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E. M. SNEYD-KYNNERSLEY

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E. M. SNEYD-KYNNERSLEY

FORMERLY H. M. I. NORTH-WEST DIVISION

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DEDICATION

To E. G. A. Holmes, Esq., H.M. Chief Inspector; and to my late Colleagues of the North-West Division, by whose desire these records were put together; in ever grateful memory.

E. M. S.-K.

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H.M.I.

CHAPTER I
THE BEGINNING

"The Man seems following still the funeral of the Boy."

J. KEBLE.

My first acquaintance with the office of H.M. Inspector of Schools dates as far back as 1854. I was then twelve years old. At breakfast we were informed that the Reverend Henry Sandford was coming on a visit. "Who, and what is he?" I asked. "Firstly, he was the son of our neighbour, Archdeacon Sandford: secondly, he was 'H.M.I.': that is to say, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools."

"What do they do?"

"Oh, they travel about the country, and examine the school-children in the National Schools."

"Travel about?" I said wistfully: "I should like to be an Inspector."

It was pointed out to me, with that frankness which is necessary in dealing with the inquisitive boy, that if I wanted travelling I had better be an engine-driver. But I replied, with unconscious sarcasm, that there were certain qualifications needed for the post of engine-driver.

Thirty years later bitter experience wrested from me the frequent remark that I did not find my work hard or disagreeable when I was once in school: all that I complained of was the travelling.

And there came another curious reminder of the conversation of 1854. One day, in the 'eighties, I was lunching with a Roman Catholic priest, and among my fellow-guests was a much-loved Canon, who apologized for having omitted his morning shave because he was suffering from neuralgia: "and," he added, "I have often thought I should like to be a Capuchin Monk, so that I might be at liberty to grow a beard."

Being myself a hairy man, I pointed out that Inspectors of Schools had the same privilege. But the Canon promptly retorted that he believed there

were certain qualifications necessary for the office of inspector, and he had never heard that there were any required for being a Capuchin.

This would seem to point to a classification:

1. Engine-drivers.
2. Inspectors of Schools.
3. Capuchins.

From 1854 to 1871 I was not interested in Elementary Education, though after leaving Oxford I took some part in Classical teaching. The storms of Mr. Lowe's Revised Code passed over my head: and the Elementary Education Bill of 1870 was fought in Parliament while I was sailing home from Australia. The School Board elections of November, 1870, caused some excitement in the large towns, but the Franco-German war was raging, and the siege of Paris was of more general interest. To the supporters of the Government the New Education Act appeared to be an admirable measure; the Opposition maintained the contrary opinion; but, as is usually the case, the great majority of the people adopted one or the other side without tedious enquiry into details. I think that was my case.

In the following year without any warning my destiny began to be shaped. About Easter there came a letter to my father from our old friend of 1854, H. Sandford, who was a cousin of Sir Francis Sandford, Secretary of the Education Department, and had become a Senior Inspector. He premised that certain officers were to be appointed to make enquiries under the new Education Act—men who had graduated with honours at Oxford or Cambridge—and that the nomination of these was in the hands of the District Inspectors. He went on to enquire whether my father had a son with the necessary qualifications.

Now at that time I was a briefless barrister of something less than two years' standing, nearly one of which I had spent in the aforesaid visit to Australia; and the prospect of work with a living wage was alluring. I was assured by my briefless brethren that the solicitors would not miss me, and that they themselves were able and willing to fill the gap. The offer of the appointment was accepted for me, and at the end of April I found myself an "Inspector of Returns." To my extreme delight I received notice that my work lay in North Wales: Anglesey, Carnarvonshire, Merioneth, and about a third of Denbighshire formed the district of my Chief, whom I was to assist.

I was to begin in May; the pay was good; I was twenty-nine, and in robust health. With such a country what could a man wish for more? The nature of the work was obscure, but presumably explanations would follow, and credit might be given to the Government that the task would be neither dishonourable nor onerous.

On an appointed day we were to attend at the Education Department at 11 A.M. to meet Sir F. Sandford, and to receive further instructions. I went accordingly, starting, as I thought, in good time, so that I might not begin with a reputation for unpunctuality. But at Charing Cross I found that there were but three minutes left, and I nervously hailed a hansom to complete the journey. With admirable exactness I reached the office door at 10.59, and enquired for the Secretary.

"Not come down yet, sir," said the porter: "he don't generally get here till half-past."

I felt that I had found a profession after my own heart. Judges sat at 10; Quarter Sessions' Chairmen at 9; and nasty remarks were made, if counsel by the merest chance in the world happened to be a quarter of an hour late. The cases in which I held briefs (with a fee of £1 3*s.* 6*d.*) could not contemplate a delay of half an hour; they were not on that scale.

Eventually the great man arrived, and pleasantly greeted the roomful of novices. We got our instructions, and were promised further information. In the following week I began work at Carnarvon. There, and in other schools in the district, we spent a few days, partly to teach me the rudiments of school work, partly to arrange a plan of campaign for my special work. It was all new to me, and I could offer no suggestions.

But I thought of the poor briefless ones whom I had left behind me in London: Westminster or Guildhall from 10 to 4; Temple Chambers for an hour or so; smoking-room at the club at night, with some remarks on the Tichborne case, then superseding the Franco-German war as a topic of conversation; and I was more than content with my lot.

CHAPTER II

ANGLESEY

"You do yet taste
Some subtilties of the isle, that will not let you
Believe things certain."—*Tempest.*

It next became necessary to find out what an "Inspector of Returns" had to do. What were these "Returns"? There was the Elementary Education Act, 1870, to study, and there were Instructions of the vaguest kind. In after years I became familiar with many dozens of such documents; and I used to associate them with the words which ("with that universal applicability which characterizes the bard of Avon"—to quote Mr. Micawber) Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Macbeth:

But in these cases
We still have judgment here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor.

It appeared that the Returns were answers to questions sent by the Department to every parish in the country; What was the population? What schools had they in the parish? What schools outside the parish did they use? and so on. When we had verified the answers, we were to recommend recognition of such schools as we found to be efficient, and to state what further provision was required, with detailed suggestions. For Parliament had decreed that every child should have an efficient school within reasonable distance of his home.

This seemed simple. But the word "parish" gave us endless trouble. When we speak of a parish, we think of an ecclesiastical district; and we picture to ourselves a cluster of houses, a long street, and an old church, with the village inn and a butcher's shop in the background. But Parliament meant, or defined, a *civil* parish; that is, a finite area in which a separate rate can be collected. In most parts of England the difference is immaterial; but in Anglesey, and sometimes in other places, we were baffled at the outset.

The people had long ago left the old centres, and had settled down where four cross-roads met, or near the railway station, or near a quarry, or a mine. There they had put up two chapels, three beer-shops, and a general store: they had called the place after the bigger chapel, Moriah, or Carmel, or Bethesda; and, except for a wedding or a funeral, they ceased to go up to Jerusalem.[1] Now Moriah was nearly always on the edge of two or more civil parishes, and if it wanted a school, the two or three parishes would have to pay for it, though they might have perfectly efficient schools of their own in the old centres. This of course roused protests.

Then there came another stumbling-block. If a school were ordered, it would probably be built and managed by a School Board; and in Anglesey the members of the Board would be five men whose opinion on a pig might be accepted, if the pig belonged to a perfect stranger, but on school matters the pig's opinion would be equally valuable.

A third trouble. These parishes were often so small that one could not hope to see a competent Board, unless several parishes were united. But the parishes would often rather die single than live united to their next-door neighbours. I cannot forget the fury of the Rector of Llantwyddeldwm, when it was proposed to yoke him unequally with Llantwyddeldy, and to build a joint school for the two parishes.

Lastly came the great question of rates. All the Dissenters were determined to have School Boards elected everywhere; and, to calm the minds of the small-souled brethren who feared for their pockets, word had been passed round that the rate could not exceed 3*d.* in the pound. To prove this they appealed to the declarations of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Forster, and to Section 97 of the Education Act. That Section is nineteen lines long in the official copy, and there is nothing bigger than a comma by way of relief from beginning to end. In the seventh line occur the words "3*d.* in the pound." Who can blame a Welshman imperfectly acquainted with English, if after diving into this sea of troubles he came up gasping for breath, but firmly clutching the comfortable words THREEPENCE IN THE POUND? Finding that I was a barrister, and supposing in the innocence of their hearts that this implied some knowledge of the law, the combatants frequently appealed to me; and I assured them, with all the self-assurance of the briefless, that the Section did not limit the rate: it merely provided an aid-grant for poor parishes. And it happened that I was right. When, in the

’nineties, they came to pay rates of from one to three shillings in the pound, they must have said a good deal.[2]

Our instructions said no word about any of these special difficulties. But the difficulties faced us everywhere we went, and caused us no little perplexity. At the same time the discussion roused much interest among the leaders of the contending parties, as we moved about from centre to centre. I think it was the most stormy month of my official life.

There were few compensating pleasures. Anglesey is not a good county for an uncommercial traveller. In 1871 it was almost wholly unknown to the ordinary Briton. Travellers to Ireland were whirled through twenty miles of desolation between the Straits and Holyhead. Yachting men knew the beautiful coast facing the Straits. Occasionally a Liverpool steamer full of sea-sick tourists called at Beaumaris. Once John Bright visited that dreary capital, admired the fine view of the Snowdon range, and deplored the deadness of the town. Finding that the landlord was a Baronet, he snorted, and described it as “withering in the cold shade of aristocracy.”

Also, of course, thousands of trippers visited the great bridges. But the interior was, and is, wholly uninteresting, and the fine sea-coast was at that time almost inaccessible by land, and had no accommodation for summer visitors. The roads, except the great London and Holyhead road, were generally atrocious, and there were only three or four places where a carriage could be hired. Trees, even hedges, were rare, and there was no shelter from the frequent gales. Marshes and moorland divided villages apparently connected. Who could ask a child to go to school across a mile of wind-swept “morfa” or “rhos”? I was told the current, and recurrent, anecdote of the Tutor of Jesus College, the Welsh College of Oxford. Jones, of Jesus, asked how it was that Tacitus spoke of Anglesey as “insula umbrosa,”[3] whereas nowadays there is hardly a tree to be seen inland. And the Tutor replied deprecatingly, “Well, you know, Mr. Jones, it’s rather a *shady* island still.” Also William Williams, Ysgol-feistr, had said that in most parishes there was “not a stick in the place except the parson.”

The inhabitants of this *terra incognita* were themselves incognitiores; for even the travellers who knew the railway and the coastline had no dealings with the people. In those days Anglesey was almost wholly ignorant of English. Our dealings lay, of course, chiefly with the clergy and the parish

overseers; but the latter usually brought their own ministers and elders to support them. Then the proceedings raged lengthily in the vernacular: my chief, or his assistant, conducted the enquiries: “Druidaeque circum, preces diras sublatis ad caelum manibus fundentes” (as Tacitus said of their ancestors) denounced the Catechism, while I looked on and yawned.

Thanks to the freehold tenure of Church Benefices, the island was in the hands of the Chapel. There were practically only two Dissenting bodies in Anglesey; the Calvinistic Methodists and the Congregationalists. The Wesleyans locally were a small body. The Calvinists, like the Wesleyans, were an offshoot from the Church, forced out by the folly of its rulers. They held all the vital doctrines of the Church, and, even now, could accept the Thirty-nine Articles and the Liturgy as freely and with the same mental reservations as an orthodox Low Churchman. An intelligent Calvinist told me that “Calvinistic” had ceased to be anything but an *epitheton ornans*: but that may have been merely his own position. I imagine there is no difference in doctrine between the Calvinists, the Congregationalists, the Presbyterians, and the Wesleyans; but their views on Church government vary.

However this may be, and my ideas on the subject are very hazy, there is no doubt that the Chapel forms part of the Anglesey life, as the Kirk (of whatever sort) does of the Scottish life. But it does not produce the Scottish virtues, and the ministers of that date, 1871, were not morally, intellectually, or educationally of the Scottish type. Certainly Truth and Honesty were not well cultivated, or else the soil was bad.

“The Chapel has stood between Wales and Heathenism.”

“The Chapel stands between Wales and Religion.”

These are the rival cries, and the reader may choose which he prefers.

There is no freehold in the Chapel pulpit: a minister who was carried out of the “King’s Arms” would have short shrift. And morality is not the only rock on which the preacher may strike. During the South African War I was spending a Sunday at a Welsh watering place, and after lunch I was talking to the landlord at the door of the hotel.

“See that chapel?” he said: “they had a new minister this morning; preached his first sermon; turned out to be a pro-Boer, and preached against

the war. They had a meeting in the vestry after service, and gave him the sack before dinner. Smart work, wasn't it?"

Wales is chapel-ridden, but it is not priest-ridden: the wary minister adopts the platform of The Cause: and there is a tendency to put The Cause above the Great First Cause. Certainly there was a lamentable want of truth and honesty in the "Returns" investigated by us in 1871, and made by, and under the influence of, these ministers and elders: and also in their ordinary school statistics.

These schools were always known as British Schools; and in theory they were carried on in connexion with the British and Foreign School Society, one guiding principle of which was that the children should have plain, undenominational Bible teaching. Up to 1871 the inspection of Elementary schools was carried on by three sorts of H.M. Inspectors. The Church schools were inspected by clergymen; the Roman Catholic schools by Roman Catholic laymen; and the other schools by laymen, of whom the best known was Matthew Arnold. In Wales the British Schools in receipt of Government grant were not numerous; and North Wales was grouped with Lancashire and Cheshire. As a rule their inspector lived in London, and, except when he paid his annual visit, they saw nothing of him. Nor indeed had he, I believe, before May, 1871, the right to enter the doors without due notice. And as the managers were for the most part unlearned men, whose interest lay chiefly in the balance sheet, the schoolmaster farmed the whole concern—that is, he took the children's school pence, the annual grant, and the subscriptions, and paid the expenses, retaining the remainder for his salary—or, alternatively, he had a salary varying with the grant. In either case his income depended on the regular attendance of the children: for the grant was paid in part on the unit of average attendance, and in part on the success in examination of each child who had attended 250 times.

All these statistics were recorded in registers, and it is easy to see that there were many temptations to fraud and few checks. In one case the master of a large British school confessed to me that he had had no registers for three months: he had recorded the attendance in copybooks and he was "going to transcribe them."

The religious instruction which these worthies were supposed to give—and I believe that up to 1871 it was a condition precedent of the Code grant

in all schools, as it certainly was an essential feature of British schools—often seemed to have been dropped. In one case I asked casually and unofficially what the arrangements were, and the master told me he read a chapter of the Bible every morning.

"In English or in Welsh?"

"Oh, in English," he replied eagerly; for Welsh was discouraged by My Lords.

"And do the children understand it?"

"Well, no, indeed; but it is just while they are coming in, and it doesn't matter."

I made no remark. We were forbidden to make any enquiry.

A charge freely brought against these schools was that when the British school inspector came down from London, capable children likely to earn a grant were passed on from school to school to be examined under the names of less capable children on the books of the recipient school. The story was generally believed, and special precautions were taken to thwart the conspirators. Detection would be almost impossible, for children in the bulk are much alike, and in North Wales few are so eccentric as not to be called by one of the six names, Jones, Evans, Hughes, Davies, Williams, Roberts. Also the inspector would be always in a hurry, and always ignorant of Welsh, and enquiries could hardly be made. But I am bound to say that I never came across an instance of this particular fraud. The only authentic case within my knowledge occurred in a Church school in Liverpool, where an inspector who had the royal gift of remembering faces, recognized a number of children whom he had seen in another school. Let it be said for the manager's sake that he was asking for recognition only, not for grant. Recognition, quotha! Well, he got that.

I believe the trick is more common in flower shows.

It will be gathered from the foregoing account that I was not favourably impressed by the islanders, though in many cases "the barbarous people showed me no little kindness." This opinion was not confined to visitors. I received a letter from a resident, who gave me much help in my work, speaking doubtfully of the chances of success in dealing "with these Cretan people."

"Cretan"? or was it "crétin"? No: clearly C-r-e-t-a-n. Crete is an island—ah, I have it—

Κρῆτες ἀεὶ ψεῦσται, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαὶ.

I might add "Cretensis incidit in Cretenses"; the Anglesey man is down on the Anglesey men. But I would rather not translate the Greek. You will find it in St. Paul's letter to the first bishop of Crete, Chapter I.

This, of course, is all ancient history. More than a generation of men has passed, and the new generation may be vastly different. Moreover, there was a revival in the island not long since. The people are changed in heart.

"Do you think a Tory candidate will be returned at the next election, Mr. Jones, Ynys Fôn?" (Mona's Isle).

"'Deed, I don't know; yes, perhaps, I think."

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Thus, to take a few prominent cases, Colwyn Bay, Bethesda, Portmadoc, Barmouth, Bala were known officially as parts of the civil parishes of Eirias, Llandegai—Llanllechid, Ynyscynhaiarn, Llanbedr, Llanycil respectively.

[2] The Blue Book of 1902 gives the following returns:—

County	Boards	Rates over 9*d.*	Highest	Lowest (school owning)
Anglesey	34	20	23*d.*	4·4*d.*
Carnarvon	30	20	25·5	1·5
Merioneth	20	15	26·8	5·9

In Anglesey the expenses of administration were £850 11*s.* 2*d.*

In 1882 two parishes in Carnarvonshire, Criccieth, and Llanllyfni, levied rates of 39·4 and 44 pence respectively. (See Blue Book, 1883.)

[3] But I cannot find the phrase in the *Annals* xiv. 29; or in the *Agricola*.

CHAPTER III
VAGRANT

"Sports like these
In sweet succession taught e'en toil to please."

GOLDSMITH.

So we fought a hard fight for two months or more, and began to see our way more clearly. It was then that I learned a lesson, which lasted me through my official life and did me much good service: the advisability of taking the public into one's confidence. People like to know what is going on; and, if there is to be disagreement, it is better to have it early, when explanation will generally put matters right or effect a compromise. At that time this was a hateful doctrine in the eyes of Whitehall officials: they said it "led to correspondence." My experience is in the opposite direction: why should men write letters if they know the facts? If official inference from the facts is wrong, they ought to write. I lived to see the "free and open" policy generally adopted, and commended by My Lords.

For this reason in our enquiry we[4] took the local magnates into counsel. Choosing some place central for two or more parishes, we invited the incumbent and the overseers to meet us. The incumbent brought the landowners, and the overseers brought the chapel dignitaries. From this collected wisdom we got all the information we wanted, and sometimes good advice. Above all, we got confidence; for those present saw and heard all the information that was given us: they learned the requirements of the Act, and were told exactly how far their district went towards satisfying the law. Confidence is a plant that for special reasons grows slowly in that land; and occasionally there were outbursts of fury; but, as we shall see later, the result was that our recommendations were received with hardly a single murmur.

Through these meetings sometimes one made friendships which lasted for years: less often one met men, whom, it was a consolation to think, one

would never meet again in this world, or (with good fortune) in any other world. Sometimes in out of the way corners of the earth there were odd incidents which abide in the memory and after all the long interval blossom into mirth.

A dull June day, with cold rain hanging about: a mediæval gig, and an indigenous driver, lineally descended from Caliban, and all but monoglott. We meet an aged clergyman, and Caliban touches his hat.

"Who is that?" I ask, to make conversation.

"Well, they call him Menander."

"Menander? What does that mean?"

"'Deed, I don't know," was the natural and national answer.

Menander—Greek poet—never read a word of him—must have been dead 2,000 years: perhaps he came to North Wales. Wasn't there an Early Father of that name? I think I confused him with Neander,[5] though I could give no account of Neander then or now. But why? And who? A parson; perhaps an officer of the Church. Thus I mused. Then I put it to the driver: did he think it was the Welsh for a rural dean?

"Well, yes, I think," said he, obviously having no idea what I meant.

On arriving at our meeting-place I told my chief that I had met Menander, and that I had ascertained that he was so called in virtue of the office of rural dean. He roared. I suppose the story is told of me to this day in Ruridecanal chapters. The holy man was a bard, and Menander was his bardic name; when he wrote poetry for an Eisteddfod, he took that for a pen-name.

Another dull cold day in September. We had assembled at a spot convenient for several parishes, and many local heads had been summoned. But the district was not interested in schools, and only one incumbent and two or three farmers met us on the top of a low hill overlooking the affected area. We soon settled our business, and were about to return, when the Major appeared. He was the squire, and his interest in schools was not his ruling passion. We explained matters, and it became apparent that the Major was not a total abstainer: he had been shooting, and seemed to have found it thirsty work. The question with him was, Would we come to lunch? We

accepted with qualms. It was most unfortunate, the Rector said, but he had another engagement, and he fled.

We went to the Hall, and the Major joined us in some trifling alcoholic refreshment as a stop-gap, for it was still early. We surveyed the grounds, and enjoyed the Major's conversation. It appeared that he was a many-sided man. Ares, Dionysus, and Aphrodite were among his idols, and (like Paris) he preferred the last-named to Athene. Eventually we lunched, and to our alarm the Major began with champagne, and finished up with port. I say advisedly "finished," for during dessert, with a hasty apology, he retired; and after an awkward interval the butler appeared with a timid suggestion that we should go away, as "we had sewn the Major up." We stopped only to disclaim the plain sewing: there were many stitches put in before we took the garment in hand. We learned afterwards that the unfortunate man had received some injury to the head in active service, and that his brain could stand no unusual pressure. I never saw him again: the inevitable end came within twelve months.

Another September day. The school-room where we met was rather full, and I gathered that there was a special grievance. The parishioners disclaimed any knowledge of English, and a brisk conversation in Welsh followed, while I filled up forms. After some time I asked my colleague what it was all about.

"Oh, the usual thing: the Conscience Clause, and the Catechism, and they want a School Board."

"Tell them the usual thing: must adopt the method prescribed by the Act."

But a more animated discussion ensued: what was the matter?

"They say the Rector lives in the school-house, and keeps his pig in the girls' playground."

I turned on the Rector, who was listening with some alarm, and asked him whether this were true. He admitted it. Where else was he to live? There was no parsonage. A man must live somewhere.

"Je n'en vois pas la nécessité," I quote to myself. "And the pig?"

Well, yes, sure; there was the pig there; but where else was he to put it?

I was wroth, and told him emphatically that he might keep it in the church for anything I cared. The monoglott meeting roared with laughter. They had followed the conversation with some ease—for monoglotts. I fully expected a formal complaint to the Office from the aggrieved Rector. But he was too much frightened.

Another autumn visit brought me to the parish of Llandudwal. The Chapel party were aggrieved, and unfolded their piteous tale. Weeks ago they had brought over the Clerk to the Guardians, and had had a statutory meeting, at which they had passed a resolution in favour of a School Board, and had written to the Education Department: and yet there was no Board ordered.

I explained that my functions were limited to enquiry: I had no executive powers: they should "call him louder." Then the story went out of my front brain to that dark chamber at the back, where so much lumber lies unsuspected. But in the course of the next year I happened to be studying the Educational affairs of Llandudwal, and sent for the file containing its annals. A flash of light lit up the lumber. There are two Llandudwals; one in A. shire, the other in B. shire. Llandudwal A, which I had visited, had voted for a Board, and the application was filed with the papers of Llandudwal B. The latter had not asked for a Board; but when they were informed that their prayer was granted, and that they were to elect a Board on the 25th prox., they thanked Heaven for a Liberal Government, and like

> Obedient Yemen,
> Answered Amen,
> And did
> As they were bid.

For twelve months they had lived, though not yet born, and had, no doubt, levied a rate to pay for their illegal election.

Full of horror I broke it gently to a magnate at Whitehall. He laughed consumedly, and said Wales was a strange country. A general Act of 1873 cured this and all other similar irregularities. But think of the humour of it!

Time would fail me to tell of other journeys: bright May days with the fresh green of the larch on the hillside, and the glories of the chestnut and the wild flowers in the valleys. Hot June sunshine with azalea, and

honeysuckle, and rhododendron; and the cool sea-breeze at night. July and August with the tripper in the land; crowded hotels, and noisy table d'hôte dinners; the grass is brown, and the trees have taken a uniform tint, and the rivers are low; except when torrential rains have fallen for three days, and made the Swallow Falls to rival Niagara. September comes, and the tripper ceases from tripping; the trees begin to put on their own colours again, and their autumn robes are magnificent: by the middle of October they are blazing in red and yellow; and towards the end of the month there is often snow on the hills, and below the snow the bracken is red.

Then came wild drives in Welsh cars—a sort of clumsy "governess-cart," now almost extinct—through rain and storm to remote villages in Merioneth, and Denbighshire valleys; and then frost and snow; and all travelling became a burden. Trains were very few on the Cambrian line in winter. The hotels were empty, but how glad the proprietors were to see any one! How amiable was the ever amiable landlady! Could I have a sitting-room? Yes, sure, there was No. 1. And a car to-morrow? Yes, indeed, to go anywhere. And Dobbin was reclaimed from the agricultural operations to which he had been devoted since the fall of the tripper.

There was one journey from which I confess I shrank, and I regret it to this day. Off the far west coast of the Carnarvonshire peninsula called Lleyn, beyond the cape called Braich-y-Pwll, lies Bardsey Island. It is approachable by sailing-boat, if wind and tide are favourable; the distance from Aberdaron is about four miles, and one might choose one's day. But, I was warned, if anything went wrong with the wind, I might be kept on the island for a week: Baedeker did not mark the principal hotel with a star of approval. The population was about fifty-two; there should be eight children of school age. There was a king; the queen was dead. Say one king, no queen, eight knaves, the rest plain; a strange pack. If I went there, and was detained for a week, I should have to charge the Treasury something over £16 for wages, railways, carriages, and boats; there would be reams of letters about it, and a Radical M.P. might bring it up in the House. "Can't you let it alone?" said Lord Melbourne: so I did. But the next year I reported the facts to Whitehall. Meanwhile the Vice President had ruled that if the number of children anywhere, for whom no school accommodation was or could conveniently be provided, were less than twenty it was

negligible. And it was agreed that the Bardsey King should take the trick, and the Deuce might take the Eight. Q.E.F.

Even on dry land travelling was not always simple. One day a kind-hearted Rector, hearing that my intended route was more than usually difficult, offered to mount me and personally conduct me next day. To my dismay he arrived after breakfast with a horse for himself, and a Shetland pony for me. As I am, like Rosalind, "more than common tall," it was like riding a safety bicycle, the stirrups taking the place of pedals for my feet. It was a wet morning, and the road was very hilly; my mackintosh covered my steed, and nearly touched the ground. The Rector rode behind me, convulsed with laughter, and commenting on my appearance. But one must not look a gift Shetland pony in the mouth. We were due at Tyn ddingwmbob at 10 A.M., and we arrived at 12.15. The school which I was to inspect had adjourned to dinner, and there was only a fat Vicar waving a large gold watch at me.

"Pray, sir, is this official punctuality?"

But I threw the blame on my guide, and when my steed had been surveyed, and measured, the excuse was admitted: peace was made, and we lunched at the Vicarage.

Everywhere hospitality was abundant. The clergy fed me on old port: the dissenting ministers on their choicest butter-milk. The squires offered me cigars: the elders an orthodox brand of Anglesey tobacco, which would have soon repelled Suetonius, if the Druids had been in a position to try it on him; and which was called "tobacco yr achos," or "tobacco of The Cause."

Here I should not omit to say that the port wine was a serious question to a moderate man. Especially in Anglesey there lurked danger in the bowl. Some of the College incumbents had so far profited by a University education as to have acquired a pretty taste in vintages. One of these excellent men, having feasted me royally, after dinner brought out a bottle of port that remembered Tract 90. We finished the bottle: if I drank my share, and I feel sure I did my best, I must have had five glasses. The Rector rose to ring for another bottle. I implored him to have mercy: I had to get back to my hotel, and my appointment was tenable only during good behaviour: what if I were found in the gutter? The good man looked at me

more in anger than in sorrow: “Well,” he said, “you are the first man ever dined here that didn’t like my port.”

The laity were not behindhand. Arriving at one village where I had hoped to meet the usual incumbent and overseers, I found the squire only. He told me that no one else was coming; and that I was to come at once to the Hall to discuss the school supply, and to dine and sleep. It was some one’s birthday and relations were there to honour the occasion. The subsequent proceedings reminded me of Dean Ramsay’s Scotch stories. We had much port; many bottles: and we wound up with Family Prayers. I forget who read them: “it wasn’t me.” I only remember the Squire throwing in ‘Amens’ far more frequently than had been contemplated by the compiler. We all got safely to bed, and as I was not offered the chance of smoking, and did not expect another invitation to the Hall, I had a final pipe out of my bedroom window, risking detection, as I feasted my eyes on the beauty of the June night. Did my host glare at me in the morning, or was it my guilty conscience? Tobacco was often glared at in those days.

With one possible exception all that festive party has passed away, and the tale may be told.

These were oases in the desert of a life spent in hotels. And yet there is much fun in the desert, when there are good fellow-travellers. In those days at hotel dinners we sat at long tables, instead of the “separate tables” now general in this country: and at dinner, or in the smoking-room, one picked up many pleasant acquaintances. It was not always hotels; sometimes it was inns, and the inns gave one more insight into the life of the country. There after dinner we usually adjourned to the bar-parlour as a smoking-room, where the local chief citizens would assemble to discuss the affairs of their neighbours.

It was in such assemblies that I learned how little importance is attached to a surname in Wales. We all know that hundreds of years ago people in England acquired surnames by adding to their Christian name the name of their house, or of their town, or of their trade, or what not. Thus John of Chester became John Chester, and William the Miller became William Miller, thereby being differentiated from William Tailor. In Wales, the process was on other lines. John, son of William, was William’s John, or John Williams. But the next generation reverted: William, son of John

Williams, became William Jones, because he was John's William. This may still be the custom in remote parts of Wales. It was not extinct in West Carnarvonshire in 1871, where an incumbent told me of the difficulty he had in explaining the method to the Admiralty, or the Board of Trade, when his seafaring parishioners got drowned. "If William Jones was the son of this John Williams, who claims to be next of kin to the deceased, how is it that he was called Jones, and not Williams? I am to request that a declaration may be filed."

I can imagine the annoyance of a Government Office at this departure from the normal.

But as the possible Welsh surnames were limited to the derivatives from possible Christian names, it followed that they ceased to be sufficiently distinctive, and the local habitation, or the trade had to be appended to the surname, as in England it was once appended to the Christian name. I once asked a friend whether John Davies, whom we had just left, was any relation to William Davies, whom we had seen a week ago.

"None whatever," he said; "what makes you ask?"

"Chiefly the name being the same."

"Ah," he replied, "I suppose in England you would draw that inference: in Wales it would never occur to a man to do so."

In a country inn you might hear, "Have you heard that John Jones, Ty Gwyn, is dead? I met William Roberts, the Gas, and he told me. John Jones' daughter, you know, married the son of Evan Davies, the Bank, that used to live at Tyn-y-mynydd, and they built a house at Cwm-tir-Mynach, which used to belong to Mrs. Captain Roberts, Garth; and William Roberts, the Gas, is her son."

Then the company identified John Jones.

Once, when I was inspecting a Welsh school, being disturbed by the hum of conversation, I called out to a ringleader, "John Jones, don't make such a noise." The master looked up in surprise; pondered, and then sidled up to me: how did I know that the boy's name was John Jones?

I retorted that I didn't know, but that it seemed likely. It turned out that John Jones was the boy's name, and that there were seventeen John Jones'

on the list. I was firing into the brown.

In one part of the district there were seven clergymen bearing the same name, incumbents of seven consecutive parishes. But each had an agnomen, and no one ever confused Mr. Davies, Llanfihangel, with Dr. Davies, Llanfairfechan, or either with John Davies, Llanfor, who wrote indifferent poetry under the bardic name of Job.

In these inns we varied gossip with occasional gambling. Once to oblige three hungry players I took a hand at whist. We played long whist for penny points, and we counted "honours, spots, and corners." Honours were honours: spots, I think, meant the ace of spades; and I am inclined to believe that corners denoted the "Jack of trumph" (knave of trumps); but I plead the Statute of Limitations on behalf of my memory. I know we played till closing time, and I won tenpence. An ardent gambler with a slender purse and a weak heart might try North Wales.

At another such inn I gathered that gambling is a perilous pastime, when you do not know your fellow gamblers. "There wass three young men" said a sort of an Elder to me in the smoking-room, "that wass very desirous to play cards, and they could not get an-ny one to play with them: and, while they were waiting for some one, you know, there ca-ame in a stranger that offered to play with them. And he sat down"—here the Elder's voice sank, and he glared at me like the Ancient Mariner—"and it is truth that I am telling you, he won from them every penny that they had in the world, and went awa-ay with the money; and (*molto misterioso*) they say he wass the fery living spit and image of——" (and he named a famous Baptist preacher).

"Was it Satan" (I asked) "in this unlikely garb? Why did he 'make up' like that angel of sweetness and light? If it was the preacher *revenant*, how did he acquire this skill in cards? Did he cheat, or did he exhibit supernatural skill? What game was it? If whist, why did not his partner score also? Think it was Nap, or Loo? Then why did they insist on a fourth man?"

But the Elder knew no more about "the famous victory" than did old Kaspar of Blenheim.

At another inn, where I called for such lunch as one can get in country inns, I found a small party of villagers, and the arrival of a strange Saxon produced a momentary silence. This was broken by the oldest inhabitant, who seemed to be impressed by my length of limb. Evidently he was the Mercury, or chief speaker:

"Fery high," said he.

I admitted the charge.

"Yes, sure: going to rain, think you?"

I disclaimed special knowledge, but remarked that the glass was going down.

"Ah, weather-glass?" said the old man, after an interval for mental translation. "There wass an old man, John Jones, Llanfair, fery old-fashioned man, had a weather-glass; and one time he wass wanting to get in his hay, and the glass go up, up, up, and the rain come down, down, down, and at last John get quite mad, and he ta-ake the glass and go to the door, and hold it up to the rain, and he say, 'There, now, see for yourself.'"

I repaid him with laughter. I suppose the villagers knew that story from their cradles, but they laughed a gentle welcome to an old friend.

Mercury was encouraged to further efforts. "Another time it came on to rain worse than that time, and the river wass above the bank, and wass carry off all the hay that wass lying about; and John Jones wass trying to sa-ave it, but it wass all carried away, and he say, 'TAD ANWYL! (dear Father), take the rake and fork too,' and he throw them into the river. Fery old-fashioned man, John Jones, Llanfair."

Alas! my train came in sight, and I had to run, leaving the tale of John Jones, like Cambuscan's, half told.

There might be Tales of my Landlords also, for in the late autumn one saw much of them. It was my privilege to visit the School Board whereof Harry Owen of Pen-y-gwryd, was a member; Owen, beloved of Charles Kingsley, Tom Taylor, and Tom Hughes. Are not his praises written in *Two Years Ago*? Strange to find a man out of a novel serving on a School Board. At that time his visitors' book still contained the verses written by the three above-mentioned heroes, which may be found on page 495, vol. i., of *C.*

Kingsley's Life. Owen was warned to cut out the page, and frame it, as had been done with Dean Buckland's geological note in the Beddgelert book; and he promised to do so; but at my next visit it was gone. Some one, said, on I know not what authority, to be an American, had cut out the page, and carried it off.

Another landlord's memory I cherish, though I conceal his name, because he told me a precious anecdote:—

"I took a few friends in a landau over the pass last week, and on the way we came to Mr. William Hughes, Rector of Llansgriw; you know Mr. Hughes? and I told my friends we would go in there for a minute, just to get a rise out of the old fellow: so in we went. 'Morning, Mr. Hughes,' I said, 'just driving round; thought we would give you a call, and ask how you were.'

"'Very glad to see you, Mr. Jones, and your friends, too, I am sure. Will you take a glass of sherry this cold morning?'

"Of course we said we would, and he went off to the cellar, and came back with a bottle, and filled our glasses. I took one mouthful of it, and said:—

"'*I see you've taken the pickles out, Mr. Hughes.*'"

One more word. How did I get on without knowing the language? I have often been asked the question. In the official enquiries I had, as I have said, the good fellowship and support of Mr. E. Roberts, late H.M.I. in the Carnarvon district, who saved me from many perils then, and now has added to my debt of gratitude by correcting the fragments of Welsh quoted in these pages. In travelling it was very seldom that I was inconvenienced, though I often got no reply to my questions but "Dim Saesneg" (no English). And that never failed to bring to mind the simple-hearted Balliol don, whose lament over the rude profanity of the Welsh peasants it was the delight of his pupils to extract by judicious questioning:

"When I was in Wales I regret to say that I was *not* favourably impressed by the manners of the people. If at any time in the course of a walk I applied to any one for information, I always received the reply 'Sassenach,' which, I believe, means 'Englishman,' coupled with an expression that I should be very sorry to repeat."

FOOTNOTES:

[4] Here and throughout this chronicle “we” stands for the Inspecting Staff.

[5] I have since ascertained that Neander was not an Early Father, but a German theologian.

CHAPTER IV
LLANGASTANAU

"O good old man; how well in thee appears
The constant service of the antique world."

As You Like It.

On a dreary day in October I had to visit one of the remote villages high up in the moorland district. The wind howled, and the rain beat down pitilessly, as my Welsh-car jolted me, and swayed me to Llangastanau[6] Rectory, where I had been invited to spend the night. I was by no means sure of comfortable quarters, for I had never seen my host: his invitation came through my chief. But the alternative course, a long drive in the early morning to the parish school, was still less attractive, and I made up my mind to take college port, or butter-milk, as the case might be.

When the car turned off the bleak road into a sheltered drive leading up to a solid-looking house, with gleams of light in the windows, and smoke issuing from several chimneys, my spirits rose: and when I saw the neat-handed Phyllis at the door, and behind her a scholarly, yet sociable face beaming over a well-lined waistcoat, I felt that I was in for a good thing: the lot had fallen unto me in a fair ground. There was no Mrs. Rector—there is much to be said for celibacy of the clergy—and we made our way to a library with a bright leaping fire of logs, and the most admirable furniture that a library can have, two arm chairs, a long table, and three walls lined with books. As for seats other than the arm chairs, one remembers the remark of—was it not the visitor to Charles Lamb?—"all the seats were booked." On each chair was a pile of volumes taken down from the shelves, and not replaced: so free and careless is the celibate life. But Phyllis Jones eyed them scornfully as she passed, and during dinner they were all "put back" where Phyllis thought they would fit in. Even the celibate life is not all free.

My bedroom was equally enticing. Is it wicked to enjoy hearing the wind moan, and the rain beat against the windows, when you have a good fire burning in the grate, and there are RED CURTAINS to the windows, reflecting the glow? I never see red curtains without thinking of that wild night.

Before leaving me to dress, my host informed me of Rule 1 of the house: "Smoking is allowed in every room in the house, except the drawing-room;" and I had a delicious pipe and a snooze before dinner.

On reaching the drawing-room aforesaid I was told whom I should meet. First, there was the Squire—who, by-the-bye, had wanted to have me at the Hall, but the Rector would not hear of it, "though he was painfully well aware that I should be far more comfortable there." (Laughter and dissent.) The Squire, John Trevor, had been the Rector's pupil at Oxford; they had kept up their friendship, and the Squire had given him the living; one of the best fellows in the world. With the Squire would come David Williams, Vicar of Llanbedr, formerly at a public-school with the Squire. At Oxford they had parted; David had been tempted by a Welsh scholarship to Jesus College; the Squire and my host were at St. Peter's. David was another of the best fellows in the world, and also one of the most humorous.

Thirdly, Mr. Morgan, the Rector of Llanfair-castanwydd-uwch-y-mynydd, which I might call Llanfair for short, was coming, because he really wanted to see me about his School Board; a most worthy man, and an eminent bard and philologian. Men called him The Druid. And lastly, might he introduce his nephew, Harry, formerly a scholar of St. Peter's, and now, after taking a degree that satisfied even the President, much engaged in developing the Squire's slate-quarries. The Rector added no praises of Harry, but it was sufficiently plain that the nephew was the apple of the uncle's eye. And a more charming "rosy-cheeked apple" I never saw.

Had Harry got up the wine as directed? Yes, he had; and in a low voice he recounted his auxiliary forces. There were, he said doubtfully, *two* of No. 6. Who was coming with the Squire? What, Dafydd Nantgwyn? Ah-h. And he turned to me. Did I know Mr. Williams, Vicar of Llanbedr?

I replied that I had met him officially. Why did he call him by some other name?

“What, David Nantgwyn? Don’t you know the story? Do you know Nantgwyn Junction, where you change trains, if you want to go to Llanfihangel, you know?”

I admitted so much.

“Well, you remember, the train waits there for six minutes, while the engine runs on to Llanfihangel with one carriage to pick up passengers, and brings them back to hook on to the train at Nant. There is no refreshment room at Nant Station, but the wary traveller with a thirst knows that there is just time to run 250 yards to the ‘Black Lion,’ to get a glass of beer, to drink it, and to run back to catch the train. David was there last month. He was wary, and thirsty; and he ran to the ‘Lion,’ and shouted ‘Glass of beer, please, Mary *bach*’; but a bagman had outstripped him, and had already ordered his beer. So just as David spoke, the bagman’s beer was served. David banged down his twopence and drank the bagman’s beer joyfully. ‘Sir,’ said the bagman, ‘that was *my* beer.’ By that time Mary had drawn David’s beer and had put it in front of him.

“‘Was it?’ said David; ‘then this is mine.’ And he drank that too. The engine whistle was heard in the distance, and they both had to nip back to the station. David was triumphant, and now they call him Dafydd Nantgwyn. Here he comes.”

The Squire arrived with his guest. I was introduced. The Squire looked doubtfully at me, and formally regretted that he had been unable to have the honour of entertaining me. Warming a little, he added that he had heard dreadful things of me. Was I not engaged in forming School Boards everywhere? What was to become of the farmers when the rates went up again?

I laughed, and threw the responsibility on the Education Department. I was only a servant.

But he had also heard that I had said at dinner in Carnarvonshire that if a man had more than a certain income, the balance should be given to the Exchequer. He was glad to find that I had named £50,000 a year, which left him untouched; but it was a dangerous doctrine.

I dimly remembered some such *obiter dictum* at some one’s house, but this was, I think, the first time in my life that I had heard of any importance

being attached to a remark of mine. In the smoking-room at the Club, in chambers at the Temple, or at Bar Mess, one might propose the confiscation of Grosvenor Square for the benefit of briefless barristers, and no one would object; nay, much advice as to details would be offered. It seemed that an Inspector of Returns must weigh his words. Official life has its drawbacks.

While I was thus musing the Rector of Llanfair was announced, and our party was complete. A little man, round, quick in eye and movement, and with that "tip-tilted" nose which is sure evidence of enjoyment of a joke. Friar Tuck with the accent of Sir Hugh Evans of Windsor.

I forgot to say that "David Nantgwyn" had greeted me as an old friend. I had lunched with him at Llanbedr, when I visited his parish; and had laughed at his Welsh stories till I could laugh no more. A fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. Alas, poor Yorick! What was he doing in that galley?

We went in to dinner, and as I passed by I heard Harry mutter to David, "Sut yma Dafydd Nantgwyn?" (How is David of Nantgwyn?) and there was a scuffle.

It is good to dine at Llangastanau. The trout came out of the burn; the Welsh mutton was a native growth; the game, if I may judge from a smile passing from host to squire, came from the Hall. The port was from the college cellars, and St. Peter's has a reputation. These delicacies, or the like, might be got in London; but David and the Druid were local and priceless: it did one good to look at the Squire and Harry; and the Rector would have adorned—not Lambeth, but a choicest Deanery. "If there was many like him," said Mrs. Gamp, "we shouldn't want no churches."

We talked of many things, wheeling round, and lighting here and there; for I was a stranger, and all that they knew of me was that I was a Socialist, and probably a Turk, Infidel, or Heretic; otherwise I should not have been sent down there by THAT Government. But by some chance remark it was found that we had Oxford as a common nursing mother, and we did better. The Rector was thirty years my senior. He was of Mr. Gladstone's standing, and had been one of his ardent supporters: now mourned his decadence. The Squire preceded me by ten years; David was very slightly his junior; Harry was five years my junior; thus we covered thirty-nine years. Still the

Squire was rather distant, till in the course of our memories I let fall something which inclined him to believe that our views of the Prime Minister's policy coincided. After that he became most friendly. It is better, as Mrs. Malaprop remarked, to begin with a little aversion.

He "took a glass of wine with me" in the old Oxford fashion, and we got on capitally. Where had I been last week? I told him. Had I seen old Micaiah Roberts there? I thought I had, but there were two or three Robertses.

"Did you see Mrs. Micaiah?" said David; "they say that she lost her wedding-ring last year, and went to her husband to get a new one:

"'Micaiah, I've lost my wedding-ring.'

"'Well, Mrs. Roberts, what of that?'

"'Won't you get me another, Micaiah?'

"'No-a, Mrs. Roberts, I will not; your a-age and your personal appearance will preserve you from insult.'"

The Druid was hot on the scent. Had I heard about Micaiah's son?

"Some one asked Micaiah what he was going to do with his two sons. He said, 'The eldest will be a solicitor, if he can get his articles. The other will go into the Church, like his father.'

"'But that will be costly, my dear sir. Shall you send him to Oxford?'

"'No-a, sir,' replied Micaiah, 'he will become a Nonconformist preacher; then after a year or two he will go to the Bishop and say, "My Lord, I haf seen reason to change my opeenionss, and I wish to be ordained," and the Bishop will ordain him, and gif him a living moreofer.'"

David turned to me. "The Druid doesn't love the Bishop; says he is a (Welsh expression—I think 'Hwntw drwg' or 'bad man from yonder'); that is what we call the South Walians; and he says the Bishop's accent is lamentable."

The Druid admitted his dislike. "The Bishop couldn't say 'Hollalluog' (Almighty) to save his mitre; and he is worse than Jeroboam; he makes priests of the lowest of the people. Five Calvinist preachers has he ordained in two years; the last couldn't speak decent English; he was reading the

Second Lesson in church the other day, and he came to the chapter in St. Luke, you know, where it says ‘there came down a storm, and they were filled with wãt-ter; and were in’—(he was following the words, you know, with his fat, greasy forefinger, and he stopped suddenly, and went on slowly, as if the ice were thin)—‘*gee-o-par-dy*.’ English or Welsh, the Bishop is no good.”

“Druid, Druid,” said the good Rector gently. I saw he did not like to hear the Chief Ruler thus spoken of, or his dissenting brethren scornfully entreated. “You must remember that we don’t get the pick of the chapel for our converts.”

“No, indeed,” said the other, quite unabashed, “nor of the schoolmasters either. Have you met William Williams, Rhos, yet, Mr. Inspector? He went to preach a Harvest Festival sermon for old Howell the other day. Mr. Howell, you know, Rector of Llanfochyn, is rather an old swell,” he added, for my information, “and Williams was a British schoolmaster....”

“And an excellent young man,” interposed our host.

“Oh yes, indeed, I was not saying anything against him; I would not do it whatever; but he is not quite of the same ways of acting as old Howell,” said the narrator, pleading for his story. “Well, he came, and he preached a very excellent sermon, I am sure; and whilst they were in the church a storm came on, and when service was over it was still raining very hard, and Howell said, ‘Look here, Williams, you can’t go home in this weather, let me put you up at the Rectory to-night.’ Of course he was much obliged, and they had supper, and so on, and then Howell showed Williams his bedroom, and there was a nightshirt, you know, and everything, they thought; and Williams, when he was asked whether he had got all he wanted, says, ‘inteet it iss fery kind of you, Mr. Howell; eferything, thank you,’ and they said ‘good-night.’ But in about five minutes Howell comes back, and knocks at the door; ‘Sorry to disturb you, Williams, but it occurs to me that you would not have a tooth-brush, and I have brought you one.’

“Williams took it, and looked at it, and he says, ‘Well, indeed, Mr. Howell, it is very kind of you, and I am much obliged; yes sure; but I do feel that I am depriving you and Mrs. Howell of it.’”

The Druid could hardly have found a more appreciative audience. Notably the Rector gasped for breath, and wiped away many tears of pure delight. Harry and David Nantgwyn (I have already got into the habit of speaking thus of him) shouted for joy, like the morning stars; and the Squire chortled in his glee.

"Llanfochyn is becoming famous," said the Squire; "it was in that parish that a very remarkable sermon was preached one week-night in July. The orator was a local preacher in Zion Chapel, and the congregation were farm labourers, male and female. After some short preliminary exercises, he began:

"'Well, my friends, you have all been busy in the hay to-day, and instead of a sermon let us take some of the principal Bible characters, and see what we know of them. There was Moses: what shall we say of Moses? He was man for meekness. And then there was h'm, h'm, Samson: Samson slew a thousand men with the jawbone of a lion: was it lion? Yes, I think: well, he was man for strength. Then there was Samuel ... and David ... and Solomon: Solomon had 300 wives, and h'm, h'm: he was man for marriage. And there was Jonah: was three days and three nights in the belly of a whale: what shall we say of Jonah? *He was man for fish.* And now, &c., &c.'"

I thanked the Squire warmly, for he had told the story well. But, as he truly remarked, the song wants singing; write it down on paper and it is nought. There was a short lull in the conversation while we ate, and chewed the cud of the Llanfochyn sermon. I turned to my neighbour, the Druid: "Have you been long at Llanfair, Mr. Morgan?" I asked, hoping to draw him out.

"Thirty years: ever since I was ordained. I went there as curate at first, and my rector never came near the place. I was only a deacon, of course, and the first Sunday in every month I would go down to Rhosfawr, and John Evans, Rhosfawr, would take my service, while I took his. And the first Sunday I was there, we began, as usual in those days, with the Morning Hymn, and the choir in the chancel sang it, and then we went on reading; but I was quicker than John Evans, being a young man, and when we got to *Te Deum* there was no singing. I looked about, and there was no choir, and I heard the clerk say (in Welsh, you know) to a lad, 'Go down to the 'Red Lion,' and tell them that the little chap they have got from Llanfair has read

so quick that they must come back and sing *Te Deum*.' And it seemed that there was a door at the back of the chancel, and every Sunday the men would go out after the hymn, and stop at the 'Red Lion' till it was time to sing again. But I was too quick for them whatever. I could give John Evans (he added modestly) down to 'Pontius Pilate,' and beat him."

This anecdote was evidently an old favourite with the party, and it was duly honoured.

"Had any trouble with Richard Jones, Ty'n-y-felin, lately, Druid?" asked Harry, I think, to draw him out once more.

Mr. Morgan chuckled. "He won't have anything to say to me for a month or two, now. Last week after the equinoctial gale—you remember?—the roof of my church had suffered a little, and I was going down to the builder to see about it, when I met Richard Ty'n-y-felin. 'Good morning, Mr. Morgan,' he said, 'wass blow fery hard last night: got slates off your church roof, they tell me?'

"'Yes,' I said, 'I'm on my way to Moses Jenkins to get it mended.'

"He leered at me with horrible malice and cunning: 'Wass no-a sle-ates off our chapel roof, Mr. Morgan.'

"I leered back at him: 'D'ye think, Risiard, the Prince of the power of the air would unroof his own chapel?' And he fled."

"Too bad, too bad," protested the Rector feebly; for he had laughed with the rest, though all unwillingly.

"Too bad for Richard Jones," murmured David to me.

"Well, I am not so bad as Dr. Johnson, whatever," retorted the Druid. "I was reading last week how Boswell found him throwing snails over his garden wall."

"'Sir,' remonstrated Bozzy, 'that is rather hard on your neighbour.'

"'Sir,' replied the Doctor, 'I believe the dog is a Dissenter.'"

The Rector rose from his chair with marked disapproval. "Shall we go into the study?" he said. And we adjourned.

FOOTNOTES:

[6] Llangastanau: Castanau is the Welsh for chestnuts: I cannot imagine how the parish got its name. I saw no chestnuts, and I ought to know one.

CHAPTER V

LLANGASTANAU: THE LIBRARY

Dissolve frigus ligna super foco
Large reponens, atque benignius
  Deprome quadrimum Sabina,
    O Thaliarche, merum diota.

HORACE, *Od.* I. 9.

Heap high the logs, and melt the cold,
    Good Thaliarch; draw the wine we ask,
That mellower vintage, four-year old,
    From out the cellar'd Sabine cask.

CONINGTON.

I found that the Rector had a quaint custom, a survival of his Common-room days at St. Peter's. Dinner was in the dining-room; Wine with the eponymous chestnuts was served in the library, and it was an older bin than Horace offered to his guests. We sat in a half-circle before the fire, and each man had a small table in front of him. There was even a mimic railway, copied from the St. Peter's Common-room, to carry the decanters across the fireplace, under the mantel-shelf.

But at the dining-room door my host stopped me, and at the same time signalled to the Druid to stop. With many apologies he explained that the schoolmaster, Mr. Evans, whom I was to inspect next morning, was very anxious to see me just for a moment, if I would oblige the worthy man. Mr. Morgan, who was one of the managers, would accompany me.

Of course I consented, and we went into another room. As we passed through the hall I noticed that the Rev. David gave the master a kindly greeting, and that the latter returned it with a respectful but reproachful smile. Our business was entirely uninteresting, and in fact might have well been postponed to the morrow; but I had already learned that in country schools the Annual Inspection was the event of the year, and the filling up

of Form IX. (the school statistics supplied to the Department) was like the settling of a marriage contract. Two minutes sufficed to pacify the master, and I bade him good-night. As I was leaving the room, however, I heard him say to the Druid:

"You have Mr. Williams, Llanbedr, here to-night, Mr. Morgan. Fery pleasant chentleman: eferybotty likes Mr. Williams, indeed. Did you hear about Capel Zion? Oh it wass too bahd." And he stroked his beard with intense enjoyment.

"Capel Zion? No, what was it?" asked the Druid eagerly. "Stop, Inspector, this is good for the digestion."

"Well indeed it wass too bahd," repeated Evans. "You know Capel Zion, Mr. Morgan, that they have built between Llanbedr and Llanfawr? and just before it wass finished, Mr. Williams wass riding past the chapel door, and saw that they were putting up a board with a text painted on it, and it wass 'Tŷ Gweddi y Gelwir Fy nhŷ i'; that is, sir (he explained to me), 'My house shall be called the House of Prayer.' So Mr. Williams looks at it, and just then Meshach Morgan, the deacon, you know, came out, and Mr. Williams says, 'Morning, Meshach: pity to haf it painted like thaht: it will want doing again efery two years in this valley: why not have it carved on slate?' 'Too much money, Mr. Williams,' says the deacon. But Reverend Williams says, oh, he should like to have the pri-vi-ledsh of presenting the new chapel with a suitable text like thaht, out off the Book that they all valued (thaht wass bahd for Meshach, because he would not haf it in the Board School at the last meeting), just to show his friendship for his Nonconformist brethren. And so it wass settled. Mr. Williams goes down to Dolgellau and orders a slab of slate to be carved, and he gives the man a copy of the text: and after a time it comes, and the Capel Zion congregashun were very proud of it, and efery one praised the Vicar for being so liberal to those from whom he differed, and the *Herald* bach (*Carnarvon Herald*) praised him too.

"But one day Elias Morgan, Felin-ddu, wass riding by the chapel after dining with the Captain, and they say he had had a glass or two—well, it is a peety—and he sees the deacon there, and calls out, 'Hallo, Meshach, Hen Ogof Lladron!'—that iss, sir, 'old den of thieves'—and he points to the

slab. Well, Meshach Morgan looked up, and all in a moment it came to him what it wass, when he saw the slab, and the text: there it wass ofer the door:

> ‘Tʸ Gweddi y Gelwir Fy nhʸ i; eithr chwi a’i gwnaethoch yn ogof Lladron.’

That iss, sir, ‘My House shall be called the House of Prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.’ Oh, it wass too bahd; and now they don’t know what to do with the slahb whatefer. Well, good-night now, gentlemen,” and he went.

The Druid lay back in a low chair, and kicked his little fat legs in the air, screaming with suppressed joy, but anxiously looking round to see whether the Rector was within hearing. I think I enjoyed the story no less. There are moments when life is worth living.

We made our way to the library, and found that our host was waxing impatient. The chestnuts were getting cold. “Castan da iawn” (first-rate chestnut) said the Druid with a reminiscent chuckle, and we sat down to the College port.

“Old wine, old friends, old books,” murmured the Rector, and the squire grasped his hand with a tear of affection in his eye.

“Old jokes too, eh? hen Castan,”[7] said David.

“Hen ogof lladron,”[8] replied the Druid in a low voice, and they both looked nervously to see whether the Rector was listening. Happily he was absorbed in meditation. I wondered at times whether there had been some tragedy in his life, leaving him a lonely man. But it was not my business.

“Good old chap, Evans,” said the Squire: “parish couldn’t get on without him; but he gets bothered a bit when you fellows come round every autumn. Runs the school from nine to four; keeps the accounts of a small quarry, and of a Co-operative Store at night: measures land for the farmers on Saturdays.”

“Helps me with my figures on Saturdays, too,” murmured Harry, whose education had been severely classical.

“Runs Sunday School on Sundays, and plays the organ in Church,” continued the Squire.

“With approximate accuracy,” added Harry in a carping spirit; “gets a foot on the wrong pedal now and then.” It seemed that Harry was choirmaster; and choirmaster and organist are like Bishop and Dean.

“Extraneous duties: hard work,” said I professionally.

“But good pay,” pleaded the Rector: “one way and another he gets not less than £250, with house, garden and coal.”

I admitted that this was better than the Bar; but a man who could measure an irregularly polygonous field with a semi-circular bulge in it was worth all that.

David Nantgwyn sagely remarked that some of these men were better than others. Harry interpolated the offensive comment that this differentiation applied equally to Vicars. David waved him aside with an “Avaunt, stripling,” and proceeded with a recent painful experience. His school had been vacant, and a man had applied with a testimonial from the Rural Dean, deposing that Mr. A. B. was equally admirable whether you regarded him as a schoolmaster or as a Christian—“rather implying, you know, that they are separate walks in life”—in the former capacity he was most efficient; in the latter he was exemplary. David went to see the Rural Dean, and asked his real opinion of A. B. The reply was that A. B. was a reprobate person: he had been dismissed for a series of offences, culminating in brawling in church with suspicions of intemperance.

“But, Good Heavens,” David had objected, “you stated in black and white that he was ‘equally efficient’ and all the rest of it.”

The Rural Dean was entirely unabashed: “that was only a tes-ti-mo-ni-al.”

I remarked that this sin was not confined to the Principality. An English Inspector had told me a story of a school manager who came to him at the inspection about the middle of October with a lamentable account of the schoolmistress. Visiting the school a few days back he had found that the mistress was absent; and on calling at her house he had found her dead drunk. She had been but recently appointed, chiefly on the strength of an excellent character from a clerical neighbour. He added that this giving of false testimonials was immoral and unneighbourly.

("Whether you regard him as a Christian or a neighbour," suggested David aside, and I accepted the amendment.)

The inspector agreed, and suggested that he should prosecute his friend and get him six months. The manager said he should hardly like to do that, but it was a scandal. Meanwhile the inspector had been glancing at what we call Form IX., the paper that Evans brought just now, and on page four he read:

"Qu. (4) Are the managers satisfied with the teacher's character, conduct, and attention to duty?"

The answer was "YES."

"Quite so," the official said, in continuation of the discussion, "but I think if I were you I would modify the answer to *that* question," and he laid an incisive finger on Qu. (4).

The manager was not at all abashed. "That refers," he retorted, "to her conduct up to the end of the school year, September 30. It was on October 7 that I found her so drunk."

My modest contribution to the gaiety of the evening was received with the courtesy due to a stranger, and many similar stories followed. The Squire, who in those dark days before the invention of county councils had to give many votes in the appointment of officials, besides his own considerable share as landlord, and quarry-lord, was strong on the moral side. The Druid and David were lamentably lax. What were you to do when a poor beggar, or (still worse) a half starved widow, demanded a testimonial for himself, herself, or son?

"What I do," said David, the Oxford casuist, "in such cases, is to ignore the special exigencies of the post. A man comes to me for help to get a place as organist. I know he can't play any more than your Evans; so I dilate on his moral character, his tenor voice, and his excellent business capacity. The appointer looks at the signature, and says 'Excellent man, Mr. Williams, Vicar of Llanbedr; glad to find he speaks so highly of you,' and ten to one the man is appointed merely by reason of my superabundant merits."

Much plain speaking followed this audacious assertion, and all talked at once for some minutes. The Squire effected a diversion by enquiring about the expected visit of a common friend named Jenkins, a returned

missionary, who was to preach for his Society next Sunday. David also knew him; had entertained him as a guest at Llanbedr a fortnight before; and in turn had been entertained by him with anecdotes of his deputation tour. “In August he was staying with Hugh Hughes, Pen-y-garth, and Hugh had kept him there for three days, so cheery a guest was he. On the Monday they had started over the pass to collect some subscriptions from the farmers; it was very hot, and old Hugh is a bad walker: when they had got about half-way, Hugh stopped him and said with his delightful stammer, ‘I s-say, w-w-what do you think this f-f-fellow will give?’

“‘Five shillings, I should say.’

“‘W-well, l-look here; here’s five shillings; l-let’s g-go home again.’ And they went home.

“Hugh admitted that he was not interested in missionary work. He added that the only Society he subscribed to was the Patagonian Mission. Jenkins naturally enquired why he selected that one.

“‘Because they tell me,’ said Hugh, ‘that the P-p-patagonians eat all the m-missionaries.’ Jenkins declared that was worthy of Sydney Smith.”

The Druid lit a cigar with thoughtful care. “We want a missionary in my parish,” said he deliberately; “some of my people are heathens. Last week I met William Roberts, Tan-y-fron: you know him, Mr. Trevor? and after a little talk—I wanted him to subscribe to the school—he says to me: ‘Well, indeed, Mr. Morgan, I don’t believe there is a God at all.’

“‘Singular thing, Roberts,’ I said, ‘but I have a cow in my field of the same opeenion.’ Oh, he wass mahd.”

This led to an acrimonious discussion on “Christian Missions,” all leaning forward in their chairs and filling and lighting their pipes with feverish haste; the Druid and David pessimist, the Rector optimist, the Squire benevolent, for, as he remarked, if the missionaries don’t do much good, they don’t have much of a time out there; and he waved a comprehensive hand over the earth beyond Wales.

Harry and I pulled out of the stream, and filled up a whisky and soda to last till peace should be declared. And Harry told me of his strange life up in the hill-country, where the joy of living atoned for the loss of Oxford society. The Rector was the finest old chap in the world; the Squire was a

rattling good sort, and gave him a free hand; some of the quarrymen were first-rate fellows; of course they wanted a lot of looking after, and an Englishman would have a rough time of it, but he himself was a Welshman, and he knew their little ways. Then there was fishing, and there was shooting, and he was always fit.

And so on, till the war of words ended, and the Druid came for his whisky, and sat down by my side.

"You seem to have some remarkable parishioners, Mr. Morgan," I remarked with deference; "but I gather that you get the better of them."

He was much flattered. He admitted that he was too many for them. When he first came there, he confessed it was uphill work, but he had learned by ex-pee-ri-ence, and he prolonged the word to indicate the time required for his complete education. It was in the autumn, after he came to Llanfair, that a young man came to him one Saturday evening, and asked him (in Welsh) "to cry the nuts in church next morning." "Well, of course, I did not like to let him know that I did not understand, and I asked a few questions about it; in the end I found that his mother had an orchard full of nut-trees, and the nuts were ripe, and I was to give out after the Second Lesson that an-ny one that took them, you know, would be prosecuted by law."

"With the Banns of Marriage? And what did you do, Mr. Morgan?"

He smiled in a superior manner. "I told him it wass no use for me to cry the nuts to the people that were in church; they would not touch his nuts; it wass the people outside that wanted to be told."

What an admirable doctrine! and what simplification of sermons it would produce if generally promulgated. But most congregations prefer to

"Compound for sins they are inclined to"

in the manner indicated by Butler. "I suppose the population is scattered in your parish?" I rashly remarked.

The Druid seized his opportunity, and drew up his chair nearer to me.

"Well, yes, my dear sir, that is what I wanted to speak to you about. It is like this. Llanfair-castanwydd-uwch-y-mynydd—that is the Church of St. Mary of the chestnut trees on the mountain, and Harry there calls me 'Old

Chestnuts,' and I tell him if there were no chestnut trees there would be no chestnuts, that is *castanau*, you know—well, the parish is divided in two: there is Llanfair-castanwydd-uwch-y-mynydd-uchaf, that is the upper part, and we call that Moriah, because of the big chapel up there; and there is uwch-y-mynydd-isaf, that is the lower part at the foot of the mountain, and they call it Llan; that is where the church is. Well, the chapel folk in Moriah say——"

But at this moment—*sic me servavit Apollo*—Phyllis Jones, parlourmaid, announced the Squire's carriage, and the others, who had been watching my bewilderment with much delight, rose from their arm-chairs and came around us, laughing uproariously.

"Come with me, Mr. Morgan," said the Squire; "I will put you down outside your gate."

"Don't go, Druid," protested Harry, "don't be put down; the Rector will put you up. The inspector doesn't yet understand which is 'uchaf,' and which is 'isaf,' and how can you expect him to make it clear to those fellows in London? Stop, and I will lend you a tooth-brush."

The Druid saw the lead and followed suit. "Thank you, Harry," he said, "but I will not deprive you and the Rector of it."

And so they vanished into the night.

FOOTNOTES:

[7] Old chestnut.

[8] Old den of thieves.

CHAPTER VI
THE VILLAGE SCHOOL

"You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear;
To-morrow'll be the happiest day of all the glad New Year."

Conceive, oh ye inhabiters of towns, a condition of existence so devoid of incident that the annual inspection of the village school is the event of the year. "Never comes the trader"; never comes Wombwell or Sanger; the Bishop holds no Confirmation here, and the Eisteddfod keeps afar off. To this people October is the first of months, because of the "Xaminashun." September is the long Vigil, during which, in spite of late harvest, truants are hunted up, cajoled, threatened, bribed to complete their tale of 250 attendances. Rising early, and so late taking rest, the teachers struggle with their little flock. The third week comes, and the post is watched with keenest anxiety. Has the day been fixed? Surely he won't come on the First! Surely he won't keep us in suspense till the last week! Suppose it rains! Suppose they get the measles! "Suppose there is an earthquake," says the Rector cheerfully.

The children do not look so far ahead, but when the actual day is fixed they catch the infection, and weary their mothers with speculations of probable success, possible failure. The eve of the awful day brings a half-holiday, on which the school floor has its annual wash: but the children hang about the playground and the school gate; for even blackberrying has lost its charm to-day. Do they lie awake at night? I doubt it, but I have no knowledge. Certainly they rise early, and clamour for early breakfast. Do they, like Falkland at Newbury, "put on a clean shirt to be killed in"? There, again, I have no information; but I know that it is a day of best frocks, of ribbons, above all of BOOTS.

And the Inspector? The children, nay, possibly the youngest teachers, think (like Poor Peter Peebles), "I have not been able to sleep for a week for thinking of it, and, I dare to say, neither has the Lord President himsell." Alas! at Llangastanau the inspector wants yet ten years to teach him the most needful lesson, that what to him is "Wednesday's job" is the day of the

year to them. He sleeps a solid eight hours' sleep, and dreams that he is playing football with Harry and the Druid.

In 1871 school inspection was, as a science, still in its infancy. The chief function of H.M. Inspector was to assess the amount which the Treasury should pay; and this was done by rapid examination of every child above seven years of age who had attended 250 times in the school year. Those who had made less than the specified number usually came to school to see the stranger; but in most cases they were rewarded for their habitual truancy by being sent home as soon as the great man arrived. Whereby they got a holiday, with the additional relish of thinking that the good children were on the rack.

The children under seven were, and are, called infants. There was a grant of 8*s.* (or 10*s.* if the teacher was certificated) for these sucklings, *if they were present*. If the weather was so bad that they could not come, or if they got measles, whooping cough, chicken-pox, scarlet fever, or any other of the dreadful list, and were unable to appear, the grant for the absentees was lost. The principal function of the Inspector in an Infant School was to call over the names of the children on the Schedule. He might go on to hear them sing; and, if he were an enthusiast, he might carry his enquiries to any length. The instructions issued by the Department advised that "every fourth child in the first class should be called out and strictly examined." But even in my greenest days I cannot remember that I was so green as to obey that recommendation. A little experience taught me that infants should be left in the hands of their own teachers, and that the inspectors should look on. My Lords had not discovered this in May, 1871, when they issued Circular 11.

It was seldom that the examination of the elder children went beyond the three elementary subjects commonly known as the Three R's. (What philosopher was it who first found out that reading, writing, and arithmetic all begin with R? Think of him as a time-saver!) But a town school might hunt up a few boys, who in Oxford parlance *ambiebant honores* in geography, grammar, history, or mathematics. There was an extra grant for a child who "passed" in one of these luxuries, but Circular 18 safeguarded the public purse by requiring that the examination should be on paper. To express themselves intelligibly on paper was far beyond the powers of these mute inglorious Miltons.

As for investigation of methods of teaching, or of causes of weakness in any subject, such refinements were but just beginning to be known. The great aim of inspector, teacher, and children was to finish by 12.30 at the latest.

Our plan of campaign was delightfully simple. Most of the children were in the two lowest standards. These were supplied with slates, pencils, and a reading-book, and were drawn up in two long lines down the middle of the room. They stood back-to-back, to prevent copying, and did dictation, and arithmetic, sometimes dropping their slates, sometimes their pencils, sometimes their books, not infrequently all three, with a crash on the floor. When we had marked the results on the Examination Schedule, all these children were sent home, and the atmosphere was immensely improved. Then we proceeded to examine the rest, the aristocracy, who worked their sums on paper. As a rule, if we began about 10 we finished about 11.45. If the master was a good fellow, and trustworthy, we looked over the few papers in dictation and arithmetic, marked the Examination Schedule, and showed him the whole result before we left. Then he calculated his "percentage of passes," his grant, and his resulting income; and went to dinner with what appetite he might. But if the man were cross-grained, and likely to complain that the exercises were too hard, the standard of marking too high, and so on, he would be left in merciful ignorance of details. Half an hour in the evening sufficed for making up the Annual Report, and the incident was closed. Think of the simplicity of it!

We breakfast early at the Rectory, and during the meal we chew the cud of last night's mirth. Harry and I are full of reminiscences: the Druid's stories; David's flashes of humour; the surpassing merits of the Squire. The Rector is a little uneasy and rather silent: at 7.30 the weather was rather bad, and if the children are kept away by rain—some of them having long distances to walk over the bleak country—not only will the grant suffer, but the teachers will be grievously disappointed. Happily the clouds lift and hope returns.

Soon after nine we visit the stables to arrange about sending me to the station in the afternoon, and the groom touches his cap to me, gazing with a wistful eye. He expresses an ardent wish that it may be a fine day for the school children, and as we make our way to the school the Rector informs

me that there is a young person teaching there, to whom the groom is much attached; in fact he believes there is an engagement.

We find a long, rather low building with a thatched roof: the windows are somewhat low and narrow, and filled with diamond panes; and inside the light is scanty. There is a tiled floor; there are desks for the upper standards only; the other children sit on benches with no back-rails: both desks and benches are evidently the work of the carpenter on the estate. There is no cloak-room, and the damp clothes of the children are hung round the walls, sending out a gentle steam, as if it were washing-day next door, and the water were not very clean. About a quarter of the room at one end is occupied by a platform, which is found convenient for village entertainments; and a narrow passage by its side leads to a small class-room, "contrived a double debt to pay": it holds the small Infant Class and it serves as a Green Room for the performers at the aforesaid entertainments.

The children greet us with effusion, and I am introduced to the teachers. Mr. Evans receives me with a smile that remembers Capel Zion, but does not presume unduly. There is Mrs. Evans, who takes the Infant Class, and also teaches the girls to sew for four afternoons a week, during which time a big girl "minds" the infants: an admirable woman, Mrs. Evans, but getting rather middle-aged for the little ones; always motherly, but not always fresh and gamesome. And there is pretty Myfanwy Roberts, formerly a Pupil Teacher here, now Assistant Mistress, "till she can save a bit." Clearly this is "the young person," and I admire the groom's taste. Myfanwy is trembling with excitement in her Celtic manner, and Evans himself is uneasy, for he does not know my ways, and I may frighten the children. If I insist on giving out the Dictation, my deplorable English accent will be fatal; and if I laugh at the children's efforts to talk English, they will close up like tulips in a shower.

The children are for the most part either black-haired and dark eyed, or red-haired, freckled, and snub-nosed: but some are pure Saxon:

"Blue-eyed, white-bosomed, with long golden hair."

All wear their best clothes, and ribbons, and the maidens know it. They too are uneasy, and they discuss my appearance in their own tongue, which leaves me neither elated nor depressed: as when a Venetian gondolier

scathingly delineates his passenger in local patois to another boatman: but the passenger's withers are unwrung. Only when I venture into the Infants' room I hear a murmur from a four-year-old, which the Rector intercepts and translates to me. It was, if I remember rightly, "Welwch-'i-farf-o," "look at his beard." I admit that in those days I had a beard which reached to the third button of my waistcoat: it had an extraordinary fascination for infants.

I call over the names of the fifteen infants, and find great difficulty in distinguishing between Mary Jones, Ty-gwyn; Mary Jones, Hendre; and Mary Jones, The Red Lion. One of them is absent, and her name must be struck off: Mrs. Evans will not admit that it is immaterial which name is cancelled, so long as she gets sixteen shillings for the two survivors: if John Jones, The Red Lion, heard that his Mary was wrongfully marked absent, there would be letters in the paper, and a meeting at Capel Carmel. Yes, sure! Mary Ty-gwyn is sacrificed on the altar of expediency.

Then I lose my heart to Gwen, aged four, and thereby win Mrs. Evans' heart. It was Gwen, I find, who commented on my beard, and she is still so wholly absorbed in contemplation of it, that my addresses are unheeded. As I stoop down to press my suit in a language that she does not in the least understand—but the language of Love is universal—she makes a sudden grab at the object of her admiration, to see whether it is real. The other babes hold their breath in terror; but finding that Gwen does not swell up and die, that no she-bears appear, and that I am laughing, they break into a long ripple of choking mirth, in the midst of which I escape.

I return to the main-room, where the fifty "elder scholars" await me. "Will I hear a song?" Certainly I will. Is it the "Men of Harlech"? It is; and it is rendered with a vigour that leaves nothing to be desired. Mr. Evans volunteers another of a more plaintive character, and we have a native lament in a minor key, which leads me hastily to assure him that the grant is now secure.

The Rector is a keen Shakespearean scholar, and he mutters to me:

> "This passion and the death of a near friend would go near to make a man look sad."

I cap his quotation:

> "An he had been a dog that should have howled thus, they would have hanged him: I had as lief have heard the night raven."

The Rector is so much pleased to have his trump returned, that he beams, and pats me gently on the sleeve. Think what it must be for a man to live in a parish where you may lead trumps from January to December without a chance of getting them back!

We proceed with the examination. I begin with Standards I. and II. They find the sums a little trying, though they count most carefully on their fingers. When you have a slate in your arms, it is hard to carry the reckoning across from one hand to the other without dropping the slate. I suggest to Mr. Evans that counting on fingers is not practised in the best circles of mathematicians. He is so much surprised by this novel theory, that he gasps: then, recovering himself, he says, "Well, indeed, why did Providence give them *ten* fingers for whatever?"

Angharad Davis, a charming maid of seven, to whom I transfer the affection which Gwen scorned, gets one sum right (out of three), and one that is not without merit. She has "borrowed" and omitted to "pay back." I have known grown-ups to do the same thing. I ask her what she makes of four fours: she looks at me with tearful eyes and mutters something in Welsh. "What does she say, Myfanwy?"

"She says 'nid wn i ddim,' and that is, 'I don't know.'"

I think Angharad may pass for her frankness, combined with good looks.

The Squire arrives with the school accounts; and brings Mrs. Trevor, who announces that she is particularly interested in the sewing, and wants to have my opinion as an expert. Horror! Meanwhile Standards III., IV., and V. are struggling with sums, and, at intervals, with Dictation, given out by the master in a convincing accent. Then they read with a fluency that in those early days used to amaze me, knowing, as I did, that they knew very little English; till I found by greater experience that they knew the two books by heart, and could go on equally well if the book fell on the ground.

All the work is done—Geography, Grammar, History, Needlework—*done before the Inspector's eyes*—all these must wait till October, 1875:[9] the children go home with undisguised joy, and I proceed to mark the papers. Evans has passed 92 per cent.; great rejoicings follow, and I am

classed above the last inspector, who drew the line at 88. I fear the Consolidated Fund loses by my inexperience, but I hold my tongue.

Mrs. Trevor insists that I shall report on the sewing. There is a table covered with female garments in unbleached calico (which smells like hot glue), linen, and flannel; and I am expected to look as if I knew one stitch from another. By great good luck I drive away both Mrs. Squire and Mrs. Evans by picking up, in my ignorance, a garment so shocking to the modest eye that my critics turn hastily away, and are speechless. I hold it up to the light; comment on the backstitching (which I now have reason to believe was hemming); pull at the seams; and find that my lay assessors have fled. Rather abashed I also go, and find the Druid at the door. He has had a wedding, and he has left the loud bassoon and its moaning that he may explain to me about those hamlets with the cacophonous names.

"Good-bye, Mr. Evans: 92 per cent. is excellent. Good-bye, Mrs. Evans: love to Gwen. Ffarwel, Myfanwy."

"Beg pardon, sir," interposes Evans, nervously; "but you haven't signed the Log Book, or seen the Accounts; and you have left Form IX. and the Schedule behind, and here they are." This dims the glory of my departure, and I return to sign the Log Book, a custom of those days. The Squire comes with me, and as I open the cash-book, and wonder which is Income and which Expenditure, he remarks quite casually to the master: "By-the-bye, Mr. Evans, I have arranged with the architect and the builder to carry out the improvements in the premises recommended by H.M. Inspector last year, if this gentleman approves."

I, of course, intimate that I should not presume to have an opinion contrary to my chief's: and the Squire continues:

"The windows will be enlarged; the diamond panes will be taken out; the floor will be boarded; and I have ordered some new desks. If we can manage to get three weeks' holiday without frost at Christmas, we can do all the work then."

Evans was radiant with joy, and we started for the street. Just by the gate I again hear a soft murmur from infant lips; this time as a soliloquy: "welwch-'i-farf-o!" It is Gwen. Ffarwel, Gwen bach.

“Now, Mr. Inspector,” says the pertinacious Druid, “from here you can see my parish. On the hill-side is Llanfair-castanwydd-uwch-y-mynydd-uchaf....”

“Look here, Mr. Morgan,” the Squire says hurriedly, “come up to the Hall with the Inspector; the Rector is coming, and we will settle Moriah after lunch. Give him a rest now. Hang Moriah.”

“But it isn’t all Moriah,” the Druid was beginning.

The Rector saw his chance:

> “*Non omnis Moriah: multaque pars mei*
> *Vitabit Libitinam.*”

“Ye-es, sure,” said the Druid vaguely: and so it was settled.

FOOTNOTES:

[9] These and other subjects were introduced for general use by the Code of 1875.

CHAPTER VII
WINDING UP

"If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly."—*Macbeth.*

When you are paid by the day it is very unwise to work quickly. I was very young in the public service in 1871, and that immortal, if immoral, truth had not come home to me. Therefore I had worked almost continuously for eight months, and at a speed that, if the Civil Service had possessed a well organized trade union, would have ensured a heavy penalty for "spoiling the place."

About the second week in December, just at the time when all men were watching with bated breath the drawing near of the dark shadow at Sandringham, my task was done. I was grieved to leave the lovely country; the host of friends, an exceeding great army that had sprung up from the dry bones of Returns; and especially my chief and his family. He must have found me an all but intolerable nuisance, for I was very green, and very unofficial in disposition: but he had never reproached me, or hindered my steps. I was a little sorry, too, to leave the work in so crude a state. The plans were finished, but the execution was hardly begun. There is a fine line, which one is surprised to trace to the *Rejected Addresses*, because it ought to be in Shakespeare:

"And deems nought done, while ought remains to do."[10]

And that was my lamentable case.

Let me add, too, that I was grieved to lose my pay. There were no such almug trees in the Inner Temple.

But I sent in my last batch of Reports, and my resignation. In those times of official inexperience I supposed that I should receive a polite reply, regretting, &c., and trusting, &c., and especially commenting on the fact that I had finished my work so soon. When Clive was "amazed at his own moderation," it was, doubtless, a shock to him to find that no one shared his

amazement. The only reply that I received was a formal acknowledgment of the receipt of my communication. It was not their Lordships' way to be effusive. More than 30 years later, one of my staff, who was resigning after 35 years' service, told me that he had not received even a postcard, unstamped, On His Majesty's Service, to thank him, and bid him farewell. It is recorded of Lord Chancellor Thurlow that one summer afternoon on the last day of term before the Long Vacation the Bar rose from their seats, and bowed with expectancy when the Chancellor had risen. It was usual that his Lordship should say something: but he was mute; and a leader remarked, in an audible aside, "He might have d——d us, anyhow."

Being unemployed I returned to the Bar. My practice had not suffered by my absence: no solicitors had felt any inconvenience; and my briefless brethren showed no displeasure at my return to compete with them. One remarked that he thought he hadn't seen me about lately; and I was pleased to find that my eight months' absence had attracted so much attention.

There is no part of Anglesey so repulsive to the well-regulated mind as is Fleet Street in the City of London. There is nothing in the work of an Elementary School so dull as the proceedings in the Law Courts. And on going the usual rounds to attend Sessions and Assizes I found that the necessity of paying one's own travelling expenses, instead of charging them to the Treasury, was a distinct falling off.

This lasted till after Easter. About that time I got notice from the Education Department that I should be required to attend at the Office for the preparation and issue of notices under the Act of 1870, and with some hesitation, for this was neither a permanent billet nor a road to the Woolsack, I accepted the call.

The Department, having accumulated sufficient information about school supply and deficiency, was now to send to every parish in England and Wales a Statutory Notice containing their Lordships' decision. It was my duty to advise on the issue of these notices to my former district. This occupied, with occasional intervals, about two months.

I have always since been glad that I had this opportunity of seeing the inner working of the machinery, and in after years I found it of great service. It brought me face to face with officials who signed only initials to their minutes addressed to the outdoor staff, and were disposed, if there was

any dispute, to shelter themselves behind the shield of "my Lords." When one knew that "my Lords" was J. B., or B. J., and that J. B. was only old Brown, and B. J. only young Benjamin Jones, one felt less downtrodden than when one supposed J. B. and B. J. to be possessed of the inner confidence of the Vice-President.

There were some other Inspectors of Returns summoned for similar work. Several of these rose to more important positions in the public service, but the only man that attained to distinction was one already well known to me, the late Henry Traill, whose comments on his district inspector, and on the Office generally, were our daily delight. We assembled in a decayed mansion in Parliament Street, now entirely destroyed. I suppose it stood in front of the new Foreign Office. Our hours were those of the permanent staff: we began at 11 A.M. with a margin of at least half an hour. About one P.M. there was a generous interval for lunch. The man who stayed till Big Ben struck five might have had a final half hour of quiet work. Of course there was no night work. This was better than rushing about the country in Welsh cars, catching the 8.30 A.M. train, and sitting up after midnight to make up Reports.

For the most part our work was to transcribe our recommendations from the Reports which we had sent in. When these were done, we conferred with the Senior Examiner of each area, who had to sign each notice. It was trivial work for those who had already gone thoroughly into the details.

It must be understood that the examiners—whose existence as an unexamined but nominated body of Civil Servants occasionally excites the wrath of Radical M.P.'s—never examined children. *Nec examinati, nec examinantes*, is their proud motto, and I think they would add *sed sicut angeli in caelo*. But they examined our Reports and the correspondence of the Office. There were similar officials in the old India Office. James Mill was an examiner; but in the *National Biography* Charles Lamb and John Stuart Mill are styled "clerks," and probably they were of lower rank. Our examiners were appointed by the Lord President, and in answer to those carping Radicals it is alleged that high academical distinction already earned renders further examination unnecessary. I think there were exceptions, but certainly many were men of remarkable ability, and in some cases this was combined with practical aptitude for affairs. If this latter qualification were conspicuously wanting, I suppose some hint was dropped

that in another career there would be more scope for obvious abilities, which, &c., &c. “The stage, or the army, or something very superior in the licensed victualling way,” suggested Mr. Sampson Brass. The fittest survivors rose by degrees to be Assistant Secretaries, and until recently one of this select body was chosen to be Secretary when a vacancy occurred.

The examiners were of two orders, senior and junior, and between the juniors and the younger inspectors intermittent war smouldered and raged. The indoor man was shocked at the irregular habits of the outdoor man; the outdoor man was disgusted by the pedantry and ignorance of details shown by the indoor official. But no blood was shed, and on both sides advancing years brought toleration. Of late years a much better tone has prevailed throughout the Office. The machinery had been oiled.

There was another class of officials, in some respects the most meritorious: these were the clerks. They were appointed in the ordinary way of the Civil Service, and rose to great eminence in their class. I imagine they worked with reasonable diligence during office hours, and if they spent some part of the time on the Civil Service Co-operative Store, and similar toys, that is better than writing poetry on office paper in office hours; which was the crime laid at the doors of the examiners. During the thirty-five years of my correspondence with the Office I think I saw only three of these excellent men, but I knew by name and high repute many more. Their mission in life was to keep the examiners in the straight path, and at times they treated both them and the younger inspectors much as a caddie treats a beginner at the game of golf; or, to put it more respectfully, as an old sergeant treats a newly-joined subaltern. Their merit was accuracy and trustworthiness; their foible was pedantry. In a treatise blending the Politics with the Ethics, Aristotle would have said that the virtue of a Civil Servant’s life was Orderly Method; its Defect is Muddle; and its Excess is Red Tape. As a rule the higher branches of the service lean to the Defect, and the lower to the Excess. The critic of Ministerial and official disasters would do well to bear this in mind when he is seeking a victim to denounce.

Among the three clerks whom I met, there was one who gave me some remarkable information. It was in my early days, and I had recently met an angry Welshman on the church side, who complained that his party did not get fair-play. There was a certain Welshman, whom we may call Jones, highly placed in the Red Tape and Sealing Wax Office, discovered by

Anthony Trollope. Jones was strong on the chapel side, and according to my complainant, when there was any special controversy about schools raging at the Education Department, Jones got access to the correspondence, and put his party in possession of the case for the other side. I had declared that the story was absurd: Jones had no access to the portfolios of another Office; also it would be dishonourable, and it would be a breach of etiquette, and so on. Now, finding that the clerk whose room I was visiting had a pile of portfolios on his table, it suddenly occurred to me to ask: "Suppose Mr. Jones of the Red Tape Office sent to you for one of these files, would you let him have it?"

"Certainly; they have a right to see our files, and we have a right to see theirs."

I made no further enquiry, and I did not communicate the result to my Welsh acquaintance. He might have replied that there was what logicians call "an undistributed middle" in the story; but that if it is found (1) that A. B. is improperly using private information; and (2) that A. B. has access to documents containing that information, one may reasonably assume (3) that A. B. went to the private documents for his private information.

With the aid of all these officials, and in spite of many obstacles offered by an army of lesser servants, called "writers" and "boys," who hid, or lost, documents of vital importance with the easy unconcern of a slavey in lodgings, we made rapid progress. Once, when I complained that the progress was not sufficiently rapid, I was taught a valuable lesson: "you must remember that in a Government office it doesn't do to make mistakes: it is better to go slow than to go wrong."

Difficult cases arose at times, and these were referred to the higher officers; on one or two occasions the direction of the Vice-President was taken, and general rules were made. But, as a rule, it was straightforward filling up of forms; Form A, if the parish supply was complete; Form B, if there was a deficiency; and so on. When the cases were settled, a notice was sent to the local officials, and publication in local newspapers and on church doors was required.

By the terms of the Act objection might be made within a month after the publication of the notice, and, as popular feeling had run high during our enquiries, I looked forward to a general rising in North Wales. But in due

course I received an informal communication from Whitehall: the month was up, and from all that "infected area" not an objection had been received. I replied that this must not be taken as evidence of acquiescence: it was July; the people were getting in their hay and plundering the early tourist; when they were at liberty, they would fight. "Pooh, pooh," said the Office, "they have lost their chance."

A little disappointed, as a schoolboy might be, that there was to be no fight, I went to Switzerland; returning in September, I found *one letter* awaiting me. It alleged that my proposal to unite the parish of Llanon with the parish of Llanof was the most monstrous outrage on common sense within the experience of the writer. Secondly, the writer would be glad to know why I had not kept my appointment to meet him and a neighbour on August 20. It gave me some satisfaction to reply that the meeting to which he referred was fixed for August, 1871, and that, as we were now in 1872, he and his neighbour were a year late.

No explanation was tendered by the complainant. I suspected that the local Mrs. Mailsetter had intercepted the 1871 invitations, probably at the instigation of some local politician, and had warmed them up a year later.

Was Llanon wedded to Llanof? "Jeanie's mairit weel eneuch," said the Scottish matron; "to be sure she canna abide her mon, but there's aye a something." The subsequent proceedings interested me no more. Except for occasional requests for information, I had no further concern with the district, and though I have paid very many visits to the beautiful country in these thirty-five years, it has always been as a tourist.

FOOTNOTES:

[10] A kindly critic points out that the line is merely an exact translation from Lucan's *Pharsalia*, II. 657—

"Nil actum credens, quum quid superesset agendum."

CHAPTER VIII

H.M.I.

JUDGE (*pianissimo*): "It was managed by a job."
ALL: "And a good job too."—W. S. GILBERT.

I returned to the hunt after the elusive brief. The life of this class of hunter is familiar to readers of fiction. It is *ex hypothesi* without incident. Month after month went on, and the Woolsack came no nearer. But one night, dining at the Club, I met a friendly official from Whitehall. Had I heard that the Lord President was going to appoint a batch of Inspectors, and that he had expressed an opinion that the Inspectors of Returns were entitled to first claim? I had heard nothing, but the idea took root, and I made immediate application.

It happened by specially good fortune that my father knew two of the Ministry, one of whom was in the Cabinet. The services of both statesmen were invoked; my former chief in North Wales supported me, rather out of the goodness of his heart, I fear, than out of conviction, for he regarded me as a firebrand; and others, of whom the most helpful and thorough was my former tutor at Rugby, the present Dean of Wells, did kindest service. In a few days a letter from the Lord President to the friendly Cabinet Minister was forwarded to my father; it ran thus:

"Dear ——

I have had great pleasure in putting your friend Mr. Kynnersley's name on my list.

Yours sincerely,
CARABAS."

And on a folded corner was a note: "*Thanks for appointing X.Y.*" It was evident that X.Y. and I had been bartered. I always regret that I did not make a note of X.Y.'s real name, so that I might have followed up his public career.

Last scene of all. Some three weeks later my clerk, of whom indeed I owned barely one-fourth undivided share, came to my lodgings before I had breakfasted, with the extraordinary news that there was a brief for me in Chambers. This had never occurred before. There were briefs at Sessions and Assizes, few and far between, but in Paper Buildings hitherto the solicitors had respected the privacy of my apartment. I took a hansom as soon as possible, and drove to the Temple. There on the table was a real brief, and side by side with it lay an official envelope containing my appointment as "one of H.M. Inspectors of Schools." This was dramatic. I accepted the brief, which instructed me to examine a bankrupt in Chambers, and I examined him accordingly. Never was I more convinced of my unpreparedness for the Woolsack.

It remained to interview the Secretary of the Department; and to leave a card on the Lord President, who regretted that he was so busy that he could not see me. Bear in mind that I did not see him; my thanks were received vicariously by his private secretary.

Now let me pause. Should I have "told tales out of school" about that letter? I doubt. And yet I decide in favour of the reader. As far as I am concerned, I think meanly of the man who will hide a good story because it is to his own disparagement; and I think that the Marquis of Carabas is untouched in his honour, I would even say in his judgment. Remember that I had all necessary qualifications for the post, including practical experience, in addition to good testimonials. And then you admit that it was an admirable appointment? That being so, I will let the story stand.

Some twenty-five years afterwards it happened that I was on a cycling tour, and chance brought me to a noble park which, by the courtesy of the owner, was open to cyclists. At the entrance there was the usual instruction to cyclists to ring a bell on approaching people or carriages; but bell-ringing had already fallen into disuse as an indispensable ceremony, though retained for emergencies. Therefore, when I saw a wagonette drawn up in the middle of the park road, I did not ring; it was the first year of "free-wheelers," and I merely slackened pace, and planned circumvention of the carriage. In the wagonette sat an elderly gentleman, who looked reproachfully at me and said, "Yes, but you didn't ring your bell." The experienced Civil Servant acquires a habit of not "answering back"; he keeps silence even from good words, and I did not reply that I never rang a

bell unless I wanted something; that I did not wish him to move; nor had I any intention of running into his carriage, which would have buckled my front wheel. Merely I looked at him with some surprise, and rode on pondering on the phenomenon.

Suddenly it flashed across my mind that this was the monarch of all he surveyed—my Lord of Carabas, formerly Lord President of the Council, patron of my youth, whom I had failed to see when I called in Whitehall; through whose discernment in the selection of Inspectors I had been battening on the Consolidated Fund for a quarter of a century. Ring a bell! I would have rung a triple bob major. Should I go back, and explain, ringing carillons as I drew near? Long before I could decide, I had left the park far behind. It was a Hard Case, such as the ingenious editor of *Vanity Fair* propounds for solution every week. What should A. do?

This is quite irrelevant to the preparations for my assumption of office. I had to pass a medical examination, and then I was gazetted. In that day, and up to 1903, Inspectors of Schools were actually appointed by the Sovereign in Council, and for this reason they were really entitled to the prefix H.M., which is assumed by many other inspectors "of lesser breed."[11]

This being done, I bade an informal farewell to the Bar, and put away my wig and gown in a safe place, to be resumed if I were dismissed from office. Once only was an attempt made to entice me back to the Law Courts. At a London hotel, some few years after my appointment, I met a County Court Judge whom I had known in his caterpillar stage. He hailed me. Had I heard that old Z., County Court Judge at Y., was dying? I did not know the man, but I expressed decent regret.

"I thay, Kynnerthley," he went on, with the lisp so familiar to many common juries, "why thouldn't you go in for hith plathe? I know —— hath much intereth with the Government, and he would get it for you."

"My dear Judge," I said, "you forget that I have left the Bar some time, and that when I was at it I had no practice."

He looked at me pityingly: "What doth that matter? Do you know Q., now County Court Judge at Dufferby? Give you my word he hadn't got a wig and gown."

"Good gracious! why did the Chancellor appoint him?"

"*He taught in Thunday Thcoolth in Twaddleton.*"

Alas! I had not even that scanty qualification, and I did not apply. The suitors at Y. have much to be thankful for.

FOOTNOTES:

[11] A recently created H.M.I. assures me that the method of appointment by the Sovereign is unaltered. I apologise.

CHAPTER IX
ARCADIA

"I am here with thee and thy goats, as the most capricious poet, honest Ovid, was among the Goths."—*As You Like It.*

The Lord President might appoint, but the Secretary disappoints, and he ordered me to Norfolk, there to act as second inspector to the Rev. F. Synge. The alternative, for there were two places to be filled up, was Oxford, and I was a good deal annoyed at my billet. At Oxford I could have dined in hall and common-room, read my *Times* at the Union, and at the same time have been within easy reach of my home. But I have reason to believe that there were thorns on the Oxford rose-trees: certainly my successful rival made a very short stay in the Civil Service.

Of Norfolk I knew nothing, and it seemed intolerably remote. In those days it had no golf links, and its Broads were as little frequented as Lake Balaton. Its railway system was arranged on the plan of the Roman camp: there was a Via Principalis running north and south; King's Lynn to Wells, Norwich, and London: and a cross line (I forget the Latin term) running east and west—Yarmouth to Norwich and Ely. The traveller who wished to wander in the back streets of the county, drove, rode, or walked. Safety bicycles were not yet: the Boneshaker was not tempting, and the Spider was perilous. Add to this a curious collection of third-class inns, and the climate of Siberia. There were days in spring when one left home in the morning with a bright blue sky overhead and a N.W. wind far more attractive than Kingsley's north-easter: but with little warning the sky would be overcast, and whirlwinds of rain, snow, or sleet would drive one to depths of misery, and back to the third-class inn, where the chimney smoked, and there were woolly mutton chops for dinner.

There were days in April at Yarmouth, for by some perversity of judgment Yarmouth school inspections had been fixed in April, when the black east wind, fresh from the Ural Mountains, paid no more heed to the impediment offered by a brick wall than would the Röntgen rays to a deal door. There were days in June when a pitiless sun scorched the traveller till

about five in the afternoon, at which time a sea-breeze from the east rose up and afflicted his throat and lungs with all the diseases that begin with a cold and end in 'itis. At such times the parched light soil rose up in clouds, and much real property changed hands.

Let me offer you the local anecdote of the parts about Brandon and Thetford, where Suffolk and Norfolk meet:

First farmer: "Neow which county dew your land lay in, Mr. A.?"

Second farmer: "Well, Mr. B., thet dew depend mostly on the wind: last week, when the wind was so wonnerful strong, thet fare to lay mostly in Norfolk."

But, if there were thorns to the roses of Oxford, there were roses to the thorns of Norfolk. I was singularly fortunate in my chief, both socially and professionally: singularly fortunate, also, in the assistant whom we shared: both, alas! gone before. And the North-folk are among the most lovable of the peoples of the earth. It was told of Bishop Wilberforce that, after meeting with a brother Bishop, he said he had often heard of the milk of human kindness, but never hitherto had he met the cow. That cow family still browses on the Norfolk pastures, and the east wind does not ruffle its sweet temper.

Our district included, perhaps, two-thirds of the county, and overflowed into the ragged edges of Suffolk: the remaining fraction, the Fen district, was annexed to Cambridge. We had only one large town, Norwich: Great Yarmouth, the next in size, had only nine schools. Then there were about half a dozen market towns, where generally Church and Chapel maintained rival schools: the bulk of the work lay in country parishes, and involved drives of from ten to twenty miles before the morning's school was reached.

Our general plan of campaign was that my chief, being a family man with his home in Norwich, took the Norwich schools, and many others that were within a morning drive or a railway journey. I, being a bachelor, whose abode was in Early English lodgings, usually went off on the Monday morning to one of the outlying settlements, and made that a centre for the five days. As a rule I got to school about 10 with a margin. The children did nothing beyond the rudiments. I finished the work by 11.45, went to the Rectory, and inspected the garden, or played croquet with the

Rector's daughters: had a noble lunch; drove back to my inn, marked the school papers, wrote the Report, and posted it: and then—there was a night of Arctic winter length, and not a soul to speak to. Coming fresh from London club life, I found this plunge into solitude quite appalling.

A philosopher, whose name I forget, remarked (see Cicero de Officiis) that he was never less alone than when he was alone. But he would have admitted that he was never so much alone as when he was alone in a market town inn:[12] the banal laughter of the commercial-room, and the murmurs of talk from the nightly assemblage of local magnates who frequented the bar-parlour, and interchanged pleasantries with the young lady at the bar—these rose up, as did similar sounds in Sweet Auburn, and made the hearer as melancholy as the bard.

But this is merely a matter of habit. At the end of two years I found the life quite agreeable, and two of the hotels—Dereham and Fakenham, but I am not sure of the eponymous beasts, or heraldic bearings—sweetened comfort with an ever genial welcome.

The country schools were usually very small, and sometimes very bad. A very green girl, fresh from the training college, would take a school, and at the end of the year would get a poor report. In her second year she would work with more vigour and more skill, and would get a Report sufficiently good to earn her Parchment Certificate.[13] Then she would take another school, or a husband, and the education of the village would relapse. I wonder whether this alternate method still obtains. "Amant alterna Camaenae" we are told, but I cannot remember that any of the Nine Sisters took any interest in Elementary Education.

What girl of 20 to 30 would willingly stay for more than two years in a country village from five to ten miles distant from a railway station, with no shop windows to look at, and no eligible young men to look at her?

> "For either it was different in blood,
> (O cross! too high to be enthralled to low)
> Or else misgraffed in respect of years,
> (O spite! too old to be engaged to young.)"

In North Wales I hardly ever saw a village school mistress other than a married woman. Owing to the deplorably low moral tone of the people it

was said to be impossible for a single girl to hold such an appointment. In Norfolk there was not a shadow of hesitation on this account: brains were scarce there, as everywhere, but morals were sound: a good girl at £50 was better than a bad man at £80, and the managers took their chance of the good girl who would go, in preference to the bad man who would stay.

I have my old official note-books of that time, recording the school statistics and draft reports, and I see that in two autumn weeks I inspected a total of 606 children at a cost to the country in travelling expenses of £11. In Manchester, 30 years later, I could find 600 children in a single department of a school by spending twopence on a tram-car, and the day's travelling from doorstep to doorstep might take 40 minutes. In Norfolk the real labour of the day was the travelling, and it would often take two hours' drive to reach a school with no more children than you could put in a tram-car.

Yet there were compensations in these long drives. The dearth of railways made it worth the while of the hotel proprietors to keep good cattle, and the horses were splendid. I have driven 14 miles in an hour, without use of whip, to catch a train. Equally precious were the drivers. O Charlie B.! aged friend and charioteer for three years. How many miles we journeyed behind that black horse, or those black horses; and how delightful was your conversation! We began daily with the same opening:

He: "Let's see: where is it tu this marnin? Norton? (*meditatively*) Norton Red Lion? (*he always associated the village with its inn*). Neow which way du thet lay, I wonder?"

I: "According to the map it is beyond Weston."

He: "Weston Black Dog: why I was there last week for a funeral: let me see, where did I fetch that corpse from?"

For when not driving me and the black horse to school, he was driving the black horse, or horses, in a hearse to a funeral; and during the Burial Service he baited the horses and himself at the "Red Lion" or the "Black Dog."

Thus guided by the association of ideas, Charlie took my vile body within three or four miles of Norton, and then hailed a native: "Which way should I go to get to Norton; *far to go the nighest way?*" Implying that he

knew several routes, but was unable to decide on the best. The school was then found. Very seldom he put up at the “Red Lion”; usually he went straight to the Rectory, where he got entertainment for man and beast, and provided entertainment for the cook by retailing the latest news from Norwich.

Our conversation was most improving. All that I knew about “The Principles of Agriculture”—a possible subject of examination in schools—I got from Charlie in those drives. He did his best to teach a short-sighted man the difference between swedes, mangolds, and turnips; and between wheat, oats, and barley, before their ears were developed. He taught me not to expect a field of wheat where I had been so much pleased with the crop last year. It would be three years before the phenomenon recurred, and in those years other vegetables would be seen. This was not to relieve the monotony of agricultural life, and so to bring the labourer “back to the land,” but for certain agricultural-chemical reasons which Charlie did not explain.

He had views about cattle, too, and their approximate value, and attributed the introduction of cattle plague to Gu-anner. Also he discoursed upon birds, plants, and flowers under their Norfolk names, such as Stubin wood, Pretty Betsy, Mergule, and White Rim, and gave me much information. In return one day, as I travelled with my colleague, I taught him indirectly the mysteries of Roadside Cribbage: you know the game? A. and B., sitting right and left, count all the men and beasts on their respective sides of the road within the limits of two hedges, marking ten for a white horse and ten for a windmill: the higher score at the end of an agreed distance or time wins the game, but a cat on the window-sill, or an old woman in spectacles is Game at once. Charlie was referee about the shade of the horses claimed as “white”; he watched the game with the keenest interest, and once, when I snatched a victory at the last moment in the face of a heavy majority, by espying a spectacled hag, he rolled about in tearful laughter till the black horse wondered if we had been to a funeral in his dog-cart.

The scenery was tame as a rule. On the east side about Yarmouth, and on the west edge towards the Fens it was hideous. But in May and June the rest of the district was pleasant enough, and the typical English village, with its broad main street edged with white-walled, thatch-roofed cottages; its old

grey church and snug Rectory and neat school, all in a ring fence, made such a charming picture that I recommended an American tourist visiting England in search of antiquity to drive 20 miles in East Anglia in June. I suppose he would think little of a hundred-acre field of wheat; but to us men of small standards—I am told you may put all England into New York State—this great expanse of rolling gold, when

> "A light wind blew from the gates of the sun,
> And *waves of shadow* went over the wheat,"

atoned for a long drive on a burning August day.

September in Norfolk is said to be delightful. I distrust people who boast of only one month in the year, and that a month which falls in the holidays. (We began our year's work on October 1.) But I love them much, and I am ready to concede September.

The records of those old note-books are often astonishing. These are village schools noted in one volume:

> A. Certificated Teacher's salary, £36 without house; 72 children present: 34 examined: passed 22½ per cent.
>
> B. Out of 121 children on the books only 36 have made 250 attendances: deep snow kept away 11 of these on the day of inspection.
>
> C. 76 children on the books: 38 examined: passed 18 per cent.
>
> D. 17 examined: passed 37½ per cent.

Let me explain the technical terms. If a child did not come to school 250 times in the year he could not be examined. As the schools were usually open 440 times (that is 220 days) in the year, it was not a hard bargain. This was before the Act of 1876, which made attendance compulsory everywhere. Now in the case of School C, which "passed 18 per cent.," each of the 38 children might have passed in three subjects, called the Three R's, making 114 passes in all: instead of which, 12 passed in Reading, 5 in Writing, and 4 in Arithmetic.

A little further on I have a note of a poem in use at a school, marking an early attempt at the co-ordination of elementary education with undenominational morality:

20 pence are ⅛,
Wash your face and comb your hair.
30 pence are ⅖,
Every day to school repair.
(*Here is a lamentable gap*.)
80 pence are ⅝,
Mind what you are taught in school:
90 pence are ⅞,
Never call your brother a fool.

Write it myself? Certainly not. I could have managed the mathematical part, but the ethical deductions would never have occurred to me.

Elsewhere I come to notes of odd names borne by the children. Here is a girl called Himalaya, because she was born in the troopship of that name, the ship that carried Charles Ravenshoe to Malta and the East. She was a lucky girl, *felix opportunitate nativitatis*, for the other troopers were Serapis and Crocodile. Who would marry a Crocodile?

Also there is a child named Laste. I asked the Rector whether I should say Last, or Lastee? and whether It was a boy or a girl. It was a boy, and the Rector well remembered baptizing It. "Name this child," he said, and the father replied "Last." "How do you spell it?" said the puzzled priest. The father said he didn't spell it at all, but It was the tenth, and he wasn't going to have any more. But he had three more.

"What did he call them?"

The Rector did not know! What amazing indifference! The Curate suggested "Knave, Queen, King," and was "Highly Commended."

The ingenuity of parents in choosing names for their offspring was truly remarkable. At the end of one note-book I find this list, the result of six months' collection: in each case I have the name of the school in which the child was enrolled:

"Loral, Iho, Bylettia, Jerusia, Fitty, Belden (girl), Asabiah (boy), Dees (boy), Atelia, Ebert."

I suspected Jerusia and Asabiah of Biblical extraction, and after searching Smith's Dictionary I can identify them with Jerusha, and Hashabiah, whose history I do not remember. Atelia must have been Athaliah. "Fitty," the note

says, “is a nickname, but his mother doesn’t know any other.” Why not Commodus? “who, under the appellation of Commodious, was held by Mr. Boffin not to have acted up to his name.”

Another book contains an epitaph. There are many collections of such things published, but I do not possess one, and for anything I know this may be as well known to collectors as the epitaph of her who was “first cousin to Burke, commonly called the Sublime.” For those who share my ignorance I subjoin it, premising that it was in memory of a former Rector of—let us call it Cornerstone:

> “Who for his uniform exemplary practice
> of the moral and Social virtues
> and a faithful discharge of
> the duties of his Ministerial office
> was greatly and deservedly esteemed,
> and with that decent unconcern
> which the Review of a well-spent life
> naturally inspires,
> Quitted this world Aug—, 1769.”

I like “decent unconcern.”

But Cornerstone is memorable in another way not recorded in my school note-book. The Rectory had at one time been haunted by two ghosts. One was a former Rector with a wooden leg, who every night at the midnight hour came stumping down the cellar steps to fetch himself beer. I like to think that he was the “decently unconcerned” one, who had found out his mistake. The other was a lady, and an illustrious one: no less than Amy Robsart. How it came to pass that Amy (who, according to Sir Walter, lived “on the frontiers of Devon” and was murdered at Cumnor) haunted a Norfolk Rectory, you must ask Mr. Andrew Lang. Sir Walter never let history or geography stand in his way, and one would not condemn a ghost on his evidence. There she was; she was known as Mistress Amy, and she walked about at the midnight hour *in a silk dress that rustled*. The Rector for the time being no doubt regarded this strangely assorted couple of incorporeal hereditaments with decent unconcern, but no servant would stay in the house. I think it was my host who put an end to the servile war by importing some Breton lasses who spoke no word of English. As it was

impossible that any villager should forewarn them, they were not on the look out: or perchance the ghosts were only

"Doomed for a certain term to walk the night"

and the term had expired. Certainly the plague ceased, and the confidence of the village was restored. Thenceforth servants were plentiful.

That veritable history is not in my note-book: there is little in it of the slightest interest: there is no record of the human element in our inspecting life; no record of the constant succession of anxious managers, distracted teachers, half-distracted and half-delighted children, whose absorbing interest in the day's work was a constant reproach to me.

The teachers alone would fill a volume:

"with your remembered faces,
Dear men and women, whom I sought and slew,"

as an Inspector-poet[14] once sang—the note-books record only your names with a few dry official details; but memory brings back much more. It was a hard life for the pioneers in the back-woods of Arcady in the early 'seventies. You laboured, and other men have entered into your labours. Ill-paid, often ill-housed; worried by inspectors; worried by managers and managers' wives; worried by parents, and worried by children, who came to school as a personal favour, and, if affronted, stayed away for a week, you served your generation. There can be few, if any, still at work whom I knew in Arcady thirty years ago; but as I look through these books I see the names of many whom all men honoured, and who reaped a full reward in the affectionate gratitude of the children.

And those children! shall they have never a word? How they assembled in the early morning, and haunted the precincts till 8.50, when they were admitted into school, and harangued on behaviour; how they, beribboned, brought down flaxen-haired, blue-eyed infants still more beribboned, and too much pleased with the ribbons to take thought for the inspector; while comely matrons stood at their doors representing the past, but carrying in their arms the scholars of the future: how they waited wearily till the MAN arrived, and then in audible whispers discussed the question whether IT was THE SAME—with apparent reference to the inspection of the previous year; how they struggled tearfully through the morning; fled home; and, what

time the Inspectors had emerged from the ever hospitable Rectory, and were gazing at the tombs of the rude forefathers in the churchyard, were ready, clad in their workaday suits, to see their enemies off with faintly subdued derisive cheers.

And the Rector and Rectoress said, “Well, that’s over for another year.”

And the teachers said, “Thank Goodness, that is done; he seemed in a pretty good temper.”

And H.M.I. said to his colleague: “Nice old boy. What induced him to marry *her*? Never mind; sha’n’t see her again for a year. What school to-morrow? Home, Charlie.”

FOOTNOTES:

[12] “In respect that it is solitary I like it very well, but in respect that it is private it is a very vile life,” said Touchstone.

[13] Certificate printed on parchment, attesting competence as teacher. See Chapter on “Reports.”

[14] F. H. Myers, *St. Paul*.

CHAPTER X

ARCADIA CLERICORUM

"I am one that had rather go with sir priest,
than sir knight."—*Twelfth Night.*

The chief charm of Norwich, which was my headquarters, lies in its Cathedral. Architecturally it is a delight to the soul of man. Gazing on arcade piled on arcade; Norman pillars, pointed clerestory, and triforium; mystic curves and intersections of window tracery; and the noble vaulted roof above; one could sit undisturbed while the Canon in Residence took his weekly toll of our time, and discharged one-thirteenth of his yearly task:

"I 'eered un a bummin' awaay loik a buzzard-clock ower my yead,
An' I thowt a said whot a owt to 'a said, an' I comed awaay."

The music was remarkable for the perfect training of the boys' voices by Dr. Buck, and for the incompetence of the aged men, who, though past work, could not be dismissed, because they were freeholders and had not been convicted of felony; as though petty larceny were a graver offence than singing out of tune! Freehold! always freehold!

To me, however, the great attraction was the Dean, Dr. Goulburn. He had been my headmaster at Rugby twenty years earlier; and though I had not had the slightest acquaintance with him, the sight of that familiar face, and the tones of that sonorous voice were sufficient to call up priceless memories of bygone days and long-lost friends.

In Norwich the Dean was venerated. In London and Oxford he was famous as a preacher: as a writer of religious books he had done excellent work, which, if one may judge from advertisements, still holds its ground. As a headmaster he had been less successful, and I gathered from some slight conversation with him as Dean that the very name of Rugby jarred on his ears. He was a scholar, a divine, a gentleman, a saintly man, and a good companion: but there was something lacking, something essential in dealing with boys. I doubt if he ever was a boy. At Eton, as we learn from his

biographer, his short sight debarred him from games, and his "sapping" propensities made him so unpopular with the drones that, although *bene natus, bene vestitus*, and *bene doctus*, his election to the Debating Society, called Pop, was secured only by the interposition of the headmaster.[15] This was Keate, and probably he threatened to flog the Opposition.

When he was himself headmaster in after years, this want of sympathy with athletes and drones must have limited his sphere of influence. In some way he had failed to assimilate himself to Boy, and Boy saw that something was wanting. Without boy-knowledge a headmaster is like a coachman without horse-knowledge: he cannot drive.

I could fill many pages with stories of him, and many pages with tributes to his excellent merits, but I forbear. As Inspector I had no dealings with him. Peace be to his memory.

Both in the city and in the county my acquaintance during the three years that I spent in East Anglia was almost wholly clerical. The parochial clergy managed the schools, collected the funds, often supplied a large share of the funds, and entertained the inspector. In a short time I found that there was infinite variety in the seeming monotony. Parson A. was literary, and his name was known to all men of letters. B. was archæological, and had views about ruins. C. grew bulbs, and the district was so badly arranged (*quâ* C.) that his school inspection came in January, when only the noses of his aconites, snowdrops, and crocuses were visible; but from February to June, and even later, he lived in splendid happiness.

D. grew coniferæ, a pursuit which requires expectation of long life; E. grew orchids, and told me of his parlour-maid's *bon mot*. She was helping in some stage of the culture, and in amazement inquired the name of the unsightly vegetable. "Orchids," she was told. "And a wera good name far un tew," said the maiden with wholly unconscious pleasantry; "awkidest things I ever handled."

F. was absorbed in schools, and spent half his days there. G. added to the cares of his life by doctoring the bodies of his flock. A neighbouring duly qualified practitioner had threatened him with a prosecution for manslaughter if any more of his patients died. One likes to see the thing done properly, and *quâ medicus* the Rector was a nonconformist; *quâ artifex* a blackleg.

H. was High and told me of his persecutions; L. was Low and tried to interest me in the conversion of the Jews.

The alphabet becomes wearisome. Suffice it to say that the society never became wearisome. In their reception of the common enemy, the Inspector, they varied, as they varied in their pursuits: it is not every man that can stand being told that his school is bad, and that the grant will be reduced; and therefore the smiles of welcome varied a good deal in direct proportion with last year's school balance: but we were very good friends on the whole. If old Bookworm compared me to Gloster—

> "the clergy's bags
> Are lank and lean with thy extortions"—

I knew that love of Shakespeare, not hatred of Inspectors, moved him. If Carker complained that I had plucked his best boy in Arithmetic, he melted into apologies on seeing the prodigy's prodigiously incorrect sums.

The Norwich district barely touched the Fens. That dismal region where, as a Cambridge man assured me, the inhabitants are web-footed and speckle-bellied (like frogs) was naturally and officially wedded to Cambridge; and I regret that I am unable to report on the accuracy of my friend's statement. On our side the livings of the clergy in the 'seventies were fat, and the churches were magnificent. I fancy that, even then, the congregations were not equal to the splendour of the buildings. There may have been reasons for this. It used to be said in Cambridge in the early years of the last century, that the incumbents of the Fen district lived in Cambridge from Monday to Saturday. On the last day of the week they sought their sphere of labour—where no gentleman could be expected to *live*—and got through their Sunday duty with tolerable acceptance. A select band would centre at the "Lamb" at Ely, and with the aid of the hebdomadal rubber made the place almost as snug as Cambridge. Freeholders! Freeholders! "O sainte Église! something divine must indeed dwell in thee, when even thy ministers have not been able to ruin thee."

In the 'seventies the Norfolk clergy as a rule were resident. There was indeed a strip of country in one quarter, where for several miles the incumbents had "left their country for their country's good," but retained the income of the benefice, only deducting (with much reluctance) the salary of a cheap curate: and there were others whose throats and chests

were not strong enough to stand the Norfolk winter: but Providence tempers even the Norfolk wind in certain cases, and I was assured that the common herd, whose livings were of less value than £1,200 a year, bore up well. There is a system of compensation in the distribution of good things.

I still remember one hoary sinner—possibly still alive, for he was the sort of man who would be likely to live for another thirty years, to support Mrs. Poyser's theory, "it seems as if them as aren't wanted here are th' only folk as aren't wanted i' th' other world"—who boasted that, being entitled to ninety days' leave of absence from his flock in each year, he arranged to take the last quarter of one year and the first quarter of the next, whereby he got six months' solid holiday. The drawback, he said, was that he couldn't get another holiday till October 1 of the third year.

I cannot say what provision he made for the services in his absence, and it was not for me to ask. But on a visit to a country school in another parish I found that the incumbent had been away for four months *by special leave from the Bishop*, because his wife was ill, and that he had thoughtfully arranged for the Vicar of the adjoining parish "to come over and give them a service on Sunday afternoons." The benefice in his case was valued in the "Clergy List" at over £700 a year, with a house.

These cases of neglect and the worse cases of evil-livers sounded strange in the ears of a Civil Servant whose tenure of office was on a frailer footing. I used to point the finger of scorn at the Bishop, who might be supposed to intervene. "But how is he to get evidence?" his defenders would say. I replied that if I were Bishop with £5,000 a year, I should hire a private detective and send him down to old Boozer's parish (Rev. O. Boozer, Great Tiplingham) for a month to collect evidence. But I was told with some warmth that the clergy would consider that a most ungentlemanly proceeding.

This surely is to put vermin on a level with game.

I said that the churches were magnificent. It is another instance of the compensatory tendency of the gifts of Providence, that ugly countries generally have fine churches. Look at Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire. There was a time when even Holland received the benefit of this arrangement, and did not build shanties round the bases of its cathedrals. The decay of agriculture, the diminution of the rural population,

and, above all, the migration of the weavers to the coalfields have wrought havoc with the congregations, charm the Rector never so wisely. Who, outside Norfolk, knows that "worsted" gets its name from Worstead in East Norfolk, a village with a noble church that might hold from 800 to 1,000 people? I see in the "Clergy List" that the population is now 781, of whom 54 per cent. might be expected to go to church, if they valued statistics—and our incomparable Liturgy.

Take another case. There was a time when Our Lady of Walsingham had an extraordinary reputation, not only in England but in the Low Countries. Five English sovereigns sought her shrine: three Henries and two Edwards. Erasmus visited it in 1511, and wrote an account of it, which for wit, irreverence, and general impropriety could hardly be surpassed.[16] The cult lasted for 300 years, and when it was at its height pilgrims came over in great numbers to Yarmouth and King's Lynn, and made their way along a *Via Sacra* of noble churches and priories. The finest of eastern counties' churches, in my recollection, is at Sawell, or Sall, within easy reach of Walsingham; and it was suggested that pilgrims were persuaded to drop a coin or two at churches on the road, whereon Sall flourished (Sall—profits—yes, I see; I leave it), as did the Lady Chapel at King's Lynn, and the churches on the Palmers' way from London and the South.

When I saw the great church in 1876 it was going fast to decay, and the sum mentioned as necessary for repairs was alarming. The population in 1901 was 191.

In another of these fine churches I found the Rector in much trouble. Bats had got into the roof and multiplied. The parish would gladly have retained the Pied Piper of Hamelin to rid them of their foes; besides ordinary pollution they had made the church their slaughter-house and their dining-room—the wings of moths, and all sorts of garbage lay about.

"Bats!" said the Rector, who was a Biblical scholar; "Isaiah couples them with the moles, according to our translation, but I doubt whether *chephor peroth* refers to moles."

"Perhaps it was the church mouse?" I suggested.

"Bats," he went on, after giving me a suspicious glance, "are clearly indicated by the word *atalleph*."

"It is *ystlumod* in Welsh," I said, not to be overcrowed by a Rural Dean, "and *Fledermaus* in German; *flittermouse* in Ben Jonson."

But the Rector was intent on murder, and heeded not my pedantic flippancies:

"BATS," he repeated, with a far-away look in his eyes.

What a parody Calverley would have made:

> "They hunted for moths in the Rector's garden,
> And though they possibly no harm meant,
> They littered the pew of the Churchwarden:
> They spoiled the gold of the Tenth Commandment."

That is a bad rhyme: I am not equal to the task. The case was serious: what did I suggest?

I said it was rather out of my province: bats never built in schools: had he tried incense?

His eyes were again fixed intently on me, but I gazed at the roof. It seemed that the good man was LOW. How was I to know? Finally he gave me credit for guilelessness. "But what would the Archdeacon say?" I inferred that the Archdeacon also was LOW. Certainly the bats were High.

It is sad that I cannot carry the tale further. Did he try the remedy? I cannot but think that

> "good strong thick stupefying incense-smoke,"

such as Browning's Bishop loved to taste, would have evicted the cheiroptera. Fear of the Archdeacon might have held the Rector's hand when Divine Service was toward, but I suspect he would still have six week-days undisturbed.

This was not the only instance of want of practical common-sense in the management of the freehold. Another incumbent remarked to me that he couldn't understand why his people didn't come to church. I thought it might be that his preaching was deterrent, but politeness suggested "the singing?"

"Oh no; it isn't the singing: there's plenty of that. To be sure," he added pensively, as if the thought came to him for the first time, "it may be that it

is because there is no heating apparatus."

That is one of the drawbacks of official life. You cannot tell a school manager what you really think of him. If his church had been a school, we should have taken a tenth off his grant after a year's warning; and the next year, if his school was still uninhabitable, we should have struck it off the list.

No doubt in Norfolk, as elsewhere, a great change has come over the country clergy. Most of the valuable livings in that diocese were in the gift of the Cambridge colleges, and probably at Cambridge, as at Oxford, clerical fellows hung about the combination rooms for years, either giving indifferent lectures, or, in the preferable alternative, merely consuming the college port; while they waited for the shoes of richly beneficed incumbents, who showed an indecent reluctance to put them off. It was often discovered, when the long-deferred inheritance fell in, that there was lurking in the background a virgin, who had but too often passed the flower of her youth, and who thus tardily became Rectoress Consort. A strange couple they would be to administer the affairs of a country parish.

But though too often hampered by lack of training, and sometimes by lack of zeal, in their ecclesiastical duties, they did much for education. The traditions of a college living required, long before the Act of 1870, that there should be a parochial school, and they built generously, if "not according to knowledge": strange schools in the University-Gothic style; externally picturesque; internally ill-lighted, ill-ventilated, ill-warmed; but no worse than you would find in the great public schools. And Mrs. Rector looked after the sewing, and the girls' ailments; and both husband and wife were diligent attendance officers, bribing, threatening, persuading parents and children.

Let me not omit to add that some of these ex-dons were of the salt of the earth, though not too earthy. I knew them only as school managers, but it was sufficiently clear that in such cases the school was part of an admirably organized parish: their acquaintance with the children, and their complete knowledge of the home life of the children never ceased to surprise and interest me: the discipline and the school work were proof of the Rector's watchful eye; and the greeting of the teachers showed the affectionate respect in which he was held.

Three great changes have come about in the last forty years. The abolition of clerical fellowships has cut off the supply of academical idlers. It is hard nowadays for a college to find men to take the college livings. "And oh, the heavy change," the collapse of agriculture in corn-growing, and the consequent fall in rental of glebe lands, and in tithe, have all but extinguished the old-fashioned broadcloth Rector. Thirdly, recent legislation has all but extinguished the criminous clerk, and made it comparatively easy to stir up the mere idler.

Are the people grateful? I doubt it. They grumbled at the old style, and they grumble at the new style; but they made more out of the old style. A few years ago I happened to be in Wales, and, meeting a fruit-seller with a cart bearing the name of Llanbeth, I got into conversation with him, and casually enquired whether my old friend, the Rev. J. Jones, sometime Rector of Llanbeth, was still living. No: he was dead, and Reverend Williams reigned in his stead. I expressed sorrow.

"Fery different gentleman now," said the fruit man, disparagingly: "I am parish clerk, and I know: fery different gentlemen eferywhere. Yes, sure." And the wretch leered hideously.

"Well, I will tell you," he continued unasked, "they are men that have failed at the Institushun (*meaning the Training College, then at Carnarvon*); that iss what they are."

"After all," I suggested, "they are better men now?"

"Well, I will tell you: they are more men of the world: that iss what they are."

"But, at least," I pleaded, "they don't drink?"

"No-a, indeed; because they can't afford it: ELSE——"

"Thou shalt not escape calumny," said Hamlet. "Did a day's work?" "Yes: because he is a man of the world." "Didn't get drunk?" "No: can't afford it." And even the wise and (comparatively) virtuous Inspector, when he meets in school the man of the world, who in general demeanour compares unfavourably with the schoolmaster, remembers easy-going old Broadcloth with a sigh, and hopes the new broom will sweep clean.

FOOTNOTES:

[15] See “Memoir of Dean Goulburn,” page 15.

[16] From a professional point of view Erasmus’ Geography was lamentable. He speaks of “this sea-side saint,” and says that the place is on “the extreme coast of England on the *North West*.” It is 7 miles from the Wash.

CHAPTER XI
MILLER'S

"A merrier man
Within the limit of becoming mirth
I never spent an hour's talk withal."

Love's Labour's Lost.

It was not in Norfolk that I met the Rev. Joseph Miller, Hon. Canon of his Cathedral, Rural Dean, and formerly Fellow and Tutor of some College in Oxford. Having at one time or another inspected schools in ten different counties I may leave the venue uncertain. It is merely for convenience that I record the visit here.

At the time when I made his acquaintance, he had acquired some notoriety in clerical circles in a singular way. In those days—I know not whether the rule is altered—the Bampton Lecturer at Oxford was appointed by a committee: there was a list of subjects to which the lecturer was confined, and any one who felt a call to the University pulpit sent in his application, specifying the particular subject upon which he was moved to discourse.

Miller proposed to give a course of lectures on "THE FAILURE OF MOSES." I suppose he sent in a syllabus with his application: but possibly the syllabus which he showed me was made merely for his own use.

The argument, briefly stated, was that in spite of the divine and miraculous assistance which it enjoyed; in spite of the purity and simplicity of its doctrines, the Mosaic system had never up to the time of the Captivity spread over even the little country of Palestine. Assuming the correctness of the popular chronology, there was an interval of 881 years between the Exodus and the Captivity, and at no time during that period was the country as a whole free from gross idolatry. But after the return from the Captivity idolatry seems to have disappeared in the course of years; at least there is no mention of it in the Gospels. To what was this change due? Clearly to the

introduction from the East of the doctrine of a future life, with future rewards and punishments.

Moses and his followers (said the Canon) promised temporal prosperity to the righteous, and in the end ruin to the ungodly. This was not the common experience, and the people, seeming to gain little by virtue in this world, and having no hope for another, tried other forms of worship, which combined pleasure with religion.

Solomon, who was strong enough to enforce uniformity, became the founder of the doctrines of Religious Equality and Concurrent Endowment, and applied them to his own household. Then came the schism, and things became worse. Miller's description of Jeroboam as the first Home Ruler, the parent of Free Churches, would have convulsed the undergraduate gallery. The lectures would have set Oxford in an uproar between the Torpids and the Eights, and when published in the following year would have filled the *Guardian* and the *Spectator* with correspondence. They would eventually have attracted the attention of Convocation, and *odium theologicum* would have blossomed into a *gravamen*, or even an *articulus cleri*.

But it was not to be. The committee chose another man, and an informal message was sent to Miller to the effect that the success or failure of Moses was not among the Bampton list of subjects. Moreover, his theory was opposed to Article VII. One Divinity Professor privately complained to Miller's Bishop that he should have a Rural Dean holding such views "directly contravening the Articles."

"Let us see the Article," said the wary Bishop; and he opened a Prayer Book:

> "Wherefore they are not to be heard, which feign that the old Fathers did look only for transitory promises."

"It seems to me, Professor, that the Article is satisfied. The Rural Dean will not be heard."

"But, my dear Lord, he may preach the same doctrines from his own pulpit."

The Bishop picked up Liddell and Scott, and turned to his favourite passage in that work:

ὀρθρο-φοιτο-συκοφαντο-δικο-ταλαίπωροι τρόποι:

"early-prowling base-informing sad-litigious plaguy ways"

"There is a branch of that Society in the Diocese, and I shall receive prompt intimation of any breach of Article VII."

The Professor "retired hurt," as cricketers would put it; and his score was 0.

Miller told me the whole story, and probably improved it a little. Who (except the present chronicler) does not throw in a little *pourboire* for the ever thirsty reader? "But," he added with mock resignation, "it has cost me a mitre. Junior Proctor I was: Rural Dean I am: Bishop I shall never be. Do you remember Scott's (of Balliol) lines on Shuttleworth, Warden of New, when, according to Common Room gossip, that dignitary refrained from giving his vote for fear of imperilling his promotion?" He opened a drawer, and in the very tones of the Master he read:

ἀνδρῶν δ' οὐχ ἡγεῖτο περικλυτὸς Ἀξιόκερκις,
στῇ δ' ἀπάνευθε μάχης πεφοβημένος εἵνεκα μίτρης:

"Shuttleworth, Warden renowned, led not his men to the battle;
Standing aloof from the fray, much afraid on account of the mitre."

"No one can say that of me, and I shall not wear the mitre."

He never did: but in fullness of time he made an excellent Dean.

One year I sent him formal notice of his school inspection, and received a pathetic reply. I had chosen the very day which he had fixed for a ruridecanal meeting. He could not put it off, and he could not leave his rurideacons unshepherded, even to wait upon H.M.I. Would I forgive him, and, partly in evidence of forgiveness, partly by way of penance for having selected a day so obviously unsuitable, would I dine with the "Rurideacons" at 5.30—old Oxford hours, and convenient in the country, because it enabled the brethren to dine, and to get home before dark, without "falling out by the way"? He added in a P.S.—"Towzer has got the gout and can't come."

I was glad Towzer could not come: I had seen him last at his own school, when he was mad with gout, and shook his fist at me in his fury. Miller knew this.

On the appointed day I examined the school, and, when the afternoon work was done, strolled up to the Rectory, to wait for the arrival of the exhausted clerics.

There were seven or eight of them at dinner: the rest went empty away. It would be easy to describe the guests individually, but all the clergy between the North Sea and the Irish Channel, between Carlisle and the borders of Salop, would waste their precious time in hunting for the lineaments of themselves, or their neighbours. I need mention only two: first, the Archdeacon, who had views about the Burials Bill (which was the burning question of that day), the Revised Version, and the Unity of Christendom. He was full of goodness; rather lacking in humour, and rather hostile to inspectors, whom he regarded as a lay and inferior form of archdeacon. There were two Archdeacons in the diocese, both worthy, and both wooden; so that Canon Miller had said, in his epigrammatic way, "The Archdeacon is the *oculus episcopi*, and our Bishop suffers from that form of ophthalmia which is known to the faculty as *amaurosis*, or dullness of sight."

The other notable was the Rev. O. Goodfellow. He was the butt of the Rural Deanery. For five tedious years he had toiled at Oxford for his degree; his college had ejected him at the end of his fourth year, and he had taken refuge in a Hall. There he exhausted the pass-coaches of Oxford, and he might have exhausted his father's patience, but a soft-hearted examiner took pity on him, and his fate was like that of Augustus Smalls of old:

> "Men said he made strange answers
> In his Divinity;
> And that strange words were in his Prose
> Canine to a degree:
> But they called his vivâ voce 'Fair,'
> And they said his books would do;
> And native cheek, where facts were weak,
> Brought him in triumph through."

Possibly he might have done better in the schools if he had not devoted the October term to football, the Lent term to the Torpids, and the summer

term to cricket. There is little time for reading, if a man really tries to do his duty by his college in these three branches of industry. In his parochial work his athletics helped him greatly; for the rest he was the most good-natured of men, and his wife was charming. Every one laughed at him, and everybody liked him. Also he was known to all men as Robin.

The dinner was simple and good; the conversation was varied, except in two directions: the Canon announced at the outset that if any one mentioned the Burials Bill or the word "education" he should be sconced. This, as my neighbour on the left remarked *sotto voce*, trumped the Archdeacon's best trick, and left me without a card to lead.

I have omitted to mention Mrs. Miller, most delightful of hostesses, whom I, "as the representative of the Crown," had, with friendly laughter, been instructed to take in to dinner. At this moment she asked me confidentially what would happen if she were sconced. I told her that the penalty in the case of a man was to pay for a quart of beer for the company; *but* that if the sconcee could drink the whole quart without stopping to take breath, the penalty rebounded on to the informer; presumably in the cases of "lunatics, infants, and married women" (under the law of that date) the guardian, parent, or husband would be liable. I gave this legal opinion with some solemnity, and the company rather embarrassed me by suspending their conversation that they might hear the decision of the Court. The Archdeacon, who, like St. Peter, "was himself a married man," showed marked disapproval, and I hastily diverted discussion by adding that I had seen the draught completed, and the penalty reflected.

Johnson, my left-hand neighbour, a Yorkshire man, said that in his county it would not be a remarkable feat. "I remember a case in point," he continued; "a discussion arose at the 'Red Lion' in ——ton, whether any man could drink *two* quarts without stopping to take breath. Finally it was agreed that if such a man existed, it was Will Pike. Bets were made, Will was sent for, and the case was laid frankly before him; would he try?

"To the surprise of his backers he hesitated, and at last asked whether they could give him a two-three minutes just to see about it. This was conceded; Will retired, and in less than three minutes he returned, and drank his two quarts in manner prescribed. The opposition paid up, but one man,

feeling a little sore, complained of the delay. Why didn't Will begin at once?

"Will hesitated a minute, and then confessed that he himself didn't feel quite sure of his ability—I might say 'capacity'—so, to make sure, he had just stepped down to the 'Black Lion' to try. As he stood there, he contained four quarts."

Mrs. Miller was quite unmoved by the horror of this anecdote; she laughed with the rest, but added a word of caution to me: "They do very strange things in Yorkshire, Mr. Kynnersley; if you could hear Mr. Johnson's fishing stories, you would add to your knowledge of natural history."

"This is hard," said Johnson, plaintively; "Mrs. Miller alludes to a very remarkable experience of mine last June. I was fishing for trout in the West Riding, and a farmer offered to show me the way, and gave me some hints. He pointed out the best pool to begin on; advised a particular fly; and specially charged me, when I hooked a trout, not to let the line get slack, or the fish would get clear. A big trout took the farmer's pet fly, and by bad luck I stumbled against a root, let the line slack as I fell, and in a moment the fish drew the line over a sharp-edged rock, cut it, and sank.

"'Now watch him,' said the farmer: I saw that trout slowly rise, and swim to a log that checked the current: there it worked with its mouth against the wood, till it had extracted the hook: it caught the hook between its jaws; swam close to the log, and deliberately planted it with its barb fixed in the soft wood. Finally it drew back, and contemplated its trophies. There was a complete row, January, February, March, April, the Mayfly...."

A shout of indignant laughter cut short the list. Only the Archdeacon was grave. He waited till the "mirth unseemly" was done, and then in solemn tones asked Johnson whether this had really happened to him.

"Well, not exactly to me, I admit: it was a friend of mine who witnessed the feat: but the story is more effective in the first person. I hope, Mr. Archdeacon, you don't doubt my friend's veracity? He is a Diocesan Inspector."

"Oh, not at all," said the other hastily. But he looked grave, and Mrs. Miller crumbled her bread.

“Very hearty, genial sort of folk in Yorkshire, are they not?” I interposed by way of eirenicon.

“Very much so: not quite that refinement of thought and manner which stamps the caste of—er—the Lower House of Convocation,” said he, with a glance at the sceptic. “I remember a singular instance of this so-to-say lack of delicacy. A young doctor in my first parish was coming home late at night, when he heard the noise of wheels; then a crash, and then a shout. He ran hastily in the direction of the sound, and by the help of a feeble moon and a cart-lantern found a young collier in difficulties: a wheel had come off the cart, and he was extricating what seemed to be a long box. The doctor offered first aid, which was readily accepted.

“‘Aw’ve ’ad a reight mullock (*a regular misfortune*), tha’ sees. Aw’ve been ovver tut t’Union, wheer ar owd man deed, an getten leeave to tak ’im hooam, and burry ’im in t’ Church yard, an nar me cart is brokken daan: aw s’all hav to leeave all t’ job in t’ field whol mornin’. Nowt’ll mell (*meddle*) on ’em.’

“It was his father!

“The doctor gave a hand, and together they carried the light shell down through the gateway into the field, and left it in a corner. The driver turned his lantern on his helper’s face, and said briskly:

“‘Why, it’s Maister Smith, t’ yung doctor, for sewer?’

“Smith assented.

“‘Sithee,’ said the collier confidentially; ‘aw’ll tell tha wot aw’ll do’; and, coming closely to him, he said in an undertone, ‘Aw’ll sell tha t’owd un fer awf a crawn.’

“*It was his father.*”

Mrs. Miller shuddered. “If any one mentions Yorkshire again,” she declared, “I will talk about the Burials Bill (which seems much wanted in *that* county), and if the Canon is sconced, and drinks all that beer, he will have the gout, and I pity the Rural Deanery.”

Johnson chuckled with the satisfaction of a man who has hit the mark, and the conversation became general. The Archdeacon tried to interest our hostess in the Revised Version, but she did not know the aorist from the

paulo-post-futurum. She skilfully played a spade, and introduced gardening: but he did not know a pelargonium from a potentilla. Then she led a small club, and brought in the Girls' Friendly Society Annual Meeting, and he followed suit.

Some one mentioned the Bishop, and though not much could be said about the local Diocesan in the Archdeacon's presence—for as you would not abuse a man's eye to the owner, so you should not abuse the owner to the eye—yet it led to talk about bishops generally, and we became anecdotical, as we ate our gooseberry tart. At that date men told stories of S. Wilberforce, and Magee: Stubbs and Temple were not yet in all men's mouths. Most of the stories were familiar, but we enjoyed them as old friends, and in the telling of them, and in the subsequent discussion, curious light was thrown on the gradual accretion and expansion to which such legends are subject. In the case of one well-known story we were able to trace the aboriginal myth:

"Bishop Magee was at a meeting of bishops, discussing the rubrical words 'Before the table.' He wrote on a bit of paper, and passed it to a colleague:

"'Before the table' means 'at the north end of the table.' Qu.: was 'the piper that played before Moses' standing at the north end of Moses?"

And this is the complete legend, many years younger.

> The Bishop of Peterborough was standing on a railway platform in Northamptonshire, waiting for a train, when he was accosted by a prominent Evangelical clergyman in his diocese, who was much exercised about the question of the "Eastern Position." "My Lord," said the latter, "the case is perfectly clear: when the rubric says 'Before the table' it means standing 'at the north end of the table.'"
>
> "I see," replied the Bishop, meditatively; "in my country we have a saying, 'By the piper that played before Moses': hitherto I have always supposed that the piper stood in front of Moses: now I see that he stood at the north end of Moses. Here is my train: good morning."

The stories of Wilberforce were equally familiar, and all went to illustrate what we may call his diplomatic talent. One came from private sources, and

may perhaps be recorded here. A man fresh from the Oxford diocese told it:

There was a great function of some sort in a church near Oxford, and many clergy had assembled to meet the Bishop, and were using the schoolroom as a vestry. Five minutes before service time the Rector came in great trouble to Wilberforce: the clergy had been specially requested to bring their surplices, but Mr. A. and Mr. B. had come with black gowns, and the effect would be ruined: would the Bishop speak to them?

"My dear Mr. X., leave them to me," was the only reply.

Three minutes passed, and again the Rector pleaded for help: "Leave them to me," was repeated.

Just before the clock struck the Bishop moved down to the two black-legs. "How do you do, Mr. A.? *so* glad to see you here: will you read the first lesson for us? How do you *do*, Mr. B.? will you read the second lesson? *so* much obliged."

Greatly flattered, the two men hastily borrowed white robes, and the situation was saved.

"That," he added, "is a true story."

I resent this sort of warranty. It has a tendency (firstly) to imply that previous stories were not true: (secondly) to assume that truth is better than fiction. Moved by this feeling I ventured to interpose. If truth was to gain extra marks, I knew a Wilberforce story of such authenticity that it was vouched by a Judge of the Common Pleas, and a Bishop: and I offered this contribution to the chronicles of the evening:

It happened just after the Summer Assizes at Oxford that Mr. Justice Keating was going on to Worcester; and in the carriage with him (among others) was Bishop Wilberforce. Opposite the latter was a seat untenanted, but littered with correspondence. A lady looked in, just before the train was starting, and asked whether the empty seat was engaged:

"Occupied," said the courtly prelate with a courtly smile, and the lady moved hurriedly on.

He turned to the judge: "'Occupied,' not 'Engaged'; you observe the distinction: I have a great deal of work to do in the train, and the guard is good enough to allow me the use of a second seat for my papers."

The judge, an Irishman by birth, was much tickled, and told the story to a friend in London. The friend repeated it at a dinner table, where Archdeacon John Allen of Salop was a fellow guest; and concluded with much virtuous indignation, boldly asserting that the distinction was inconsistent with honesty. The Archdeacon was the most excellent and the most combative of men, except his brother Archdeacon of Taunton (Denison). He went to the root of the matter by denying emphatically that the Bishop ever made the remark, and undertook to get his Lordship's authority for his denial. Accordingly he wrote to Cuddesden that night: told his story in full, and asked for an official contradiction. The maligned man vouchsafed no answer, good or bad: only he forwarded the petition to the Bishop of Lichfield, and wrote at the bottom:

"Dear Bishop of Lichfield,

Can't you find something for your archdeacons to do?

Yours always,

S. Oxon."

The man who told me the story had, I believe, heard it from Sir Henry Keating. I repeated it to a clerical friend, who, when I reached the end, said, "Yes, that is quite right: I was examining chaplain to the Bishop of Lichfield, and he told me the story."

A vehement discussion arose during dessert: some accusing, others excusing, and Mrs. Miller looked anxious. But the Canon broke in, just as she was preparing to retreat to the drawing-room: "Why," he exclaimed, "do you have two standards of morality? Let me tell you two stories: I cannot tell them in parallel columns, but you must put them side by side in your minds."

He told them in order, and I, the chronicler, put them in parallel columns:

The Bishop.	The Premier.
He went to a provincial town for some function: the clergy and others met in the Assembly room of the chief hotel; and there was to be a procession through the streets.	Lord Palmerston and Sir J. Paget (who told the story) were walking down Bond Street. A man came up and saluted the statesman.
While they were robing, an elderly farmer came hurriedly into the room, made straight for the Bishop, and greeted him heartily. "How do you do-o?" said the Bishop: "so glad to see	"How do you do, Lord Palmerston?"
	"Ah, how do? glad to see you: how's the old complaint?"

you: how is the old grey?"

"Very hearty, thank ye, my Lord, and the grey mare too: very good of your lordship to remember the old lass."

"So-o glad," purred the Bishop: "so good of you to come: good bye."

"Who's your friend?" said one, when the door was shut.

"Really, I have no idea."

"Why, you asked him after his old grey."

"Yes," replied the Bishop reproachfully; "but when you see a man with a great coat covered with grey hairs, you may assume that he has been driving a grey horse."

The stranger's face clouded over, and he shook his head: "No better."

"Dear me: so sorry: glad to have met you: good bye."

"Who's your friend?" said Sir James when the stranger was gone.

"No idea."

"Why, you asked about his old complaint!"

"Pooh, pooh," replied the other, unconcernedly: "the old fellow's well over 60; bound to have something the matter with him."

"Now when you hear one story, you say, 'Good old Pam' and admire his worldly wisdom: when you hear the other, you say 'How like Sam' and deplore his crafty cunning."

We looked at one another, and shame covered our faces. "Agreed," said Johnson: "S. Oxon was great; he was genial, and he was witty. What was his best saying? I am inclined to give the first prize to his comment on Bishop X's marriage. Let me recite it. The Bishop, you remember, married some one of humble station, and that so quietly that no one knew of it for some time. Then there was an outcry, and the Bishop resigned the see. This was reported to Wilberforce, who remarked that his right-reverend brother might fitly be appointed to the See of Ossory and Ferns, then vacant, for he believed ferns were cryptogamous."

The laughter was partial, for certainly Goodfellow, and possibly another, besides Mrs. Miller, failed to catch the point, and the Archdeacon seemed in doubt whether the story were quite proper: but Mrs. Miller turned calmly to me, and begged that I would perform the necessary surgical operation, if I was quite sure——eh?

"Quite safe," I assured her: "I examine in Botany: plants which have visible flowers and so on are phanerogams: the others, *which marry in secret*, are cryptogamous: ferns are cryptogams."

“No joke can survive a post mortem”: Mrs. Miller smiled sadly and left us.

“Have a cigar before you go?” said our host, and we made for the study.

CHAPTER XII
MILLER'S STUDY

"Pereant qui ante nos nostra narraverint."

But not all. I stopped in the hall to search my great-coat pocket for my pipe, and I overheard the farewell of the Archdeacon. Domestic circumstances called him home, and the Canon remained to see him off the premises. It fell to me, therefore, to break to the others the news that the venerable one would not join them. They bore up.

"He can't take my new hat," said the Rev. Patrick O'Brien, LL.D., "it hasn't the curly brim: but he gets first pick of the umbrellas. I suppose he was created for some wise purpose, but he doesn't eat, he doesn't drink, he doesn't talk, and he doesn't smoke. Hwat can ye do with um?" And he lit a fat cigar.

"Reminds me of what Topers of Brasenose said to the Professor," commented an elderly rector named Oldbury: (Oxford; high and dry; broadcloth, silk hat, bit of a squarson; good old chap). "Do you remember Topers?" he asked me.

I pleaded comparative youth.

"Ah, of course. Well, Topers and another man were dining at Balliol High Table with one of the dons, and the only other don present was Professor Aldrich, who hated Topers and all his ways, and was infinitely disgusted to meet him as a guest. Topers was quick to see this, and excelled himself in wit and anecdote, while the Professor was mute. The dinner was prolonged: the undergraduates departed: even the scholar whose duty it was to say Grace was released, when Topers turned to his host, and pleaded for a bottle of that admirable Balliol port to mellow the Stilton. This was too much for Aldrich: he got up and said, 'Gentlemen, you will find coffee in the Common-room, when you are ready for it,' and he was stalking down the empty hall.

"Topers rose from his seat with tragic solemnity: 'Go, sir,' he said, with a majestic wave of his hand, 'and take with you that appreciation of the good things of this world which Heaven has *not* given you, and the conversation of which we have heard not a word.'"

Ah me! As the others laughed, I saw the old Hall, now used as a library, the three black-gowned figures at High Table, the empty Hall half-lighted, and at the far end two or three scouts who were clearing away dishes, turning stupidly to stare at the short square don with firm-set chin and gleaming eyes; while John de Baliol, Dervorguilla, his wife, "and others, benefactors of this college," in their gilt-framed pictures, looked on with the cold impartiality of Gallio.

"Topers was a brilliant man," said Miller, free from his Archdeacon: "he had the marvellous gift of concentration which so few possess."

"Would you call it *absorption*, Canon?" murmured Johnson: and there was a stifled laugh, which annoyed Miller: Topers' weakness was notorious.

"Concentration, I prefer. Day after day he used to go to Parker's, the bookseller's in the Broad, and take up the new book of the day. As he stood there, he read in spite of all distractions, and picked the entire marrow of it before he came away. What a faculty for a barrister, a judge, a statesman to possess! Yet he did nothing but make epigrammatical remarks which are mostly forgotten. I never meet a man called Littler without thinking of Topers. Littler came up for *vivâ voce* in Collections: 'Mr. Littler,' said Topers with venomous looks, 'your Greek prose is disgusting, your Latin prose is disgusting, your translation is disgusting, and your name is ungrammatical.'"

"What was his name?" asked Goodfellow, whose mind travels slowly.

"Topers," said the narrator hastily, determined that there should be no more post mortems; and went on, while Goodfellow pondered on the grammatical defects of this proper noun: "It was severe; but a more caustic address is recorded of the great Dean Mansel. That eminent philosopher was examining a raw Cockney in Greek. The lad came to the word 'hippos,' which he pronounced 'ippos,' and translated 'orse.' 'I can understand your calling it ORSE,' drawled Mansel, 'for I suppose your father and mother called it ORSE, and you never heard it called anything else: but I can't

conceive why you should call it IPPOS, because I don't suppose they ever heard the expression.'"

"Mansel was great," Oldbury remarked: "Tommy Short was brilliant: greatest and most brilliant was Henry Smith of Balliol. Did you ever hear his comment on the mathematical papers of two of his friends? Brown and Jones were in for what is called 'Second Schools,' that is to say, a pass in Mathematical Greats after the Classical Honours examination. 'How did you get on to-day, Mr. Brown?' he asked.

"Brown produced the paper of Questions: 'In the Euclid I did that, and that, and that; I left out those, and I had a shot at those. In the Algebra I did those, and left out those.'

"'Oh yes,' said Smith, without faintest comment: 'and Mr. Jones, what did he do?'

"'In the Euclid he did those, and left out those; in the Algebra he did those and left out those.'

"'Oh yes,' said Smith with increased politeness: 'then I should think he would be ploughed TOO.'"

What evil spirit prompted Robin Goodfellow to rush into the fray? When was any anecdote of his not condemned? Yet at this moment he started forward:

"I say, I heard a good story the other day," he began, chuckling feebly at the reminiscence; "and I doubt if even you, Miller, ever heard it before. A woman brought her girl to be christened, and when the parson, you know, asked her to name the child, she said, 'Luthy thir,' because she lisped, don't you know. 'Lucifer!' said the parson, 'you might as well call him Beelzebub: I shall christen him John,' and so he did. Good, wasn't it?"

The story was not well received. "You've forgotten the end, Robin," shouted one man: "when I first heard that story at a private school in Lancashire about thirty years ago, it went on:

"But the father muttered, 'Tha'st called hoo Jahn, and hoo's a wench.'" (General assent.)

The Canon rose wrathfully from his seat: "Goodfellow, you call that a new story! do you know that it is to be found in the 'Life of St. Augustine,'

in the chapter describing his reception in Kent in the year 596? Where is the book?" And he went to the bookshelves, picked up a huge folio, and read with some fluency:

> Inde, precibus finitis, postquam omnes dispersi essent, advenit femina filiolam in manibus gerens. "Quid petis, mea filia" inquit Augustinus: "Ut infantem baptizare velis" respondet mater. (*H'm, it's very poor print.*) Quo concesso omnes redierunt, et ad Fontem aggrediebantur.

"Now that is very interesting," interposed Johnson, to give the Canon time. "You see 'Fons' would not be the font, of course, but a spring: Augustine, no doubt, was preaching on a hillside, and at the foot in the meadow there would be a fons, or spring. I beg pardon for interrupting you, Miller."

"Not at all," said the Canon, grinning with complete understanding of the motive: he had spent the interval in careful study of the folio, and now resumed more easily:

> "Nomina hunc infantem" inquit sacerdos.
>
> "Lu-lu-lucia" respondit illa, balbutiens propter quandam hesitationem linguæ.
>
> "Quid dixisti, mulier?" petit Augustinus; quippe qui—(*"'quippe qui' is good," muttered Johnson to me*)—post tot pericula per terram et mare, et tantos labores paululum surdus erat;—

"Is it 'erat' or 'esset'?" enquired Johnson, with kindly concern for the Latinity of Augustine, or his biographer.

"'Esset' of course: it's the vilest print," said the Canon, smothering a laugh: "where was I? h'm, h'm":

> surdus esset: "num audes infanti mox Christiano futuro nomen Luciferum ascribere? quem ego certe Johannem appellare mallem"; et ita factum est.

"There, Goodfellow, I think that settles the antiquity of your story."

With furtive laughter we applauded the student of Augustine. Robin, who like Cedric at Torquilstone, was a little deaf in his Latin ear, asked to be

allowed to read the passage for himself: but it happened most unfortunately that as the book was being handed to him, it fell, and the reference was lost, nor could it be found again. The conversation was hurriedly changed by Johnson, who congratulated the Canon on his intimate acquaintance with the Fathers, and also with the Latin language.

"Some of us," he went on to say, "get a little rusty in our dead languages. Last month I was dining with my squire (who, you know, is a scholarly man) and a clerical friend, who shall be nameless, was there. The squire reads the lessons for me: he does it well, and the people like to hear him. After dinner he suddenly asked me whether in reading the Revelation he ought to say 'õ-mĕgã' as a dactyl with the accent on the O, or 'õ mégger' as two words, if you understand me. I said the latter might be right, but it would be as pedantic as Samarĩa, or Alexandrĩa: I preferred the former. And my clerical brother volunteered approval: *he said it was õmĕgã in the original Hebrew*. And he made the statement quite with the air of a man who had the gift of tongues more than we all. The squire stared, but we made no remark, and the fellow's complacency was undisturbed."

Oldbury remarked that not all of us lose our acquaintance with the classics. He had written lately to the Bishop in reply to a request for information as to church attendance: and had stated that on Sunday mornings the attendance was very good, especially in the case of aged people; but whether that was due to piety, or to the necessity of adducing regular church-going as a condition precedent of benefiting by Tomkins' dole, he should be sorry to say. And the Bishop wrote back:

"Sit dolus, an virtus, quis in hoste requirat?"

Oldbury considered that neat. But Miller objected that it only went to show that even a bishop knew the second "Æneid."

"A little knowledge is a dangerous thing," said a man opposite, who was the Diocesan Inspector of Religious Knowledge; "I was complaining to Squire B., who, you know, made his money in the Black Country, about the character of his schoolmaster, a notoriously intemperate man:

"'Well of course,' replied the squire, 'if we ever *found* him drunk, we should give him his *sine quâ non* at once.'"

Goodfellow had been pondering silently. At this point he pushed his chair near Johnson's, and whispered, "I say, did Joe Miller make up all that rot about St. Augustine?"

"My dear chap," replied Johnson soothingly, "what, all that? 'Bradley's Exercises' couldn't have done it right off: it would have taken Cicero all his time."

"Well, of course, it was a long story," Robin admitted; and confidence was partially restored. A bold stroke of Miller's completed the work. I think he must have overheard part of Robin's question, as he passed behind us to concoct a parting drink for O'Brien. He returned with a post card in his hand.

"Talking of Latin reminds me that I got a Latin postcard from an old Oxford friend this morning, which you may like to hear:

"'*Dives quidam ad portas*'—h'm, let me translate it to save time."

> A certain rich man having arrived at the gates of heaven begged St. Peter to admit him into the company of the blest. "Admit thee, O Dives?" said the holy janitor: "what good thing hast thou done in thy life?"
>
> *Dives paulisper meditatus*—er—that is, after a little thought Dives replied, "Once I gave an obol to a poor man who asked an alms of me."
>
> "One obol! thou!" said the saint: "is there nothing more of good?"
>
> "And another time," pleaded Dives, "on a very cold day, a poor boy, scantily clad and ill fed, offered to sell me for an obol a box of fire-bringing sticks (*I suppose Dives meant matches*), and moved with compassion, I gave him the obol, nor accepted the sticks."
>
> The saint, much perplexed, turning to the Archangel Michael, enquires what should be done: "O sancte Petre" inquit ille, "hunc duobus obolis donatum ad Orcum demittas."

"Which, I think, we may translate 'give him twopence, and send him downstairs.' Like to see the card, Goodfellow?" And Robin was satisfied, though the Latin was beyond his grasp. "Is it St. Augustine?" he asked.

“Ulpian, I think, from the style,” replied Miller; and Robin tacitly admitted Ulpian into the company of Early Fathers.

“I have a lot of these cards,” said Miller; “my friend supplies me with the Common Room anecdotes in this inexpensive manner. Here is another, which I give in English—for the sake of the Inspector:”

> A certain undergraduate, erudite and devout, Puseyite and Augustan, went to his Father-Confessor; and, the secrets of his heart having been revealed, asked for absolution not without penance.
>
> “Thou hast erred, my son,” said the priest, devout but not erudite; “go to thy chamber and recite the Atten*dī*te.”
>
> “It is short, father,” said the young man shuddering.
>
> “Then say it twice,” replied the Confessor with placid countenance.

“What is the Attend*ī*te?” I asked.

“The 78th Psalm, ‘Attendīte, populе,’ ‘Hear My law, O ye people’; 15th evening, don’t you know?”

“Short!” said Goodfellow: “it’s 73 verses!”

And he hasn’t seen the joke yet.

O’Brien finished his stirrup-cup, and obtained leave to go home: he had a seven miles’ drive. I was not sorry to lose him, for I disliked the man, though he had the merit of furnishing the diocese with a good story. It is said that when he went up for Ordination, the Bishop put him up for the night, or nights, at the Palace with the other candidates; and on the Saturday night, though there were no outside guests, the examining chaplains and the future priests and deacons made a large party at dinner. About half way through the meal the attention of all was arrested by the voice of Mr. O’Brien addressing the Bishop:

“Have ye read my sermon, my lord?” (It appears that each candidate had to submit a sample sermon for the episcopal criticism.)

“Not yet, Mr.—er——”

“O’Brien, my lord.”

"Mr. O'Brien, I have not yet had time: may I ask what is the subject that you have chosen?"

"It's on the Atonement, my lord."

The Bishop shuddered, and replied coldly: "You have chosen a very difficult subject, Mr. O'Brien."

"Faith, my lord, it's signs ye haven't read it, or ye'd say it was easy enough."

But he was ordained, and, still more surprising, he found a woman with money to marry him. With her money he bought a good living and settled down in the country. As the late Master of Trinity would have said, "The little time he could spare from the neglect of his parochial duties he devoted to the breeding of prize poultry;" and on that point his opinion was deemed valuable. Also he had the national fluency, and the Colonial and Continental Society offered him holiday chaplaincies in the choicest spots of Middle Europe.

"What is the name of Dr. O'Brien's parish?" I asked the Canon, when he came back from the door: "I don't meet him in any school."

"Exby: he succeeded a very different man, old Wright, of whom many stories are told. It is not a college living, but Wright had been a don for many years, and, having a good bit of money, bought Exby sooner than wait any longer for Zedtown, his fat college living. He never married, and he kept up his Common Room habits, especially including the rubber, which was the delight of his life. But he was a very prudent man, and he didn't like losing his money. If he was losing, he went to bed early: if he was winning, he would sit up all night, or as long as he could get the other men to sit up. One night, they say, he had a great run of luck, and went on playing till after the early hours of the morning: in fact, it was about five, when they heard a most fearful rumbling in the chimney, increasing in noise, till at last with a cloud of soot a black apparition in human form descended, and stood on the hearthstone.

"I may tell you in confidence that it was only the sweep: his proceedings were perfectly in order, but the servants had omitted to notify the Rector that the visit was impending.

“The gamblers, and especially the Rector, reasonably concluded that it was the Prince of Darkness, who had come to carry them off; and they started from the table. Old Wright dropped on his knees, and held up his trembling hands with a goodly assortment of trumps and court-cards, and stammered out:

“‘Spare me, oh, spare me, till I have finished the rubber.’”

All the “Ruri-deacons,” as Miller called them, knew the story; but familiarity with it even now cannot hinder me from laughing in sleepless hours of the night at the picture of the blear-eyed four, with shattered nerves, clinging to the table, and gazing at the still more startled sweep.

“I knew Wright,” said one on my right: “he told me he used to keep his store of money in £5 notes which he hid in a volume of Tillotson’s sermons in his study. I asked, ‘Why Tillotson?’ and he said, ‘Because it is not likely that a burglar would be fond of sermons, and if he was, he wouldn’t want to read Tillotson.’”

It needs some acquaintance with Tillotson to get the full aroma of this appreciation.

“He was a great man for schools, Inspector,” said another: “used to do all the thrashing for the schoolmistress; and one time he did his duty to a boy so nobly that the mother came to complain. ‘You know, parson,’ she said, ‘as Scripture says as a man should be merciful to his beast.’

“‘But he wasn’t *my* beast, Mrs. Green,’ retorted old Wright: and she was so much pleased with the homely repartee that she retired chuckling.”

“Have you met O’Brien’s new Curate, Rogers, yet?” said Johnson to the Rural Dean. “A very different man from our friend. He told me of a singular experience that befell a fellow student: he was, you know, formerly a Dissenter of sorts, and was educated at one of their colleges.”

“That accounts for the excellence of his preaching, I suppose?” said our cynical host.

“No doubt,” replied the narrator coolly; “any how, he is a good fellow. Well, at those colleges it is the custom to send out students to preach in outlying districts, both to give them the confidence that comes from experiments on vile bodies, and also to keep the cause together. One

Saturday afternoon Rogers' friend was sent off with instructions to go some miles by train; then to walk two miles to Blankby; and there to ask the way to Mudby, where one John Hodge would put him up for the night. He got all right to Blankby, and so on to Mudby. Then he enquired for Mr. Hodge.

"'Which Mr.'Odge would 'a be?'

"He explained that he was going to preach at the chapel next day; and it was agreed that Jahn 'Odge o' th' owd farm, being great wi' th' chapel folk, was like to be the mon, and full directions were given. As that sort of people always tells you 'right,' when they mean 'left,' it was late and dark when the missioner arrived. Old Mrs. Hodge opened the door, and admitted his plea for hospitality. Her husband had not yet come in. It was a mere cottage, and the evening meal did not take long. Noticing that her guest was weary, the dame suggested, ''appen yo'd loike ta goo ta bed?' He gladly agreed, and followed his hostess. As he went, it struck him that there were not many rooms, but it was not his affair, and he was soon in bed and asleep. He knew not at what later hour he felt a dig in the ribs, saw a light, and heard Mrs. Hodge's voice:

"'Thee move a bit furder on, yoong mon: theer's me an' my owd mon to coom yet.'"

"Oh, but that is good," shouted Miller, "and I don't care whether it is true or not. Not going away, Oldbury? Tell the Inspector the story of Wilberforce and Lady A. before you go. He has never heard it."

"I always obey my Rural Dean," said Oldbury. "The story was told me many years ago by a pillar of the Church, and I think it is little known.

"It was at the time of the Crimean War that the Bishop was dining at a solemn banquet given by one of the Peelite Ministry of that time. There were three or four ministers present, and among the ladies was an illustrious Marchioness, Lady A. She sat next to the Bishop, and when the solemnity of the statesmen had killed all other conversation, they became aware that the Church and the world were still full of life. And this is what they heard:

LADY A. Do you ever go down to Boreham now, Bishop?

BISHOP. It is seldom that I can find time: but from old associations the place has a peculiar interest for me. Last year I was fortunate enough to be able to accept an invitation from my friend Mr. Goodheart, and at dinner I

sat next a very worthy, elderly, man of the name of Polycarp, who in a very touching manner was recounting to me the many blessings which he had received in the course of a life prolonged beyond the usual limits.

LADY A. (*stifling a yawn*). Dear me, Bishop.

BISHOP. Yes: and it appeared that he considered the chief of his blessings to be that he had had twenty-three children. And while I was trying to find words to express my opinion that some people might regard that as a not unmixed blessing, a black-eyed lady, whom I had observed to be listening with much attention to our conversation, leant across the table, and said with remarkable distinctness: 'ONLY SIXTEEN BY ME, MR. POLYCARP.'"

"Good-night, Miller. Good-night, Mr. Inspector."

Solvuntur risu tabulae; they all went home. But the night was still young, and Miller and I drew up our chairs to the fire.

"Good men, and true!" said the Rural Dean, turning over in his hands a bundle of the Oxford postcards. I was turning over in my mind the men to whom I had just bidden farewell. One puzzled me:

"Who was the big man with gold spectacles, sitting next O'Brien; hardly spoke a word all the time?" I asked.

"Gold spectacles? Oh, old Weights of Slobury; most worthy, but not lively. There is a story of him. It is said that when the new railway was being made through his parish, he one day paid a pastoral visit to the navvies' huts; and having gained admission to one hut, he talked and read till the master grew weary, and suggested that it was about tea-time. Weights took the hint, and his leave. As he closed the door, the man pointed compassionately over his shoulder at the ponderously retreating figure, and muttered:

"'Theer goos a good navvy—*spiled*.'"

"But here, Inspector," he continued, "here is a postcard that will suit you. You were at Balliol, were you not?"

He gave it to me, and it may be anglicised thus:

A traveller in Central Africa was surprised and carried off by hostile natives, who brought him before their chief. A drum-head

court-martial was held, and sentence of death was speedily passed. But while the executioner was making the necessary preparations, the tribe were ransacking his baggage, and one of them with a shout of joy held up an Oxford blazer of the Balliol pattern. The chief saw it, and his grim features relaxed. In excellent English he said—

"Were you at Balliol? So was I: you may go. Good old Jowett!" (*Abi in pacem: Jowettii, et nostrum, haud immemor.*)

CHAPTER XIII
CHESHIRE

"Then there is the County Palatine."

Merchant of Venice.

Three profitable years I spent in Norfolk, learning my business, and I became weary of exile. When on my appointment I received my instructions from the Secretary, he said that, looking to my experience gained as Inspector of Returns, it was not necessary that I should serve any further apprenticeship: I "need not take up my headquarters in Norfolk." This in official language meant that as soon as possible I should be given a district of my own; and in my ignorance of official life I took no thought for the morrow. But, as my third year of expatriation began to draw to a close, it occurred to me that the Secretary was not personally interested in me, and that in the Civil Service, as elsewhere, a man who wants promotion must see that he gets it.

I reminded Sir Francis that I was hungry—not for promotion, but for *amotion* to less remoteness. He at once admitted my claim, and created a new district for me, the headquarters of which would be King's Lynn, and the territory West Norfolk and East Cambridgeshire. I remember that Wisbech and Whittlesey were included. I never saw either, but I should class them with Timbuctoo and Borrioboola Gha. My capital had a population of 17,000, and a member of Parliament: the grass grew in the streets, and on Tuesdays the cattle from the Hinterland came to market and ate it down. There was no Grand hotel, and no place where I could lodge; it would be necessary to take a house, and manage it. Matrimony stared me in the face. The greater part of the aforesaid Hinterland was fen district, imprudently reclaimed from the great dismal swamp. I pointed out these drawbacks to the Secretary, and he kindly suggested that I should beguile the tedium of existence by shooting gulls. It might have come to secretary-birds.

In a few weeks Providence intervened. I heard that H.M.I. at Chester wanted, for family reasons, to live near Lynn: would I change? I felt as Clive must have felt when the pistol, which he snapped at his own head, failed to go off. “He burst forth (says Macaulay) into an exclamation that surely he was reserved for something great.” Can it ever at any other time have happened that a man wanted to leave Chester to go to King’s Lynn?

With great difficulty I persuaded Sir Francis that to the Cheshire and Norfolk people it must be a matter of profound indifference whether Gyas or Cloanthus inspected their schools. Granted that Cheshire suffered loss, yet how pleasant to think of the joy of Norfolk. He grudgingly agreed, and in due course it was arranged. On October 1, 1877, I took charge of the Chester district.

We read at times in the history of great men that after some turning-point in their career they “never looked back.” I am not a great man, and in one sense I often looked back. There were many days when I thought of my successor; in winter frostbitten in the fens; in spring shivering in a dogcart, beating up against the east wind, smothered with yellow dust on Roudham Heath; at any time of the year wearily waiting for slow trains at dismal roadside stations: and at such times the old pious ejaculation rose to my lips, “There but for the Grace of God goes poor John Bradford.”

For I had got the best, or at least the most comfortable, district in England. In six months I was relieved of the eastern side of Cheshire, and my limit was a radius of from 10 to 20 miles round Chester. There were eight railway lines centred in the ancient city to carry me about, and on some of the lines trains were frequent. The school inspections had been so craftily arranged that I could spend the winter months in Birkenhead, where all the travelling was done in cabs; the spring in and around Chester, where there were hansom cabs instead of the perilous dogcart; the summer months in the more distant places at the end of my chain; and the autumn in the Wirral peninsula, between the Dee and the Mersey.

Late in the ’eighties an old colleague asked why I did not apply for a London district, and so get rid of all the travelling. There was the leading case of S. who used to inspect the four northern counties, giving six months to Northumberland and Durham, and six to Cumberland and Westmorland:

now he had a compact area in East London, a mile across one way, and a mile and a quarter the other.

"And a yellow fog by way of a change from a black fog, and absolute monotony of schools all the year round," I replied: "town children differing only in degrees of dirt; school buildings which would not be tolerated outside the large towns; and managers who take a cab to Whitehall, if they don't like their Report. And at the back, and using private and political influence at the Office, a Debating Society calling itself the London School Board. Here in Cheshire I get variety. On Monday I had a town school of 400 boys in a black hole: on Tuesday a suburban school of 150 girls in a beautiful building with a lavish supply of teachers: on Wednesday I drove 10 miles to a country village, where the whole 45 lambs of the flock were collected in what an esteemed inspector called 'a third class waiting-room and a jam cupboard.' I am going to get Monday's school shut up in 12 months: in London it would take 12 years. London! I had rather be a country dog, and bay the moon."

He admitted that the School Board was as bad as the fog. H.M.I. is all but powerless in Board Schools; the Board inspectors hold the purse strings and control the promotion, and if H.M.I. tries to raise the standard of education to the level of other towns the Board combine with the teachers to worry his life out.

"But," he added, "H.M.I. sometimes has an innings and scores freely. Did you hear about Bouncer? Member of the Board, you know: prominent educational reformer. Went down to a Board School the other day, and walked through the class-rooms. When he got to Standard V. he found them sitting upright, and a middle-aged sort of man balanced on the fireguard in front of the class.

"'Hallo,' said Bouncer, 'what is this class doing?'

"'At present,' said the middle-aged man, not liking the Bouncerian manner, 'they are doing nothing.'

"'Nothing! then they had better go home,' snorted Bouncer.

"'Not a bad idea,' said the middle-aged man meditatively.

"Bouncer was furious. 'Pray, sir,' he asked, 'do you know who I am?'

“‘Haven’t a notion,’ said the middle-aged man.

“‘My name is Bouncer, sir, John Bouncer; and I am a member of the School Management Committee.’

“‘Ah,’ said the man on the fireguard, ‘and do you know who I am?’

“‘You, sir? No, I do NOT know.’

“‘I am the inspector, what you call Her Majesty’s Inspector of Schools. Now, boys, here is teacher with the map of Europe. What is the capital of Herzegovina?’”

I thought I would do without Bouncer. No one behaved like that in West Cheshire: I should be frightened.

“And then,” I continued, “look at my playground. There are three railways to take me into Wales; eighty minutes to Llandudno, three and a half hours to the foot of Snowdon, two and a half hours to the foot of Cader Idris. Do you offer me Margate and Primrose Hill?”

So I abode in Chester for twenty-five years. This is not a biography. I got to know the whole district topographically and individually—managers, teachers, and children. A new generation of managers sprang up; many of the teachers had been children under my inspection; the children were the sons and daughters of my earliest victims. The buildings had grown up with the teachers and children; there were few, indeed, that had not been enlarged, modernised, or practically reconstructed, and many of them brought pleasant recollections of hard fought battles waged with managers for the sake of the children, or with the powers of darkness for the sake of both managers and children.

But I began to think that I had been there too long. We knew one another too well, and there was an increasing danger of my standard being regarded as the standard standard. So I mused, and waited.

CHAPTER XIV
MY LORDS

"Nay, do not think I flatter:
For what advancement may I hope from thee?"

Hamlet.

Some years ago the present chronicler and others were staying at a small hotel in a remote corner of Silesia. After breakfast the waiter appeared and addressed the linguist of the party. What did the Herrschaft propose? he should recommend the ascent of the Flaschenberg. At what hour would the Herrschaft dine?

"What does he call us?" I asked the linguist.

"Herrschaft," he said: "Their Lordships; *you* ought to know."

We were "My Lords"! Probably some Hanoverian monarch had imported the title from Germany, and had applied it to a Committee of the Privy Council. Under this sign they conquered. It took the place of the kingly and editorial WE. It called up a vision of phantasmal, coroneted heads, shaking a negative, more rarely nodding an affirmative. In front there might seem to be a Secretary, an Assistant Secretary, even a clerk: but when the suppliant got as far as "What ho! Arrest me that agency," the official vanished, and there was but a voice, "My Lords regret." "And so the vision fadeth." With this weapon they put to silence inquisitive members of the Opposition, who "wanted to know" things better unknown: with this they conquered School Boards and school managers of all denominations: with this they even tried to intimidate H.M. Inspectors themselves, who well knew that it was no lion that roared, but only Snug the joiner.

My Lords were but a Parliamentary fiction; in theory composed of the Lord President, the First Lord of the Treasury, and some Secretaries of State: in practice they had no existence; but I think the Whitehall staff had by long "making believe" persuaded themselves that they were flesh and blood. A newly appointed examiner would go to his immediate superior

with a letter from the School Board of Swaggerby, protesting against a deduction of one-tenth from the annual grant paid in respect of the Slum Street Board School: how should he reply?

"Pooh, pooh: it's Article 32, c. (3): tell them to go to the deuce." And the beardless stripling would sit down, and write:—

> "Adverting to your letter of the 24th inst., I am directed to inform you that My Lords regret that They are unable to reconsider Their decision in the matter. I am to refer you to Art. 32, c. (3) of the Code; and I am to add that Their Lordships will look for a marked improvement in the results of the next examination as a condition of the payment of any further grant."

The capital letter prefixed to the third personal pronoun always seemed to me the height of impertinent arrogance. But the examiners enjoyed it immensely; and I am convinced that, if they ever went to church and heard the petition in the Litany supplicating wisdom and understanding for the Lords of the Council, they mentally added, "Meaning US, though WE are already well supplied."

The composition of the Education Department was very simple in 1872 when I trod the corridors. At that time elementary education pure and simple was controlled from Whitehall. Science and art were the care of another establishment, which we knew as "South Kensington." The Montague and Capulet retainers never met; only they bit their thumbs when the other house was mentioned. When—in the later 'seventies—we began to clash, science and art were considered pastimes for retired officers, who had exchanged the sword for an H.B. pencil, and all sorts of majors and captains used to be mixed up with the study thereof. They used to examine in drawing, and they conducted examinations in May and December with a code of regulations of their own composing. They even invented an envelope with a fastening that reminded one of Rob Roy's purse—("the simplicity of the contrivance to secure a furred pouch, which could have been ripped open without any attempt on the spring, &c.")—and when, as occasionally happened, we were appealed to for help in superintending their examinations at the training colleges, we danced in fetters of red-tape.

It used to be told of one of the best known of the Whitehall officials, F. T. Palgrave, of *Golden Treasury* fame, that a school manager once interviewed

him on some grievance, and, getting little satisfaction, enquired whether he might ask whom he had the honour of addressing.

"Oh, certainly," said he, "my name is Francis Palgrave."

The visitor thanked him, but explained that he rather wished to know the official's rank: for instance, was his opinion final?

"Not at all," replied Palgrave airily; "I am what they call a Senior Examiner: above me are the three Assistant Secretaries, Mr. A., Mr. B., and Mr. C.: above them is the Secretary, Sir Francis Sandford: above him the Vice-President, Mr. Forster: above him the Lord President, Lord Ripon: and above him, *I believe*, the Almighty."

I served the Department, or Board, in one capacity or another and with some interval for more than thirty-five years. In all that time I never saw a Lord President, and I should often have found it hard to tell the name of the reigning potentate if I had been asked suddenly. He was always a peer: I dimly remember two dukes, two marquises, some earls, and a viscount. Barons were nothing accounted of. It was said that when Greville, the diarist, sometime Clerk of the Council, had attended his first Council meeting, some one asked a Cabinet Minister whether he had noticed that they had a new clerk: and the noble lord replied, "Not I; when the tall footman puts coals on the fire, do you suppose I notice whether it is Charles or James?" And the remark being repeated to Greville induced him to form a low estimate of the statesman.

That was very much our attitude towards the Lord President of the Council. For our master at the Education Department of the Privy Council was master of all the branches of that Vehmegericht, if I may adopt Sir Walter Scott's spelling. I believe agriculture and public health were our rivals in his affections, and it was often said that the chief knew more about cattle plague than he did about the education code. In actual practice he confined himself (as we understood) to the patronage; that is to say, to the appointment of the indoor staff (examiners) and outdoor staff (inspectors). Sometimes a Lord President would take the same kindly interest in education that his wife might take in the gardens of the family place; liking to see a good show of flowers, and at times venturing to give a hint to the head-gardener, but shrinking back if that magnate showed signs of impatience or resentment. It was even said of one Lord President that he

liked to read reports, if type-written, on educational matters; but we were warned, "you mustn't talk to him about P.T.'s and Article 68 or Circular 321: he dislikes technical details."

Alas! the Lord President is extinct as the mammoth.

The Vice-President, known in the Office as the V.P., was a much more real person. He was always in the Lower House, and quite often was chosen for some fancied fitness for the post. It was his duty to defend the Office and the Inspectors against the attacks of numerous enemies, and once a year, late in the Session, when the House was getting thin, he was allowed to move the Estimates, and to make a nice long speech. For anything I know to the contrary he may have thought that he both reigned and governed. But the ever watchful Permanent Secretary knew better. Let us hear Susan Nipper on a similar situation.

> Oh! bless your heart, Mrs. Richards, temporaries always order permanencies here, didn't you know that? Why, wherever was you born, Mrs. Richards? But wherever you was born, and whenever, and however (which is best known to yourself), you may bear in mind, please, that it's one thing to give orders and quite another thing to take 'em.—(*Dombey.*)

There was often a good deal of Nipperism in the Secretary when the temporary V.P. wanted to give orders.

The outdoor staff troubled itself very little about the temporaries. Almost every new V.P. came in like a lion, and rumours would reach us from time to time that the new man was giving trouble, and might be expected to produce a new Code. Generally the malady took the form of what we may call Circularitis,[17] and after that the patient experienced relief. When the furthest recesses of our peninsula had been made to tremble at the new policy, the afflicted man began to amend, and the disease yielded to treatment at the hands of the permanent physician. Then he went out like a lamb.

Of all the V.P.'s of my era, the most obtrusive was Mr. Anthony John Mundella. Everyone knows Tacitus' estimate of Galba, that "by universal consent he was fit for empire, if he had not been an emperor." But I doubt if even this faint praise could be given to Mundella. He was made Vice-

President, we may suppose, to pacify the Birmingham League, to keep the fussy man himself quiet, to satisfy the advanced wing of the party. And it was generally conceded that no man ever in the office was more keenly interested in education; no man more anxious to do and say the right thing. At times he soared above earth, and won admiration for his absence of pretence, and his strenuous endeavours to carry out what he conceived to be the right policy. But no one could have thought him fit to govern. He had never held office before, and neither the manufacture of hosiery, nor the part which he had played in the local politics of Nottingham had fitted him for the difficult and delicate task which fell upon him. Men in the Office said he was a pulpit-cushion thumper, and nothing more: he was incapable of deciding a case submitted to him.

Moreover, as is often the case in similar circumstances, he could not work with men above him, or below him. It was told me by one in the secrets of the Office that the Secretary went one day in subdued fury to the Lord President with a paper in his hand. "Look," he said, "what Mr. Mundella has said to me." The noble earl read it, and said soothingly, "I assure you that this is nothing to what he says to me."

The argument, if it can be so called, is a bad one; for a rude remark to a subordinate differs from a rude remark to a superior. But pity for the helpless chieftain stayed the other's wrath.

On the retirement of Sir Francis Sandford, in 1884, Mundella determined to have a secretary after his own heart. Sir Francis had recommended the appointment of one of the ablest of the Inspectorate as his successor, and the Lord President had agreed: but when this was revealed to Mundella, he protested vehemently that the Board Schools would not be safe in such hands, and insisted on the appointment of Mr. Cumin, then an assistant secretary in the Office. The President adhered to his choice, and Mundella straight-way seized a piece of paper, wrote his resignation, and handed it to his superior officer. What could be done? It is easy to say with Dogberry, "Why, then, take no note of him, but let him go, and thank God that you are rid of—an undesirable person." But the situation was difficult. Mundella would have given his reasons in the House, and would have stirred up the Radicals against the old Whigs: the Birmingham League and the Dissenters in both camps would have supported their Goliath against the Whig David: I think there was no remedy. Cumin was appointed.

It was not a good appointment; but if the new secretary did not justify his patron's praises, he equally failed to justify his expectations of favouritism. The traditions of the Office require that the permanent staff shall treat all classes and sects of schools with equal hand; and though there were many willing to cast a stone at the Secretary, I cannot remember that he was ever accused of undue partiality to one type. There were times, whoever might be secretary, when the balance seemed to be depressed on one side or the other; but it was always explained by nods, and upheaval of the shoulder that pointed to the V.P.'s room, that THOSE FELLOWS were giving trouble. In the last few months a recently emancipated secretary, who employs his well-earned leisure in theological warfare, has informed us that he "puts Protestantism before politics." I believe I am correct in saying that during his long period of service in Whitehall no one even suspected him of ecclesiastical prejudices.

This habit of mind Mundella could not understand. In office, as in business, he did not seem to run straight; but when financial troubles caused his downfall, men pitied him, because they thought his errors, there also, were errors of judgment rather than of moral sense.

Of other Vice-Presidents before the arrival of Sir John Gorst, I think Mr. Acland was the most demonstrative. He had been a clergyman in Priest's Orders, but he "renounced them all," and entered Parliament, and in 1892 was made Vice-President by Mr. Gladstone. It was said that the Premier was under the impression that his new Minister had never gone beyond Deacon's Orders, and that, knowing that the abandonment of Priest's Orders involved excommunication, he would with fuller knowledge have made another choice. Ecclesiastical law is one of the few subjects that I have never examined in, and I repeat the canonical proposition without any warranty. It may be a joke. When Mr. Gladstone is concerned, one must always remember the excellent rule laid down by a critic in the *Times*, when reviewing a book of Oxford anecdotes: "What one requires of a story (at Oxford) is not that it should be true, but that it should be suitable to the character of the man of whom it is told." (I quote from memory.) Accepting the story with this reservation, I think it was open to the new Minister to retort that the change from Tory M.P. for Oxford to Radical M.P. for Mid Lothian more richly deserved the greater excommunication.

However that may be, the new V.P. had little sympathy with his former brethren. His zeal for education was great, but whether in Whitehall or in the West Riding it has always been the zeal of the tailless fox yearning to bite the well-tailed little ones. To us inspectors much of this fury was welcome. There were many schools which we had long been anxious to close on account of the defects of their buildings, and always hitherto, whether Tories or Radicals were in power, we were thwarted by My Lords. Now we began to hope. But it was not till November, 1893, that the V.P. succeeded in forging a weapon with which to smite his foes. In that month appeared the famous Circular 321, which demanded full information about the premises of every Public Elementary School, and we spent a busy year in compiling the answers. The mesh was narrow, and if we had been properly supported in Whitehall we should have netted all the offenders. But there never was any backbone to My Lords. Voluntary Schools and Board Schools for once went hand-in-hand: the backstairs of the Office crawled with protestants of all denominations: there ensued consternation, procrastination, prevarication. In some districts we kept the fire banked up, and in a later year, with the help of the Aid Grant,[18] we moved. But it required continual stoking. Excommunicated Mr. Acland may be, but many a child has to thank him for increased health and comfort; and I trust that when he comes to work off his sentence in Purgatory, he may be able to plead these good works as an equitable set off.

The last of the V.P.'s, and the only one that I ever saw, was Sir John Gorst. Nature had not designed him for the position of second fiddler; but the Lord President, finding that his understudy, when he got hold of the first fiddle, played out of tune and threw out the band, insisted on his keeping the lower place. This amused the House of Commons, and the Duke omitted to stipulate that Sir John never should

> "With arms encumbered thus, or thus head shake,
> Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
> As, 'Well, we know'; or, 'There be, an if there might';
> Or such ambiguous giving out——"

intimate that some people could play fiddles better than others who had a great name. Then the Secretary asserted that *he* was Conductor, whoever was playing first fiddle. It was rumoured that there was incompatibility of temper in exalted circles. "What odds to Hippokleides?" we said, we others.

There came a new Code,[19] that was to put elementary education on a really satisfactory basis. This was so common a phenomenon that we hardly turned our heads to look at it: but to our amazement it was followed by an invitation to attend at the Foreign Office one March day, that we might hear the V.P.'s opinions on his new baby, and on education generally. We assembled from the Solway to the Channel, from the Irish Sea to the German Ocean. Whitehall lay down with South Kensington, and the great Hall of the Foreign Office had a novel congregation. There for the first and only time I saw a V.P. His views on education were pronounced "very crude," "amateurish," and so on; but it was a holiday, and the country paid our expenses: I think my bill came to about £4. I lunched with a Treasury clerk, who suggested that the V.P. had not spent all his "Vote," and wanted to knock down the balance, instead of refunding it to the Treasury. But it is the way of the Treasury to take low views of human motives.

The Lord President and the Vice-President have passed away. It may be that the dual control was unworkable; but there was something to be said for it. The V.P. was not a first-class Minister; the President was not a first-class educationalist. Therefore the V.P. put on the steam, and the other put on the brake. We are now better able to appreciate the value of the arrangement.

There came a change after an Act of 1899. The Education Department of the Privy Council cut the cable, became independent, and took the title of "Board of Education." My Lords vanished, and the Lord President and Vice-President were transformed into a President and a Parliamentary Secretary. The former may be chosen from either House, but the first to hold office was a noble lord who would have fitly adorned the post of Lord President of the Council. He was followed by a philosophic commoner; and he again by other commoners, whom their friends applauded, and their enemies severely censured for their activity. It may be suggested that a more experienced statesman in the Upper House might have exercised a wholesome restraining influence.

On a former page the Lord President was disrespectfully compared with the tall footman. The permanent secretary occupies the more exalted position of head waiter. It is to the head waiter that the experienced traveller pays court. He controls the loaves and fishes, and without him one may hang on and starve while others wax fat. He arranges the tables, and gives

to his chosen friends corner seats by the fire, or choice spots in the bow window commanding a rich prospect; but to the ungodly a draughty place near the door. As the older visitors drop off, it is his to move up those who find favour in his eyes, and to let the runagates continue in scarceness. If he smiles, the understrappers scowl in vain: a word to the great man will do all that is wanted. The directors, the manager who appointed him, pretend to superior dignity, and their emoluments are on a more generous scale: but in their secret hearts they admit that the key to the success of the establishment is in the hands of the *maître d'hôtel*.

These valuable, if tedious, reflections come to me too late. I never paid court to the great man: I never went near him, unless I wanted something very much. It was sufficient for me to cultivate the goodwill of the waiter at my table, though I was well aware that he would endure but for a time. As soon as I had got to know Rosencrantz he was moved on, and I had to begin again with Guildenstern. I sat in a dark corner and carefully avoided the master eye. But I was very well treated.

Presidents, V.P.'s, secretaries, and all the host that called themselves "My Lords" trouble me no more. I can sit like Amyas Leigh on Lundy and dream of my old friends and foes:

> "And I saw him sitting in his cabin like a valiant gentleman of Spain, and his officers were sitting round him with their swords upon the table at the wine. And the prawns and the crayfish, and the rockling they swam in and out above their heads...."

Shadowy presidents and vice-presidents; sturdy Sir Francis with his pleasant smile and rich Doric accent; the grim and cautious head of Cumin; sharp-tongued A., rough-tongued B., double-tongued C., honey-tongued D.

> "She lies in fifteen fathoms at the edge of the rocks, upon the sand, and her men are lying all around her, asleep until the Judgment Day."

And so I bid them farewell. Requiescant in pace, as they let me do.

FOOTNOTES:

[17] Circularitis: the symptoms of this distressing complaint are eruptions of Circulars, Memoranda, and Instructions addressed to the servants of the Department, or to School Boards, or other local authorities, and often producing great local irritation. It is said that the disease is almost wholly confined to Whitehall.

[18] Aid Grant: the Voluntary School Act, 1897, gave an ‘aid grant’ not exceeding 5*s.* per scholar, &c., to Voluntary schools. This enabled the managers to increase the teachers’ salaries, or to improve the buildings and furniture.

[19] Code: every year the Board issue a Code of regulations for Public Elementary Schools. This directs the course of instruction and fixes the annual Government grant.

CHAPTER XV
MANAGERS

"To say 'ay' and 'no' to these particulars is more than to answer in a Catechism."—*As You Like It.*

What is a manager? Generally one that manages; particularly one who manages a school. Before 1903 every school was supposed to have at least three of these potentates: over the others towered the Correspondent; in some cases there was no one behind or below the Correspondent; and when the three necessary signatures had to be provided as a warranty for the accuracy of statistical returns, the Department advised recourse to a minister of religion, a J.P., or a banker. But Squire Broadlands used to call in his wife and his gardener. They put their names where they were told, and asked no questions.

"Managing" included the appointment of teachers, general supervision of the process of Education, upkeep of the fabric, and paying the bills. Incidentally this brought with it the raising of the necessary funds. There was the weight that pulled them down.

The Correspondent was usually the Rector; or, in Roman Catholic schools, the Priest. He carried on the endless letter-writing with My Lords; secured teachers; kept them in order; and, above all, kept H.M.I. in good temper, especially by votive offerings of lunch. In Board schools the Clerk, as a rule, did all this work, except the lunch. There H.M.I. was left to the uncovenanted mercies of the charitable.

At the present day all this is changed. The so-called managers have the shadow of power without the substance: they appoint teachers, who at once pass from their control: and they have to raise money for landlord's repairs from ratepayers who are already overburdened with the expenses of their tenancy. But they have got rid of FORM IX.

What was Form IX.? In the dark ages before the Act of 1902 this was the stumbling-stone of managers and a rock of offence to inspectors. At the end of the school year Form IX. arrived at the correspondent's house, and

thenceforth sleep was banished from his pillow. There were countless questions spread over nine pages of foolscap, and arranged sometimes in horizontal, sometimes in vertical columns. For the unwary there were more traps to the square inch than are contained in any other nine pages in the world. Two pages were devoted chiefly to signatures and general declarations. (*Dolus latet in generalibus.*) Two more were for the school accounts; five remained for the statistics of the school; the size of the rooms; the names, ages, salaries, qualifications, and past histories of all the teachers; the number of children on the rolls; the number in average attendance; the number at each age between 3 and 14; and so on.

It required many hours of labour from the head teachers before it reached the treasurer: a skilful financier was the treasurer who could complete his share in a day.

At the office in Whitehall there was an army of clerks, whose duty it was to examine Form IX. and to hunt for errors and omissions. I have heard them compared with the railway men at important junctions, who tap the carriage wheels with a hammer in search of flaws or fractures; and, according to popular rumour, receive as much as half-a-sovereign if they detect a fault. But it was alleged that in the case of the clerks the reward was as low as sixpence; this, I feel sure, was a libel on the liberality of the Department.

Their Lordships encouraged accuracy by a printed warning to the effect that any mistake might involve a delay of six weeks in the payment of the grant; and as the sum involved might be £1,000, or more, and as interest on an overdraft at the bank might be running on (with a possible Bank Rate of from five to ten per cent.) this was a serious consideration.

It is often said that the Clergy are bad men of business. If this means that they have a habit, which they share with widows, and other narrow-incomed persons, of investing in speculative undertakings of the wild-cat type, I have nothing to say to the contrary. But when we get beyond this, let one who has officially been a *malleus monachorum* for many years enter a protest. In the ordinary local affairs, and especially in the control of public meetings, they are as a rule superior to the average layman, simply because they have more experience. And for this reason they—and I emphatically include the clergy of the Church of Rome—were able to fill up Form IX.

with an ease to which the unhallowed lawyer or land agent never attained. It was a solicitor who in two successive years presented me with a balance sheet showing a surplus on both sides of the account: it was an estate agent who—but let sleeping dogs lie.

When Form IX. was approximately finished, it was tentatively offered to the Inspector, and nearly all classes of managers were grateful for suggestions of improvement. The benevolent Inspector would run his eye down the pages, and would say, "Just put in 'NO' twelve times in these columns, and 'YES' thirty-six times down there;" and the thing was done. It mattered little what was thereby affirmed or denied, if the Inspector vouched it.

But this editing was often a serious addition to our labours; for it might involve a considerable amount of research and some delicate enquiries.

"Date of birth of the assistant mistress?" What a question to ask a lady! I used to soothe the patient by jestingly proposing impossible pre-historic dates, and so coming gently down to the irreducible minimum of the approximate truth. And the managers always liked to hear the old Bar story:

> COUNSEL: Pray, how old are you, madam?
> WITNESS: Well, if you *must* know, I was born in the year '64.
> COUNSEL (blandly): A.D. or B.C.?

Once a manager came to me during the inspection and asked to have Form IX. back for a minute. I produced it, and he explained: "Old Miss Grey, when she brings me the Form, always asks to have it back again, before you come, so that she may run her eye over it. Then I look at it, and I always find that she has left a blank for her 'date of birth.' She gets it back from me, fills in the date, and gives you the Form: then I get it back again to see how she is getting on, and very slow progress she makes."

"'Character of the late master?' How very awkward: after the last report, you know, we really were obliged to make a change, and people do say he was not quite—he seemed at times a little—what can I put there?"

"'Present address of the late mistress'—and she died last November. Eh?"

It was not always possible to go into these details: there might be a train to catch: and then, if anything went wrong, the manager would lay the

blame on the broad back of the Inspector. “I had Form IX. returned to me last year,” said a south-country incumbent to me: “I think Pluckham, our Inspector—do you know Pluckham?—might have corrected it for me: I gave the fellow lunch, don’t you know.” I assured him that there was no reciprocal obligation in the matter of lunch.

These were comparatively simple questions. But the accounts were appalling; and they had to be audited. Till recent years this was not much of an ordeal, for an amateur auditor was easily satisfied. I myself was witness of an audit when a treasurer presented his accounts to a friendly banker for his certificate. The skilled accountant added up the figures, and pronounced the result very good. “Now,” he asked, “what have I to certify: ‘That I have compared this balance sheet with the *accounts*, and with the *registers*’? Where are the registers?” and he seized the vouchers, and ran through them: then he signed the certificate. The school was not in my district, and I was not bound to remark that a register of school attendance is not the same as a receipted account.

In the late ’nineties a professional auditor was required, and after some experience I concluded that compound addition and subtraction are no part of an auditor’s education. But the process inspired confidence in the public mind.

When ladies and other simple souls undertook the office of treasurer, there was a chance of trouble. Two instances occur to me.

The first was in the depths of Bœotia. My sub-inspector and I had to inspect a school supported by the Earl of X., and managed by the Dowager Countess. I had been warned that her Ladyship was a little trying, and I was prepared for the worst. On the appointed day we drove a few miles from the railway station, and caught a glimpse of the Hall as we passed the lodge gates. “That’s built in the Grotto style,” said my driver, and after much meditation on this order of architecture, I decided that he meant “Gothic.” You could hardly put an Earl into a grotto.

At the school door—the school also was Gothic, but I prefer the Vandals—I was invited into a sort of lobby, which should have been the girls’ cloakroom; and there was the Countess. She was stately, but gracious. The accounts were a little perplexing; what should I advise? I suggested some trivial alterations, and then noticed that on the Income side there was no

record of “School-pence” paid by the children: if any had been received they must be entered. The Dowager scorned the idea: there were school-pence, but they had been received by the Mistress and had been kept by the mistress: I think she considered them *Korban*. In that case, I said, they must appear on both sides of the account; on the Expenditure side they must be added to “Mistress’s Salary.”

The Dowager was wroth: she clutched me by the arm, and went nigh to shake me, as Queen Elizabeth “shook the dying countess.” “My good sir,” she said with biting sarcasm, “Lord X. is willing to pay the ordinary expenses of the school, but he cannot be expected to meet these additional charges. Is he to put down in the accounts every trifling present that he has given the mistress during the year?”

I pointed out that if the children had paid the pence, and the mistress had received the pence, the Earl was safe: all that remained was to record the payment and receipt. Otherwise, I said very emphatically, the accounts would be returned by the Department, and payment of the grant would be delayed for weeks.

Her grasp relaxed. “I think I see,” she said slowly: and I escaped into the school and joined my colleague in the examination of the children. The Dowager finished her accounts by the light of my suggestions, and followed. My sub. was hearing the first class read, and at the same time was keeping an eye on the second class, to which the teacher was giving Dictation. I saw her Ladyship make her way between the wall and back row of desks, glancing over the girls’ shoulders, as they wrote: I saw her pause behind one girl, and with a suggestive finger indicate that a word was wrongly spelt: I saw my ever watchful colleague shoot out a long arm, clutch the girl’s paper, crumple it up in his pocket: I heard him continue in his cheerful tones, “Very nicely read, Mary Smith; go on, Jane Brown.”

The Countess withdrew: the Grotto Hall did not provide lunch: I would have given a good deal to hear her Ladyship’s account of the morning’s work.

“And other simple souls,” I said: for I had in my mind the strangely parallel conduct of my friend Mr. Shippon. *Citoyen fermier* Shippon was elected treasurer of the village school, and he found Form IX. a hard thing to tackle. So far his experience of public education had only taught him that

it interfered with the supply of cheap labour on farms; notably in the scaring of crows, and the dropping of 'taters. When it came before him as an offshoot of the Civil Service in connexion with a code and a balance sheet, he was—in the expressive language of north-west England—"fairly moithered,"[20] and he came to me for help. I got a slate and collected the items: income from school-pence, subscriptions, and proceeds of a bazaar—£98 11*s.* 4*d.* Expenditure on salaries, books, coal, &c.—£36 8*s.* 8*d.* Balance in treasurer's hand—£62 2*s.* 8*d.* If he would copy down those figures, he would be safe.

"Na, na, it conna be," said Shippon with much emotion: "yo've rackoned in t' skule pence, and t' governess 'as took 'em all."

"Yes," I said, "but I have included them in her salary: it's as broad as it is long."

"It conna be," he repeated very emphatically; "yo knaw nowt about it."

When a man holds all the cards, he can keep his temper, and I laughed, and left him. But I added a warning that if he didn't bring out a balance of £62 2*s.* 8*d.* he would get no grant; and after some weeks' meditation he yielded.

Managers generally were far more agreeable than these two: we got to tolerate one another, and established an armed neutrality; then we made advances on either side, and in most cases we became friends. They became part of our little solar system in our annual revolution round the district, and as the years rolled on we got strangely to associate them with the season of the year in which their school inspection fell due. "I hope, Mr. Kynnersley, you don't regard me as November," said a rector's wife to whom I had made this confession. I prevaricated, but the association of ideas was unavoidable. We never met in any other month.

There were places which I never saw except in winter: there were others which I connected with climbing roses in the village, and great bunches of wild flowers in white jugs inside the school. If I lunched with A., I had ducks and green peas: B. came in rhubarb-tart time (I hate rhubarb): C. fed me on game: D. gave me the first mince-pies of Advent. I knew the exact spot in E.'s garden where he would draw himself up to his full height and say, "November's sky is chill and drear": and I was prepared for F.'s annual

defence of the rainy weather by his cheerful cry of “February fill-dyke, don’t you know?”

It was on the way to G. that I expected to see the first lamb of March, irresponsible as a daddy-long-legs: and the big meadows beyond H. seldom failed to show the first infant colt. In May the cuckoo—but that reminds me of a story told me by one of my most hospitable managers, good old Mr. S., now gone to his rest. He was exceedingly deaf, and one talked to him through tubes and trumpets, but he bore his affliction most cheerily. One May night at dinner—he himself told me the story—his neighbour, being a little embarrassed with the trumpet, lost her head, and shouted into the apparatus:

“Have you heard the cuckoo, Mr. S.?”

“Not for thirty years,” he replied with keen enjoyment, and with his most fatherly smile.

The rest was silence.

To the Inspector, possibly to the manager’s wife, lunch was a more serious question than Form IX. Soon after my appointment I consulted an eminent London doctor about some ailment, and was given a string of dietary rules, among which one remains in my memory: “For lunch you’ll have a piece of bread and butter and a glass of cold water.” That, I said firmly, was impossible; I was an inspector of schools, and part of my official duty was to lunch with the parson of the parish. If I were to confine myself to this convict fare, I should give grave offence; and, moreover, should weaken public confidence in my judgment. Who would accept the report of a man who lunched on bread and butter, when he could get fatted calf? He admitted the plea.

My superior officer of that time never lunched with the managers: he said he liked to lunch with his own family. I was only a lodger, and a hungry one; and when the clergy found that I would gladly accept their hospitable offers, I rose in their estimation. But as work increased, this mid-day meal became a burden; and as years increased, what Homer calls “the love of meat and drink” abated; then came the end of formal inspections,[21] and for the remaining time I lunched chiefly at railway stations. Yet while the

luncheon season lasted, I had many pleasant hours, and made many valued friendships.

Many managers invited us out of pure brotherly kindness: some possibly because it was usual to "lunch" the inspector: a few perhaps with a faint hope that a good lunch might soothe the savage beast. "Ask him to lunch," wrote one of them to a brother manager on a piece of paper, which was by chance laid on the table in front of my unexpectant eyes, and read before I knew what I was reading: "*a little civility is never thrown away;*" and I was feasted royally, while my sub., who was going to mark the examination papers, was sent empty away. I enjoyed that lunch.

There were some managers who craftily tried to charge the inspectors' lunch to the school expenses. When this was detected, we ceased to lunch there. But it was not always easy to trace. I have heard of its being included under the head of "Repairs." "You can't tell what's in a bill," said a Liverpool man to me in this connexion; "did you ever hear about the Captain's horse?" I never had.

A Liverpool Captain, returning from Calcutta, presented to the owners his account for out-of-pocket expenses. Times were bad, and the owners criticised it with unusual care. There was a charge of ten shillings for horse hire: what was this? Horses from the river to the office? How far? Why didn't he walk? The Captain pleaded the climate, the custom of the country, saving of time. All in vain: the charge was disallowed.

After the next voyage the Captain reappeared with his usual account. The owners examined it minutely, and the senior partner congratulated the Captain on the improvement: that horse didn't appear again.

"He's there all right," said the Captain frankly; "you don't see him, but he's there."

A colleague told me he disliked lunching with managers because it was so unpleasant to give them a bad report after having eaten their salt. I had no such scruple, because I admitted no connection between the two things. It would be an affront to my hosts to suppose that they wished to corrupt me.

There were, of course, managers with whom one did not lunch. The hand of Douglas is his own and so is his mouth. But I never was reduced to such

strong words as were attributed by tradition to one of my predecessors, whom a squire had rather commanded than invited to lunch at the Manor. "Tell him I would rather eat my lunch in a ditch under a hedge," said H.M.I. Taken by itself without knowledge of antecedent justification this almost seems rude.

Lunch, I maintained, was extra-official: and much of our work was extra-official. After a few years in a district we became informal advisers to very many managers. We advised on sites; recommended architects; advised on the plans with the architects; recommended head teachers and assistants. Where did we stop? Was I not constantly appealed to at lunch to recommend a really nice cook, and a curate who wanted a title? I think I earned my lunches.

A remarkable instance occurs to me. In a country parish the Rector was lamenting the collapse of his school at that morning's inspection. He attributed it to the stupidity of his parishioners: his last lot in the south had been full of genius. I assured him that this was a delusion: if you cut off the heads of 50 boys in Arcadia, and 50 in Bœotia, and weighed their brains—Arcadia v. Bœotia—you would not find an ounce of difference. What he wanted was not a new horse but a new driver.

"Could I find one?"

Certainly: there was a first rate man just leaving a school a few miles away; and I gave particulars. The man was appointed at once; the school passed out of my district, and I thought no more of it. But four years later I got a letter from the Rector, full of gratitude: my nominee had effected a reformation: he had raised the Government Grant from £77 to £132, rendering unnecessary the collection of a voluntary rate. He was "good all round, in fact invaluable." In the thirtieth year after my recommendation, when the Rector had retired, and the master had, alas! broken down, I got from the former a complete history. Not only had the grant risen to £170, "it had never looked back": the master's influence out of school had been equally priceless: the parish was changed.

I think I earned that lunch.

The humorous feature of this branch of our work was that most of it was bitterly resented by the Department. They instructed us to assist managers

with advice, but the selection of good teachers and the weeding out of bad ones sadly interfered with the policy of the National Teachers' Union, and Whitehall trembles when it sees the weakest of the N. U. T.'s.

A word of farewell is due to the lady manager. There was a time when she was a prominent personage: she assisted at the inspection, and waited for hours that she might see the Inspector blundering over the "garments." She called his attention to specially meritorious stitches, and deplored the blindness of My Lords in their selection of sewing tests: she deprecated mathematics, and urged the superior claims of housewifery. She gave private information on the characters of the pupil-teachers and the children, generally hinting that the pretty ones were undesirable. And she had the strongest views about their dress, views that the male inspector regarded with lack-lustre eye. It was not only at the inspection that she appeared: in many schools she was to be found without fail two or three days a week; possibly assisting in the needlework; possibly taking a general interest in the girls: always full of good works.

Alas! her class is extinct. I think the cold disapproval shown by the professional teacher has frozen her out. Or is it that the haughty children resent intrusion? Or that the comprehensive, critical glance, which even Standard I. would cast at her dress when she entered the room, made it impossible for her to continue her visits without "making a toilette" for every visit? These are mysteries hidden from the male eye.

With the passing of the Act of 1902 came the Passing of the manager, male and female. Now there is a committee; there is a correspondent; there is a caretaker; but the greatest of these is the caretaker.

And with the other change came the passing of Form IX. as an amateur work. Part of it is done by the teachers, part by the local authority; the managers are free from it, and the inspector sees it no more.

If I thought any manager of the many who befriended me would read what I write, I would bid him farewell; and for his consolation I would refer him to the opening sentences of Dr. Johnson's Preface to his Dictionary:

> "It is the fate of those who toil ... to be rather driven by the fear of evil than attracted by the prospect of good; to be exposed to censure, without hope of praise; to be disgraced by miscarriage, or punished

for neglect, where success would have been without applause, and diligence without reward.”

FOOTNOTES:

[20] ‘Moithered’ equivalent to ‘harassed’ or ‘embarrassed,’ but much easier to spell. In Norfolk it is ‘mĩthered’.

[21] In the ’nineties annual inspections in a given month, with formal notice to the managers sent at least ten days in advance, were discontinued, and ‘visits without notice,’ paid at any time of the year, were substituted. The result was, that the managers did not know of our presence in their schools, and, unless we sent for them, we saw no one.

CHAPTER XVI
SCHOOL BOARDS

"Allowing him a breath, a little scene
To monarchize, be fear'd, and kill with looks."

Richard II.

The object of the Education Act of 1870 was to supply all England with efficient schools. If voluntary effort failed, special machinery was devised "not to supplant, but to supplement." Purists objected that "supplement" was a vile misuse of a noun as a verb. On the analogy of "complete," "complement," it should be "supplete"; but the nation shrugged its shoulders.

This machinery was summed up in the phrase "School Board"; and for thirty-two years the School Board was the idol of one party and the bugbear of another. It had the same strange effect on the morals of men that is attributed to horses. It is said that men, who in the ordinary affairs of life are honest, truthful, and temperate, lose all control over these qualities when they are concerned in the sale or purchase of a horse. And so it was with these Boards. When a question arose of the formation of a School Board, the parties on each side lapsed into heathenism; heathenism of a low type. Distorted figures and facts poured in at Whitehall, and were eventually forwarded to the Inspector "for report, and observations"; and if it had not been an unofficial act, H.M.I. would have blushed as he read them. "And then I saw what I had never seen before, Thrasymachus blushing," says Plato in his *Republic*. There was one particular combatant, a buttress and eke a pillar of his denomination, a philanthropist, and an educational missionary, who, when any question of School Boards arose, exhibited so much of what a certain Lord Justice called "the inaccuracy of Ananias" that I had to warn the Education Department to allow him a special discount. He was happy in the opportuneness of his death; for he did not live to see the Act of 1902, which destroyed School Boards and thus took away the occupation alike of iconolaters and iconoclasts.

“Ower bad for blessing, and ower gude for banning like Rob Roy” was Andrew Fairservice’s immortal phrase, and it may be the epitaph of School Boards. “I watched by their cradle, and I followed their hearse” I may add in Grattan’s no less renowned phrase: for I rocked the cradle of many Boards in 1871, and mine were two of the dry eyes that noted the interment of the Manchester Board in 1903. But happily my connection with the institution did not end there; in the Isle of Man School Boards still exist; a population of 50,000 has twenty-one Boards to superintend its education, and not less than 110 devoted men and women struggle to keep down the rates.

The advantage of the School Board system was that it provided a body of men who had an opportunity of being acquainted with the wants of the place; usually qualified by residence to attend meetings; and with large powers of raising money to carry on the work.

The disadvantage was that it put technical, skilled labour into the hands of men from whom no proof of skill was required; and in very many places into the hands of men who were manifestly skill-less. In the large towns the Board might become a Debating Society, but if it escaped this snare, it often did well. In small villages sometimes it was a farce, sometimes a tragedy. In most places, whether large or small, the real power fell into the hands of one man, either the clerk or the chairman, who managed both School Board and Board School.

Do you ask for an instance? At a Board School inspection, noticing that there were not enough desks for the children, I asked the chairman, who was present, to see that the deficiency was made good at once. He assured me that it would be done without delay.

“When does the Board meet?” I asked.

“Oh, we don’t meet: I get what is wanted and then on market-day I go down to the town, where I am sure to find the members; they are all farmers. I say to Brown, ‘The Inspector was here last week; wants some more desks; always asking for something; suppose you agree?’ And he says, ‘Whatever you think is right, Mr. Chairman.’ Then I go on to Jones, and Robinson, and Snooks, and they all agree. We don’t bother about a meeting, except once a year to make up Form IX. for your inspection.”

What admirable discipline!

The absolute unfitness for any educational work of some Boards led to strange results. Somewhere in Wales I had sent notice to a Board that I proposed to meet them at a certain place on a certain day. They sent no answer, but I kept my own appointment, and found the Board duly assembled. I began by suggesting that it was usual to answer official letters. They declared inteet they did not know where I lived, and how could they send a letter? I pointed out that the official notepaper, upon which I wrote, had the address printed at the top. This embarrassed them: but the true explanation was given to me afterwards. There was not a man on the Board who could read and write, and they had to take all their correspondence to the market-town to get the advice of the Clerk to the Guardians before they could reply. They were in too small a way of educational business to have a clerk of their own.

A parallel but more amusing case occurred in England. There was a fierce contention among the members of a Board about the site of the proposed new school, and the knot seemed worthy of the intervention of My Lords. After some correspondence I was sent down with instructions to report. It was arranged that I should meet the Board at the chairman's house (he was a farmer), and thither I went, and found him alone. And let me here remark, that a Norfolk farmer is not like a farmer in the shires. He might farm from 3,000 to 4,000 acres. He explained the arguments for and against each site, and went on to express his regret that I was not likely to meet some members of the Board.

"Where is the Rector?" I asked.

"Very ill, and confined to the house."

"I see in the correspondence file that Mr. A. is strongly in favour of the north site. Will he be here?"

"Well, I fear not: the fact is that there is an affiliation summons out against him, and, as he is an elder of the —— chapel, he is rather ashamed to show his face."

"Mr. B., the treasurer, is on the same side?"

"Yes, and I expect him here every minute: but, if you will excuse me, I would rather you saw him in the other room: I have had to serve him with a

writ for slander in consequence of some remarks he made at the last Board meeting, and we don't speak."

"Then there is only Mr. C?"

"Yes: and he promised to be here. Perhaps you could call at his house on your way to the sites? And here comes the treasurer."

I met the First Lord of the Treasury in the dining-room. "Morning, Mr. B. About that site: here is the ordnance map: you want the school to be built just there, don't you?"

"Well, sir," said he, "I'm no scholar. But whatever you think right, I am agreeable to."

I bowed him out, and returned to the chairman: "Says he is no scholar, Mr. Chairman?"

"What, John B.? No, he can't read or write."

I roared. A cricket team would have been more particular in choosing a scorer. Would I mind calling on the erring elder, and on William C.? Not at all. We sallied forth and sought them. The affiliated elder was not at home. William C. was haymaking: he was old and deaf, and the chairman reproached him in stentorian tones:

"Why, William, you did promise me to come down to mine[22] to meet the Inspector, if you never came again."

The old man grinned, and shook hands, and excused himself: "Yu see, sir, I've a dale of hay out, and I'm a bit hard of hearin, and they du all talk at once."

I gave him plenary absolution, and asked his consent to the better site. Whatever I thought right, *he* was agreeable to. And we parted the best of friends. I had tea at the farm, and went back home. I laughed all the way to the station, and in the train, and I laughed in the small hours of the night. And I recalled how I once went with a colleague to see "The Tempest." At the end of the first Act he turned in his stall and said:

"Did you ever consider what admirable materials for a School Board they had on that island? Look here:" and he showed me his annotated programme.

"PROSPERO, Tory Landlord, expert in Elementary Science, and Language, which he taught to Caliban.

MIRANDA, qualified by entire ignorance to superintend the Girls' sewing.

ANTONIO, Liberal, Leader of the Opposition.

STEPHANO, a drunken butler, representing the Trade.

CALIBAN, Agricultural Labourers' Union, Primitive Methodist interest. There you are; five members complete."

"And Ariel?" I asked, much interested.

"The tricksy spirit shall be Clerk to the Board, and shall bamboozle the lot, and My Lords too."

There are some Educationists who never get free of the shop.

Another Board annually stirred me to mirthful compassion, because I knew, and none other knew, that it owed its birth to defective arithmetic. The parish had a population of several thousands; when the school accommodation and requirements were compared in the early 'seventies, a nought got wrong, as noughts will do at times, and a deficit of 130 places was announced. The real deficit was 13, but it was no one's business to check the figures, and 130 prevailed. The parish declined to build, and a School Board was duly elected. It spent the next ten years in pointing out to the Department in London that no new school was wanted; and My Lords unwillingly agreed: but no one found out about the nought. And it was a very useful Board, and, like the young man, Godfrey Bertram Hewitt, in *Guy Mannering*, was "in a fair way of doing well in the world, although he came somewhat irregularly into it."

We often laughed, or groaned—according to our stand-point—at the niggardliness of country School Boards; but the shoe did not pinch us. Both in North Wales and in Norfolk we had to deal with many parishes where a penny rate brought in less than £10. Every third year there might be a contested election, and the cost varied from ½*d.* to 1½*d.* in the pound. Add to this the cost to each candidate, and the intolerable worry of a storm in a tea-cup, and it is not surprising that parishes thus afflicted were held up as awful warnings to unwilling subscribers elsewhere. An experienced observer in Cheshire once remarked, "If the average farmer had to choose

between the Colorado beetle and a School Board, he wouldn't know which way to go."

In all these small parish Boards there was a clerk, who charged from £10 to £20 a year for carrying on the correspondence which the rector had hitherto undertaken gratuitously. An Anglesey incumbent told me that he had offered to do the clerk's work for nothing; but the chapel leader said that nothing should induce him to entrust the work to a churchman. One Norfolk Board School had an average attendance of five children; they cost £26 apiece, and it took a 3*d.* rate to pay the clerk: the total rate was 13*d.* in the pound. A Norfolk farmer rated on his thousand acres might be pardoned for an economic zeal that was not always well directed. It was proposed in one parish to raise the salary (£40 a year) of the head mistress. "Why," said one member, "thet there young woman is gettin a matter of saxteen shellin a week: look what thet is for a young woman as hesn't only harself tu keep."

"Don't shoot them: they are doing their best," might have been inscribed on the council chambers of many Boards. It was unfamiliar and uninteresting work for most of them; and they must have spent many weary days on it. In the early days of the institution it was usual for two or three members to attend the school inspection. I think the clerk would tell them it might soften "than which what's harder? the (Jewish) heart" of the Inspector. They touched their foreheads like ploughboys, when H.M.I. arrived, and huddled together like their own ewes in nervous apprehension —near the gate. Where would this questioning end? Were the Board immune? "If yow were tu ast me some of them questions yow ast the childer," said one bucolic bulwark of education, "I'd be tarrible put about. Same time, if I had yow on my farm——"

I admitted my limitations.

Latterly they ceased to attend. In one parish I saw no member of the Board for ten years, and when it happened that the school got a lower grant than usual, the Board of the adjacent parish reproached the absentees: "Yo shuld ha loonched th' inspector: our chairman did, and us did well."

"Most people have their price," said Walpole, usually misquoted: but mine is not so moderate.

In the ’nineties, as I have said, visits without notice took the place of the field-day inspections, and we lost sight of the country Boards. Then came the great Act of 1902, which abolished all the Boards and made the county or county borough the unit, instead of the civil parish. “These our actors are melted into air, into thin air,” and the name of School Board remains only to the School Attendance Officers, the paidagogoi,[23] who, though they now represent the Education Committees, still keep their old titles among the populace.

Before I close the history, let me append a story in connection with the old triennial elections mentioned above. I read it in a Norfolk paper more than thirty years ago.

There were not fewer than five members in the smallest School Board, and, as the vote was cumulative, there were often ten or twelve candidates for the five, or seven seats. As these elections were frequent, and elections to Boards of Guardians were annual, voters and onlookers were accustomed to a long list of office seekers; and when there was a Parliamentary by-election in a Norfolk division, and the result was posted on the walls, the rustic mind was a little perplexed to find so small a field. There it was in black and white:

BROWN	3,456
JONES	2,978
Majority	478

Two yokels gazed at it and wondered.

“I ’xpact thet’s about thet there elaction.”

“Ya-as: there was only tew of un got in, though.”

“Ya-as: only they tew a’ the top.”

And the other added with an indescribable air of cunning:

“Ole Majority di’nt get many, did ’a?”

FOOTNOTES:

[22] “Mine” and “yours” in E. Anglia stand for “my house” and “your house.”

[23] Paidagogoi (see Galatians iii) were “not schoolmasters but slaves who led children to the house of the schoolmaster.”

CHAPTER XVII
CHILDREN

> "Children sweeten labours, but they make misfortune more bitter: they increase the cares of life, but they mitigate the remembrance of death."
>
> *Bacon.*

Bacon's theory is very sound, and it is one that appeals to both inspectors and teachers. There are times when the essayist labours to be short, and becomes obscure; but here his meaning is plain, as is his cipher to the American expert: children (in school) are delightful; but if you are mentally worried, or physically in poor case, they are very trying. The work (of inspecting or teaching) takes it out of you, but it is a consolation to think that death will bring you relief.

I do not speak without experience. In my first year at Chester the population of the district was about 205,000, of whom 34,000 should have been at school. In my last year at Manchester the district comprised about 880,000 people, of whom more than 150,000 were under inspection: for the Higher Grade and Higher Elementary Schools had brought in many more of the lower-middle class than used to patronise us.

Roughly speaking, I may say that for thirty-two years I spent five days a week, holidays and extra work excepted, in the study of my ever-increasing flock; their habits, their physical characteristics in connection with education, their morals and manners (if any), their likes and dislikes, their work and their play. In the course of another thirty-two years I might have got to know a little about them. For the benefit of other searchers, and that they may begin where I leave off, I record here a very small fraction of the result of my experiences in school.

The physical characteristic side is one of absorbing interest. I have long regretted that I did not give special attention to "Ears, their influence on, and indication of, character." There is room for a valuable monograph on this subject. The kindred topic of hair was my special study. I regret that my

theories on hair were received with such general incredulity that I shrink from crushing this simple record of facts by introducing matter so debatable.

Even the rough conclusions which one formed by noting the size and shape of heads were not wholly acceptable. It is not always easy at first sight of a massive brow ("top-heavy for Shakespeare")[24] to decide whether it contains brains or water on the brain. Similarly I believe in the political world the man with a swollen head is often mistaken in the earlier days of acquaintance for—but I am going beyond my last.

Let us keep to safer ground.

It was once pointed out to me that the main feature of American humour is best described by a Greek phrase meaning "contrary to expectation." This certainly is the most delightful feature of children, but it is manifest chiefly in their conversation. In most respects they are the slaves of habit, and their games are the strongest instance of this. Of all boys it may be asserted that, if Socrates were to enquire into their ideas of Pleasure, he would reduce them to "motion without exertion, and something to do with a ball." "A wheel and a ball" is tempting as a concise summary, but "wheel" would exclude horse-riding, boating, skating, and some others. If it is argued that cycling, skating, and boating connote exertion, I reply that to boys of Public Elementary School age the delightful part is the continuous motion which they get by intermittent exertion, and that they will cheerfully drag a bicycle up a steep hill for the sake of the gratuitous descent.

This great theory comprehends all English boys from top to bottom of the social ladder: in details there are points of similarity and of the opposite between the old Public Schools and the 15,000 Public Elementary Schools. The theory of periodicity is common to both, but in the former the principle which allots the summer months to cricket (or the cult of the lesser ball), and the winter to football (or the cult of the greater ball), is climatic. The "little, wee, wee" balls used for fives, racquets, and tennis, are perennial. In our elementary schools, also, there is a law of seasons, but I have never been able to formulate it, and I know of no reason for the alternations. At one time all the boys play tip-cat, which Shakespeare would call "a dreadful trade": a crusty old bachelor says "it counts fifty if you break a window, and it is game if you put out one eye of a passer-by": this apocryphal Rule I. is

the only one promulgated. At another season hoops are *de rigueur*: at another marbles: these recreations are little known "in the playing fields of Eton, where the battle of Waterloo was won." The girls have skipping-ropes, less deadly than tip-cat, but very injurious to the bridge of the nose, or the best hat of the peaceful passenger: and they have Jacks, *alias* skip-jacks, knuckle bones, astragaloi. I think hop-scotch, which drives the passer-by on to the high-road to be juggernauted by motors, is common to both sexes. The pursuit of a football, or any cheap spheroidal substitute, is perennial for boys.

In this rotation of games, then, there is resemblance of a sort. But there is a lamentable dissimilarity in the spirit of the gamesters. Our elementary boy has hardly the most elementary idea of schoolboy honour. He begins with the loathsome practice of telling tales, not to be named among Christians; A. tells tales of B., not because he hates wrong or loves rules, but to raise his own value in the eyes of the common enemy. This is to put self above the common good. From this beginning he easily arrives at the deadly vice of the working class, the incapacity for playing fair, and for playing without quarrelling. When they are boys, their cricket and football are one long wrangle; when they grow up, they not only buy and sell contests, they even attempt the life of the umpire, who should be sacrosanct as the herald. And from this blunted sense of honour comes another abominable habit, first among boys: they ask a boon—some special indulgence, perhaps—and obtain it on special terms of doing or abstaining from doing something else; but when the boon is granted they have no scruple whatever about breaking the condition precedent. Hence comes one of the ugliest features of trade disputes, the incapacity for keeping a bargain.

Here, as I said, they are the slaves of habit. It is in their speech that the unexpectedness triumphs; and the younger the child the more unexpected are his remarks. Many an inspector, many a teacher, has been reduced to utter confusion by these random shots. It was one of my own staff who came to grief in a country school in this way. He had been examining Standard II. in the multiplication table, and the village idiot was in the class. They dealt with fair success with the simpler problems, and Mr. Rackem was emboldened to soar higher.

"How much is eleven twelves?" he asked, and there was none to answer. He put it in a more searching way: "*Who* knows how much is eleven

twelves?" And the village idiot answered "GAWD," that being the generally accepted answer to difficult questions couched in that form.

In another country school I met a boy, who by reason of his wit and his wits was the joy of the rector's heart. He was in Standard III., age about nine. I gave him an arithmetic card containing, among others, the question: "How much would one million penny postage stamps cost?" George took the contract with a friendly grin, and in due time intimated that he had completed it.

"What do you make of the stamps, George?" I asked: "Is it £4,166 13*s.* 4*d.*? Yes: that is right," and I marked his paper.

George grinned a larger grin, and remarked confidentially, as he sat down again, "Thet come to a dale more nor what I'd care tu give far un."

When Mr. Bultitude (in *Vice Versâ*) was given bills of parcels to do, he was "disgusted as a business man by the glaring improbabilities of their details." George took the same view.

A colleague tells of a similar rebuff. He was examining in mental arithmetic, and took pains to adapt his questions to local industries. Picking out a big lad, he asked, "What does your father do?"

"Cotches sawmon i' th' river."

"Capital: you will be able to do this sum; 20lbs. of salmon at 3*d.* a lb., what is that worth? Twen-ty pounds of sal-mon at 3*d.*?"

"Yah: tha' wouldn't be worth a dom."

I think this is what logicians would call "Ignoratio Elenchi."

Still more unexpected was the reply that demolished the present truthful chronicler in an infant school. The mistress was giving a lesson on an elephant. It was in the days when etiquette forbade that the subject of the lesson should be directly announced to the class: it had to be approached by artful devices. Therefore she began with a question: "What is the largest animal in the world?"

CHORUS: An elephunt, teacher.

MISTRESS: Yes, quite right.

This heresy shocked me; but etiquette again forbade that I should contradict her. Yet—for *magis amica veritas*—I might, and did, interpose a question:

"Which is the bigger, an elephant or a whale?" CHORUS: A wheele.

The mistress looked scornfully at me, and returned the oblique shot:

"Is a whale an animal, children?" CHORUS: Noo, teacher.

MISTRESS: What is a whale, children? CHORUS: A fish.

I was roused to more defence of truth, though tacitly accepting the fishhood of whales: "Isn't a fish an animal, children?" CHORUS (sarcastically): Noo.

"Is a girl an animal?" CHORUS: Noo.

"Is a girl a vegetable? Do you grow them in a garden, like cabbages?" CHORUS: Noo.

"Is a girl a mineral? Do you dig them out of a mine, like coals?" CHORUS: Noo.

Now I seemed to have the landing-net ready: "If a girl is not an animal, nor a vegetable, nor a mineral, what is a girl?"

The first and second classes felt the horns of the trilemma, and they were silent: but a boy aged four, or so, rose from his seat in the third class, and in strident tones supplied the crushing answer:

"Hoo's A WENCH."

I fled into the next room.

Another story of discomfiture—more touching, because the discomfited one had not provoked her fate—comes to memory. The scene was a Sunday School. The suffering lady had hurried down on a sultry afternoon, and found her class unusually anæmic. She toiled womanfully, in spite of heat and consequent torpor, and it was not till she was faint with exertion that she seemed to detect a spark of interest. There was a low mutter, and she cheered up, as a fisherman does when after hours of nothingness he feels a timid bite.

"That is right, Mary dear; speak up; what did you say?"

"WOIPE YER FACE."

She never smiled again—in a Sunday School.

They spared neither age nor sex, and even the lookers on might be overwhelmed. This was the case at a school managed by a worthy vicar, whose most devoted ministrations were so little acceptable to his flock that his congregation had dwindled down almost to the point specified by Professor Henry J. S. Smith, of Oxford: "The attendants at Professor Z.'s lectures might be counted on the thumbs of two hands." That at least was the current rumour. I was examining Standard II. (aged eight or nine) in the rudiments of geography, and we came to the word "desert," which they defined as "a sandy plain where nothing grew." I was anxious to get at the meaning of the word, in connection with "deserted," and remembering a long-untenanted house at the end of their street, and just below the church, I put it thus: "As I was coming here I saw an empty building, all shut up, where nobody lives, and nobody goes: what should you say that house was?"

And a fatal boy replied, "The House of God."

Never before or since have I seen a good man so utterly prostrated as was that Vicar.

If I were bound by chronology, I should keep to the end a comment on my own personal appearance made by a Manchester infant. I was coming out of school at dinner-time, and far below me, as I stood on the outer doorstep, I heard a shrill cry of "HEY!" There was an exceedingly small boy, aged four or five, gazing up into my sexagenarian face and grey beard.

"Hullo, Tommy! what's the matter with you?" I replied.

The imp pointed over his shoulder at another infant, smaller and a shade dirtier:

"'Ee says you're old Father Christmas."

It was well for Tommy that he did not live in the days of Elisha: well for Tommy that the she-bears were shut up in the Belle Vue Gardens.

Not even the Diocesan Inspectors in Religious Knowledge are safe. One writes to me: "The children have a holiday after the diocesan inspection.

Alluding to this yesterday in —— school I said, ‘What is the pleasantest part of my visit to you?’

A. ‘That you don’t come often.’”

The unexpected remarks were not always humorous: nay, at times they were intensely pathetic. I once picked up a beautifully clean baby from the front desk, and planted her on my knee, while the usual lesson on the cow, or the camel was droning on. She sat there in perfect content, apparently absorbed in contemplation of her best shoes, worn in honour of the inspection. Suddenly she turned to me, and murmured, “My daddy’s been thoompin’ our baby like anythink this mornin’.”

“Gracious!” I said; “what had the baby been doing?”

“Nothink,” she said, and relapsed into silence.

It does not bear comment; it hardly bears thinking of.

Less pathetic, perhaps, but yet touching in its way, was a remark reported to me from another Infant School. A little boy was gazing at a wall-picture of a bear. The mistress asked what he would do if he met a creature like that.

“I’d run away.”

“But the bear can run ever so quick, and he would catch you.”

The infant pondered on the clumsy-looking beast; calculated its rate of speed by some method of his own, and finally replied:

“He wouldn’t; not if I ’ad my mended boots on.”

A pleasanter reminiscence from the same town. It was in the babies’ room: I was talking to the mistress, when suddenly a baby made a remark to the class-teacher, and both teachers exploded in hastily suppressed laughter. “What did the baby say?” I asked.

“She saw you coming in, Mr. Kynnersley, and she said, ‘Is that my daddy?’”

The situation might be embarrassing. Conceive it in a French novel; with the Inspector’s wife lurking in the doorway.

The answers of these infants to their own teachers were a source of endless amusement; and sometimes they were saved up for me. One teacher had been giving a first lesson to her class on some animals. "That," she said, in conclusion, "is what we call Natural History: all about birds, beasts, fishes, and insects. I will write it on the board: 'NATURAL HISTORY.' Now can any little girl tell me any fact that she has ever observed in Natural History—anything about a bird, or a beast, or a fish, or an insect? Yes, Mary, that is a good girl: what is it that you observed?"

MARY: "Please, teacher, our baby ate a slug once."

Sometimes, too, the teachers would bring us stories of our colleagues, and of the unexpected answers given to them. The unconscious humour was often prominent. It was said that one Inspector asked, "What sort of people do you think they were, who called the most northerly county of Scotland 'Sutherlandshire'?" (It may be well to state here that the proper answer is "Norwegians.") And a child answered "Irishmen."

Another H.M.I. was credited with this elaborate interrogatory:

Q. "What is that island called which from its name you would suppose contained neither women nor children?"

A. "Please, sir, the Scilly Isles."

Enough for the Unexpected. Constant familiarity with school life gave us a good deal of insight into children's ways, and in many matters we could calculate their probable course of conduct with the assurance of a weather prophet. We got to know, also, what a thin wall separates mischief from Hooliganism, and the latter from crime. In the poorer districts we dealt with children, to whom the wall was a transparent veil. In the best districts—and the remark is equally true of the great Public Schools—there is a very thin crust over the volcano. From Monday to Friday, between 9 A.M. and 4.30 P.M. conduct is exemplary. The Roman poet dreamt of the return of *Saturnia regna*, and the British schoolboy dreams of what he will do when Saturday comes again. But every evening school discipline is suspended, and the home resumes its influence. "You mustn't be too hard on these children, Mr. Kynnersley," said a wise manager of a poor school to me: "after leaving here they don't hear a decent word till to-morrow morning."

Then there is Sunday School, and the animal gets the upper hand. *Grattez l'écolier, et trouvez l'écolier de Dimanche.* It was only second-hand, and perhaps from seeing the wreckage on Monday morning, that we got to know what boy-without-cane is like.

Of later years the Sabbatical revels have been extended to week-nights. Under the names of Bands of Hope and Boys' Brigades caneless boy has had many happy hours. We used to read in the school log-books: "Nov. 14. Meeting of Band of Hope here last night: two desks wrecked, maps pulled down, and a picture broken." Nov. 20. "Meeting of Boys' Brigade here last night. Found the floor strewn with matches and cigarette ends: maps pulled down, &c."

Some Oxford men of the early 'sixties may remember a famous *Oratio Procuratoria* of the Rev. J. Riddell, honoured name to all Balliol men. Speaking of the conduct of undergraduates at concerts, he lamented that men, who at other times are perfectly well conducted, when they appear at these meetings—*nulla reverentia praepediti, fumum strepitumque edentes, barbarorum more ululantes, promiscue tumultuantur*.

Who shall say that Latin is a dead language!

Once in a boys' school, where discipline was not rigidly enforced, I was imploring the first class not to drown my voice with their conversation while I was examining the adjacent class; and the Rector's wife, who was looking on, whispered to me, "Mr. Kynnersley, do tell me; do you really think they are disorderly *now*?"

"Very disorderly," I said.

"Dear me!" she sighed: "you should see them on a Sunday."

It is not always easy for a stranger to decide whether a baddish-seeming boy has really over-topped the line which separates seeming from being. Such an one's mother came to me one day to consult me about her Jem; and from what she told me I went to the schoolmaster for further information.

"What do you think of James X.?"

"Well, sir, he is not a bad sort of boy, but he is—er—er——"

I broke in to his relief: "His mother says he is RONK."

The master jumped at it: “That’s exactly what he is, sir: he’s ronk.”

This was in the Midlands, and the word when spelt “rank” is Shakespearean. In Cheshire the positive “ronk” is not used, but the comparative or superlative is “gallus,” which in French is *pendard*. But “ronk” is a low mark for character, and when a country school board presented as candidates for pupil-teachership three boys so ronk that their last examination had been in the Police Court on a charge of arson, I thought that the bounds of charitable construction had been passed. Certainly their “offence was rank.” Nor did I think the clerk’s plea, that “there was nothing else you could put ’em to,” a sufficient excuse. I would not dwell on the proved fact that they could neither spell nor do a sum.

Choir-boys have an established reputation for ronkness. I was told of an example in my district of that date. A number of them had been out for a Saturday afternoon expedition into the country: returning on foot they found themselves dead beat, some way from home, and they had no money for rail or tram fares. The leader on the *Decani* side—he who sings up to A, and dies of consumption, young, with soft music—solved the difficulty. He went to the nearest house and rang the door-bell. Full of fictitious strength they ran for a hundred yards. Another ring, and another run, and so on *da capo al fine*.

I wonder whether he was a ronk boy who discomfited the butcher. It is often charged against our schools that they do not give a practical education, equipping a boy to fight the battle of life. But the lamb of my flock, of whom I am thinking, was a remarkable proof to the contrary.

The butcher had advertised in Monday’s paper for “A Smart Lad.” That same morning a candidate applied.

“What name? Age? Been to the Board School? Passed your Standards? What’s four eights? Ah, and seven eights? Fifty-six? Good: seem a smart lad. Got a character? At home? How long to get it? Twenty minutes? Run and get it, and if it’s all right, I’ll put you on in the morning.”

Thus the butcher. In *ten* minutes the smart lad returned.

“Got back already? You *are* a smart lad. Thought you said it would take twenty minutes, and you’re back in ten.”

The smart lad grinned. “It ’ud take me twenty minutes to get *my* character, but I got yours in ten, and I ain’t coming. G’Mornin’.”

These veritable histories, I see, on looking back, are almost wholly concerned with boys and infants: where are the girls? It was constantly impressed upon me by ladies interested in schools, that I, as a mere man, was wholly unfit to be entrusted with the inspection of girls’ and infants’ schools. It was even thrown in my teeth that I, being a miserable old bachelor, could know nothing about children of any kind. This was the argument of Constance (*King John*, Act III. sc. iv.) to the Cardinal:

> “He talks to me that never had a son.”[25]

And this was the view of Mrs. Gamp, when she contemplated “the unconscious Chuffey”: “Drat the old creetur,” said that skilled practitioner, “he’s a layin’ down the law tolerable confident too. A deal he knows of sons or darters either.”

The taunt of inexperience is applied to others besides school inspectors. A clerical (bachelor) friend of mine found a woman in his parish feeding her three-months’ old baby on kippered herring and tea. He remonstrated, and she turned indignantly upon him:

“I should think I’d ought to know more about babies than you, seein’ as I’ve buried seven of ’em.”

Peritis credendum est in arte sua.

Now I should be loath to assert that I know anything about children. Some one in Sophocles (I think it was a Chorus in the *Antigone*) remarked that “of all weird things in nature Man is the weirdest.” And by reason of his unexpectedness Child is weirder than Man. But comparing my ignorance with female ignorance of Child, I do not see that I have any natural disqualification by reason of sex. And when my critic has been a maiden lady, it has been difficult to repress the obvious repartee.

I might add that so strong are the chains of custom that these critics, if they wished to crush me by an appeal to authority, would bring forward none but the names of men. In French, it has been unkindly remarked, *ange* is always masculine, *bête* always feminine: there is no *belle-ange*, no *bête-noir*: and so “Writer-on-school-method” is always masculine. This should

be seen to. Lancaster, Bell, Pestalozzi, Fröbel, Herbert Spencer—are there no she-prophets? If "Man marks the earth with ruin, his control" should stop short of girls' schools.

Far be it from me to dispute the point here. It may be on account of this inability to understand girl, that I have only one anecdote in stock for my 50,000 daughters:

The Squire's wife at Exhurst is not pleased with the manners of the girls, since *that* Miss A. took charge of the school. The other day Her Excellency met Mary Hodge in the lane, and did not meet with due reverence. She went on to Mrs. Hodge's cottage, and made complaint: "I met Mary in the lane just now, and she didn't curtsey to me, and I *do* think, &c., &c."

"Well, ma'am," said Mrs. Hodge, deprecatingly, "you see curtseying's gone hout now; but if you'd 'a *sloped* to our Mary, I'm sure she'd a' sloped to you."

Dear girls! I have no stories to tell of them; but though they did not lend themselves to humorous treatment, they were very delightful; and there was not one among the whole 50,000 who would have changed me for Tabitha Brown, or Priscilla Jones, or Minerva Robinson.

FOOTNOTES:

[24] Dickens: *Little Dorrit*.

[25] And so Macduff: "He has no children."

—*Macbeth*, Act IV. sc. iv.

CHAPTER XVIII
INSPECTORS

"Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

Daniel xii. 4.

Not so much Inspectors, as H.M. Inspectors: that distinction was always present to the mind of a self-respecting H.M.I. The indoor staff fell back on the imaginary peerage, which they called "My Lords": the outdoor staff went straight to the fountain of honour. And when on some sudden emergency I called at the house of an exceedingly deaf Rector (who had forgotten my face) and shouted through a trumpet that I was THE INSPECTOR, I was a little hurt to be asked "WHAT OF?" I fear he ranked me with my esteemed colleague in the other nuisances branch.

There were strange rumours thirty years ago of the all but regal position assumed by the pioneers of inspection. And no doubt they received much encouragement in country districts. In one corner of Bœotia I found a surprising instance of this homage. I had spent the night at "The Lion" at Littletown; the accommodation was humble, but sufficient; the bill presented in the morning was aspiring, and more than sufficient. I suggested some abatement and got it. Two or three years afterwards my successor proposed to sleep at "The Lion," but prudently enquired beforehand whether they were likely to make him comfortable. The landlord assured him there was no cause for alarm; he had been patronised by Royalty. On further enquiry it appeared that the Royalty was ME. *L'état, c'était moi.* Thanks to large envelopes, "On Her Majesty's Service," addressed to H.M. Inspector, and unsoiled with the common postage stamp, I had been raised to Royal rank, and the reputation of the hotel and its charges had risen accordingly. I fear those loyal spirits are more cautious now.

In a leading article in *The Times* I read one day that a fact, which the writer had just discussed, occurred at a time "when Inspectors of Schools were really men of mark." And about the same time I read in a novel by a lady writer that the objectionable young man of the story had got "one of

those appointments which require no special capacity, such as an Inspectorship of Schools." In the latter case I took pains to find out in what Inspector's district the lady lived: and I discovered that her tyrant was one of the most amiable and most exemplary of men. Among other qualifications for the post he had the voice of a turtle-dove afflicted with tonsilitis; and as a preacher—he was in Holy Orders—he was inaudible at a distance of twenty feet from the pulpit. It is recorded of him that one Sunday, after he had been preaching in a strange church, the verger, or beadle, met one of the clerical staff, who had been engaged elsewhere, and said, "You 'aven't missed much to-night, sir; we 'ad a bee in a bottle."

I cannot think how this colleague can have offended the lady: unless she sat under him. Her criticism betrays a sense of personal resentment.

The complaint that things and persons are not what they were is familiar. It must have frequently been made by Eve, after her change of residence, and in the family of Noah it would be the merest commonplace. "What pterodactyls we used to have before the Flood!"

But there is some justification for the lament of *The Times*. There were two or three Inspectors of Schools who were more distinguished than any whom I have known in later years. Dr. Temple, and Matthew Arnold, for instance, gave lustre to the office. But the former was "Inspector, chiefly of Training Schools" (*Life*, Vol. I., p. 97) for only two years; and the latter was —to put it in most courteous terms—more efficient on the literary side. "Mr. Arnold inspects our school in Westminster," a London school manager said to me. "Of course we are much honoured, and the managers make a point of attending to meet him. He arrives in the course of the morning; shakes hands with the managers and teachers; and talks very pleasantly for a few minutes; then he walks through the classes between the desks, looking over the children's shoulders at some exercises, and so makes his way to the door, and we see him no more."

His letters in his *Life* give some plausibility to the story: his heart was not in the work, and the drudgery was distasteful. But he wrote admirable Reports in the Blue Books: there is a volume of these collected Reports before me, and I think no one reading them would detect any lack of experience in the writer. He did what we were strictly forbidden to do, and what lesser lights were afraid to do; he freely criticised the Code, and freely

suggested improvements. And throughout there ran the three threads of humour, irony, and hard common-sense. Is it possible that my London friend slightly embellished his account? When managers got bad reports, they were dreadfully untruthful.

Mr. M. Arnold's other mission in the world of education was to supply the Office with amusement. The most detestable of our obligations was to compile a weekly diary, forwarded to Whitehall every Saturday, showing the daily employment, and the daily expenditure on travelling expenses—which the Treasury repaid. "Vex not thou the poet's mind" said his great contemporary; and it may be that such minds require special consideration, when striving to deal with prosaic details.

> "Who knows what 'things unknown' I might have 'bodied
> Forth,' if not checked by that absurd Too-too?"

sang Calverley, when his neighbour played on the "crumpled horn." And in the office the Too-too was represented by a clerk, whose mission in life was to return these diaries to negligent Inspectors with pertinent or impertinent queries. "Why not travel by train instead of taking a cab?" "Why go round by C. to get to B.?" and so on. When in my latest days forty-five of these hateful diaries came to me weekly, I began to see the standpoint of the clerk: but in 1875 the Senior Inspectors had no such offensive duties: "they themselves were custodianed."

Arnold's district consisted of Westminster and Edmonton, a ridiculous grouping. His official address was "The Athenæum," and he lived, I believe, at Esher. By the Treasury rules, if his work at Edmonton required his attendance for two or more consecutive days, he was bound after the first day to spend the night there, or to refrain from charging his train and cab fares home again. Being a poet, of course he returned home, and charged his fare every day. "The knight of the Blue Pencil," as he called his enemy, sharpened his blue pencil, and wrote—"Mr. M. Arnold, H.M.I. Why not stay at Edmonton?" And the great man plaintively replied: "How can you expect me to stay at Edmonton, when John Gilpin[26] couldn't?" The account was passed.

I imagine that his rule was lenient. A colleague told me how they sat together at Whitelands Training College (where the girls have the rude wind of education tempered to them by the study of Ruskin, and the cultus of the

maypole) and listened to "Recitation," which at school we called "Lines." The prosaic colleague, looking over the poet's marks, noticed that every girl had got the highest mark possible, and he commented on this monotony of excellence. Arnold merely purred—"they are such charming girls."

Of these two great men Dr. Temple represented the clerical inspector, who in those days inspected the National schools: Arnold and a few more laymen took the Protestant Dissenters, and the British and Foreign Society's Schools. A still smaller body visited the Roman Catholics. The clerical inspectors were men who had aspirations above parochial work, and souls above common-room life. The laymen were men who wanted a fixed income and congenial work, and saw neither floating on the surface of any of the ordinary professions. It must be borne in mind that inspecting schools was only part of the early inspectors' work: they were missionaries over all the land, and did much to stir up men and bodies of men to take an interest in education. Men of high attainments and diplomatic powers would be most valuable at such times, and if the country got them, whether clerical or lay, the country was fortunate.

There were others famous in the land besides the two above mentioned; Brookfield, Bellairs, Fitch, many more. There were also some very inefficient persons. A clergyman who dislikes the profession which he has adopted, is not necessarily the best man for the profession which he chooses for his second string. A layman who sees no prospect of success in the learned professions, need not be the best critic of the teaching profession. On the whole I think it safe to say that if we have fewer men of remarkable talent, we have fewer men of remarkable unfitness.

There were many anecdotes of the giants of old. In one county stories of the eccentric Mr. Goodheart still survive. A country rector told me some:

"Mr. G. frequently stayed here for the inspection of my school. In those days there was no such system of pupil-teacher examinations as you have now (he referred to the monthly examinations, long since dropped): the Inspector examined the candidates at their own schools, or at any convenient centre, and set his own questions. He always came to the parish school here on a Monday: slept here that night, and took St. George's school next day, examining the pupil-teachers where he could. One year he asked me to allow the P.T.'s of both schools to come up to the Rectory at

6.30 to be examined, and of course I agreed. I was only thankful that he didn't fix 6.30 A.M. When they came, he put them in my study; gave them questions on paper in Arithmetic, Grammar, Geography, and History; and then joined me at dinner."

"What?" said I; "and left them in the room with all your books?"

"Oh yes: he wouldn't trouble himself about a little thing like that. Well, we dined, and we had some wine that he liked, and then he told stories about My Lords: you all do that, don't you? And time went on. About ten o'clock the study bell rang, and the parlourmaid came in with a grin, and a message: 'Please might the teachers go home?' Old Goodheart had forgotten all about them.

"At St. George's his proceedings, which never varied year by year, would have surprised you. He went first to the Boys; heard some Reading; picked out some pieces for Dictation; and gave the master a lot of Arithmetic cards to deal out. Then he went to the Girls, and did the same. Lastly he went to the Infants, where he chatted with Miss Buxom, who was a great favourite of his, till 12 or so. He wound up by returning to the Boys' and Girls' schools, and collecting all the Dictation and Arithmetic which had been done in his absence: also he marked the slates. The school was done."

This took away my breath for a minute. Every "pass" was worth four shillings up to 1876, and the teachers usually got half the grant. They would not help the children, as a rule, though I have twice seen that done; but would they prevent copying?

The Rector's eyes twinkled: "Well, we used to get better grants and better reports too from old Goodheart than we do from you."

Odd trick: honours easy.

There were many legends also in three districts of the Rev. Mr. Bluffer, H.M.I. He was of the common-room don type: formerly, and still *gourmet*: formerly rough to undergraduates; now rough to managers, teachers, and children; but withal combining a certain human element and a liberal hand in spending his own money. "Why," I once asked, "did not the managers rise up, and demand Bluffer's head on a charger?" And the answer was, that the old sinner would at times wash down his advice and criticisms with cheques in aid of struggling schools.

There was need of some washing. The Secretary of the Department told me, some time after Bluffer's death, a story of H.M.I.'s behaviour in school. The master was an elderly man of the village pedagogue type, and his fumbling ways were a little irritating to an official in a hurry. The first class wanted reading books, and the old man went off to fetch them; searched in one cupboard unavailingly; found them in another; collected them; piled them up in his arms, and limped back.

"LOOK ALIVE, MAN!" shouted Bluffer, with a vigorous slap on his fat thigh. The master jumped: down went the books, and the children roared.

The manager, who told the story to the Secretary, was a peer of the realm, and a wealthy one. I think if he had kicked Bluffer out of the room—say 40*s.* and costs—and had let the Government grant go hang, he would have enjoyed himself more on his death-bed—and thereafter.

But yet, as I said, there was a human element in Bluffer. From another country school after the inspection the mistress wrote to her former headmaster:

"Her Majesty's Inspector has been here. He was in a lovely temper. When he had done, he kissed all the boys, and all the girls: then he kissed the pupil-teachers; and last, but not least, he did not omit your humble servant."

"*On ne s'arrête pas dans un si beau chemin*," said Mr. Pleydell, when he saluted Julia Mannering after Lucy Bertram. It reminds one also of the old cottager who learned for the first time that Solomon had had all those wives: "Lor, sir, what blessed privileges them early Christians had."

Bluffer's last district was in a large town, and a friend of mine was a manager of a school therein. When the day of inspection arrived, the rector was away, and my friend, being senior curate, was left to receive the great man. He knew Bluffer by reputation, and with commendable prudence enquired at the Inspector's London club what, as Mr. Weller would put it, "was his partickler wanity." It was oysters, and oysters accordingly were laid in. On the appointed day the curate approached the official, explained his position as vicegerent, and proffered hospitality. The inspector hesitated: to lunch with a curate was hazardous, and, indeed, *pessimi exempli*: but this curate was a Fellow of his college, and had "sat at good men's feasts, and

from his eyelid wiped a tear" when the cook fell short of excellence; it was a long way to the hotel: on the whole he thought he would venture.

"And when he came to my lodgings," the curate reported, "and saw the oysters laid out on the table, *and the brown bread and butter*, his face lit up with a heavenly smile, and the report was excellent."

No such mitigating features were noted in Snarler's reputation. Perhaps it was malice that attributed to him the appalling statement, "I never feel that I have done my duty in school unless I have left the mistress in tears." It is not likely that he made the statement, or that, if he did, he meant it. But such stories are not told of amiable men. "Men must work, and women must weep," but the actions, if concurrent, must not be causal. "It is better that women should greet than bearded men," was Ruthven's theory; but his methods were considered rough, even in Edinburgh, even in the sixteenth century.

Let it not be supposed that the modern type of inspector is wholly free from folly and vice. I could unfold several tales, but *de viventibus nil nisi bonum* is a safe motto. Whether ancient or modern, in my somewhat lengthy experience, H.M.I. is not generally beloved. At one time I used to attend an annual dinner, where the great majority of guests were clerical. They would come to me, one after another, with the same story:

"Are you still inspecting schools? Still in the same district? Do you know our man, Mr. M. or N.?"

"No; we never meet our colleagues outside the Division."

"Ah, dear me: I wish *you* would come to us instead. Our man is very unpopular; requires *so* much in the way of improvements. Why, what do you think he did last March?" &c., &c.

It was pleasant to think that on that summer day all my school managers were wandering about England, making the same complaint about me.

It is a pleasant profession for a peaceably-minded man. If I were asked to state its principal charm, I should say it is Irresponsibility. The income is moderate, but sufficient and certain. In the dim and distant future looms a pension, assuring bread and butter. The standard of comfort, therefore, is assured: unfruitfulness of honest work does not threaten poverty; Patients, clients, customers, cannot leave one.

But the chief comfort is that there is no personal worry. A doctor grieves that his patients die; a barrister gnashes his teeth at the blind stupidity of judges and juries, who heeded him not; a parish priest lies sleepless o' nights, sorrowing for the wickedness of Crooked Court, notably for the backsliding of hopeful converts. But the entire collapse of the arithmetic in Crooked Court Board School would not deprive the "irresponsible, indolent reviewer" of a moment's rest. The work is often very heavy, but it is not work that kills: it is worry.

FOOTNOTES:

[26] A colleague insists on a variant: "when John Gilpin's *horse* couldn't."

CHAPTER XIX

CHAUNTERS'

"I heard once more in college fanes
The storms their high-built organs make,
And thunder-music, rolling, shake
The prophets blazon'd on the panes."

In Memoriam.

Without any choice of mine, except in one instance, it has happened that since I left school, in 1860, I have always lived in cathedral cities. Oxford, London, Bangor, Norwich, Chester, Manchester in turns have been my dwelling-places. The cathedral city aspect of London (the above-mentioned exception) is little considered: only of Chester and Norwich can it be said that the atmosphere is Close. There bishop, dean, and canon in residence are persons to be reckoned with. Even the minor canon, a young man who comes with a tenor or baritone voice, and goes away with a wife and a living, receives in many quarters the brevet rank of canon, and is a welcome guest if he can sing comic songs in the drawing-room.

An Oxford college about the year 1860 instituted "Choral Scholarships," with the view of attracting undergraduates, who should be able to take an intelligent part in rendering the choral services for which it was so famed; and the wag of the period unkindly described them as "*Vox et praeterea nihil*." This is possibly true of some minor canons also, especially of those who are gifted with a tenor voice: for nature bestows this supreme gift with so sparing a hand that she can hardly be expected in every case to add wisdom. I cannot remember that I ever met a minor canon with a *basso profondo*. But baritones abound, and when they, or the tenors, retire to their country living, there is much lamentation in the Close.

One such glorified minor canon I used to meet annually. The Reverend A. Chaunters had risen to the rank of precentor[27] in a southern city: let us call it Sudchester: then he had been offered the snug rectory of Q., and in that country parish he had spent many happy years.

His cathedral days shared a fond place in his memory with his undergraduate days at Oxford. I think, if I may be allowed the vain thought, that it really pleased him to get me to lunch every autumn after his school inspection: and with coffee and tobacco to prolong the session till the October twilight warned me to go.

It was my part to tell him year by year of the Cathedral services in the city in which I dwelt; of Services[28] by Stainer and Stanford; of anthems by Gounod, Stainer, and Martin; of the surpassing merits of the organist and choirmaster. He would respond with chronicles of Magdalen and of New in the 'forties and 'fifties; of Elvey and Corfe; and of the Musical Society in which he took an active part; and then of the much-loved cathedral, where he was precentor; of the wonderful tenor, and of the surpassing boy who sang Rossini's "Inflammatus"—"with the C in alt, you know"—and Mendelssohn's "Hear my Prayer." He would fetch out old folios, worn at the edges and weak in the back; and looking lovingly through them, he would ask, did I know "I beheld and lo," *Blow*; and "They that go down," *Attwood*? Had I ever seriously studied Purcell? Ah-h.

Then it was mine to tell him of changes in Oxford: of new buildings, even of new colleges: and it was his to bring up memories of (I forget what) college, where he matriculated before I was born. He was there at the time of the "Oxford Movement." He had heard the sermon of Pusey which was condemned: he had sat under Keble: under John Henry Newman himself. He must have continued at Oxford as Chaplain of New, Magdalen, or Christ Church after he took his degree, for he remembered the day in 1845 when Bounder of Queen's met him and said, "Have you heard that Newman has gone over at last, and a good job too?" That was John Bounder, who afterwards was Archdeacon of Nevermindwhere, &c., &c.

A little prompting from me would set the old man a-gate (in Cheshire phrase) with a crowd of memories of his cathedral life; so varied that I suspect that, like many in their anecdotage, he assimilated the experiences of others.

Of his Dean he had much to say. The very reverend gentleman had been incumbent of a town parish, where Evangelical views prevailed, and cathedral services were new to him. It was said that after watching the choir

for some days he summoned the precentor (that was Chaunters' predecessor) to the Chapter House, and began after the method of Socrates:

"Mr. Precentor, I'd be glad to know whether your choir is paid to sing, or to stand and do nothing?"

"Certainly, to sing, Mr. Dean."

"Because I have been watching 'um for four days now, and I've come to the conclusion that there's an organised conspiracy among 'um. In the Psalms, for instance, ye'll see 'um taking it in turns; one side singing a verse, and then resting, while the other side sings; so that half of 'um are idle all the time. It's an organised conspiracy; nothing else."

The precentor explained the antiphonal method, and the canon, who was present, rather staggered the dean by assuring him that this method was practised by the early Christians in the days of Trajan.[29]

After this the dean was quiet for some weeks: then he broke out again on the precentor: "I've been looking a good deal lately at your list of Services, and I notice that ye give us too much in the same key. There's Kempton in B flat, and King in B flat, and Boyce in B flat, and so on. Couldn't ye give us a little more variety?"

"By all means, Mr. Dean," said the precentor: "glad to see that you take so much interest in the music."

He withdrew, and revised the list for the coming week: there were four Services (out of fourteen) in the objectionable key, and in each case he erased B flat and substituted A sharp. Thus amended, the list was printed and submitted to the dean, who was pleased to express his gratitude that his suggestion had been adopted.

"Your precentor, I presume, didn't explain that an organ has only one note to represent A sharp and B flat," said I, anxious to let my host know that I saw the point of his story.

"Not he: he was a man who enjoyed a joke, and sometimes made one, when he would have done better to hold his tongue till he got outside. I remember one day, an old canon had died; he had always been in money difficulties, and had left a family very poorly provided for. The precentor

came in just before service with a hymn-book, and suggested that the canon in residence should choose a hymn suitable to the melancholy occasion.

"'To be sure,' said the canon pensively, turning over the leaves in a vague way: 'there's a beautiful hymn beginning:

'O let him whose sorrow
No relief can find—'

"'The very thing,' said the precentor:

'Trust in God and borrow.'[30]

"'That is what *he* would have done.'"

Chaunters' cathedral, he said, stood in the midst of a Close: there was the palace, there was the deanery, there were the houses of the four canons. Even the minor canons presumed to occupy modest dwellings or lodgings in the sacred precincts. There also was the devout centurion, Colonel A., and there the retired Admiral B. There, too, were godly matrons and still more godly spinsters, who revered the cathedral, adored either the bishop or the dean, associated with the canons' families, and patronised the minor canons.

The canons were appointed by the Crown. The King can do no wrong, but he may be misguided. One canon was the head of a college at Oxbridge; he "resided" at Sudchester in the Long Vacation. When October came, it brought with it the incumbent of a huge London parish, which he neglected till Christmas. Then came the archdeacon, who indeed never went away, for the Close was his home. The fourth was a voluble Irishman who had obliged his political party—Chaunters did not tell me which party—at a critical time, and had received his reward in the form of a canonry; though he was of opinion that a deanery would have been more fitting, and his wife criticised with some acerbity two recent appointments to the episcopal bench.

The archdeacon, I have said, was a fixture; the others let their houses, when they were not in residence, and thus added a modest sum to their revenues. Two of them sided with the bishop, who was High; the others with the dean, who was Low. Chaunters was epigrammatic and symmetrical in his account.

Just outside the Close, for the convenience of his music pupils, lived the organist, Dr. Pedler, whose Services—Pedler in C, and Pedler in E flat—are as well known as his anthems, "Oh my soul," *Pedler*, and "Great and marvellous," *Pedler*. He even wrote an oratorio, called Sennacherib. It was performed by the local Philharmonic Society, and Part I. was favourably received; but in Part II., when they came to the tenor and bass recitative (D minor) "And when they arose" (too-too) "early in the morning" (too-too) "behold" (burr-r-r) "they were all dead corp-ses" (vum-vum on the 'cellos), there was smothered laughter in the middle of the hall: and the really fine aria for the tenor,

"For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast"

was interrupted by guffaws from the back seats, where the humour of the recitative had more slowly penetrated. The dean, too, gave it to be understood that the blending of the Book of Kings with Lord Byron was hardly becoming in a cathedral official, and Sennacherib perished.

"It was a pity, though," said my host, "for that tenor air, sung by Sims Reeves with extraordinary power to a harp obbligato accompaniment, should have carried it through." And the old gentleman sat down at the piano, and made as though he would play it; but he laughed sadly, and muttered, "No Sims Reeves, and no harp here," and went on with his memories.

"This soured the organist, and he developed unsound opinions about the Close. His enemies even said that he voted for the Whig candidate at a Parliamentary election: but this was before the days of ballot voting, and the base slander was easily disproved. He was a freeholder under the old statutes of the cathedral, and neither dean nor bishop could touch him."

"*Quamdiu bene se gessisset*," I interposed, knowing the Rector's affection for an easy bit of Latin.

"Just so," he answered, rather uncertainly, and continued.

"Pedler's special aversion was the Irish canon; partly because he had led the laughter that slew Sennacherib, and had even asked why Sims Reeves had not a Jews' harp to accompany him: partly because it was known to Pedler that the Canon spoke of him as the 'great and marvellous' one, in allusion to the anthem above mentioned: but chiefly because by the statutes

of the cathedral his enemy was precentor, and got £600 a year for his office. [31]

"'Paddy Windbags,' he would say—for by that opprobrious name he designated his enemy—'doesn't know the difference between the Cruiskeen Lawn and Winchester New; and with his canonry, and what he gets by letting furnished apartments here, when he is on the stump in Mudborough, he gets as much as all the men and boys on the *Cantoris* side put together.'

"'And there's that Cockney chap,' he would go on, 'got a living in London worth goodness knows what; population 15,000; takes a holiday in September, because he is so hard worked, and *then* comes down here for three solid months with thirteen old sermons in his pocket to fire at the cathedral congregation. Three months with two hours' work a day! YAH!'

"All gone now," Chaunters sighed; and there was a pause.

"Did I ever tell you about old Dick the blower?" he resumed: "Dick had been blowing the cathedral organ for thirty-five years; it was all done by hand then; and the story was that he knew the Services and anthems so well that he could tell exactly how many fillings of the big bellows went to each. He had a rough copy of the Service List hung up in the recess where he worked his lever, and a glance at that sufficed. One afternoon, when the First Lesson was running down, he looked at the list to see what 'Magnificat' was on; it was Rogers in D; and he muttered 'sixty-four,' or whatever the number of pumpings was, and in due course he blew sixty-four times. But by bad luck it happened that an eminent musician had turned up, and, to impress him, the precentor had taken off Rogers in D, which is a short affair, and put on Attwood in C, which, you may remember, has a long Gloria at the end. Having blown his sixty-four, Dick had emerged from his den to stretch his legs, and, long before the Gloria was finished, the organ was as dead as Sennacherib. Dick was puzzled, but conscious of right; and when, during the Second Lesson, Pedler came raging down-stairs to know what was wrong, Dick was ready: 'What 'ave I bin a doin' on? Why, what 'ave you bin a singin' of? *Hattwood in C?* What does it say on that there list? DOCTOR ROGERS in D, and I blowed Dr. Rogers in D. If you'd 'a said Hattwood in C, I'd 'a blowed accordin'."

Pedler admitted contributory negligence.

Concerning vergers, Chaunters had countless tales; but he robbed all the cathedrals in England of their local vergers and domiciled them all in Sudchester. It was not his verger, but a St. Paul's man who objected to private devotions on the ground that they had services at 10 and 3.30, and didn't want no fancy work. It was a Canterbury verger who bade a private devotee rise from his knees, and apologetically remarked to a bystander that if he didn't stop 'em he should 'ave 'em prayin' hall hover the place. It was a Belgravian verger who warned the lady not to leave her parasol about while she looked at the painted windows, "because Private Devotions comes in at 11, and they halways steals." It was in a northern cathedral that the vergers complained to the dean that the organist, by playing on the organ when there was no service going on, distracted the visitors so much that they wouldn't go round the chapels and tombs.

"So that," replied the Dean blandly, "not only this our craft is in danger to be set at naught, but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised."

It was at that same northern fane that a recently appointed verger, who had left a good place to assume his gown, on being invited by his exceedingly respectable master to return, said, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness." It was in a still more remote cathedral that the old verger, on being informed by the canon that the stranger whom he was showing round was an Ecclesiastical Commissioner, one of the family of Shalmaneser, hastily moved to the visitor's right side, and explained that he kept his money in the pocket which he thus removed out of danger.

But all these and many other equally veracious anecdotes did my host affiliate on Sudchester, and I said no word of reproof. All vergers work on the same principle, that the cathedral exists for their benefit, and that they should be supreme. It follows that vergers' stories are interchangeable.

He had stories of parish clerks, which in like manner he localised in the adjacent parishes. Most of them are in print, but one purely Cheshire story, dating from 1866, has possibly been forgotten, even in the county. I will risk it after forty-two years.

It was at the time of the cattle plague, when Cheshire farmers were threatened with absolute ruin, that in a country church one afternoon the

choir burst into a pathetic hymn, of which I remember only one verse:

"There's not a cow, or ox, or beast,
But takes it out of hand;
And soon we'll have no beasts at all
To dwell within the land."

The farmers wept bitterly, and said it was too touching: but the Rector said to the clerk, when they got into the vestry, "Why, Thomas, what was that psalm you were singing? Was it one of David's?"

"Deevid!" said the clerk in bitter scorn, "Deevid never wrote hanythink loike that in hall 'is born dees: that wur a bit of *moy* puttin' tergether."

I remember how I pleased the old man by capping his story with a Midland counties' story, told me by the vicar concerned therein:

They had begun the Athanasian Creed, and in the front seat, right before the old three-decker of pulpit, reading-desk, and clerk's pew, stood an old man searching in vain for the unaccustomed formulary. The vicar hastily whispered to the clerk below him, "Find his place." The clerk obeyed, and then half-turning round muttered with withering contempt:

"Whoy, 'ee were a-rootlin i' the Psawms!"

Of course these varied reminiscences were not all produced at one meeting; they were spread over many years, and some recurred more than once, more than twice. The story about Dick, the blower, for instance, was a hardy annual, and if the Rector had not produced it in any year, I should have been aggrieved.

FOOTNOTES:

[27] His official rank was succentor, the precentor being a Canon; but in Sudchester the full title is always conceded.

[28] "Services"—with a capital S—stands for the Canticles, and the musical setting of the Communion Service.

[29] "Carmenque Christo, quasi deo, dicere secum *invicem*."—Pliny, x. 97.

[30] The verse runs thus in the hymn-book:

"Trust in God, and borrow
Ease for heart and mind."

[31] This custom exists at other old foundations; St. Paul's, York, &c.

CHAPTER XX
CHAUNTERS' GARDEN

"I'll fetch a turn about the garden."

Cymbeline.

One year Chaunters asked me to excuse him for half an hour or more, while he took a funeral: the garden was his special delight, and though in October there was little to see, I should find the gardener there, and he would show me what was left. The flowers needed no apology: there was a blaze of dahlias, and I know not what else: and there was Robert Diggle, the gardener, whose acquaintance I had made before.

He was digging away exactly as I had seen him in the previous October; and I thought of the historic Andrew Fairservice:

"Am trenching up the sparry-grass, and am gaun to saw sum Misegun beans."

Do you trench up asparagus in October? and what are Misegun beans? I did not ask Robert, because it would have revealed the depth of my ignorance, and the school might have got to know it. How could I examine in botany, or in the principles of agriculture, if I didn't know when to trench up sparry-grass? It seemed wiser to congratulate the good man on the appearance of the garden, and on the bright show of flowers, which I did not venture to specify more particularly: I added it was evident that the rector was as keen a gardener as ever.

The remark was not well received: it implied that Robert was not entitled to the undivided glory of the dahlias and things. He grunted, and then conceded that the rector worked hard. "It's a pastime," he said, and then handsomely added, "and I think he does good: why, theer's a manny little thengs, as it doon't matter how you put 'em in." Poor rector!

"Alas! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely, slighted (gardener's) trade."

Robert's thoughts were elsewhere, while I filled and lighted a pipe. "Ah heerd yo' was about, sir: been to our skule, 'aven't yo'?"

I admitted it.

"'Twas our Lizzie tould me theer were a streenge mon as 'ad been, and hoo[32] weren't a-goin' to skule anny moor. 'Whoy, whativer's to do?' ah says: and hoo says, the mon come and called hoo Jenny, and hoo towld 'im hoo weren't called Jenny: that were Jenny Miller in yon desk; and the mon asted hoo to come 'ome with 'im wheer 'ee lived, and hoo were froightened. 'Lor' bless thee, wench,' ah says, 'yon were th' inspector: 'ee wouldna hurt yo'.' 'Na, na, dadda,' hoo says, 'ah bain't a-gooin to skule anny moor.'" And Robert leant on his spade and roared. Then he added, apologetically, "Hoo isn't only fower, a-gooin' foive."

I suggested that if she had been more than four years old, with five in prospect, I should have hesitated to give the invitation.

"And hoo isn't so very strong, neether," he added mournfully, as if to discourage my abduction of Lizzie: "doctor says as hoo had ought to 'ave a iron tunic."

I hastily agreed, and then pondered on Lizzie, thus armour-clad, strait-waistcoated—*inclusam Danaen turris aenea*—ah, to be sure, "*tonic*," iron tonic, much more suitable. Robert did not notice my hesitation: he had picked up a big stone, and in throwing it behind him had disturbed the peace of a tom blackbird, who fled, using language that would have brought a blush to the bill of a Melbourne cockatoo. I went on to remark that the little ones seemed very happy with Miss Jones, and that Mr. Birch was a good master.

Robert agreed: things were improved since his time, and the little 'uns would as lief go to school as stop at home, when they had once got over the scare of the first week.

"When I was a lad," he continued; and I modify his dialect for general convenience, "at one time we had a Scotchman for schoolmaster. Squire had heard as the Scotch were great at eddication, and he advertised, and got McDougall, as they called him. But I reckon squire was a bit took in, for we soon found out as old Mac wasn't so wise as he looked. It was in the reading lessons that we first caught him: there were some of the top lads as

were pretty tidy readers, but now and again they'd come to a long word, as would pull 'em up short, same as if you'd struck your spade again a stone in digging; and they'd stop, and wait for Mac to give 'em a hand over. But they never got nowt off 'im: 'ee'd only the one answer, and that were, 'Hop that, cocky, it's Laa-tin': and after a bit we got to understand, and we'd laugh, and he'd get mad. Well, one day in one of them lessons he comes to a middlin' hard word, not so bad but what he could tell it himself: 'Now, lads,' he says, 'what does this word mean?' 'Magazine' it was, I remember as if it were yesterday: and Tom Jackson, he grins, and he says, 'Please, sir, it's Lahtin,' and we laughed a good 'un. Eh, but Mac were wild, and he gives Tom what-for with what he called the tawse, a bit of broad leather with a hole in it, and Tom took and told his father, old Tummas, the blacksmith, of this newfangled way of thrashing a lad; and old Tummas, he goes down to skule to have it out with the gaffer. McDougall was settin' in his own parlour with a black bottle by his side, and little Jenny Williams was keepin' skule till he'd done his pipe and glass. 'Hey, gaffer,' Tummas says, when he come inside; 'thou'st been a 'ammerin' our Tom wi' a strap wi' a 'ole in it, 'stead of a stick, and ah wunna 'ave it,' he says: 'whoy what dost think ash-plants was growed for?'

"'My mon,' says Mac, 'what are ye saying? Can ye no express yourself in a more intelligible manner?' and he tips up the cheer as he were settin' on, on to its hind legs, and just waves his pipe at Tummas, as if he were a kid. The smith could mak' nowt of the Scotch, but he kicks up Mac's foot, as he swings it in the air, and down goes skulemaster, chair and all. He clutches at the table to save hisself, like, and that brings down table and whisky bottle too; and Tummas just chucks a couple of chairs and a big cushion off the couch a-top of the whool lot, and he goes into skule. ''Ello, lads,' he shouts: 't' gaffer's not a-feelin' so very well to-dee, and it's 'ollidee for yer all.' And off they goes down t' road a 'ollerin' like mad. My word, it were a bit o' fun.

"Well, squire got to hear of that some road, and Mac had to go: they do say as he got so drunk one day in skule that the lads had him down on the floor, and rolled him along, same as a barrel, but I wasn't there that day: Tom Jackson tould me of it. And the squire got a college man, as had passed all the zaminations, same as Master Birch."

"Certificated," I suggested.

"Ah, summat o' that: and he played th' organ in church, and got us some new tunes, as we didn't tak' to, not at first, but, Lor' bless you, they has 'em everywheer now, and calls 'em old. And he measures up fields for th' farmers, and goos off manny a time i' th' arternoon to learn their daughters to play the pianner, when he should ha' been in skule, and they should ha' been makkin' cheese. 'Eh, my word,' Farmer Turner says one day, '*theer's been no good cheese made i' Cheshire since piannyfortes com' in*': and that's a fact." And Robert turned over the soil pensively, and threw a worm to his favourite robin.

("*No good cheese since pianos came in.*" Mrs. Poyser, or, still more, her misogynist enemy—what was his name? Bartle Massey?—would have been proud of the epigram.)

"Well, he gets too big for his boots: couldn't carry corn, as the sayin' is: and that year th' Gov'ment inspector began to come round, same as you, sir; only he was a minister; and he drops on skulemaster, so I heerd, because us lads couldn't get our sums right; and skulemaster goes off in a huff.

"I'd only one more master, because I left skule to go to work when I were eleven: and he were a cliver chap. Th' inspector i' those days used to zamine us i' th' Bible and Catechism, bein' a minister, I suppose?"

I nodded my head in confession of my disqualification.

"Well, we didn't do no jography, nor none of them things as they larn 'em now, but we has Scripture; and th' rector and skulemaster takes it between 'em, and when th' rector weren't theer, skulemaster would say, 'Now, lads, don't go to sleep; I like to see yer 'ands 'eld up ev'ry time when I ast a question, and mind, if you know the *right* answer, hold up the *right* hand; that's the one as you *write* with; but if you don't know, hold up th' other 'and.' Well, it tak's 'im a deal of time to get 'em to remember which were the right 'and, and Bill Tompkins, 'ee 'olds up 'is left 'and, because he always wrote with 'is left 'and; till at last gaffer taks and ties a bit of string round all their right 'ands, and then us got it right.

"But when th' inspector com round, i'stead of asting skulemaster to zamine the lads, same as the last chap did, he asts 'is own questions, and skulemaster gets scared, and says, 'Now, boys, *don't 'old up either 'and, unless you know*: don't guess;' and 'opes th' inspector will excuse 'im for

interruptin'. That fair moithered us all, and not a 'and or a word could th' inspector get from us.

"Naterally th' inspector, and rector too, gets a bit shirty, and they turns on skulemaster, but he nowt but smiles at 'em, and says, 'It's just seen' a stranger,' he says, 'as they isn't used to: I think, sir, if you'll allow me to ast 'em a few questions, they'll do better.' Th' inspector didn't much like bein' told as 'ee weren't a good 'and at the job, but 'ee says, 'Oh, all right,' 'ee says, 'take 'em yourself, by all means,' 'ee says; and he sets down i' th' arm cheer to see skulemaster cut 'is own throat, in a manner of speaking. 'Now, lads,' says th' gaffer, very pleasant like, 'don't forget what I tould you about 'oldin' up your 'ands. WHO WAS MOSES?' and every lad 'olds up one 'and or th' other. Gaffer, of course, asts only what they've been learned, and picks out only th' right 'ands for th' answers; an' 'ee goes on for a quarter of a hour, 'ands up every time, and mostly right answers, theer or theer about, and th' rector perks up and says it was only bein' a bit shy, in a manner of speakin', and 'ee's very pleased with 'em, and there'd be a school treat next week; and th' Inspector says 'ee 'asn't seen a better show of 'ands not in the county. Ee! my word, my word!"

I laughed with Robert; but to think of the villainy of the master, who made the children his conspirators! Did his scripture syllabus include a certain text about a millstone and the depths of the sea?

Robert struck his spade deep in the ground and leant on it, implying that he was coming to something of interest. "Did yo ever meet Master Bibber in skule?" he asked.

"Bibber"? yes; I had seen him in two schools some time ago: he had gone to America and had died there, a good while since.

Robert pondered whether the law of slander, about which the working-man is (fortunately) very timorous, would "cop" him, in Cheshire phrase. "Ah wudna say a word agin 'im i' that case," he said: "but 'ee were a rum 'un."

"Wasn't an out-and-out teetotaler?" I suggested, knowing Bibber.

Robert took courage: "Eh, by gom, no. It wasn't hereabouts; it was down in Clayshire, where I were gardener to Muster Brown, that I seen 'im. I hadna been married above two-three year, and it were on a Sunday

afternoon, that I heerd a terrible noise, and I says to my missus, ‘Polly,’ I says, ‘theer’s dogs worryin’ a cow:’ and hoo says, ‘Eh, yon’s not dogs, it’s children cryin’,’ hoo says: and I goes into the street, and theer were a crowd round Master Bibber’s door—he were skulemaster i’ th’ village skule—and theer were little Tommy Bibber among ’em, cryin’ fit to break ’is ’eart. ‘Eh, Muster Diggle,’ ’ee says, ‘coom in,’ ’ee says; ‘theer’s father murdered Jenny, and ’ee’s a-gooin’ to murder us.’ So I goes in, o’ course, and theer were Jenny lyin’ on th’ floor in a faint, and theer were old Bibber, mad drunk, and dancin’ about, quite crazed like. ‘’Ello, Gaffer,’ I says, ‘what’s to do now?’ ‘Ah, Robert Diggle,’ ’ee says, ‘’appy to see a neighbour on the Sabbath day; let us engage in prayer.’ ‘Yo dom’d rascal,’ ah says, ‘it’s gin as yo’ve been engagin’ in,’ and ah stoops down to pick up Jenny, and all of a sudden Bibber maks for me, and tries to bite me i’ th’ arm. ‘By gom, Bibber,’ ah says, ‘if it’s fisticuffs yo want, yo shall ’ave ’em’; and ah fetches ’im one on th’ side o’ th’ yead, and down ’ee goes like a bullock. Ah picks ’im up again, and ah sheeks ’im till yo could ’ear ’is teeth rattle, and ah puts ’im i’ th’ cheer, and ah picks up Jenny, and puts ’er on th’ couch, and ah leaves ’em to it.”

“What did the school managers say to that?”

“Oh, they giv’ ’im the sack next week: but th’ folks i’ th’ village, they were all for Bibber—’ee were a smartish chap, when ’ee were sober—and Bibber, ’ee taks a cottage close by, and sets up a skule of ’is own, and gets all the children; and th’ young mon as gets th’ parish skule, ’ee hadna more than ’alf a dozen when ah comed away, and ah niver ’eerd how it ended. Skulemasters is like gardeners, I rackon; theer’s good and bad; but it taks all sorts to mak a world.”

While I was still pondering on the comprehensive wisdom of this apophthegm, the Rector appeared with apologies for delay. In his hand he bore an open letter, and his flushed face showed some excitement. “Come in the greenhouse,” he said, “there is just time for a cup of tea before your train, and I have a letter to show you.”

The conservatory opened into the dining-room, and there we found a table and chairs, and tea ready. “It’s from my nephew, Percy,” Chaunters said, waving the letter. “He is mad on music, and architecture, and is

making a tour of the southern cathedrals this autumn; among others he has taken Sudchester, and I gave him an introduction to the organist."

"What, old Thingumy in E flat?"

"Pedler? No: he has been dead some years: it's that queer fellow Trackers; wrote a cantata called Boanerges, don't you know? They had it at Birmingham, or Leeds, or somewhere last time. Here is the letter:

"He begins, like most travellers, with the hotel: 'Why do all Cathedral towns have an hotel that was forgotten in the Reformation? Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer used to lie here, and the place has not been done up since. The fish they gave me for dinner yesterday was bought for Cranmer's dinner one Friday, and he wouldn't have it because it wasn't fresh. The head waiter used to be Ridley's page, and he has the episcopal scorn for a layman. The chamber-maid was a buxom lass in Latimer's time; she has lost the bloom of her youth, but retains her sixteenth century domestic methods;' and so on; you know he is young, and out for a holiday.

"Then he gets to the flying buttresses and the Norman arches, but you are in a hurry: this is what I thought you would have time for:

"'I was just in time for afternoon service, and I took your letter with me and told the verger I wanted to speak to the organist, to whom I had a letter of introduction.'

"'Dr. Trackers, sir? certainly,' said the official with official patronage; 'never heard the Doctor play? then you'll 'ave a treat: hevery one says so; perhaps he'll give you a bit with his new stop, "nux vomica," they call it; but *I* think it sounds like a choir of hangels playing on a comb' ('hïngels plyin hon a ca-omb'—in the original). I hadn't time to digest this graphic description of the Vox Humana before T. arrived, and accepted my note: 'What, the old Precentor?' he said, 'come up to the organ-loft;' and I went."

("We may skip a good deal here about the organ, and its stops, and pneumatic machinery—did I ever tell you about Old Dick the blower?—and come to the music." "*Cut the cackle and come to the 'osses*," I murmured to myself.)

"It was the 15th evening, with that long Psalm, you know, and never have I heard such chanting. T. knows his psalter by heart, and never seems to look at the book; his mind is busy with half a dozen things, and he keeps up

a running commentary of the quaintest but most maddening kind on the music, the singers, the cathedral, and what not. The choir is admirably trained, and the boys' voices are good, better than the men's; and they pronounce every syllable, though *andanti con moto*, and got through the seventy-three verses without a slip. Trackers, as a rule, only indicates illustrations, reserving greater effects for greater needs; but once he just threw in a pedal F natural, to express his opinion of the blacklegs of Ephraim, which absolutely withered and shrivelled them up.

"'*Three chants we have for this long psalm*,' he began, '*starting in A; sort of reciting, historical chant—do you understand stops? Just pull out that chap*'—and he pointed with his big nose—'*listen to that tenor; he's as flat as Holland*'—and he warmed him up with a reed on the solo—'*we can't afford Sims Reeves, and this is a decent little chap; now that coupler, please*;' and he "brought waters out of the stony rock": '*verse 19 brings us into D, with a heavy bass, good for the plagues farther on. Dean's away this week, don't know where—now the reeds, please*'—and he "rained down manna," and "brought in the south-west wind," and with a sudden cyclone "slew the wealthiest of them," and then bit by bit he muzzled the monster, while the Israelites were falling into forgetfulness, till there was only just enough to keep up the pitch. Then he broke out again: '*Did you hear of the Dean's uncle, and his will? Always hoped to get something out of him, and last Christmas the old fellow died in town—now those two at the side*:' and suddenly the organ began to live again, and to grow, and we rushed into the plagues of Egypt. I looked over the rail and saw the eyes of the boys positively shine: the men were shifting from one leg to another, as the growl of the pedals increased."

("Dear me! how strange," the old man interpolated; "I always change legs every verse when I am excited.")

"They were singing TUTTI, and insensibly quickening the pace; I heard Trackers absently mutter something about the Dean and his uncle—'*of course the Dean went to the funeral*'—and then even he joined in the chase: "hailstones," and they danced on the floor; "hot thunderbolts" that rumbled and scorched; "furiousness of His wrath, anger, displeasure, and trouble"; and "the prophets blazoned on the panes" rattled, and the old fabric swam before my eyes, and I clutched at the rail for safety: there came a sudden roar, like an advancing earthquake, and the pestilence smote the first-born

of Egypt, so that the tower shook, and then, without warning, we slipped into the smooth waters of G: "He led them forth like sheep"; Israel sat in shady places by the water side in the Promised Land, playing on the harmonic flute, and—Trackers, half turning his head, said:

"'*And they found he'd married his cook, and left her the money.*'

But I was leaning over the rail and crying like a girl at her first play."

"Look here, rector," I interposed, "I must catch the 6.30." And I fled.

Poor old Chaunters! We were not to have many more meetings. The next year, on my arrival at the rectory, I was warned that there was something special in store for me, and in due course the secret was revealed. Some old friend had bequeathed to him two dozen of 1847 port, and a bottle had been decanted with extraordinary care. I own I find it difficult to drink port in the afternoon, but such nectar could not come at a wrong time. The Rector was with difficulty induced to join me: he would have just one glass to see whether it had "suffered by translation"; and just another glass because he wouldn't see me again for a whole year; and the merest drop more to drink Church and Queen, because we had forgotten that ceremony. As I was going away he charged me to remember that the '47 was to be kept for me: "no one else came to see the old man," and with his gout he couldn't touch it himself: so long as the old man lasted there was a bottle for me.

Alas for good intentions! Next October, when I came to the rectory, the Rector had had the gout, and the port was gone.

It was not on that account, but because of the increase of work which necessitated devolution of the smaller schools to the sub-inspectors, that in the following year I had to delegate the inspection of Chaunters' school to my senior colleague. But I charged him to deal gently with the old man; to lunch with him; to tell him about the anthems at the cathedral; and specially to be careful to introduce into his conversation such fragments of Latin as would give it a scholarly flavour without straining his host's classical memory; and to this end we compiled a list of phrases, such as *bona fide*, *in*

situ, *in statu quo*, *timeo Danaos*, *festina lente*, *profanum vulgus*, and others which I forget.

It was a great success. The Rector wrote to me, expressing his sincere regret that I could not come; but thanking me for sending so excellent a substitute: it was rare, he remarked, in these days to meet a man whose conversation gave such ample proof of a liberal education.

I think I never saw him again: his death occurred soon afterwards, and I trust his nephew "carved his epitaph aright." Like Browning's Bishop he would have liked Latin; but he would not have cared whether it were Tully or Ulpian, so long as it was familiar; and he would have given a preference to examples from the Latin Grammar. It would have sufficed, I think, to begin with "*Hic jacet*," and to wind up with "*Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit*"; and I should heartily have appended "*Nulli flebilior quam* MIHI."

FOOTNOTES:

[32] "Hoo," or more properly "oo," in the Counties Palatine stands for "she" or "her."

CHAPTER XXI

R.C.s

"A single life doth well with churchmen, for charity will hardly water the ground, where it must first fill a pool."—BACON.

I think I have already said that one of the charms of our life, seemingly so monotonous, was its infinite variety. There were no days in the year that provided such varied entertainment as those set apart for the Roman Catholic schools. Technically we knew them only as R.C.s.

It should be premised that, as a general rule, in the north-west of England (in French idiom) "who says Roman Catholic says also Irish." This is not the case in some villages in Lancashire where the Reformation has not yet penetrated; and in such towns as Liverpool and Manchester there is a large admixture of the Latin race, besides Belgians and Hollanders; but in Cheshire with very few exceptions the priests are Irish, and the school-teachers and children are Irish. There is a sprinkling of English priests, but by dint of living almost wholly with Irish co-religionists they nearly always have a noticeable brogue. They study their business so diligently and so skilfully that I can quite imagine they would cultivate the brogue, if it were not self-sowing, as the key to the hearts of their flocks. Assume a virtue if you have it not.

On the other hand I have known some Irish priests whose families have lived so long in the land of the silent H, that, if on such a theme I may be allowed a bull, they have added the absent H to their brogue, making themselves all things to all men.

It must always be borne in mind that in the North there are exceedingly few of the well-born, well-to-do priests, such as are to be found in London and the South. In the former district they are for the most part born of the working class; workers among the working class, and especially among the working class that does not work if it can avoid it. Born poor, often poorly educated, poorly paid, chiefly dependent on the poorest of the poor, holding office practically at the will of the bishop (subject to an appeal to Rome)

and without prospect of any promotion except to the dignity of an honorary canonry, they seem to have less of the enviable in their lives than most of their flock. A drudgery with the halo of martyrdom.

"Happily," said a 'vert to me, "these Catholic-born priests are exempt from doubt;" and their absolute knowledge that the next world will bring them a recompense for their work here is sufficient consolation.

Nothing could be farther from the truth than the popular conception of their character and habits. What priests in Ireland may be I know not; what they are in north-west England I know in part. As regards their character, I may say that I have known very many priests among the five million inhabitants of the two Counties Palatine in the last thirty years, and that I have heard of only two charges affecting their moral character (in the popular acceptation of the phrase); in one case the offender was a foreigner and he was expatriated with admirable speed; in the other case, there was only the gossip that no one heeds. They are priests of the church of a small minority: they are on their guard, and they keep guard well.

I do not mean to say that they are impeccable. But their peccadilloes were not my concern, unless they took the form of an attempt on the public purse in school matters. And this chronicle is not a chronicle of other people's failings. I turn to *Lorna Doone*:

> "That is said to be the angels' business; and I doubt if they can attend to it without injury to themselves."

For the rest, their bitterest enemies—and they are very bitter in these parts—will allow that they work without ceasing and with entire self-devotion. In their parochial work I imagine—not from enquiry, but from casual observation—that the house-to-house visiting falls chiefly on the curates; the rector is more easily found at home. But the heavy work undoubtedly comes at night. The door bell seems to get no rest; sometimes it is a drunken woman, who comes to take the pledge, just as a wealthier drunkard might ask for a bottle of seltzer; sometimes a request for worldly advice or assistance; sometimes, and many times, an urgent demand for a speedy visit to Biddy, who is "dyin' entirely," but turns out to be dismally drunk. The whole force of the mission is sometimes called out, and then, even when the inspector was playing his annual rubber, it was with much difficulty that a quorum could be kept.

In the small hours of the morning the flock break out afresh. Patsey is brought home helpless at 2 A.M., Michael has his head cut open at 3; Molly upsets the lamp, and sets the baby on fire at 4. In each and every case his reverence is brought down to give the last rites to the afflicted person, and in each and every case he finds that he might as well have gone on with his sleep.

Dear Canon C. much loved, much plundered! Was it not told of him, how his flock took it in turns to trade on his loving credulity? In the early morning there would come a violent ring at the bell, and the Canon would stare out into wet darkness:

"Who is there?"

"It's me, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, God help me, yer Rivirence."

"What do you want?"

"It's me husband that's had a shtroke, an' he's dyin' this minute."

"Well, I can't come, but here's half-a-crown."

And so on *da capo* till the purse was empty.

Why do they stand it? The answer was given me, indirectly, by a contemplative priest:

HE: "There can be no doubt that for the working-man the Church of Rome is the best in the world."

I: "Why specially for the working-man?"

HE: "Because it enables him to lead whatever sort of life he prefers, and then at the last moment he can send for the priest, and put it all straight."

I: "Good Heavens, Canon! do you believe that?"

HE: "My dear man, if you believe the Bible, there can't be the least doubt in the world about it."

This seems to account for the "conversation" (in the Scriptural sense) of several friends. It is hard that the privilege should seem to be confined to working-men. However, it becomes abundantly clear that even at 2 A.M. Patsey cannot be neglected: it may be for him the chance of a lifetime.

Another and a most distracting part of their work is Finance. I believe I am correct in the following premises: Every mission in these parts has a debt on the buildings. No such debt can be incurred without leave from the bishop. The priest is bound to find the quarterly interest. No personal liability attaches to the priest: his successor inherits the debt.

In favour of spending there is:

(1) A congregation full of zeal; thriftless; firmly believing in Justification by Works.

(2) Freedom from personal or family liability.

(3) Accruing reputation for zeal.

On the other side:

The interest has to be found, and the congregations are poor, and heavily taxed for maintenance.

You may say that is three "For," and one "Against." But arguments are weighed, not counted; and the weight of that quarterly interest is the weight of the Old Man of the Sea. How many lives have I seen wrecked in that sea of debt—in spite of the Anchor of Faith! Yet debt, in moderation, is "most wholesome and full of comfort," as one of the Articles says of something else—I forget what; and I have preached to Anglican divines, and with some acceptance, the blessings of debt. Call it "distributing capital expenditure over a term of years," and even a rural dean succumbs. "Out of debt, out of danger," but "out of debt, out of progress."

The third great branch of their work is one that I can discuss with more knowledge—the educational side.

This is the most remarkable instance of their zeal, and also of their success. The mere building of the schools, merely in the two Palatine counties, represents a very large expenditure; though, no doubt, a good deal of this was added to the debt, there remained the overwhelming difficulty of the annual upkeep.

It was in their favour that the salaries of R.C. school teachers were low, and that the excuse of poverty was often accepted for a scanty supply of school apparatus. Against this must be set the arduous task of getting school-pence from a poverty-stricken flock—("school-pence, indeed, an'

me wid nothin' to eat in the house, and the childer wid niver a boot to the sole of their feet: Howly Mother!")—and subscriptions from exhausted subscribers. There is, I believe, in some domain of chemistry an "exhausted receiver": it has no counterpart in the charitable world.

The Free Education Act of 1891[33] was a positive boon to them: it gave them a certain 10*s.* per child per year, instead of a problematic 5*s.* or 7*s.* 6*d.* But the Act of 1902 seems to have brought them the sort of riches which Horace called "operosiores." I think the matter has been mentioned in the newspapers.

Many of the girls' and infants' schools were taught by Nuns, and I have usually supposed that some co-operative arrangement was made in such cases with the convents, by which chaplain's duty at the convent was set off (in part) against the sisters' salaries. There are many Orders in the North-West, and their names, whether polysyllabic, or foreign, or both, are often a sore trial to the poor Irish. Outside Liverpool there may be some one that has not heard the story of the afflicted Irishman who gratefully acknowledged the kindness of "the Frightful Companions (Faithful Companions); they was very good to me; and the Little Sisters of Misery (Misericorde), they was very good, but the best of all was the Bone Suckers (Bon Secours)." Of these three the first named is the only teaching order: but there are many others, of whom the best known are the Sisters of Notre Dame, in Liverpool. And if any one wants to know what can be done for education, primary, secondary, tertiary for aught I know, he should go to Mount Pleasant in that city, and look around him.

As teachers nuns have many advantages. They are wholly devoted to their work; not to their pay, for they never see a farthing of it: it goes to Domus. They regard their service as their permanent vocation without the distraction of possible courtships: in their ways with girls they are almost motherly: and the sisters from the better orders have a singularly refining influence on the children.

There are also certain disadvantages. The good sisters are too unworldly: they never read a newspaper; I suppose they read few books: their chances of improvement are limited, and their tendency is narrowing. In the case of the less successful ones it is rather dispiriting for a school manager, or an inspector, to think that, as the happy dispatch of marriage is impossible,

they must wait for the slower process of age to remove them from the list. Also they have too often a profound contempt for rules and codes. I think this is due to their Irish ancestry, which naturally disposes them to be "agin the Government." And they are by no means subservient to their priestly managers: at their back in case of dispute is reverend mother, and only the boldest priest would go to war with so excellent and so powerful a person.

When the Orangemen have persuaded Parliament to pass an Act for the inspection of convents I shall not apply for the post of Inspector. Not that I have any fear of a hostile reception. On the contrary: it is because I fear that, inasmuch as I may be by that time somewhat advanced in years, my constitution would not be able to stand a life of profuse hospitality. There was one convent, but I hope reverend mother will never see this page, where I found the Lord Mayoral collations after the annual inspection so perilous that I had to resort to the most discreditable manœuvres to escape. "Bolton Abbey in the olden time" (Landseer) was their model; and fish, flesh, and fowl made the table groan before me, and made me groan after the table. Cruel only to be kind, and inversely.

A clerical friend of mine, holding strong Evangelical views, and being annoyed, I suppose, by his school report, took some pains to undermine my character by spreading a rumour that I had played whist at a certain convent with the mother superior, the second in command, and the chaplain. I should have been very glad to do so, and I can quite imagine reverend mother playing a very good game, and coming out with small cards from her long suit when all our trumps were gone. But in sober truth I was not asked. My dear friend, Father Rigidus, was much shocked when I told him of the rumour. It appeared that cards are forbidden to holy women. But surely this would not exclude Patience?

It is another instance of the tyranny of man, that he, the man-priest, persuades holy women to regard cards as permissible to him, but wicked for them. I admit that they are forbidden to the clergy by the canons of the Church of England, but I believe Rome is more lenient. And I have known several Anglican transgressors. In this connection a friend tells a story of the great Henry of Exeter, Bishop Phillpotts. He was in residence as Golden Canon of Durham, and in that ancient city was playing an unhallowed rubber. Close by his side was a stray parson, who was telling with some

glee how he had buried a Dissenter, or married a divorcee, or what not. Phillpotts turned savagely round on him:

"Sir, are you aware that your proceeding was directly contrary to the canons of the Church?"

The parson was entirely unabashed: "So it is contrary to the canons," he retorted, "for you to sit there playing whist *with the ace of trumps in your hand*."

But I am straying from the point, if there ever was one.

There is, finally, a branch of priestly employment upon which I am peculiarly well qualified to speak: this is the hospitality department: and herein they excel all denominations. Their traditions are partly Irish, partly collegiate, or monastic; a good stock on both sides, if it's dining you want. There were still remaining in my earlier inspecting days a few country rectories where, before the fall in the value of tithe and glebe, H.M.I. was royally received, and the neighbouring gentry assembled to do him honour. As a rule these dinners were magnificent, but not festive. A modest man (like the present chronicler) soon gets weary of being stared at and listened to. Moreover, the tedium was prolonged beyond the grave of dessert, for there was the drawing-room, and it was always possible that some one would sing.

Far different were the R.C. nights. Clear in the memory is the recollection of that Chester south window looking over the Vale Royal, and the fresh green of the April meadows; the cheerful room where the Provost, newly recovered from the horrors of Lent, made all things smooth; and the well-beloved Canon paced restlessly up and down his quarter-deck, smoking his unfailing cigarette, and bringing out of his treasures things new and old. And never to be forgotten are those wild February nights in the City of the Future, when Monsignore dispensed carnival hospitality, ending in the long, well-stocked library, where we discoursed *de iis quae melius sine ulla solennitate tradi possunt*—the phrase is academical—till near the midnight hour. Well remembered, too, are the other Presbyteries in that hospitable town, and the genial welcome that began with the smiling parlour-maid at the door—who "remimbered the ould man, when I was in Standard IV. meself, and he pulled me hur, and called me Biddy"—and ended much later at night.

To many other places—Manchester and Salford alone had more than thirty R.C. schools—my duty took me; and in all the welcome was the same. To their credit, moreover, be it said, the priests are singularly free from that professional, unreal manner affected by some clergymen, and by nearly all Dissenting ministers. A good bed-side manner is esteemed in doctors, but a good grave-side manner is abominable in any one but an undertaker.

"Where is that barty now?" Few indeed of my old hosts survive:

> "And I the last go forth companionless,
> And the days darken round me, and the years,
> Among new men, strange faces, other minds."

It must not be supposed that the company on these occasions was exclusively clerical. Poor was the mission that could not produce a festive layman, or two, to give variety to the conversation; and also, if by any remote chance some one demanded a rubber, to prevent the possibility of being counted out in consequence of an epidemic of sick-calls.

It was not in what Disraeli absurdly called "the City of the Future," but in Utopia, that I was guest at one "inspection dinner," that may seem to deserve a record. It was at St. Michael's R.C., and I had inspected the schools that day.

Who was there? There was Canon A., my host; Father B., an Oxford man, formerly in Deacon's Orders in the Church of England, afterwards a 'vert; Mr. C., treasurer of the schools, a man of good Lancashire Roman Catholic family, belonging rather to the Newman cult than to the Manningites; for the rest, interested in cotton, or silk, or wheat: Father O'Dowd, who had been trained at the English college in Rome, and had lived for some years in foreign parts; Father O'Flynn, who had come over from County Cork to see his old schoolfellow the Canon; they had been boys together at Ushaw, or Stonyhurst, or somewhere, and had kept up their old friendship in spite of distance. Lastly, there was Dr. Walsh, a keen-witted man of the world, who had a good R.C. practice in the town, and was much esteemed by my host, though he was suspected of some laxity in his views and in the observance of his duties.

We dined well, of course; but, while the maids were hovering about, the conversation was limited to local topics, neutral politics, and—for O'Dowd's sake—recollections of foreign towns. We could not even allude to the schools, much to my relief, for the maids' sisters, cousins, and aunts were at St. Michael's, as teachers, or scholars. But when dessert brought freedom, we expanded, and Father O'Flynn with his pleasant Irish good-fellowship said to me across the table—he and I sat left and right of our host:

"I hope ye've been pleased with the Canon's schools this morning, Mr. Inspector?"

I laughed, accepting this as a gambit, not a question; and replied that I was always pleased with St. Michael's.

"Well, ye know," he continued, "ye can't make a silk purse out of unsuitable materials: but they're a highly intelligent lot of boys that they turn out: I met one of them on my way up from the station, and he got 'lave to carry me bhag,' because his brogue won my heart. He said he went to St. Michael's when he was a kid, but now he'd 'gotten a surficate'; what did he mean by that, now? Got a certificate of exemption, *and he passed an examination for it*? Well, well, it's easy ye are, I can see, and there's hopes for the Canon yet. So I just asked him how many yards there were to a foot and he said 'twelve'; and I put it to him whether that wasn't too liberal an allowance? Oh, he was much hurt: 'anny ways,' he said, 'that was the way they larned me at St. Michael's *avverdepoyse*.'"

Our host shook with laughter: the boy was Jimmy Nolan, and he was "not all there." There had been a fight at a wake in the house when Jimmy was a baby, and Jimmy had a nasty fall on the floor, and something had gone wrong.

"Ah, well," O'Flynn went on, "the boys have a better time of it than you and I had, William. Do you remember the Provost? He had the heavy hand. Do you remember how, when he had given us a dozen a-piece, he would send us into chapel to pray for him? What do ye think of that, now, Mr. Kynnersley?"

I replied with official caution that it seemed to show a certain lack of humour on the Provost's part; or else a strong disbelief in the efficacy of

prayer. If I had been in the Provost's place I should not have given two sore boys *carte blanche* to besiege Providence. He might have found himself an inverted Balak. And I recalled the reply of Archbishop Sumner, when Bishop Phillpotts (already quoted a few pages ago) at the end of a heated argument said it only remained for him to return to Exeter and pray for His Grace. "No," said the Archbishop, turning pale, "don't do anything uncharitable."

"That was neatly put for an Englishman," said O'Flynn. "I like a clean give and take, all in good manners. Did ye ever hear of Cardinal Z.'s rebuff at his installation? There is a custom, you may have heard, that when a Cardinal Bishop is appointed he takes his title from a particular church in Rome. Cardinal Newman, for instance, was this way associated with the church of St. Giorgio in Velabro, down by the Arch of Janus, is it not, Father O'Dowd? And the story goes that Z., who had at one time aspired to be the head of a certain church in the Immortal City, which we may call St. Apollinaris, and had at that time been unsuccessful, eventually received the purple, and took his title from that same church. In due course he attended the church in full pomp to be installed; and it gave him the keenest delight to see at the head of the local clergy the man who had led the opposition against him. As he descended from his state carriage, he bowed formally to his enemy, and said as if it were part of the ceremony:

> "'*Lapidem quem reprobaverunt aedificantes, hic factus est in caput anguli.*'[34]

"The other bowed almost to the ground, and responded:

> "'A *Domino factum est istud, et est mirabile in oculis nostris.*'[35]

"I doubt if history can produce a better thrust and parry."

"In the upper circles of Rome," said Father B., who seemed to be, like Mr. C., an admirer of Newman, "they cultivate these amenities. The inspector may not know Monsignor Talbot's remark to Cardinal Howard. You remember that Cardinal Manning's life is full of allusions to those two great men; and you will not have forgotten how Manning relied on Talbot's help, and how, when Talbot broke down in mind and body, Manning neglected him.[36] At one time both Howard and Talbot were in great favour at the Vatican; but while Talbot was well aware that he owed his position

simply to the fact that he was a Talbot, the Cardinal was secretly certain that, besides his personal appearance (which at one time added lustre to the Life Guards) and his connection with 'the blood of all the Howards,' there was intrinsic merit. It was therefore the delight of Talbot to poke fun at his fellow countryman, and the Inner Circle greatly enjoyed these scenes. At last the climax was reached. The Pope sent for both grandees, and informed them that he had determined to send them on a special mission to Goa, in S.W. India. Full particulars were promised: meanwhile he proffered his blessing.

"The two returned to their gorgeous carriage, and when it moved on, Howard lay back in his corner, meditating triumphantly that his time had come: obvious merit had at last been recognised, and the Catholic world would admit it. Goa was only a starting-point; and then—. Beneath the dome of St. Peter's a dense crowd of the faithful cheering, a blare of trumpets, an atmosphere thick with incense, and a fifteen stone Pontiff borne on a *sedia gestatoria*—all these floated before his eyes, ears, nose; why should Nicholas Breakspear be the last Englishman to ascend the Papal throne?—and then came a chuckle by his side, and a familiar voice:

> "'I say, Howard, I expect this isn't much of a job, or they wouldn't have sent you and me.'"

"There were many stories of Talbot," said Mr. C.; "my uncle knew Cardinal Newman well at Birmingham, and heard many, for Talbot was, of course, too nearly allied to Cardinal Manning to be a *persona grata* to the other great ecclesiastic. I remember one story illustrating the simplicity of his character:

"Talbot came over to London to preach for a special fund in some church, and there was a vast congregation to hear 'the intimate and constant attendant' of Pio Nono.[37] He began by informing them that he had only on the previous day received a letter from the Holy Father himself upon the very topic which had brought them together that day. He would read it to them, and he begged that they would remember that, the Pope being the vicegerent of the Almighty, they should regard it *as a voice from the unseen world*. He would now begin:

> 'My dear Monsignor
>
> It is very hot here——'

What followed, the congregation never could remember, for they laughed so much that the rest was lost."

I think that Father O'Flynn did not like these anecdotes. I suspected that he, the Canon, and probably O'Dowd were ultramontanes, and that Walsh was entirely indifferent. Certainly at this moment the Canon rose, and suggested a move upstairs, where we should find a fire more suitable for the January temperature; and we went.

There was indeed a charming fire and a goodly array of comfortable chairs. I don't know why it is, but after a good dinner the frail body seems to yearn for external heat: something to do with the gastric juices, I believe, but I never was good at animal physiology, though I examined in it when required. I settled myself with a sigh of relief in a huge arm-chair, and O'Dowd found a seat next me. We cast away the trifling cigarette, and betook ourselves to the businesslike pipe or cigar. Walsh and some others betook themselves at once to whist.

We talked about Paris for some time, and then moved south. O'Dowd remarked that he believed I knew Rome. I told him how much and how little I knew of it, and for a time we talked of churches, and palaces, pictures, and music, and an abiding calm came over us.

"I daresay you know," said he, probably with some reference in his mind to what we had heard downstairs, "that you must not believe all you hear in Rome? They are very great in anecdotes: '*quid Romae faciam? mentiri nescio*,' said Juvenal, but that was as a critic."

(Never before had I heard a priest quote Juvenal!)

"Do you know the Gesù church at the foot of the Capitol, a terribly gusty place?"

I knew that tawdry edifice, and I told him so, omitting the adjective.

"And the story of the Devil and the North Wind? No? It is a typical Roman legend. The Devil and the North Wind one autumn evening were coming down from the Capitol, and they stopped outside the Gesù. Said Satan, 'Just stop here a moment, while I go inside and say a prayer:' and he went in, and the North Wind has ever since been waiting outside for him to come out."

Now I saw how Livy came to write his history. He was "nursed upon the selfsame" seven hills, and he would have liked that legend. Insensibly, in the comfort of the arm-chair and the fire, I began to translate the story into "Latin in the style of Livy," that would have gladdened the heart of the Rev. E. C. W., sometime Fellow and Tutor of Balliol: "*Eodem anno jam autumnale equinoctium instabat et complura prodigia referebantur ta ... ta* ..." when O'Flynn woke me up with a start:

"They were telling me in the boat," he said, "about Father Hennessy and the Orangeman: have ye heard it? Hennessy was travelling to Dublin, and was saying his Office as he was in the carriage; and opposite him was a man from County Down. Soon after they left the station, the Orangeman leant across to Father Hennessy, in the middle of his Office, ye understand, and says, '*I* wouldn't go to Purgatory,' says he.

"'*Beatum Michaelem Archangelum, beatum Joannem Baptistam, sanctos Apostolos*,' mutters Hennessy, looking over the other's head, as if he didn't exist anny way.

"This took the Orangeman back a bit, but soon he perks up and slides a bit nearer: '*I* wouldn't go to Purgatory,' he says again, and Hennessy goes on: '*Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper*,' he says, and never heeds him.

"After a while the Down man gets quite mad, and he moves forward close up to the priest, and looks him straight in the face, and says very loud and distinct:

"'*I* WOULDN'T GO TO PUR—GA—TO—RY!' he shouts.

"'Well, go to Hell, then, *ne nos 'nducas in t'ntationem, sed lib'ra nos s'malo*,' said the old man, all in a breath, and the Prodesan closed up."

I wish I could get O'Flynn to tell the story to a phonograph: but even then you would miss the *gratia vivax* of the narrator.

Dr. Walsh had finished his rubber, and had cut out. He joined the fireside group in time to hear the end of the last story; now he was stirred to emulation. "I heard you while I was at the whist table, Father O'Flynn, talking of the old French nobility; some of them are good friends of the Church, but they get taken in at times. When I was a student in Paris, I was told of one, who had married the Marquis de la Chose, a worthless fellow of

as good blood as herself; but she was rich, and he hadn't a sou. He wanted money after a bit for one thing and another, but she was very anxious to reform him, and she dealt it out with more care than he quite liked. So at last he comes to her with a great story of the fund they were raising for the Holy Father. 'Peter's Pence' was the cry, and she ought to subscribe. She was as pleased as Punch to find him set on good works, and she forks out the money freely, and he brings her receipts, and all sorts of stories about the growth of the fund—*les deniers de Saint Pierre*—and she gives more and more. But one day two of his old friends saw him driving in the Bois with a lady with golden hair, and she was not the Marquise.

"'*Tiens*,' says one, 'but regard the locks of gold.'

"'*Justement*,' says the other; '*vous avez raison: ce sont les deniers de Saint Pierre*.'"

With such-like faithful chronicles they beguiled the time, and I listened and laughed. But I had to get back to my hotel, and I craved leave to depart. Dr. Walsh offered to accompany me—"Just to be at hand if any of the St. Michael's teachers or children happened to throw half a brick at the Inspector"—and we went off together.

There were no half bricks, and the murmured remark of one half-dressed lad to a half-naked comrade, "Thur goes the —— ould mon," was purely affectionate recognition.

"I didn't feel sure," said Walsh in a few moments, "that it would be safe to tell them inside there another Parisian story, but you may like to hear it:

"It was about a certain Père H., who was visiting one of his flock, a lady of the old nobility who had lately lost her husband. She was plunged in grief, and Père H. was suggesting, in the most delicate manner in the world (like Mr. Chucks), that she ought to have masses said for the repose of the Count's soul; because, between you and me, he hadn't set the best example to the Republicans. But she cried, and declined; and the more he pressed it the more obstinate she was. At last she recovered herself sufficiently to explain that the money would be thrown away: the late lamented was gone *là bas*. The priest explained that if her husband was in Purgatory, as might conceivably be the case, masses would be profitable. But she wept more: he had died in mortal sin, and he was not in Purgatory at all, but *plus bas*.

Father H., finding argument and entreaty thrown away upon her, went home. But two days later he returned to the charge: 'Madame la Comtesse,' he said, after the usual introductory remarks, 'I have consulted our Superior, and I have consulted our books, and I find that in such a case *une messe ne fait aucun mal: ÇA RAFRAÎCHIT*.'"

I woke up the echoes of the Irish quarter with my laughter, and Walsh's heart warmed to me, for laughter is meat and drink to a story-teller, and he became confidential: "Good sort, are they not?" he said, referring to our hosts; and he told me of their good works, and their self-denial, as we walked through the dismal streets. Before he had finished his panegyric we came to the cross roads, where I had to turn off. He stopped and sighed: "It's a queer thing at the same time; there's no one quite perfect: ye'd think that the Canon went as near being an uncanonized saint as anybody: but he habitually leads from a single card, and I lost two-and-six by him this evening. Good-night: pleased to have met you."

And we parted, and as I breasted the hill before me, like Christian in "Pilgrim's Progress," I sang sadly:

"How many a spot defiles the robe
That wraps an earthly saint."

FOOTNOTES:

[33] Before the Act of 1891 children paid "school-pence," from 1*d.* to 9*d.* a week. The Act provided for a Treasury grant of 10*s.* per head for each child, say 3*d.* a week, on condition that the school fees were reduced by that amount. Thus children paying not more than 3*d.* a week were relieved of all charge, and the managers were assured of a moderate income.

[34] "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner."

[35] "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

[36] See *Manning's Life*, vol. ii, pp. 695-6 notes (first edition).

[37] See *Manning's Life*, vol. ii, p. 574.

CHAPTER XXII
ERRATA

"In whom the dear Errata column
Is the best page in all the volume."

T. MOORE.

APOLOGIA: I am doubtful whether this record of human error should be published here. Out of every possible hundred readers must be deducted (1) teachers and examiners who are satiated with errata and have ceased to be amused; (2) those who, like the benevolent critic of the "Rejected Addresses," think some of the answers very good, and do not see why they should be rejected; (3) those who require a surgical operation before they can be made to see any humour in error. Yet there is a remnant, and for the remnant's sake let the chapter stand. The rest may skip.

"You must get very amusing answers from the children in school, do you not?"

This was a favourite opening at lunch or dinner, when my neighbour had found out my profession. I have usually replied that if I asked a silly question, I was likely to get a silly answer: if I asked a sensible question, and put it in plain English, understanded of the people, the chances of amusement were few. By long experience one gets to know the way in which children reason, and any neglect of caution might lead to dreadful results.

For instance, there was my old friend, the Rev. Mr. Playne. He was inspecting a school that I knew well, and was led by some word in the reading lesson to enquire about professions.

"What am I?" he asked.

"A mon."

“Yes, a *man*; but the Vicar is a man, and the Master is a man: what sort of man am I?”

“A very hugly one,” was the answer, and the line of examination was changed.

One should not lay oneself open to crushing rejoinders. I too have been crushed, and I rashly told the piteous tale to a lady at dinner, thinking to meet with sympathy. She contributed as much of the story as she could remember to a newspaper; whence it was pirated by a compiler of “Railway Jests,” and the mutilated fragment was shown to me by a teacher after some years.

I also was hearing a class read, and we came to the word “Pilgrim.” What, I asked, was a pilgrim?

A. “A man that goos about from place to place.”

Q. “But I go about from place to place: am I a pilgrim?”

A. “No: ’ee’s a *good* mon.”

And the Vicar remarked *sotto voce*, “That’s one for you.”

Also one is very likely to get strange answers if the question soars above the children’s comprehension. In another school the children were reading from their own school-books a great speech by John Bright, in which occurred the mystic words, “Urim and Thummim.” I asked the meaning, and the Rector, an eminent scholar and divine, whispered that *he* didn’t know: to which I replied with the same secrecy, that I didn’t know, but that as the words came in the school-book, the children were bound to have a theory. They supplied two: (1) “When a man hev a lot of property left un:” (2) “When the postman come to the door.” The interpretation would have baffled Daniel, but the Rector suggested that “thumping” was the clue: thumping legacy, thumping at the door.

It was a similar sudden strain that produced from a Norfolk child the definition of a philosopher: “a little thing with two wheels what you ride about on.” Velocipedes were more common than philosophers in those days.

But the safest path to comedy was to ask a thoroughly silly question, and to get answered according to one’s folly. It was, I remember, in what I may call the “Urim and Thummim” school, that while I was examining the

children, the Rector was revising a heap of divinity examination papers from the training colleges. I heard a sudden guffaw, and begged that I might have the joke, while it was still warm. The question was, "What do we know of the antecedents of the man at the Pool of Bethesda?" And the appropriate answer was, "It is clear that his antecedents either were dead, or had grossly neglected him."

Fool meets fool. But this rash style of question is more common in oral examinations, and as one learns wisdom, comedy decreases. Twice a year, however, our work changed, and a great mass of examination papers poured in from the training colleges and other centres. The various subjects were allotted, as a rule, according to our previously declared wishes, and I took Geography, or History, with an occasional lapse into English Grammar and Literature. Year after year I used to jot down on an old atlas, or on the blank pages of a cheap history manual, as the case might be, the best jokes of the batch, and the accumulated treasures lie before me.

For the information of the outside world it must be premised, that most of the candidates prepared for the examination in Geography and History by learning by heart wretched text-books put into their hands by their head-teachers. When the examination paper was laid before them, they at once wrote down such paragraphs or pages as seemed to meet the emergency.

> "But though they wrote them all by rote,
> They could not write them right,"

as the admirable Cambridge bard sang. Moreover, having from long experience unbounded confidence in the leniency of H.M.I., they had no doubt that "their acts would receive the most favourable construction"; and if they could not remember the right page, they offered another very nice article, much superior to the one asked for; as if it were a patent pill; and they expected equal treatment for the changeling. An account of Richard II. might be out of stock, or at least they could not lay their hands on it: but surely an examiner would give *some* marks for a biography of Richard III., with special reference to the murder of the little Princes. A map of Africa (our own brand) was surely as good as the demanded map of S. America: and if the man who asked for a list of the exports of British India were not satisfied with a highly imaginative list of the imports, at least he would not take off any marks from the other questions.

This is the only explanation of the two following answers.[38] It will be seen that the former excels in ignorance, the latter in irrelevance:

(1) Q. Give a short account of the way in which Great Britain became the chief power in N. America from 1607 to 1763.

A. Queen Elizabeth was reigning in the year 1607. She ruled for a long time, and was a very prosperous queen. Leicester was her favourite for a long time, she was a very changable women, and no one remained in her favour for a very long time. It was in her reign that the war started in N. America. After Q. Elizabeth came her sister Queen Anne and William Prince of Orange. Anne reigned with William six years. After her death William reigned for 7 years. He called his parliament and got together a lot of money with which he again renewed the war in N. America in which he was very successful. George III. was the next to reign being the grandson of Q. Elizabeth. He continued the war that Elizabeth had begun and kept the war on till he had conquered the whole of N. America.

(2) Q. What possessions in Europe have English sovereigns held? How have such possessions influenced English History?

A. India is a possession that makes a great deal of difference or will do to English History. The late Q. Victoria was made Empress of India. It is a very large country and not a very healthy one. The natives do not produce enough food in their own country and very often they have a famine there. About 3 years ago they had a famine there and the English people sent out a lot of food for them.

(NOTE: She has written seventy-seven words without approaching Europe.)

Other strange customs and beliefs were noted annually. It was not thought correct in geography, or in history, to mention India without referring to the Black Hole of Calcutta: and indeed this popular incident might be introduced anywhere on an emergency. Here are some instances:

(1) By the treaty of Utrecht the English gained a good many battles. They gained the entry through the Mediterranean sea, and also opened trade to the Americans. These battles were mostly all won by Bute viz. The battles of Vicissico, Maschuerits, Passaro and

Vico Vosa. The former being assisted by Marlborough who was one of the chief persuaders of Queen Anne 1702. Bute though he tried his utmost to make things successful he was hung by the vengence of the people. The previous wars led to the Indian Mutiny where a great many of our soldiers were ill-treated (known as the Blackhole affair at Calcutta). This affair proving successful now was very sad at first.

(2) The Crimean war took place in 1704. In this war there were thousands of them killed but the victory rested with the English. The people were put into prison or the Black Hole as it was called and then they were left to die. The heat of the day was so great and there was no place to let air in, therefore they became romantic with thirst and died in the morning only 27 remained alive.

(3) Q. What is the Mutiny Act?

A. The Mutiny Act was an Act passed by the Government in 1857 to put an end to the atrocious crimes that were being carried on in India. It was during this year that 186 persons were confined in the Black Hole of Calcutta.

This method of learning history not only blends wars, disasters, and centuries: it compounds and confounds men. Wellington and Nelson unite to make one heroic figure, and at times borrow traits from others:

(1) The Duke of Wellington most of the Irishmen claim him as one of their nationality, he was able to lead the whole of the British army into Hyde Park, and lead them out of it again, he won many battles by sea and in the last and greatest of these the Great Duke fell, some of his officers wishing him not to dress in his uniform on this occasion his last words were Thank God I have done my duty. He was carried by his men from the post of duty in their arms to the cabin below.

(2) When quite young Wellington entered the king's kitchen but after a while he showed signs of wanting to join the regiment the king therefore ordered him to the regulars where he was not very long before he showed great skill in all military work. He served on the sea and was afterwards sent to France where he gained the

famous victory at Waterloo. He was also present in the Crimean war and was once sent to India to dispel some rioters in the Indian Mutiny; &c., &c.

Here Nelson escapes from the Duke and blends with Wolfe:

(3) While (Nelson) was suffering from the wound some of the British soldiers exclaimed they run they run at which Nelson cried Who run and when told he gave his last orders to Hardy: &c. &c.

And here the Duke escapes from Nelson and becomes Elizabethan:

(4) Q. State what you know about the Spanish Armada.

A. The war of the Spanish Armada was fought on the sea, at which the English had a great many great and important ships of war and most important naval commanders such as the Duke of Wellington. The war was with the French with whom the English Spanish and Portuguese went to fight against. The Duke of Wellington was afterwards made a great general. God gave wisdom to our general and success to a good cause. The Portuguese afterwards sent him his portrait and underneath it was written Invincable Wellington from grateful Portugal. But the Duke being asked for a copy of the print by a friend before he sent it scored out the word invincable and underneath it wrote Dont halloo till you are out of the wood which showed the Duke's good sense.

It is difficult to remember at the end of this long story that the original theme was the Armada. In the next example Wellington seems to be confused with Bacon, as well as with Nelson:

Duke of Wellington was a great English general. He was the commander of the English fleet during the Peninsular war, and won the following battles Assaye &c., and greatest of all the Battle of Waterloo. He was however charged with bribery after serving in Parliament a few years he retired to his country residence where he died.

No one suffered so much from this blending method as the strange trio, Sir Thomas More, Sir John Moore, and Thomas Moore, the poet. Here all three appear:

Q. Who was Sir Thomas More?

A. Sir Thomas Moore was noted as a poet, a statesman and a soldier. He was killed at the battle of Corunna.

Here two of the party are curiously mixed up with Henry de Bohun:

Sir Thomas More was a general in the English army. he was killed in the battle of Bannockburn and buried in the dead of night.

This needs no comment:

The battle of Trafalgar commenced in the year 1705, when two celebrated persons met with their death namely Sir John Moore and John Jervis. Sir John Moore was a poet and the author of many celebrated pieces of poetry.

John Hampden, the Hampton Court Conference, the Five Members, and the Seven Bishops are a strangely assorted group:

(1) Hampton Court Conference. This conference took place in Charles II's reign: he wanted to compel the bishops and clergy to believe in several articles he had drawn up. If they did not agree before the feast which took place in a few days they were to be expelled from their livings. The night before the feast seven bishops headed by John Hampton presented themselves before Charles with a millenary roll with several thousand names on begging them to be excused from his unjust demands.

(NOTE: I think "the feast" was not a banquet, but the Feast of St. Bartholomew: so that Charles II., James I. and James II. are implicated.)

(2) Hampton Court Conference was passed in the year 1783. It was in the reign of Charles. This was drawn up by 6 bishops and brought to the King to be signed. When the King saw this he flew into a terrible rage and would not sign it. This was awked about the streets, and all the people were anxious to buy one.

(3) Blake is known in history as being one of the seven Bishops who lived in the reign of James II. These seven Bishops among whom was Blake had offended their king. When brought to trial he Blake was not present, they had altogether hidden themselves, but

however they did appear. The day was in their favour and they were happily dismissed.

(NOTE: Some confusion between the Seven Bishops, and the Five Members; Bishop Lake of Chichester, and Admiral Blake.)

It is evident that the acquaintance which such candidates had with English history was limited: but one would think it safe to ask pupil-teachers, aged 18-20, or assistant teachers, aged 20-30, about the Young Pretender. These were the results of rash confidence on the part of an optimist examiner:

Q. Who was the Young Pretender?

A. (1) The son of Oliver Cromwell.

(2) ... also known as William Pitt.

(3) The son of Edward VI the old Pretender. So called because he pretended to be the little Earl of Warwick. Some people believed is story but more than half the people disbelieved him. He was tried and executed.

(4) Warren Hastings was known as the Old Pretender. The Duchess of Burgundy helped him.

(5) ... was Prince Charles Edward who claimed to be one of the little Princes murdered in the Tower. He was found to be a deceiver, and was put into the king's kitchen to work.

(6) The son of the old Pretender William Pitt, who was a claimant to the throne in George 3's time. He was one of the greatest statesmen that ever lived. He was created Earl of Orford.

(7) [He] was quite harmless as may be seen from the way in which he suffered himself to be hid by the maid in Scotland.

Again the examiner might suppose that all students of English history had some knowledge of the Jacobite movements of 1715 and 1745; but the following would open his eyes:

(1) Jacobites were originally followers of Jacob who went about in various parts of the country for preaching purposes.

(2) Jacobite was the name given to the followers of Jackade. Jackade was a person who pretended to be Duke of York. he marched through London at the head of 6000 men: he went to Ireland and tried to deceive them his followers were called Jacobites and Jacobin was the name given to his government.

(The two next may need a note: they refer to the Rebecca Riots in Wales, blended with Jacob, son of Rebekah. I think Rebekah had no daughter.)

(3) They called themselves Jacobites from a passage in Scripture about Jacob which passage they considered applicable to their own case. Their object was to do away with the tolls at turn-pike gates and they went to the root of the matter and destroyed the gates themselves.

(4) The Jacobites from the word Jacabus means James. The people of this rebellion dressed themselves in a very odd fashion their dress being like Rebeckah's daughter of old. They were however subdued.

A friend brilliantly suggests that Jonadab, the son of Rechab, and the Rechabites have been blended with Jacob, the Jacobites, Rebekah, and Rebecca. I gratefully agree.

There were some candidates to whom the politics of George III.'s reign were by no means clear:

Q. What effect had the French Revolution on Pitt, Fox, and Burke?

A. (1) The French Revolution led to such an extraordinary amount of work on Pitt, who was then Prime Minister that he was overtaxed, and could not contend against it therefore he resigned and led a life of seclusion. Burke who was a great writer overtaxed his mind with writing about the Revolution that he became partially insane. Fox was noted for writing his celebrated Book of Martyrs about this time, he also was forced to lead a life of seclusion on account of worry, and anxiety of the revolution.

(2) Pitt and Fox were great rivals in the House. Burke was in France. The Revolution occurred in 1857, and these three men who were clever and had a lot of foresight banded themselves together so

that they could be able to quell any signs of a rebellion in England. They all saw what a lot of mischief had been done in France, and thought it wise though differing in politics to be on the safe side.

(3) Pitt, Burke, and Fox were strongly opposed to the French Revolution, they foretold what would happen but the remainder of Parliament would heed their warnings. Pitt rose from his sick bed and ministered unto them but to no effect.

(NOTE: The reader will have some difficulty in awarding the prize among the last batch. Fox, the religious writer; Pitt, the ministering angel: these are two great conceptions.)

Now we come more clearly to another form of idiocy, the Happy Conjecture; which enables a candidate wholly ignorant of the matter in hand to evolve an answer of considerable length out of some familiar word in the question. Here is an illustration. In 1641 a Bill was introduced "for the utter abolition of Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, &c.," and a forcible epigrammatist of that day called it the "Root and Branch Bill." In 1901 an inquisitive examiner put in the History paper: "What was the Root and Branch Bill?" "Root?" said the candidates; "Branch?" said they: "it can do no harm ... here goes:"

(1) It was passed so that no one could cut down the trees or take the wood without the permission of the king.

(2) A bill dealing with the root of the matter, and certain branches relating to it.

(3) It was drawn up The Root to represent the whole of the crown money and the branch part of it the loans and money added to the crown money.

(4) A Bill that was made to shield the Presbyterians from the Protestant community.

(NOTE: In No. 4 which was the Root?)

In the same paper they were asked to explain the term "Villeins"; and in like manner they said to themselves "'villains,' archaic spelling, pedantic examiner" and they conjectured; one as an indignant Dissenter, another as a bigoted Churchman, a third as an undenominational idiot:

(1) Men who committed dastardly and vile tricks. Many of them were becoming clergymen in the reign of Henry II it will be remembered until it was decided that they should be tried by the King's Court. This of course stopped their treacherous games.

(2) The villein was religious rising, the people in this rising were called Villeins, they did not believe in Baptism, Holy Communion, and Confirmation.

(3) A villein was a person who was ordered to do some cruel deed. He was generally paid very dearly for doing so. A good example of villeins is seen in the case of the murder of the two princes in the Tower.

All these pale before the brilliancy of the reply to the following fearful question:

Q. How was the Coalition Ministry of 1783 formed? Name the most prominent Members. What causes led to its fall?

My candidate came from the Lancashire coalfield, near the Bridgwater Canal. "COAL-ition," she said, and she read her title clear, with the aid of local knowledge:

A. During the year 1783 Mr. Brindle and Mr. —— cut a canal from Worsley to Manchester so that the people of Manchester could have coal much cheaper than they were having. When the time came for opening the canal Mr. Brindle ran away and hid himself. It turned out to be a great success and it has proved to be very useful to Manchester people till lately. Coal is now much cheaper and there are so many coalpits round the district that it is much cheaper getting coal nearer home.

Here are some miscellaneous blends:

(1) (Character of Henry VIII.) Of a sour and hasty disposition he was not long in wreaking his vengeance upon those who should happen to fall under his displeasure, *e. g.* Wolsey, who incurred Henry's displeasure by not taking his part in a quarrel the king had with the clergy through a hasty speech of the king, who in an angry moment exclaimed have I no one to rid me of this low-born priest. This caused four Norman knights who heard the king say this to set

off at once to Canterbury Cathedral to murder the man Wolsey on the spot.

(2) (The Pilgrim Fathers.) A number of men who set out on foot for the Holy Land travelling night and day on foot were called the Pilgrim Fathers, because they were thought Christians if they travelled and denied themselves every comfort. It was the Pilgrim Fathers who kept sacred the cutting of the miseltoe from the oak, the keeping up of Christmas, Good Friday, and such like.

(3) Q. What do you know of Anselm?

A. Anselm Archbishop of Canterbury was imprisoned by William II. He escaped from prison by the aid of a coil of rope sent to him concealed in a bottle of wine.

(NOTE: In the second of the above three answers the last sentence puzzles me. I am inclined to suggest "Puritans" for "Pilgrim Fathers," and "denounced" for "kept sacred." The third answer gave me much trouble, but patient search showed that Henry II. (not William) imprisoned Flambard (not Anselm, and no Bishop) and that the rope was hidden in a jar (not a bottle).)

(4) Freedom of Trade may be attributed to General Washington who entered the Bristol Channel with a cargo of tea from America which was upset by the English causing a war with the Americans.

(5) Q. Name three Prime Ministers: describe the policy of one of them.

A. Edmund Burke, Walter Scott, Bothwell. Bothwell was a great writer: he wrote about bills and cheques.

(NOTE: Bothwell and Boswell one knows, though not as Prime Ministers: but it was Byles who wrote on Bills, and it would be strange if the candidate had ever heard of his work.)

(6) Q. Mention with dates any risings in the times of the Tudors.

A. In the rising of Jack Cade he mustered up a large number of rebels who under there desperate leader plundered everything before them, and finally entered London of which they took possession. Cade was slain by Wallworth the Lord Mayor, and the rebels

without their leader became so desperate that the king's life was in danger, but Henry took off his helmet and exclaimed stay I am Henry of Winchester, kill not your king.

(NOTE: Cade is blended with Wat Tyler, who was killed by Walworth in presence of Richard II.: neither Cade nor Tyler lived in Tudor times. Henry of Winchester, alias Henry III., made his appeal in 1265, nearly 200 years before the first Tudor king.)

Theology is as perplexing as politics: here are some instances:

(1) High Church are the high minded members of the Church of England. They believe in incense, the worshipping of the cross, and many other hideous notions.

(2) The Puritans tried to make a great distinction between the Whigs or Court party and themselves. They wore sober garments indulged in no vices and avoided the Society of the Whigs. Only thing really approved of was sermons.

(3) Strafford and Laud two archbishops in the reign of Henry 8 were impeached for denying the doctrine of transsubstantiation.

(4) Henry VIII. was a very strict Protestant and wished to confirm all Europe. He sent out men as missionaries to preach the gospel and to tell the people of the good the wood receive if they believed it.

The weariness of wading through a thousand of these examination papers was terrible. We were as gold-diggers washing gravel of a poor quality, and we hailed the smallest nugget with shouts of delight. Some of these are small, but to our hungry souls the gold seemed good:

(1) Q. What do you know of Dr. Arnold?

A. Dr. Arnold was hung as a spy by Washington during the American war.

(NOTE: Blending General Arnold, Dr. Arnold, and Major Andrè.)

(2) The Black Prince died from injuries received by his horse.

(3) John Knox introduced the revival of learning, the steam roller, and the printing press.

(4) Edward III. said he was the dughter of Arabella.

(NOTE: Meaning to say "the son of Isabella," blended with Arabella Stuart.)

* (5) James I. was a great Catholic. He was not at all brave. It is said of him that he padded his clothes for fear he would be knocked.

* (6) The Cabinet consists of the Private Secretaries, the Foreign Secretaries, the Colonial Secretaries, and the Poet Laureate.

* (7) Oliver Cromwell called Sept. 14 his lucky day: he died on Sept. 14, but he still called it his lucky day.

* (8) Christianity was introduced into England by Julius Cæsar in 55 B.C.

* (9) The Black Prince got his name from the great disease. (Qu.: Meaning the Black Death?)

* (10) Magna Charter was a very good woman to the poor. Her photograph is on the stained glass windows of the Church of Scotland.

These came from the rich mine of History. Geography was not so auriferous. To drop the metaphor, the candidates were less amusing in Geography, because they were less ignorant. They had learned Geography as children, but as a rule they picked up their notions of History from manuals, compiled by writers of a low grade, dealing chiefly in anecdotes and picturesque phrases. But there were bright moments even in revision of Geography. The simple questions, there as in History, were often the most fruitful. One would think that all pupil teachers, all book readers, and newspaper readers had heard of the equinox, and the Midnight Sun. But look at these answers to demands for explanation of the terms. First the Equinox:

An imaginary line drawn across the sky. Land lying on or near the equator. The axis on which the earth turns. A wind which blows from April to September, they are called Equinoctial gales. When the sun and moon are on the zenith they are said to be in the equinox. A peculiar animal in South America. The part where the earth and sun pass one another. &c., &c.

Then the Midnight Sun:

> The sun is visible at midnight from the top of Mount Riga where hotels have been built especially for tourists who go to see the midnight sun.

(NOTE: This comes of reading Mark Twain on the Rigi sunrise.)

> When the sun shines on the northern part of the earth it takes more than one day to get in the shadow of the earth on account of it moving so slowly.
>
> The midnight sun is caused by certain gases igniting in the air. These gases are at rest when apart from each other, but at their joining they light up the whole parts thus occupied by them, and thus give light to all the northern parts of Europe.

That is so scientific that a modest examiner hesitates to give it O: and the next is still more imposing:

> Q. "The sun never sets on the British Empire." Explain this.
>
> A. It is quite true. The British Empire being mostly surrounded by ocean is deprived of the sun's rays as the water has the greater attraction for it. It is also responsible for this on account of its position from the equator.

And this again throws a new light on things:

> Iron is usually mined in the most populated area which seems providential as much labour is attached to its thorough preparation.

It must have been a relative of that candidate, who first noted the providential arrangement by which large rivers always run through large towns.

Even verbal eccentricity was found wonderfully refreshing at times:

> (1) The rivers of Queensland being most of the year ... mere poodles.
>
> (2) Amsterdam is built on stilts.
>
> (3) There are immense forests round the shores of the Baltic and tobogganing is a great trade.

(4) Cologne cathedral built in the Elizabethan style of architecture.

Here are some unclassified follies:

(1) A cyclone is an instrument for telling the distance of travelling.

(NOTE: The candidate must have been surprised to find a cyclometer in a Geography paper.)

(2) Cyclones are the evaporation of volcanoes.

(3) The dingo is a bird with a face like a dog.

(4) (Trees of Australia.) The cow-tree, octopus, and large palms are very plentiful.

(5) The Plateau of Tibet is noted for the Tibet goat. I cannot say whether the goat took its name from the Plateau or the plateau from the goat.

(NOTE: She would feel the same difficulty about the Skye terrier and the Cheshire cat. Did the cat take its name from the county, or the county from the cat?)

(6) Hong Kong before it came into possession of England consisted of a few shanties and huts: at the present time it consists of mountains, valleys, and rivers.

(7) Rangoon a Prussian seaport on the Baltic so called because it is situated on a Rangoon, salt water lake.

(NOTE: Take the island of Rügen, the port of Riga in Russia, a lagoon from the Adriatic, and Rangoon in Burmah, and mix.)

ENGLISH LITERATURE papers seldom came my way. They were very exhausting, for the candidates wrote essays of appalling dreariness, and there were few oases. I have a few samples.

Q. Name the authors of the following works:

	WORK.	**AUTHOR.**
ANS:	Short Way with Dissenters.	Trolloph.
	Tale of a Tub.	William Wordsworth.

Rape of the Lock.	Adam Beade.
Campaign.	Mrs. Browning.
Rights of Man.	Jessie Fothergill.

The really funny thing about that list is that it is absolutely genuine, and the work of one candidate. And I defy any one to make a better list, trying to be wrong.

This life of Wordsworth is nearly as good:

> William Wordsworth was born in Hampshire of poor humble but God fearing parents. They had a very large family and sometimes hardly knew how to make ends meet. They were educated at any ordinary every day school but William had always a taste for poetry and thought he should like to become a poet, and in order to have their son's wish gratified his parents denied themselves so that he might have books to study and to try to send him to some college. He was a very studious youth and made a very good scholar. He worked very hard at Oxford to try and repay his parents who had now become old for their self-denial on his behalf. He helped them with his purse. He wrote several very simple, and interesting poems and they soon became known. In this way he obtained a very nice livehood. He was a very dutiful son, hard work and painstaking. At school he was liked by his fellow companions for whom he had always a joke ready at hand. Some of his poems are now used in our Elementary schools such as "We are seven." He was born in the year 1626 and died in 1785 aged 59 years.

(NOTE: According to the Nat. Biography he was son of an attorney; was born in Cumberland, educated at the Grammar School at Hawkeshead, and at St. John's, Cambridge. (1780-1850.) But it is agreed that he wrote "We are seven." The candidate's subtraction is weak.)

About 1902 some theorist discovered that our pupil teachers were lamentably weak in knowledge of common things, and he persuaded the Board to add a paper on "General Information" to the already heavy list. I at once applied for the office of reviser, on the twofold ground that it would be easy to coach up the answers, and that the wrong answers would be amusing. I soon found that from my point of view the merits of the paper

were over-rated; and as the Board found the same thing from their point of view, the paper was dropped. But it provided me with a few gems:

The examiner began with some well-known buildings and places: "Where and what are the following?"

The Forth Bridge.
The Phœnix Park.
The Coliseum.
&c., &c.

A. (1) The Fourth Bridge is so called because it is the last of 4 bridges.

(2) The Forth Bridge is in Venice where the suspects were led by the Counsel of three, and were never heard of afterwards.

(3) The Phœnix Park is in Ireland: so called because of the Phoeneans having been there.

(4) The Phœnix Park scene of the assassination of Mr. Phœnix.

(5) The Phœnix Park is an insurance.

(6) The Coliseum of Rhodes is the form of a great elephant one of the seven wonders of the world.

Then he asked the candidates, the great majority of whom were girls, about dogs, their appearance, and their special uses. One girl said that "the fox terrier runs sideways," but she did not explain. Another described the "St. Bernard dog renowned for saving snow-hidden wanderers in the Torrid regions." A third chose "the scavanger dog, a very ungamely dog. It belogs to the Eastern countries all refuse is put out at night and clears it away before morning."

Lastly, as far as we are concerned, he asked the meaning of the following expressions: "The Green-Eyed Monster," "the sere and yellow leaf," "the Thin Red Line," &c., &c.

The Green Eyed Monster was defined as "indigestion": according to another it "refers to a whale": according to a skittish one, "sometimes the headmaster or headmistress of a school appears to be a green-eyed monster in the eyes of her pupils and also teachers sometimes."

The sere and yellow leaf was “a certain kind of tobacco.”

The thin red line was “The charge at Baraklava headed by Sir Colin Campbell during the Indian Mutiny.”

It was, I think, in another paper, that these quaint views appeared:

> Q. What do you understand by a quorum, a minute book, &c.? A. A quorum is a question asked at a meeting which the chairman is unable to answer. A minute book is a book kept, with the exact number of minutes allotted to the speakers at a meeting.
>
> Q. What are the duties of the chairman? A. The chairman performs the doxology.
>
> Q. What remedy would you suggest for burns? A. Stripes of hot vinegar are very affecting.

At the end of many days’ revision of such-like skimble-skamble stuff an inspector wrote: “Complaint is sometimes made that the training colleges do not provide sufficient accommodation for all the applicants, but the plain inference from the perusal of these papers, having due regard to the spelling, the grammar, and the acquaintance with the subject shown by the candidates, is that a kindergarten class in an idiot asylum would be a more fitting place of learning.”

It will have been seen that our Errata are secular. We did not examine in divinity. But twice a year, at one time, I used to meet Diocesan inspectors, who kept large volumes of the most hideous blunders in their own subject. One of these I remember for its exceeding ingenuity. The question was, “What do you mean by ‘a graven image’?” And the answer was “An idle maid with hands.” Now it is clear to my mind that this is not to be regarded as bad spelling; but that the definition had been given orally, and that the impression produced on the child’s mind was that of a naughty girl “as didn’t do no work though she had hands to do it with.” And I think she had heard her father accuse her mother of “doin’ nothink but set theer like a bloomin’ image.” Then she combined the ideas.

To this I would add a delightful blend from a pupil teacher examination:

> When the Israelites had gone God told Noah to go out into the city and tell all the Israelites that if King Pharoah did not let the

people go he would drown the world. And it came to pass, when God did drown the world, and all the beasts and every living creature in it. During the flood God told Noah to build an ark and it was to float on top of the water. In it save Noah and his family and with the two tables of stone: &c., &c.

FOOTNOTES:

[38] In all cases except those marked with an asterisk, the answers are copied *verbatim et literatim* from the originals: in most cases I have the name of the writer, or of the school, or centre of examination. The starred answers are supplied by colleagues, and may be considered authentic.

And in all cases the Spelling, the Grammar, and the Punctuation are original. “For Heaven’s sake, reader, take them not for mine.”

CHAPTER XXIII
REPORTS

"All my reports go with the modest truth,
Nor more, nor clipp'd, but so."—*King Lear.*

The annual inspection of a school ended in a Report. When the papers had been marked, and the Examination Schedules had been made up, it was time to search one's note-book, and to rack the memory for facts, and therefrom to construct a report to Their Lordships, to be communicated to the managers, and by them to the teachers.

In the earlier days of inspection this was a comparatively simple affair: the really important matter was the number of children who had passed or failed in the examination. Upon this, unless there was conspicuous weakness, the greater part of the grant depended, and it was easy to fill up the forms with commonplace criticisms and suggestions. From 1876 to the middle of the 'nineties the pressure increased, until at last reporting became a serious strain on memory, judgment, and conscience; for there was a variable grant for half a dozen subjects, culminating in a variable grant for the general "merit" of the whole school: and each item required some thought. New code after new code relaxed the strain, until inspection arrived at the present effete condition, when the grant is fixed, and the criticisms of H.M.I. are like the bite of a midge; annoying for the moment, but transitory in effect.

Or, as my old headmaster would have said, "like the coruscations of the summer lightning, lambent, but yet innocuous."

From one corner of my old domain comes a mimic blue-book, containing all the school reports for the past year. Here they are collected; and I look at them with some dismay. Of course I did not write all of them, but I edited all, and I am answerable for all. Some are strongly worded, for, if one does not shout pretty loud to a deaf man, one is not heard. Yet one does not want one's shouts phonographed. How do the managers and teachers like the reports in print, scattered broadcast?

I search my memory for any parallel publication. The nearest that I can discover is a Cricket Directory, which I saw perhaps forty years ago: I quote from memory fertilised by imagination:

> A. B. is a promising run-getter, but he too often forgets that a straight bat is a rudimentary necessity: his fielding is improving: as a bowler he has not been successful this year: his average is x.
>
> C. D. bowled x overs for y runs last season, and took z wickets: this is his best record so far, and makes him a valuable acquisition to a county team. As a batsman he has still much to learn: his average last year was z.

These are complimentary compared with some of the school reports that lie on my table. But when I read them, or rather their prototypes, in that remote period, I was sorry for A. B. and C. D. Yet the writers were subject to the law of libel, and H.M.I., if not malicious, is privileged.

> "Others abide our question: thou art free,"

the Law Courts may say. Stern critics sit in Whitehall and weed out all that seems perilous: when the sieve has done its duty there is little left for the lawyers.

I meditate on the extension of the expression of free opinion. How would it work on Sundays? The preacher has a pulpit, and in that inviolable recess has a free tongue for half an hour, with a merciful leaning towards twenty minutes. The organist is a greater libertine. The architect and builder ill-use us, and for the most part we suffer silently. Would the bench of bishops send me about the country to report on church services, and to recommend deductions from the incomes of the incompetent? Of course one would begin with cathedrals and proceed with more lenient rule to parish churches. Probably at least one inspector would be required in each diocese, and as these officials, like school inspectors, would be men of diverse minds, it would be the most racy Bluebook of the year that reproduced their varied views. Let us make some samples:

> NORCHESTER CATHEDRAL. Visited on April 1 by Mr. Mendelssohn Brown.
>
> The condition of this cathedral is far from satisfactory. The singing, which is the main object of interest to the greater part of the

congregation, is even worse than at last year's inspection. Of the eight men several should be contemplating acceptance of a retiring pension. The boys are ill-behaved, and their musical capacity is on a level with their behaviour: in the Psalms there was no verse in which they did not make one or more mistakes. The Services were ill-chosen and incorrectly rendered: the Anthem was a pretentious failure. The merely literary part of the service was satisfactory, but it is not desirable to attach too much importance to these rudiments.

REMARKS: My Lords will require a more favourable report on the singing as a condition of an unreduced grant.

WESTCHESTER CATHEDRAL. Visited on March 7 by Mr. Simeon Jones.

It is gratifying to be able to report well of the musical part of the service: the organ playing was distinctly good, and the singing often reached a high level of excellence. It should, however, be borne in mind that congregational worship is the primary consideration, and special attention should be paid to this feature in the coming year. The Canon in Residence would do well to attend an elocution class at a Continuation school in the winter season: it was with the utmost difficulty that the Lessons were heard, and even in the 16th chapter of Romans four mistakes in the Salutations is 33·3 per cent. above the average for all England. The Dean's sermon was for the most part inaudible: this is probably not to be regretted from a doctrinal point of view, but the waste of time is a serious consideration.

REMARKS: Special attention should be paid to the Inspector's warning.

SUDCHESTER CATHEDRAL: Visited on Nov. 10 by Mr. Hodge.

The service was very creditably conducted and well attended. It is unfortunate that the collections continue so small. The premises need attention: the choir is dark, and the walls need cleaning. It might be advisable to remove the 15th century stained glass from the East window and to substitute clear glass. If the walls were whitewashed (two coats) there would be less danger from germs.

The health and comfort of the congregation should not be sacrificed to merely æsthetic considerations.

REMARKS: I am to request that the Dean and Chapter will submit plans and estimates of the work recommended by their Lordships' Inspector as soon as possible.

EASTCHESTER CATHEDRAL: Visited on Dec. 15 by Mr. Crankie Robinson.

The Dean and Chapter are to be congratulated on the completion of the restoration of this ancient fabric, and which has been carried out in a thoroughly catholic and conservative spirit, with the result of revealing to the present generation the work of Sigismund, first Abbot of Ostia. At the same time the later accretions, notably the lancet windows of the polygonal apse, and the late Perpendicular machicolations, have been reverently handled. The time at my disposal was insufficient to enable me to report fully on the preaching, reading, and singing, but the work seemed satisfactory on the whole. The crypt was very cold.

REMARKS: The Dean and Chapter should seriously consider the advisability of warming all parts of the sacred edifice.

Such reports would be what my clerical friends call "distinctly helpful." If there is any hesitation shown by the episcopal bench in taking it up, Baedeker might be appealed to. By degrees all important places of worship might be gathered in.

This, however, is visionary: I am concerned with the actual.

In framing the school reports "to be communicated to the managers," we had several rough principles. The first was that a good school would do with a very few words: a bad school required many stripes. The second was that one should begin with the good points (if any), and thus proceed more gracefully to the bad points. But if the place were thoroughly bad, it was thought wise to begin and end with denunciation, sandwiching a few words of faint praise about the middle.

It was noticeable that a master liked to be prepared beforehand for a bad report. One man, of whom I knew something, complained bitterly that the Inspector "before leaving the room was as pleasant as you'd wish, and I

thought everything was going well; but when I got the Report I couldn't sit down for a week after it." How graphic!

It happened from time to time that a school manager would be goaded into fury. At one time I expected this to occur twice, or it might be thrice, a year. It might almost certainly be predicted that the fight would rage round one adjective or one verb: though the word might be immaterial to the general argument.

From many such contests we were saved by the skill of the examiners in Whitehall. From long experience and not, I am sure, from any congenial dullness of mind, they got to know exactly how a thoroughly stupid manager might misinterpret a harmless phrase; and if they kindly forewarned me, I gratefully substituted something suitable to the meanest capacity. The knavish speech may sleep in the foolish ear, but simple speech may kindle amazing suspicion that will blaze into wrath.

In more remote days our reports were twofold. The full report was sent to the Department, and, if approved, was forwarded to the managers. But, in addition, every certificated teacher who had passed through a period of probation had a parchment certificate of merit; and on this it was our duty to inscribe an epigrammatic abstract of the report on the school, or, if he were a class teacher, on his class. The advantage of this "endorsement" was great. It gave managers of schools a complete history of an applicant's career. It gave an inspector still more valuable information; for in reading previous endorsements he was often able to supply a good deal that was not apparent on the surface. The opinions of some inspectors had a special value. Others were less esteemed. I was told that one very important School Board had a sort of table, equating the official opinions of all the inspectors in England. But I never heard what Mrs. Harris (*teste* Mrs. Gamp) would have called "my individgle number."

The ordinary inspector soon acquired the habit of framing his endorsement on the general principles of his craft. It was not thought fair to speak ill of a teacher on his certificate, unless there were special grounds. Therefore one proceeded by judicious omission. If one read that Mr. A. "taught the elementary subjects with fair success" one drew two inferences; (1) that he could *not* teach anything else; (2) that his discipline was weak, because it was not mentioned. But if it was stated that Mrs. B. "maintained

good order, and was particularly successful in teaching handwriting," it became obvious that her arithmetic was a deplorable failure. So that to the trained eye the *suppressio veri* was not a *suggestio falsi*.

But useful as the system was, it was open to two strong objections. Firstly, it was often hard on a teacher, for the inspector might err, and the endorsement was permanent. Secondly, and this was the last straw, it became an intolerable nuisance to the inspector. In a school of 100 children it was easy to be terse, innocuous, and fairly truthful. But I open a recent notebook, and find a school of 600 boys with 21 teachers. Supposing that ten of these teachers want certificate reports; conceive the strain on the imagination, or the commonplace book! Therefore a cynical and eccentric colleague adopted the startling method of applying the same treatment to all. If this school of 600 boys passed a good examination on the whole, but had two weak classes out of the twenty, then the correct summary would be —"The school has on the whole passed a good examination. Standards II. (b) and III.(c) are not equal to the rest." *And he wrote this on the certificates of all the ten men.* Eight at least would say, "What have I to do with the two black sheep? Mine are white." But the inspector replied, like Mrs. Prig, "Who do you think's to wash one feater, and miss another, and wear out one's eyes with all manner of fine work of that description, for half-a-crown a day?" Or words to that effect.

It was recorded of another inspector, whose massive intellect had partly given way under the strain of compiling reports, that in a certain school he wrote:

> "The master's wife has lately died: the school has been painted pea-green.
>
> "J. Tearem, H.M.I."

These records, I said, were indelible: but there was nothing to prevent a teacher from (so to speak) suiciding his parchment certificate and lamenting its loss for the rest of his life. If the parchment was lost, the Department declined to replace it, unless it had been lost by an inspector. Probably the inspectors lost more than the teachers destroyed, but it was rumoured that the latter method was not unknown. An alternative remedy was to erase undesirable words, and, if necessary, to introduce amendments. This certainly was done occasionally, for there were cases of detection, and that

suggests the existence of undetected cases. A more remarkable course was to hire, or buy the parchment of a retired teacher, if possible a homonym, and to trade under that new name with such alterations as were necessary. A colleague told me of a case, which he declared was well known in the village in which the vendor lived. It was in Wales, and it was no one's business to interfere.

A touching story of a lost parchment is told by one inspector. These documents were not issued till after a period of probation, and if results during that period were not satisfactory, the term might be prolonged indefinitely. A London teacher, when her first chance came, was unsuccessful; and when the next chance came she was more than usually anxious. The inspection went smoothly: she began to hope: and day after day she sat like Mariana, lamenting the delay. Then came the joyful announcement that "the certificate of merit would shortly be issued," and she became more clamorous. It happened one day, that illness kept her at home on the south side of the Thames, and she sent strictest orders that, if the big envelope with official heading arrived, it was to be locked up in the desk with special care. That very day it came, and the assistant mistress in her friendly zeal determined to disregard orders, and with her own hands to carry it to her care-worn chief. It would do her more good than medicine.

She went by steamer up the Thames, Battersea way; and as it was a cold day, she put the precious burden on her lap, and buried her hands in her muff. There came a sudden gust, which lifted the big square envelope, whirled it round, and tossed it into the river. And she was left lamenting.

First the news had to be broken to the bereaved one. Like Tennyson's dame

> "(She) wept like a child for the child that was dead before he was born."

She was frantic with grief, and her friends trembled for her intellect, such as it was. But the assistant was a girl of much resourcefulness. Her father was a prominent official in the body that looks after the Thames: she went to him, and told the piteous tale. My colleague—but he was an imaginative man—alleged that they dragged the river from Teddington Lock to the Nore, but caught nothing. Finally it was decided that a sea-gull had detected a meaty flavour beneath the paper cover and had carried it off.

I am glad to say that after prolonged correspondence the Department issued a duplicate.

Of all endorsements the most difficult to frame was the initial entry. At the end of the term of probation the teacher had to give a formal lesson on any topic or object that he chose: it was supposed to last for twenty minutes, and H.M.I. was expected to sum up his opinion of the lesson and of the teacher's general capacity in one compact sentence. Very often one disregarded the formal lesson, for the teacher might be all but speechless with fright, and the verdict had to be based on the general results of the year's work.

In one such case I was in great doubt. The mistress was very young and very pretty. She had light hair and blue eyes, and it follows that she was very nervous. I cannot say that her school did very well. I think it was deficient in Arithmetic: but she was very charming. Should the parchment be issued? My Assistant was susceptible, and soft-hearted: he pleaded for her: she was all alone in this country school: her Certificate examination at Whitelands—one of the leading Colleges—showed that she had plenty of brains: she had done her best, and she would improve. Finally I gave way, and suggested as the endorsement: "Miss X. is a pretty fair teacher." He agreed rapturously, and so it was written. But the next year my chief visited the school, and according to custom called for the parchment. And (so the assistant told me) when he read the entry, and caught sight of the "pretty, fair" one in front of her class, it smote him suddenly, and he retreated hastily to the Infants' class-room.

All endorsements are now abolished; I am not sure whether there is even a parchment certificate. It is many years since I saw one.

Oh, Miss O'Flaherty! do you remember your *bon mot* at St. Petronius' school? I asked, you know, whether you had any poetry to say as part of the examination for your certificate, and you replied with a twinkle of your Irish eyes: "I've got all the certificates I want—(and you added softly)—except one."

CHAPTER XXIV
SINGING

"I will but teach them to sing, and restore them to the owner."

Much Ado.

The ordinary work of school inspection is not exciting to an outside spectator. There is nothing in the Three R's to quicken the pulse, or to raise the temperature. Grammar, geography, history only seem to produce profound thankfulness in the onlooker's mind, that he is not on the rack; there may be absurd answers, but if he laughs, the effect on the children may be disastrous. For varied interest of a mild kind, I should recommend composition and natural history. Ladies like needlework. Some can stand with a sweet smile on their faces while the children sing. Here, then, are four subjects upon which something may be said.

The list of accomplishments that I do not possess would be lengthy. But on the credit side I may put music—up to Standard III. That is not an exalted boast, but it places me far ahead of many of my old colleagues. I could look over a music paper, if it was not Tonic Sol-fa, and when the children sang school songs with the view of getting the Government Grant of 6*d.* or 1*s.*, I was able to make quite valuable remarks.

For an inspector, a knowledge of music is an useful, but not altogether an enviable possession. He ought to be able to decide whether singing is correct and tuneful, but the man who does not know suffers less. (This sounds like a quotation from the *Ethics*, but I believe Aristotle is free from blame.) At one conference of inspectors we discussed rules for awarding the grant for singing. The code laid down the principle that, if the children sang "by note," the possible grant was 1*s.* per head; if "by ear," it was only 6*d.*; to get the higher grant they had to do certain exercises—that was simple enough. There were ten of us present, and it happened that I was the only man who personally conducted the examinations; the others sent their assistants. I was appealed to, as an expert, to say when we should be justified in refusing even the lower grant, that for singing by ear. One

valued colleague, who admitted that he detected no difference between one tune and another, remarked that his plan was to watch the face of the head teacher. If it showed disgust and loathing, disappointment and fear, he concluded that the necessary standard had not been reached, and he refused the grant. But this obviously led to hypocrisy. And the head teacher might be no judge, or too exacting. Finally I suggested, and it was carried unanimously, THAT if the singing was so far tolerable that you could stop in the room to the very end, the grant might be paid; BUT THAT if you had to rush into the playground, a stern refusal should follow.

It was a very incomplete test. I have known men who could smile at the Salvation Army band.

In the early days there was very little note-singing. There was no extra grant for voice cultivation or any other form of scientific training; merely 1*s.* for twelve songs. Then, I think in 1876, came the graduated scale of *6d.* or 1*s.*, and then, or later, the number of songs was reduced to eight. As most schools could not receive more than 15*s.* or 17*s.* 6*d.* a head, however much they might earn, there was not much inducement to pile up the losses. But the clergy encouraged note-singing for the sake of their choirs, and the teachers found it an agreeable change from the monotony of the ordinary routine. So the work grew, till it became rare to find a school that did not attempt Tonic Sol-fa at the least. Then the special grant was merged in the large principal grant.

Hymns were forbidden between 10 and 4.30 (or the equivalent times). A school manager once protested to me against this restriction. I suggested that if managers chose hymns containing "doctrine distinctive of any denomination" there would be ructions. He said triumphantly that his selection would satisfy all parties: it was Moody and Sankey. The pachyderm has many advantages.

But it was not always easy to draw the line, if one wanted to draw it; and it was rumoured that a pedantic inspector objected to the National Anthem, as having a religious tendency. It was probably the same man who corrected a similar error in history. The question was, Who was the wisest man that ever lived? A child, who knew more than I do, answered "Solomon," and the teacher said "Yes"; but H.M.I. said, "No: not after 10: say 'Solon.'"

Some schools sang beautifully in two- or three-part harmony. They were not always the most successful in other branches of study, and I am inclined to doubt Shakespeare's theory of the evil disposition of the unmusical man. We did our best to encourage harmony, beginning with simple rounds of two or three parts. And the story is told by an Inspector of established credibility, that in a certain school he had advised this rudimentary method, and was asked by an uncultured master, "What is a round?" H.M.I. explained, taking "Three blind mice" as an example: "The first class will sing the first line; then the second class will take it up, while the first class go on to the second line; and then the third class chime in." The master listened deferentially, and promised to do his best. Next year, as the Inspector approached the school for his annual visit after formal notice, he heard from afar sounds so agonizing that he hurried on to see what had gone wrong. He found the whole school shrieking as though they were possessed by the fiends in Berlioz' *Faust*. Naturally he asked for an explanation.

"This," said the master, "is the round you recommended. They are singing 'The Last Rose of Summer'; the first class sing the first line, the second class the second line, and so on, as you suggested. We found it hard at first, but I think we have mastered it now."

Of course, in many schools, the head teacher is not a musician. But most of them could "hum a bit," and they generally were awarded the grant for singing by ear. Their choice of songs was marvellous. Never shall I forget the fury of an eminent Celtic scholar, who at one time adorned the office of Inspector, when he found that a master had taught the children to sing the "pence-table" to the hallowed strains of "Llwyn On" (The Ash Grove):

> "Twenty pence are one and eightpence;
> Twenty-four pence two shillings;
> Thirty-pence are two and sixpence;
> Thirty-six pence three shillings."

I suggested "Three Bob" as more suitable to the metre, which requires a monosyllable at the end of the fourth line; but the amendment was lost; like the well-meant suggestion of Fitz James, it "added but fuel to his hate"; I was told (in effect) that "Llwyn On" should be sung *dolce, cantabile, con*

molta tenerezza; and the children sang it *staccato, alla marcia, giocoso*. I fear that school got a poor report.

This unhallowed wedding of trivial verse to immortal melody often disturbed even my placid temper. I remember in one school, after listening for some time to some moral sentiments sung to a tune that haunted me with memories of my youth, I recovered the "Lost Chord," and enquired of the Lady of the Manor, who (*suspendens omnia naso*) was keeping an eye on my movements, whether she recognized the air. She failed to do so, and I had the pleasure of informing her that it was "Villikins and Dinah," a tune which, about the time of the Crimean War, divided popularity with "*Partant pour la Syrie*," and preceded "The Ratcatcher's Daughter." How did it go fifty years since?

> "As Villikins was a vallikin in his garden around,
> He saw his fair Dinah lay dead on the ground;
> A cup of cold poison lay close by her side,
> And a billet-dow wot said as how 'twas of poison she died."

Little did I think to meet Dinah again in a Public Elementary School. The Lady of the Manor sniffed scornfully: probably the mistress heard of it next day. I am sorry I did not ask for a copy of the amended words.

In another school I was cheered by the sound of "Nelly Bly," a nigger song (shall we say negro melody?) of the Early Carolina period, say 1858-9. There I did ask for a copy of the words, and here they are:

> "In Asia and in Africa
> The elephant is found:
> He larger is than any beast
> That walks upon the ground:
> When tame he is gentle and mild,
> And does what he's desired,
> But if he's mocked or treated ill,
> With anger he is fired."

I forget the rest, but this is genuine. There should have been a chorus of Hi Jumbo, Ho Jumbo; but it was before the days of the popular beast.

In an old Blue Book, more than thirty years ago, I read a lamentation of an Inspector in this district that he had heard "A Southerly Wind" to an

extent that would have sickened a Cheshire fox-hunter, and "The Neat Little Clock" till he could wish that time were no more. The latter was a drivelling piece of morality sung to the beautiful old tune of "The Woodpecker": it lasted well into my epoch, but it seems to be extinct now.

At times one attempted to guide the popular taste. In a fishing village, where there was a lighthouse, I persuaded the master to teach Kingsley's "Three Fishers": and in an Irish school I urged Moore's Melodies. But in neither case was the result encouraging, and the attempt was not repeated. Then it occurred to me one day, as it did with a more satisfactory result to Juvenal, "am I always to be only a hearer?" or as to Fletcher of Saltoun's "very wise man," if a man were permitted to make all the school songs, he need not care who should make the Code. And I wrote for a friendly infant school a parody of Gilbert's Minstrel's Song, in the "Yeomen of the Guard": it was arranged antiphonally for boys and girls, and the second verse ran thus:

BOYS: I have a song to sing, oh.

GIRLS: Sing me that song, oh.

BOYS: It's the song of the pie, and the greedy boy
Who sat in his lonely corner;

It's the song of a boy with a greedy thumb,
Which he put in the pie to pull out a plum;
The little dog laughed when he saw such sport,
For he always laughed when he didn't ought,
He never was at school, and never was taught,
A naughty boy, Jack Horner.
ALL: Heigh dey, heigh dey,
Heigh diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle,
The little dog laughed when he saw the sport
Of the naughty boy, Jack Horner.

I think the teachers were a little doubtful about the grammar of "didn't ought," and candour compels me to admit that the song was not a success. Two schools sang it "to oblige the Inspector," but on him, at least, it had the effect of a penitential psalm. I wrote no more.

Strange that there should be any difficulty in finding words of songs: “the world was all before them where to choose.” England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales contribute folk-songs of sufficient merit and variety, though, at times, of dialectic English. Germany is always at hand. But I admit that if you deduct in each case songs in praise of Bacchus, Diana, and Venus, there is a large gap.

CHAPTER XXV
NATURAL HISTORY

> "His acquaintance with Natural History is surprising. Quite a Buffoon."—*Old Curiosity Shop.*

In Public Elementary Schools the study of Natural History is still in its infancy. But there are signs of its assuming practical importance. In one school in the county in which I write, it has developed energy in a truly surprising manner. Our county paper recently informed us that the boys attending that place of learning had caught and killed an astonishing number of "worbles" in the past year; I think over 63,000.

This is a mere plagiarism from the methods of Dotheboys Hall. I turn to the chronicles thereof, and I read:

> "Please, sir, he's weeding the garden."
>
> "To be sure," said Squeers, "so he is. B-O-T bot, T-I-N tin, bottin, N-E-Y ney, bottiney, noun substantive, a knowledge of plants. When he has learnt that bottinney means a knowledge of plants, he goes and knows 'em."

What is a worble? That I know not: the worble-hunters were not in my district. Nor is the creature traceable in Miss Ormerod's "Manual of Injurious Insects."[39] I think it molests cattle, and therefore the farmers' sons are keen to "take away that worble." And as the school is in the middle of a great hunting district, the desire for the chase is instinctive.

There is, however, no need to limit children to worbles. In London, for instance, the supply of this prey would be insufficient; but in so large a town there would be little difficulty in establishing a special entomological "line." There would be room for research of the most varied kind. The names of several species will instantly occur to the reader. If Marylebone and Westminster could be induced to make competitive collections of the best known, the sympathy of all London would be enlisted, and education would enjoy a popularity which it has hitherto failed to attain.

To tell the truth, we did not profess to teach natural history as a part of the regular course. But we gave object-lessons; that is, lessons on an object placed before a class; and as the object was usually a picture, and as the pictures usually represented either Scripture scenes, or animals, it followed that—after 10 a.m.—most of the lessons were on animals. Our ménagerie was a small one, and, the remarkable habits and properties of the creatures being traditional, there was little chance of its extension. A new beast would require study. Moreover, the managers did not like buying too many pictures.

Will you accompany me through a large infant school? The head mistress greets me: "The first class *was* going to have a lesson on the elephant: will that do?" Oh yes; let us have the elephant.

"Loungin' around and sufferin'," said Uncle Remus. The elephant is painfully familiar. When the visitor to Continental picture galleries catches sight of S. Sebastian—"arrowed, but unharrowed"—he hastily turns away in search of novelty: and so would we gladly do here. Bitter constraint and sad occasion compel us to listen for a decent time, though our thoughts wander to pity for the unhappy fate of the huge beast. To be as big as that, and yet because of "a villainous trick of thine eye, and a foolish hanging of thy nether lip," as Falstaff puts it, to be in the estimation of infant schools a compound of the clown and the pantaloon; and to be lectured on by pupil-teachers,

"Ut pueris placeas, et declamatio fias,"

it is a cruel destiny. But who could respect an animal with that tail?

The lesson is devoid of interest. How do I know, when admittedly my thoughts have been wandering? Because the children are better judges than I, and they have damned it by entire indifference. Would the Inspector like to ask any questions at the end? Only one:

"What does the elephant eat?"

"BUNS."

Will I take the second class? Certainly. I am offered the camel. The camelus scholasticus is as well known to me as my dog. I know his whole history, his habitat, his food-and-water arrangements, his disposition. He differs considerably from the Camelus Kiplingicus, or Melancholy 'Oont:

"The 'orse 'e knows above a bit, the bullock's but a fool,
The elephant's a gentleman, the battery-mule's a mule;
But the commissariat cam-u-el, when all is said and done,
'E's a devil an' a ostrich an' a orphan child in one."

But our camel is gentle, meek, anxious to oblige. The lesson is going on, while I make these valuable reflections, and the beast's picture hangs on the easel: if he is at all like his picture, *mallem errare cum Platone*, I side with Mr. Kipling. The camel has been called the ship of the desert. He is very useful; he lives in very hot countries, where it is very hot. Tommy Jones, don't fidget; listen to teacher. And he lives in the desert, where there is nothing but sand all round. Mary Smith, if you don't give over talking, teacher will be very cross with you: yes, my word, &c., &c.

When the stream of drivel has run dry, I ask:

"Where does the camel live?"

"In very 'ot coontries."

"Yes: but whereabouts?"

"In the desert."

"And what does he live on there?"

"Sahnd."

"Sand? Yes; but I mean, what does he get to eat?"

"Sahnd."

"And what does he get to drink in the desert?"

"Water."

"And where does he get *that* from?"

"Out of the taps."

I had not thought of that. There comes up a recollection of a Norfolk country school, where, after hearing all the uses and the virtues of the camel, I asked whether there were any of these precious beasts in Norfolk? None. And if the camel was so useful, why not? The answer came from the gamekeeper's son:

“’Cos that ’ud tread on th’ young pheasants.”

I looked at its sprawling feet as shown in the picture, and understood their unfitness for a game-preserving county.

We must move on again. The third class is hearing about the mole, and I pause for a minute on the way:

> The mole is useful because it eats the worms, which would eat the potatoes and get into our food. Is it ever idle? No, it is always working; digging fresh passages.

Good old mole! “Well said, old mole! can’st work i’ the ground so fast?” Let us try the next class. It is engaged on the lion, and an elderly dame has got to thirdly and lastly. Etiquette requires that the lesson should conclude with some remarks on the use of the lion.

“What is the use of the lion? The use of the lion is to ’unt. What is the use of the lion, children?”

CHORUS: “To ’UNT, teacher.”

I find she means “to be hunted”: and, when the children are gone out to play, I put it to her whether she really thinks that beneficent Providence has created the lion on purpose that man should hunt him. She is a little staggered by this presentment of her own doctrine, but pleads that it is so stated in her book, and produces it. There it is in black and white! I have little doubt that a similar belief is held by fox-hunters and other sportsmen. “Crewel,” said an old keeper, when reproached for badger-baiting, “why, whativer do yo think as badgers was made for?”

In ten minutes the children return from the playground, and I am implored not to forget the babies: they are going to have an object-lesson, and the pupil-teacher is waiting for me. It is Mary Williams, whose pretty face and pretty ways make her the idol of the babies, and even draw a smile from my grimmest Sub. I yield to pressure. The babies are hot and dusty, and riotous, and have to be relieved with a song, just to blow off steam. What is next on the agenda paper? The cow? Let us have the cow. The whole class sees the picture of the cow brought down from the wall, but nevertheless we must approach the subject as tradition dictates:

P.T.: As I was coming to school this morning along High Street I heard a great noise, and there was a man in a blue frock, driving a great big animal down the road. What do you think it was, babies?

CHORUS: A kyow, teacher.

(*H.M.I. to head mistress, sotto voce*: "If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle." *Head-mistress, uncertainly*: "Ye-es.")

P.T.: Yes, a cow, and here's a picture of a cow. (*The class regard it with blank indifference born of familiarity.*) Now the cow is a very useful animal:——

Billy Jones (*Amicus curiæ*): I seen a kyow this mornin' as I was comin', *an' it was a bull*: and it run at a mon an' 'orned 'im nearly, only 'ee got away—"(*pauses for want of breath*).

P.T. (*coldly*): That will do, Billy, you mustn't talk now till teacher has done. And it gives us milk. What little boy or girl had milk for their breakfast this morning, I wonder? (*Alarums and excursions, many competing claims to have had two moogs full.*) Yes, and that came from the cow. What has it got on its head? Horns, yes. And what can it do with its horns, Jenny?

Jenny: Hike yer. (*i. e. toss you.*)

P.T. (*much shocked*): Oh, Jenny! I told you never to say "hike." The cow would give you a great knock. And how many legs has it got?

My attention wanders, as if I were sitting under a dull preacher, and in the absence of mural tablets I study the pictures and general exhibits. With joy I hail a reading sheet for infants:

> Bill is not well. He is ill at the mill. Bid Ann fill a can of jam, and get us a bit of ham, and we will go with them to him. Did Bill sip the jam? Oh yes, he sat up in his bed, and did sip jam till his lips were red. He did not have a bit of ham. We sat with Bill till six, and then we set off.

I infer that Bill succumbed to this novel treatment at 5.55, and that they fled in haste, when they were quite sure, you know. But I think if they had

given him the ham, too, he would have gone off quicker, if that was all they wanted.

Over the fireplace is the time table for the babies' class. It is "approved by me as satisfying the Conscience Clause." (In those days our control over time tables went no further.) The babies have two lessons a week, each of fifteen minutes, on "threading a needle." I think the Conscience Clause might come in here. On Friday afternoon they have a lesson on riddles! And I never knew that! "Why does a miller wear a white hat?" "When is a door not a door?" For children who have gone through a year of this course of instruction, including the cow, the camel, and the cat, life has no further terrors, and death comes as a happy release.

The cow is nearly exhausted. "And it has a very, very long tongue, and when it wants to get some grass to eat, it wraps its tongue round the grass, and tears it off. Isn't that clever? Yes, Sally, you shall go home directly, if you are a good girl."

The closure is applied: the lesson ends, and the cow "winds slowly" to its place on the wall. As I go, I mutter to myself the old tag—

"Claudite jam rivos, pueri, sat prata biberunt,"[40]

and it reminds me of a familiar Swiss scene. The Matterhorn, the Zmutt glacier, and the Dent Blanche make the background: in the foreground daddy with a spade is diverting the runnels to feed another meadow, and Anastasia, aged seven, is not embittering life in Standard I., but superintends the prolonged meal of a tethered cow, and at the same time "minds" Seraphina and Claudinus, aged three and four respectively, who sprawl contentedly on the Alp, and pull to pieces what I call crocus, and the gods call Colchicum Alpinum. They toil not, nor do they thread needles, but they know a good deal about a cow.

Where is Mary? "Oh! Mary, Mary, quite contr*ai*ry, did you tell those babies any mortal thing about the cow that they didn't know before they came in?"

"Well, Mr. Kynnersley, there was that about the tongue."

"Mary, Mary, did you ever hear of the book—" (*I pause, trying to remember the details*)—

"Do you mean the Bible, Mr. Kynnersley?"

"No, Mary, nor 'Bradshaw': the book that contained things that are true and things that are new: but the things that are true are not new, and the things that are new are not true?"

Mary looks at me in utter bewilderment. I box her pretty ears, pull her pretty hair, and dismiss her, quite unrepentant, to her dinner. The teacher of the second class stands where I left her—"Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves."

She thinks I was not pleased with her presentment of the camel. I soothe her, and at that moment appears from the end class-room a bright-eyed little body, with a model, and a pile of literature. "Why, Miss Miranda!" I exclaim, "where have you been all the morning?"

"In the class-room with Standard I., Mr. Kynnersley, and you never came near *my* class."

How was I to know that there was a class in there? What has she got in her hands? There is a model of a camel, a sketch of its internal arrangements, "Wood's Natural History," and rough notes of the lesson. Oh, Miss Miranda!

"Excellent wench!
Perdition catch my soul but I do——"

wish there were more teachers like you.

FOOTNOTES:

[39] A scientific friend explains that the Manual treats only of vegetable destroyers: the worble fly is the pest of oxen.

[40] "Shut off the runnels now, lads; the meadows have drunk enough."

CHAPTER XXVI
COMPOSITION

"An honest tale speeds best, being plainly told."

King John.

In the dark ages before (about) 1895 one of the subjects allotted to Standard V. was composition, and this was further explained to be "writing from memory the substance of a short story read out twice." It was a very useful exercise, and many of my friends would be more valuable witnesses in a court of justice, and better company after dinner, if they had received this training. To be able to catch the point of a story and repeat it accurately is a rare accomplishment. I remember an instance in point.

I was staying with a doctor, a school manager; and at dinner I told him the old story of H. J. Byron, Sothern, and the great-coat. He laughed, and made a mental note of it for professional use. Next day at lunch he told me that it had brought him good fruit beyond expectation.

He had called at the Hall, and finding the daughters of the house assembled in the drawing-room, after he had seen his patient, he had told them the story thus:

"I heard a good story last night. H. J. Byron, you know, the man that wrote the plays, was going down Regent Street the other day, and met Sothern, the actor. It was a very cold day, and Sothern, noticing that Byron was lightly clad, exclaimed, 'What a fellow you are, Byron; you never wear a great-coat.' 'No,' said Byron, 'I never was.'

"They all laughed consumedly, and in the middle of their laughter a girl friend called, and asked what was the joke.

"'Oh,' said one, 'such a funny story the Doctor has just told us. Lord Byron, you know, that wrote the poetry, was going down—what street was it, Doctor?'

"'Well, it's immaterial, but it was Regent Street.'

“‘Oh, thanks, yes; and he met—who was it?’

“‘Sothern, the actor.’

“‘Of course, yes:’ and so he said to Sothern, ‘you never wear a great coat;’ so he said, ‘No, I never do.’ (Renewed laughter.)

“The caller pondered, and then remarked that she was awfully stupid, but she didn’t see the joke. The narrator pondered also, and finally confessed, ‘No more do I now, but we laughed very much when the Doctor told us.’”

I told the whole story to a friend, and he supplied me with a variant from a lower stratum of society. A Lancashire man went with a friend into a tailor’s shop to buy a coat. One was produced, and the purchaser asked the friend for his opinion.

“Seems a bit short, don’t it?” said the friend.

“Ah, lad, but it’ll be long enough before I get another.”

Three minutes later a third man found the friend in the street, still convulsed with laughter. “Why, what’s to do?” he asked.

The friend wiped his eyes and took breath: “Eh, it were Jack Robinson: he’s a funny feller. Ah went with him into yon shop, because he wanted an overcoat, d’ye see? And they brought him out one, and he tries it on and he says to me: ‘How does it look, Bill?’ he says. ‘Seems a bit short, don’t it?’ says I. ‘Well,’ he says, ‘it ’ull be a pretty time afore I get another.’” And the friend was again convulsed.

But the third man was indignant: “Why, whativer was theer to laugh at?”

The friend “rubbed an elongated forehead with a meditative cuff”: “Ah reckon ah’ve got it a bit mixed,” he admitted, “but we laughed a good ’un at th’ toime.”

A third case may be quoted:

Twenty or more years ago there was an inquest that caused much excitement. A man—let us call him Miller—died suddenly. There was a post-mortem examination, and distinct traces of antimony were found. The public demanded vengeance, but soon cooled down, when it was disclosed at the enquiry that the deceased, whether by making or by saving money, had hasted to become rich. There was a luncheon party at the Canon’s house

in Norceter, and the *affaire* Miller was discussed. Among the guests was old Sir John Surd, who, being very deaf, was allowed to have Lady Surd sitting next him. The Canon, a well-known humorist, gave novelty to the topic by remarking how singular it was that a man who was so fond of money should have died of anti-mony. There was laughter, and Sir John turned to his wife and privately asked for the joke.

"Oh, John," shouted her Ladyship, "such a funny thing the Canon has said. Mr. Miller, you know, John, MILLER—the INQUEST?"

"Yes, yes."

(All conversation ceased: all eyes were turned on the narrator, who became flurried.)

"Mr. Miller, you know. Well, the Canon said how funny it was that—er—Mr. Miller who—er—was so fond of money, MONEY, you know?"

"Yes, yes," impatiently. (The guests begin to smile, and Lady Surd loses her head and plunges.)

"So fond of money, should have er—er—DIED OF TARTAR EMETIC!"

Now if these imperfect historians had been trained in Standard V. I should have lost three stories.

To meet the requirements of the Code it was necessary for school teachers to have a stock of simple anecdotes, and to this end publishers brought out collections of stories, sometimes serious, moral, improving; sometimes more or less humorous; but nearly always quite unsuitable. Our children have a very limited vocabulary, and the long words and involved sentences that occur in such compilations completely bewildered them. Or, if by any chance there was a simpler story, it would probably have only one incident; and, being of so elementary a type, would be inadequate for the latter part of the school year, when we expected two or more stages in the plot. For instance: (1) Androcles meets a lion in pain and removes a thorn from his foot. (2) The lion, being invited to eat Androcles, recognizes his benefactor and declines the meal.

But Androcles was not our style of hero. An experienced school manager once pointed out to me the need for educating the faculty of humour in children. "Look at old Whackem," he said, indicating the master, "there is

no surgical operation that would have any effect on that man's humorous receptivity. He ought to have been caught young." I banished Androcles and the like, and collected the stories which Mark Twain disliked, the stories with "a snap" to them: these I put into simple English, and then tried to get the class to find the snap. In an old portfolio I find half a dozen of them, almost illegible with age, and they bring back memories of much of that "unquenchable laughter" which I tried to teach Standard V. to share with Olympus.

How popular was "The Lady Doctor"!—she who in vol. i. took out the patient's eye, and put it on a table, while she was arranging bandages. But (vol. ii.) the landlady's cat ate the eye, thinking it was its dinner. In vol. iii. the lady doctor killed the cat, took out its eye, put it in the unsuspecting patient's head, and sent him away whole. "But the ungrateful patient complains that he is always looking for mice, and that the sight of a dog makes his hair stand on end."

More popular still was Boccaccio's story of the crane. I believe it has appeared in all the languages of Europe, but not in school anecdote books. May I repeat it here? Those who know it have their remedy. The original, which is slightly altered for school use, is in the Decameron, VI. Day, IV. Novel:

A dishonest cook was one day roasting a crane for her master's supper. When it was done, it looked so nice that she thought she must just taste it, and she tore off a leg and ate it. When the rest of the bird was served up for supper, the master saw what had been done, and angrily scolded her for taking the leg. "Oh, master," she said, "those birds have only one leg."

"Only one leg, woman? Come with me in the morning to the river bank, and I will teach you better than that."

So in the morning they went; and there were half a dozen cranes, each standing, as is the way of cranes, on one leg. "There, master," she said, "what did I tell you? only one leg!" The master clapped his hands, and said "SHOO! SHOO!" and all the birds put down the other legs, ran a few yards, and flew away.

"What did I tell you?" he said, "TWO LEGS!"

“Ah,” said she, “but if you’d have clapped your hands and said SHOO, SHOO, at that crane last night, maybe he’d have put down another leg and flown away, and you’d have lost your supper.”

The difficulty was with the girls. In a mixed school, while the boys were laughing, the girls in the same class would be reflecting that the cook “didn’t ought to have took the leg,” speculating also whether they should write “crain” like “rain,” or “creign” like “reign.” Androcles is their man.

But even the boys failed me sometimes. This was notable in the extreme case of the Speculative Maid and the Hamburg lottery. I told it to my best boys’ school with much confidence:

“There was a lottery in Hamburg last year, and the first prize was £1,000. The tickets were sold in the Town Hall, and the Mayor was there to see fair-play. About an hour after they began to sell, a servant girl came in a great hurry and said she wanted to buy No. 23. They told her it was sold already. She cried so much that the Mayor asked whether another ticket wouldn’t do as well: she could have No. 21. But she said ‘No,’ she must have 23, and no other. The Mayor was so sorry for her, that he sent a clerk to the man who bought No. 23, and asked him to change it. This was done without any trouble, and the girl went away happy. When the lottery was drawn, No. 23 won the first prize of £1,000, and the Mayor was so much surprised that he sent for the girl and asked her what made her think of that number.

“Well,” she said, “it was this way: I had a dream that No. 7 won it; and then I dreamt again that 7 won; and then a third time I dreamt that 7 won; and I said to myself ‘three sevens is 23,’ and I came here and got it.”

And when I had got to the end, the whole class rose deferentially from their seats, and said, “Three sevens are 21.”

Let me add two wholly irrelevant appendices—appendicitis is the disease of the story-teller: First, was it Huxley or Tyndall, who, after hearing this, said it was the only dream story that ever carried conviction to his mind? Secondly, I was told on the highest authority that the story is traditional in the Deanery of Westminster, because it was told there at the dinner table of Arthur P. Stanley; whose bent was not scientific: and when it came to an end, all laughed except the Dean, who, after some thought, said he could

not see the joke: but, after increased laughter of the others, hazarded the surmise that "perhaps three times seven is not 23?"

This irreceptivity caused me grave disquiet. Was it possible that by diligent practice a child should convert himself into a sort of "graph" or "phone," capable of reproducing a story with absolute accuracy without intelligent comprehension? Was it not possible to superadd a test? I tried the experiment thus: the story was of the usual type, and I told it to a large mixed class, boys and girls:

"A French officer, coming into a wineshop in Paris, heard an old soldier boasting of his battles, his wounds and losses. 'I have lost my right arm,' he said, lastly, 'but it was for France and the Emperor; and for them I would gladly give the other arm.' 'That is all very fine,' remarked the officer; 'it is easy to boast when you are safe, but if it came to the real thing, it might be different.' The brave man rose from his seat, drew his sword, and cut off the other arm."

"Now, children," I concluded, "write that story, *and at the bottom say what is wrong with it*."

The best of the boys were already chuckling: other boys joined in more slowly: even the careworn teacher of the class, after staring hard at me for two or three minutes, came up, and confidentially informed me that he had got it, though at first it seemed a hard thing. But the girls sat dull-eyed and resentful of the novelty. At the end of twenty minutes they had reproduced the story word for word; and the most intelligent of them had appended the criticism, "It was very wrong of the man to cut off the arm which God had given him."

Emboldened by success, I tried another:

"A Boer farmer wished to sell his cattle to a Scotch dealer. They met at the nearest hotel and agreed that the price should be £7 10s. a head: there were fifty of them, and, as the Boer said he was no scholar, the Scotchman made out the bill; 'fifty head of cattle at £7 10s.,' he said, 'just £350,' and he gave the farmer a cheque for the money, and rode off with the cattle. But the Boer did not feel quite sure it was right; and when he got to the next hotel, he borrowed a Ready Reckoner, which showed that the price should

have been £375. Full of fury, he galloped after the Scotchman, caught him up, and charged him with cheating.

"'Eh, man,' said the rogue, 'what makes you think it was £375?'

"'I found it in the Ready Reckoner at Smith's Hotel,' said the Boer.

"'Pooh, pooh, man,' said the other, 'I know that Reckoner: it is last year's.'

"And the Boer rode back content.

"There is the story. Write at the end, *What the Boer ought to have said*."

It was at the end of the last century that a philosopher discovered that reproducing anecdotes was not educative: it gave no play to the imagination: what we wanted was original thought. Now the stories required attention, concentration, accuracy, and considerable knowledge of the laws of composition; and the better course would have been to add what required originality, retaining what required accuracy. But in education, as in other things, it is the man of one idea who moves and gets his way. My stock of stories became waste paper.

The search for originality was too often pursued in a remarkable manner. No one reads Campbell now, and no boy could retaliate with the lines—

> "For there's nothing original in me
> Excepting Original Sin."

but it was easy to offer passive resistance, and to let the teacher do the originating. The latter began by providing "heads," accompanied with copious comments; then he supplied rough scribbling-books, in which the children wrote their crude attempts. Then he wrote on the blackboard a jejune essay, which the class copied verbatim into their show-books. These were offered to us as the first fruits of original thought.

Occasionally we got the real article, and I treasure the following essay (faithfully transcribed from the MS.) as 18 carat gold:

> My Favourite Hero.
>
> A good while ago I heard of a man called Arthur Wellesley. His first school he went too was in France. He was called the Duke of Wellington. He was a grand speaker, and spoke about a great man

named Napolean. He was captured by the Romans and took to prison. They let him off iff he would not go back to the Britons. Wellington was sent to an island and he escaped in a punt and went back to his own country. There he stayed for a long while when he died. He was a very strong and healthy man.

That is genuine. The following Essay I give as it was told to me, without further warranty.

A boy was told to write an essay on the Seven Ages of Man. Not having read *As you like it*, he evolved this out of his inner consciousness:

"When he is young, he thinks of the bad things he will do when he grows up: this is the age of innocence.

"When he is grown up, he does some of them: this is the prime of life.

"When he is very old, he is sorry for what he has done: this is dotage."

CHAPTER XXVII
NEEDLEWORK

‘Domi mansit: lanam fecit.’—*Roman epitaph.*

“Domestic Economy and plain needlework.”—*Code.*

“It was I,” said Dominie Sampson, “who did educate Miss Lucy in all useful learning—albeit it was the housekeeper who did teach her those unprofitable exercises of hemming and shaping.”

The question that occurs to the professional mind, is whether Lucy Bertram’s skill in plain needlework was really limited to hemming, which is the work allotted to girls of six or seven years of age; or whether the Dominie in his contemptuous ignorance used the term to include all varieties of stitches. By “shaping,” I think he meant what we call “cutting out.” That is high art, and a few years ago it was confined to quite the upper circles of an Elementary School. If Lucy really could not go beyond hemming, I fear she would have had some difficulty with the material when it was “shaped”: unless, indeed, she made only pocket-handkerchiefs and towels. To be easily satisfied with a low standard of attainments was, in the estimation of My Lords, a mark of inefficiency. This is a pity, for Lucy shares with Rose Bradwardine the unenviable distinction of being the most insipid of Scott’s heroines, and she might have won great triumphs in needlework, even in “divers colours of needlework *on both sides*.”[41] Her back-stitching should have been a model of neatness, and her flannel patches should have drawn tears of admiration from H.M. Inspector in Dumfriesshire.

Alas! the niceties of nomenclature are already fading from my memory: yet there was a time when I could deceive the very elect with my superficial jargon.

Before 1876 the inspection of needlework was very simple. That *plain* needlework—none of your crochet work—should be taught to all the girls, was a condition precedent of the annual grant. In country schools there was not much fear of neglect, for Mrs. Squire and Mrs. Rector kept vigilant eyes

on this branch of education, and the subscribers to the school funds often got back part of the value of their money by sending their household sewing to be done in school. It was no unusual thing to find five afternoons a week entirely devoted to sewing. "They tell me," said one Lady Bountiful, "that the girls in Standard VI. learn DECIMALS! Not that I know what decimals are. *I* think they should learn to sew, don't you?" But I

> "Dallied with my golden chain
> And, smiling, put the question by."

On the day of inspection the work done in the course of the year was submitted to our judgment. As a rule the "garments" were laid out on a long table; alternatively they were dealt out to the makers, or to those who were credited with making something. It was our duty to go on "visiting rounds" among the desks; to pick up the hateful things, to look wise; and, if possible, to make an appropriate remark here and there. This was a terrible ordeal; for each girl regarded her work as the most important output of the year, and very few had any suspicion that we lacked knowledge. It happened one day that, while I was thus engaged, my driver got weary of waiting for me in the road with his dogcart, and hailed a little maid coming out of school: "Be the gentleman a-coming?"

"Yes," she replied, "he's just a-lookin' at our sawin."

The driver was astonished: "What? dew he knaw about sawin, then?"

"I 'xpact," said the dear child, "he knaw a little about everythink."

It was a cruel judgment, though kindly meant: if she had said "a very little," she would (within limits) have accurately described our pretensions; the duodecimo encyclopædia sort.

After one of these ordeals my assistant and I adjourned, in an unusually exhausted state, to "The Crown" for lunch. It was market day, and extra help had been hired to meet the demands of the farmers; so that we were waited upon by a stranger, who began by asking whether one of us had not been at "our school" that morning. We pleaded guilty, jointly and severally.

"My little gel," she went on to say, "is wonderful put out: she come back cryin' till she's sick. 'The inspector come,' she say, 'and pick up my work, and he look at it, 'Larks,' he say, 'here's a piller-slip;' and oh, mother, it was my shimmy, as I'd took such pains with:' and she did cry ever so."

My assistant behaved shamefully: he declared I was the culprit, and he laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks. But I was shocked. Not for worlds would I have had it happen: how was I to know that the folded up lump of unbleached calico was a chemise and not a pillow-case? and to this day I repudiate "Lawks" as an expletive. I exhausted myself in apologies, and thereafter I was careful not to betray ignorance.

What is a garment? Clearly a "wearment"; that which one wears. Should it include pillow-cases, towels and dusters? Custom said "Yes," and the output of pillow-slips—which in their simplicity of shape and manufacture called for no special skill—always seemed to me to be in excess of the possible demand.

In a school maintained by a bountiful Earl I noticed that the schoolroom had become the workroom of the Castle. There was a liberal display of household articles, and, while the third class had sufficed to hem and seam them, it had been found necessary to employ the first class to mark them with coronets. This was bad. Tennyson would certainly have ruled that plain sewing was "more than coronets." But worse remained behind. The Castle clearly had not realised that the whole collection would be exhibited, and there were other things, which, as Miss Griselda Oldbuck would say, "it does not become a leddy to particulareeze"; which Herodotus might have declared it "unlawful to mention"; and the sight of which would have gorgonized the Rector's wife, if she had been present. All this "underwear" with the coronetted towels was laid on the table for our inspection. It was very embarrassing. Providentially the Ladies Vere de Vere did not attend the inspection.

Allusion to these garments reminds me of a case where grave misunderstanding arose. It was in the year 1876, I suppose: for it was in that year that the system of payment of grant was altered. If a school chose to present itself for examination in certain subjects, whereof needlework was one, there was a grant of 2*s.* per head—that is, double the former grant—attainable in case of success. But, though the special and extended examination was optional, the teaching of plain sewing and the display of garments were still compulsory. Soon after the change in the Code I was at —let us call it "Layton"—school, the manager of which was a valued friend of mine, and an apostle of education; for many merits esteemed throughout the county.

At the end of the ordinary inspection I asked for the garments. The mistress, with apparent surprise, told me there were none. But, in accordance with the Code, I insisted on seeing some as a condition of the grant: I had to certify something in the formal report. After some delay she produced a shirt, and said that was all that was available. I examined and cross-examined that shirt before lady managers and teachers, and, as I afterwards remembered, covered myself with disgrace by complaining that it had no "gusset" somewhere: it was pointed out to me in the plainest language, that apparently I was not aware that a shirt might have either a "gusset," or a "yoke," and this had a yoke. So we patched up a peace and went to lunch, oppressor and oppressed. But in the report I complained of the scanty supply of garments, and some correspondence followed. It was not till some days had gone by that an explanation reached me circuitously. There were garments in abundance, but they were not meet for the male eye, and they were hidden away:

"'Tis better to have sewn and hidden away
Than never to have sewn at all."

There are instances in the Classical Dictionary of males who were over-curious: I forget the details, but I remember that their end was disastrous. Fortunately on this occasion I was innocent in intention and unsuccessful in action. But I sent the Rector the following lines, and we made friends again:

CHORUS OF SPINSTERS.

Have you heard the sad news?
How they've dared to abuse
The sewing our girls do at Layton?
The man must be worse than Satan!
What next?
No wonder the Powells are vexed.
There's the poor dear Rector,
Who fed the Inspector
On his best 'Thirty-four,
Says he'll give *him* no more:
And Miss Lucy, his daughter,
Says she'd put him on bread and water:
And Miss Taylor, the mistress,

Overwhelmed with *dis*tress:
And pretty Miss Ball,
She's worse than them all,
And says "Drat him,"
She'd like to get at him,
And she's strongly inclined
To give him a bit of her mind.

It's so like a man:
Let him find, if he can,
    Any children so good at their needles
They come poking and prying,
Set the teachers all crying,
    And bully the poor things like beadles.

He's worse than a Turk;
Just look at our work:
We have aprons and shirts,
And bodies and skirts,
    And dusters for infants to hem;
And sewing-on strings,
And a whole heap of THINGS—
    But of course we couldn't show *them*.
There were two dozen towels
We made for the Powells,
And ten pairs of stays
To be sent to the Mays;
We darn and we mend,
And make things without end
    For the Johnsons that live at the Lodge:
There's fine work to be seen
That would do for the Queen,
    And coarse things more suited for Hodge.

One thing I must own,
We can't herringbone,
    But they say it's no longer the mode;

We've no flannel to show,
And such garments, you know,
    As petticoats aren't in his Code.

But we can make chemises;
We can knit muffeteeses,
Or the *top* of a stocking—
            (*they weep*)
Oh, it's shocking, quite shocking:

And he comes to our school,
And looks perfectly cool,
While we're fretting and fussing,
And secretly cussing,
And he says, "Now, Miss T.,
I should just like to see
    WHERE'S YOUR SEWING?"

    There's no knowing
The spite of those terrible men:
    So like him to ask it:
    And Miss T. brings the basket,
And takes off the cover, and then—
    Much hurt,
    Shows one shirt.

And he says, "Is that all?
And no gusset at all?
There should be one here:"
(Oh, the CREATURE, my dear.)
Then he takes it up shamefully,
Handles it blamefully;
Pulls it about,
Outside in, inside out;
Sticks his thumbs through the cracks,
Puts Miss T. in a wax;
Holds it up to the light

(As if *he* knew what's right),
And treats it so badly;
Then shakes his head sadly—
(*they weep again*)

And the *Things*, dear, you know,
That we really *can't* show,
He pretends not to see,
And says, "Really, de-ah me!"
And flops out of school in a huff.

As if one shirt wasn't enough!

Oh, what will become of the Grant?
He surely won't *dare*—no, he can't—
To fine us: it wouldn't be fair:
But if he should try, I declare,
We have made up our minds, and we mean,
To take all those THINGS to the QUEEN,
And ask her opinion,
And whether her MINION
Is to trample on women like this:
And if she'll be pleased to dismiss
Her bold-faced Inspector,
Who bearded our Rector,
And says we can't *sew*,
When we only can't *shew*!

It was said that the simple inspection of garments was not always so simple as the inspector. A lady manager of a country school told me how in primitive times the dame who taught sewing in her parish had annually beguiled my remote predecessor. Every year at the end of the examination he called for the garments, and every year she handed him a shirt: every year he examined it with care, and every year he praised it in the report on the school. "*And*, Mr. Kynnersley," she added, "it was always the same shirt, and, to begin with, it was not made in the school at all, but by a woman in the village."

There are some who “through faith have obtained a good report,” but in this case the faith was on the reporter’s side. Conceive the greatness of the fraud, and the depth of H.M.I.’s ignorance! for either the shirt must have grown yellow with age, or it must have been washed annually: and washed garments were forbidden exhibits.[42]

As years went on, one grew more skilful in criticism. By painful experience one learnt to avoid certain pitfalls; for the old-fashioned dames who taught sewing were very outspoken in their comments. “Yew gentlemen don’t knaw nawthin about it: thet ain’t the right way far tew try it,” said one of these beldames to me, when I tested the strength of a darned stocking by putting my fingers through the darned places. She turned on my assistant, who was gazing with an air of profound wisdom at some masterpiece, “Thet’s the wrong side far tew luke at,” and she turned it round, in spite of his prompt assertion that he always liked to see both sides.

At another school, where Mrs. Squire was deeply interested in the sewing, I had basely retreated into the class-room, while my excellent assistant of that period was commenting freely on the work. To my dismay the dear old lady came to me in a state midway between choking mirth and gnawing indignation. “Really, it is too ridiculous,” she said at last, “to see you gentlemen pretending to judge of needlework: there is Mr. Pluckham, doesn’t know the difference between feather-stitch and herring-bone.” I had never heard of feather-stitch, but I took the earliest opportunity of making its acquaintance.

I have already alluded to the change in the Code, which made the full grant for sewing depend chiefly on the merit of the work done before our eyes. There was a list of appropriate exercises, and to each girl was allotted one of these, to be completed in a given time. This was the death knell of the old sewing mistresses. They could not teach a class, though they were often very successful with individuals, and now grants were in danger. The exigency of the hour required new tricks to impose on the unsuspecting inspector. It happened one day that I had taken away with me the worked specimens—fragments of linen, calico, and flannel about three or four inches square, showing various stitches—and asked a skilled needlewoman to give me her opinion. She laughed me to scorn: it was machine work. I laughed her to scorn: I was not so easily taken in: I had seen the work done before my eyes in the Board School; there was no machine in the room. The

reply was, that what I saw worked in school was not what I brought away. We differed, and the full grant was paid.

Some years afterwards my eyes were opened. A lady who took much interest in the girls' sewing, and with whom I had annual and delightful encounters, taunted me and the male sex generally with our incapacity to judge of needlework, and also with our hopeless gullibility. There was a school, she said—but nothing should induce her to reveal the name—where the mistress did all the specimens which I thought were worked by the girls, and these were cleverly palmed off on me in substitution for the patches, &c., on which I had seen the children engaged. I asked no questions, but my colleague and I, as we went home, ran over in our minds the schools within a convenient radius. There was only one of doubtful character, and thither my colleague went next month in the ordinary course. The girls had their sewing given out, and the work was going on in the usual way, when suddenly he noticed that each girl had a work-bag tied round her waist, and his suspicions were aroused. "What is in the bags?" "Oh, nothing: just the usual sewing materials." He examined several: Mary's bag contained a flannel patch complete: Jane had a neat piece of back-stitching: Susan had a button-hole complete: Harriet had so many rows of knitting. He reported to me.

Then I saw it all. That old story of the Board School came back to mind: the work *was* machined, and the girls, or the teachers—let us hope that the teachers did not make the girls parties to the fraud—had "palmed it" with a little sleight of hand, and perhaps a little appropriate "patter."

But such cases must have been rare; whereas in the days of exhibited garments, detection being almost impossible, anything may have been done. In one large town it was rumoured that there was a depôt which lent out on hire garments for the day of inspection. This may be regarded as evidence not so much of what was done, as of what was possible. It is certain that in some other schools the best girls made all the garments, and the work of the inefficient was suppressed.

When the Code made fraud too easy, I blamed the Code. In those days every pupil-teacher, and every woman sitting for a certificate, had to present to the Inspector a garment as evidence of her skill as a needlewoman: and on this she got marks which counted for the examination. There was

nothing on earth to show that the presenter of the garment had made it, and of course one could not ask questions. “I am surprised that Mary Jane has failed,” said a schoolmistress of my acquaintance, “she wasn’t that bad at sums, and it wasn’t for her needlework, for I did that myself.”

Oh, Adam! When we remember that he had no one to associate with but Eve, we cease to wonder that his moral sense weakened. “SHE gave me of the tree.”

One more reminiscence. Lady managers often would say to me, “Why don’t the girls learn to sew? They come here as servants, after having been in the school for years, and they can’t do a thing?” I heard this repeated for years, and could not reply. Nor indeed did I pay much heed: lady managers were always on the warpath. But one day I mentioned the gravamen to a colleague, and asked how he explained this failure of our system of education.

“Pooh, pooh,” he replied, “did you ever hear of the monkeys on the West Coast of Africa, or somewhere, who, according to the natives, could talk if they liked, but they won’t, because, if they did, they would have to work? That is what is the matter with our girls. They go out to service, and if they confess that they can sew, they are put on to do all the household sewing, besides their regular work: so they pretend they are useless and the ‘missus’ gets a machine.”

It may be so: it is only married men who are in a position to reveal the secret workings of domestic life. “When you’re a married man,” said Mr. Weller, “you’ll understand a good many things as you don’t understand now”—I commend the rest of his profound utterance to the attention of the reader. It occurs in Chapter XXVII. of *Pickwick*.[43]

FOOTNOTES:

[41] This form of double tapestry must have been difficult of execution. How did they hide the stitches on ‘the wrong side’?

[42] Because to work cleanly counts for merit, and washing pre-supposes dirt.

[43] “But vether it’s worth while goin’ through so much, to learn so little, as the charity-boy said ven he got to the end of the alphabet, is a matter o’ taste. *I* raythe think it isn’t.”

CHAPTER XXVIII

UPHEAVAL

"Bless thee, Bottom, bless thee, thou art translated."

Midsummer Night's Dream.

In 1902 came Mr. Balfour's great Education Act, putting the whole control of all Public Elementary Schools (*exceptis rebus divinis*, in Baconian phrase) into the hands of the local authorities. This altered the whole machinery of inspection. Hitherto our districts had been limited by the boundaries of large boroughs, or of poor law unions, though we had nothing to do with corporations, or guardians. Now, if I might borrow the words of Froude in the purplest of his purple patches, "the paths trodden by the footsteps of ages were broken up." Henceforth our little domains were to be co-extensive with a county, or with one or more large towns. A new Secretary to the Board of Education was appointed, "with fear of change perplexing (our) monarch's" inspectors. Where is my *Ravenshoe*?

> "When the head of a great family dies, relations are changed entirely between some score or two of persons. The dog of to-day is not the dog of yesterday.... Perhaps even the old hound wonders whether he is to keep his old place by the fire or no; and younger brothers bite their nails, and wonder, too, about many things."

Towards the end of the year I, among others, was summoned to the Office and had my interview. In a few days came the announcement that I was appointed to the care of Manchester, and at the same time to the Chief Inspectorship of the North-Western Division. The local paper, which reported the change to a disconsolate city, declared in picturesque language that I was to rule from the Mersey to the Solway, and from the Pennine Range to the Calf of Man.

In other words, the Division included Lancashire, Cumberland, Westmorland, and the Isle of Man.

There were advantages and disadvantages, with which I need not trouble the reader. When Bishop Stubbs was moved from Chester to Oxford, he said, with his accustomed humour, that, “like Homer, he suffered from translation.” What should I lose or gain from my translation? I soliloquised for a while, like Hamlet, whether to bear those ills I had, or fly to others that I knew not of; but, unlike Hamlet, I chose the latter, because, in any case, it could not be for more than four years, whereas Hamlet contemplated a considerably longer stay in his undiscovered bourne. I did myself the honour to accept, and assumed charge of the children of 600,000 people in the district, and of about 5,000,000 in the Division. In a few months Cumberland and Westmorland were, to my great regret, taken from me, and Cheshire, more convenient but less beautiful, was substituted.

The Division then consisted of the two Counties Palatine[44] and the Isle of Man. There was a staff of about forty-five inspectors and sub-inspectors, whose diurnal and annual revolutions I was supposed to oversee. At the time of this alteration I also exchanged the title of Chief Inspector for that of Divisional Inspector. The substitution of five syllables for one is always to be deprecated, but that was the limit of my injury.

What are the duties of a Senior, or Chief, or Divisional Inspector? (I have lived to see the three dynasties.)

It is difficult to sum them up concisely. The professional reader knows them already: the unprofessional reader would not be interested. Briefly I may say, that he has to see that the District Inspectors and their staff do their work, and maintain the requisite standard of education; he has to advise the staff in all cases of difficulty; he has to hold enquiries in cases of dispute between the District Inspector and the local authority. Also he has to attend conferences at the Office, and to advise the Board “before any important change is made.” Lastly, he had in alternate years to compile a Blue Book report on the state of education in the Division.

I may say at once that the two last duties gave me little or no trouble. When I resigned, there had been no conference for eighteen months, and no divisional reports have been required for five years. I cannot say that the conferences were profitable to the nation: in fact, so far as I remember, they were chiefly confined to questions of official organisation; but they gave one a convenient opportunity of meeting old colleagues at the expense of

the Consolidated Fund. The Blue Book report—if I may quote Mr. Curdle[45]—"as an exquisite embodiment of the (Inspector's) visions, and a realisation of human intellectuality, gilding with refulgent light our dreamy moments, and laying open a new and magic world before the mental eye, is gone, perfectly gone." I cannot say whether the Board suspected that no one read the reports; or whether in its positively Russian dread of individual opinion, it disliked the appearance in print of such crude ideas as might survive a triple censorship. So long as I was not asked to compile the hateful thing, I was content.

The most important duty of the Divisional Chief has been forgotten. It was to preside over an annual conference of his suffragans, which began with discussion of educational topics of present interest, and ended with lunch. I shall always retain pleasant recollections of those spring meetings at Derby, when I sat at the hospitable board of my good old chief, Mr. Blandford, and his successors, and I did my best to carry on the tradition at Manchester. As for the "topics," they served their turn. Then the "agenda paper" evolved the menu.

It is obvious that an official who discharged these duties efficiently would be very valuable; and the Royal Commission, which enquired into Civil Service organisation, proposed[46] to assist him by relieving him of his "small" district work; (SMALL, they said!). So far from following this suggestion, the Board have steadily increased the local work by enlarging the areas and diminishing the subordinate staff; so that in my last half year, when the district population had increased to 880,000, though I had a splendid staff in number and in efficiency, I found my time and energies entirely absorbed by local claims. Fortunately, the Division could boast an admirable body of District Inspectors, and appeals and enquiries were exceedingly rare. I gave myself up to Manchester and Salford.

Hitherto I had regarded Manchester as the place where one changed trains if one wanted to go from Chester to York. The London and North Western thoughtfully arranges an interval of an hour or more, and there is time to stroll into the town. There is a river more gloomy than the Styx, more foul than the Pegnitz of Nuremberg, or a back canal of Venice at low water. Beyond that is a cathedral, smoke-begrimed outside, filled with an impenetrable gloom inside. Beyond the cathedral I had never ventured, for

it usually rains, and there is an oft recurrent fog. In this town I was to spend four years, if I survived.

When you have realised the rain and the fog, and the smoke, you begin to grasp the ceaseless uproar of traffic. There are electric trams screaming, and whirring, and clanging, and crashing. There are lorries, chiefly laden with mineral-water bottles, which make a specially irritating rattle, and jar. There are drays groaning under the weight of huge bales of calico. And everywhere there is stone pavement; granite setts, that multiply, and intensify the clanging and crashing and groaning. And this granite paving is not confined to the main thoroughfares, where the wear and tear of traffic might almost justify a poverty-stricken corporation in its selection; might at least reduce the charge of sleep-murder to culpable somnicide: it extends over the whole town. A few, a very few favoured spots have a short stretch of wooden pavement: everywhere else, even in the most remote side street of a back quarter, there is granite.

This does not strike a Manchester man as being objectionable. How could it do so? When the Romans built Mancunium they laid down a stone-paved road, and the roads in Manchester have ever since been stone-paved, and what Manchester has always done is right. They even build schools on the edges of these “stony griefs”; and while I was there, I used to watch day by day the gradual rise of an enormous hospital bounded by one of the noisiest of main thoroughfares. That was not my business, but the schools were my business, and I never ceased to protest against the tortures inflicted on teachers and children in those places.

My particular bugbear was a Board School in the Pandemonium Road, a still noisier street than the one chosen for the hospital patients. During school hours there is seldom a lull in the infernal din. And there was no conceivable reason why the school should not have been built at the back, except that the School Board wanted to shine before men, and to allow the passer-by to see the magnificence of a Manchester Board School. The noise of the street was so overwhelming, that arrangements were made to work the school in “shifts,” each class taking one month of noise in a class-room facing the street, and a month of comparative quiet on the opposite side of the building. On the noisy side you might see the teachers, with careworn faces and outstretched necks, striving to make their voices cut through the cross waves of sound; and you would see the children, with knitted brows

and open mouths, straining their ears to catch what was said, and at times shaking their heads in despair, and sinking back into their seats with resignation, as who should say, “I have done my best, but after all it is your look-out more than mine.”

There were two other schools, both Board (or Council) schools, in the same plight: many were but slightly less tormented. Some had been planted in remote streets, and the electric tram lines had broken in on their retirement, not only destroying their peace, but threatening the children with dismemberment.

The obvious remedy was wood pavement outside the schools. This was conceded to churches and chapels, that were open two or three times on Sundays, and once or twice in the week: but schools, that were at work for five hours and a half five days a week, and where it was important that one should hear what was said, were denied so much relief. Remonstrance was in vain. The inordinate self-satisfaction of Manchester was never more apparent than in this instance: “Just look at our traffic.” Their traffic! If they could only see Oxford Street, or the Strand, and take the evidence of men who remembered the old granite pavement there!

Noise was not the worst of their offences. Many of the school buildings, church, chapel, Roman Catholic, and board, were incredibly bad. In a note-book I have a record of my last visit to Hewitt Street Council School, on a November afternoon in a thick yellow fog. One hundred and forty-three boys in four classes were being taught in a large hall: the windows were shut to keep out the fog, and from eighty to a hundred gas-jets were adding pollution to the poisoned air: thirty-two more boys were struggling for existence in a small and vilely-lighted classroom. Both rooms were on the second floor: on the ground floor india-rubber was stored: on the first floor there was calico: there was only one staircase. If a fire had broken out on either of the two lower floors, hardly a child could have escaped; for the thick smoke mounting upwards would have proved as deadly as fire-damp. After this it is hardly worth noting that there was not a foot of playground; the boys played in the street. And this, remember, was thirty-five years after the formation of the first School Board for Manchester.

Two years later, in 1907, the school was closed.

Do not suppose that these horrors were confined to Manchester; many less important towns in the district might plead that they had their standards of comfort and decency lowered by the example of their capital. There is a range of hills running from the Scotch border to the Peak, known to geography book writers (but not locally) as the Pennine Range. On the west side of this range lay my division, and from Preston to Congleton there was a succession of large manufacturing towns, differing from one another in some respects, but agreeing in their notions of school building. The root idea was a large main room, having, if possible, a raised platform, or daïs, at one end, and several small classrooms. The main room should be from thirty-four to forty feet wide: it would be admirably adapted for Sunday school, and the superintendent should sit on the platform to direct the storm. The classrooms would hold from twenty to thirty children on the eight square feet allowance of the Education Department: the walls might be lined with cupboards to hold the crockery for tea parties, and the assorted literature of the Band of Hope and other societies; also the Band of Hope's big drum, and the huge tea-urns. The societies would meet in the main room, and the best classroom would serve for the committee to assemble in. There would be no cloak-room, and no washing-room.

Incidentally the rooms would be used for day-school purposes: in this way the repairs of the fabric, and a good deal of the gas and coal bills, and cleaning expenses would be provided for; and if a really energetic schoolmaster could be found to farm the school, he would certainly relieve the managers of any financial liability, and might even be induced to pay a comfortable rent, thereby strengthening the Cause. A very convenient addition to the scheme was to build the school underneath a chapel, more or less in a basement—this economised space.

For some years the plan worked well. Then trouble arose, as new inspectors arose, and propounded startling theories of health and comfort. Some men went so far as to assert that a schoolroom 34 feet wide, with four rows of desks on either side of a central gangway—"double-banked" is the technical name—was intolerably noisy: and that classrooms, which, even if cleared of the cupboards, and tea-urns, held only twenty-five children, were insanitary when sixty-five were black-holed in them. But the managers were very powerful, and the school-farmers (lineal descendants of the Syrian *publicani*) commanded many votes. Lancashire and Cheshire M.P.'s

wrote private letters to the Vice-President denouncing the misplaced zeal of the Inspector: or they called at the Office and talked to the Secretary. All the powers of obstruction were used. The Roman Catholics kept an Archbishop, a Duke, and an Earl in readiness:

> "With belted sword and spur on heel
> They quitted not their harness bright,
> Neither by day, nor yet by night,"

and the Wesleyans had their doughty champion at the Westminster Training College, who

> "Carved at the meal
> With gloves of steel,
> And he drank the red wine through the helmet barred."

These flocked to the Office, and the Secretary for the time being threw all his children to the wolves, on condition that the wolves went away.

Do you call this exaggeration? Well, I will not insist on the barred helmet; and the "red wine" may have been toast and water. But for the rest, the story is true in essentials. In 1903 I was taken by a colleague to a Wesleyan school in one of the cotton towns, and was shown the buildings which, in a former year, Mundella, when Vice-President of the Department, had denounced to the managers: he had added the offensive remark, in the presence of the District Inspector, that he "could not understand how H.M. Inspector allowed such a building to be recognised." That official placidly murmured, "I will tell you about that downstairs," and when they were outside, he said, "I have done all I could to get the place shut up, but your Office has always blocked me." Did Mundella go by an early train to Whitehall to insist on immediate justice? "That," continued my colleague, "was twenty-five years ago, and the school has gone on ever since."

The Circular of 1893, issued by Mr. Acland with the aim of securing sanitary buildings, has already been mentioned. How other places escaped just condemnation I know not; but from careful study of portfolios I discovered that Manchester won through the nineteenth century by the policy of Fabius. In 1904 I visited a horrible den, squalid, noisy, noisome, then under the Manchester Committee, and I reported its defects in full. The Committee replied that they had appointed a sub-committee to look out for

a site for a new school. What more could be expected? But I turned to the previous correspondence, and there I read that in 1894 my predecessor had denounced the school, and that the School Board had replied, "A sub-committee has been appointed to look out for a new site."

One can picture the relief of the Department in 1894 on finding that their suggestion had received due attention, and the relief of the School Board on finding that the Department was so easily pacified. As a searcher Diogenes was not more unsuccessful.

In the twentieth century the patience of Whitehall had been exhausted. On my predecessor's report a considerable number of these dens had been condemned, and their dates of execution had been fixed. But, like Prior's Thief, they

> "Seem'd not in great haste that the show should begin:
> Now fitted the halter, now traversed the cart,
> And often took leave, but seem'd loath to depart,"

and, as in the well-known Rheims case, "nobody seem'd one penny the worse."

The Act of 1902, however, gave new life to the champions of health. We demanded execution of the condemned, and proceeded to draw up a fearful list of new indictments against other offenders. Looking down the list of schools, though time and imperfect memory have already confused North Street with South Street, and St. John's C.E. with St. John's R.C., it is easy to pick out 50 habitual criminals, who were brought up for correction.

The contest raged fiercely over the whole town; emissaries from the local authorities hurried up to London and besieged the doors of the Board; the Post Office groaned under the protests; architects of the Board visited and reported; the great Panjandrum himself, with the little round button on top, was called in; and still we fought. In some parts of the field we won easily; every Wesleyan school in the town was condemned and temporarily transferred; after a desperate fight a group of four of the worst offenders received sentence. Hewitt Street, as I said before, is gone; reversing Disraeli's epigram,[47] it is not only d——d, it is dead. The others are, I suppose, still in the former stage.

And all the time the usual struggle with the Code went on, varied now with resistance to an attack from the local authority; now with presentment of a cold shoulder to obstruction offered by the Teachers' Union; now with the soothing of indignant managers, upon whose toes all the other parties were treading. It was only in the intervals between the recitation of Standard V. and the geography of Standard VI. that one had time to notice that the rooms in which both classes were taught were unfit for human habitation; it was only on a chance visit to a cookery or woodwork class that one discovered, that the instruction was given in what the local authority called a basement, and I called a cellar; it was only on a similar chance visit to a school that I discovered abominations which almost took away my appetite for dinner.

And it was only after escaping from the day's drudgery that I had even short leisure to study the people, far too short a time to be able to give any reasoned account of them. A pilgrim may report his impressions of manners and customs, but he cannot generalise on character. True that the Manchester folk made no attempt to conceal their failings, or to conciliate the casual visitor. I have mentioned the "inordinate self-satisfaction" of the city, but it would be better to describe it as an over-full recognition of its own surpassing merits: let us not suppose that it went far beyond a just claim. There went with it a certain consciousness that in the wear and tear of crowded life the amenities of society were a little neglected. It was told me with a strange delight that the commercial travellers, and others, speak of Manchester *men*, and Liverpool *gentlemen*, and it was averred that the former put on silk hats when they journeyed to do business with the latter. I mentioned this double tribute to a Liverpool resident, and he replied that *he had not noticed it*. Now, what did he mean? Was it that the Liverpool gentlemen...? or that he had not seen the silk hats? It is better not to ask too many questions.

But the absence of pretence is sometimes itself a pretence, and the people are not so black as they paint themselves. Let us be reasonable. If the dwellers in Manchester had been more richly endowed with beauty, grace, courtesy, and so on, would they have continued to live in Manchester? Or would not other cities have enticed away men who combined these merits with the intelligence and activity which have produced the Ship Canal, and

the Technological Museum? We do not expect to find pine-apples in the Hebrides, or violets in the Sahara.

Dipping into a volume of Burns, I came to some lines so exactly suitable to the occasion, that I cannot do better than conclude with them, after the manner of Addison:

"But fare ye weel, auld Nickie-ben,
O wad ye tak' a thought an' men'
Ye aiblins might—I dinna ken—
Still hae a stake:
I'm wae to think upo' yon den,
Ev'n for your sake."

FOOTNOTES:

[44] Note that I fully admit the right of the County of Durham to this meaningless title, and also to immunity from me.

[45] "Nicholas Nickleby," chapter xxiv.

[46] "That it would tend to secure a greater uniformity of standard among the Inspectors, if the chief Inspectors ceased to have charge of small districts of their own, and confined themselves to the larger areas which they have to supervise, &c., &c.," p. 76, Report.

[47] "Protection," said Mr. Disraeli, "is not only dead, it is d——d." A modern Protectionist would lament that the statesman did not read *Alton Locke*, published before the utterance, ch. xxii: "And sae the deevil's dead.... At ony rate I'd no bury him till he began smell a wee strong like. It's a grewsome thing, is premature interment, Alton, laddie!"

CHAPTER XXIX

ISLE OF MAN

"Bold words affirmed, in days when faith was strong,
And doubts and scruples seldom teased the brain,
That no adventurer's bark had power to gain
These shores if he approached them bent on wrong."

WORDSWORTH.[48]

The question was often put to me, Why should the Manchester inspectors visit the Isle of Man? They have to cross the territory of at least three friendly colleagues to reach it, and surely they have enough to do at home? But the satisfying answer was that with no less inducement could the Manchester staff be kept together. When I was transferred to that City of Dreadful Night, I was inclined to think that The Island, as we affectionately called it, was a Heligoland, a Philippine Island: let who will, take it. But the Manchester staff soon undeceived me. "We work," said they, with tears in their manly eyes, "in smoke, fog, and gas-light for five or six months in the year: if it were not for the Island we should die: *keep the brightest jewel in your diadem*." And, therefore, when the Board hinted that I was overpeopled, and that without the I.O.M. I should be poorer but happier, I replied with the familiar Terentian words,

"HUMANI nihil a me alienum puto."
(All that is of Man, is mine.)

In the following May came my first Essay on Man. Certainly, as the crew of Ulysses sang, "Our island home is distant far." There is a great gulf fixed between Liverpool and Douglas, and out of the tourist season, when only the smaller boats are running, one is tempted to think that the Liverpool inspector, who probably examines night-schools in "The Principles of Navigation," is a fitter man for the post than one whose nautical ideas are limited by the Ship Canal and the Pennine Range. But the sight of Douglas

Bay, the clear sky, the pure air, and the quiet of the night—before the trippers arrive—bring consolation, and then content.

A classical friend hailed me as ἄναξ ἀνδρῶνm, King of Man, but that really was an exaggeration. I had no pretensions to the rank of Agamemnon. The island belongs to the British Crown: there is a governor, and some deemsters, besides Mr. Hall Caine, and a second-class bishop. All these dignitaries, and others, take precedence of H.M.I.

It is somewhat of a mild coincidence that I began my inspecting career in the Welsh Mona, and, thirty-five years later, ended with the Northern Mona. The latter is not a large island, about twenty-five miles from north to south, and about twelve across. The more familiar Isle of Wight is about two-thirds of the size, but has nearly double the population. This inequality is, doubtless, partly due to the fact that the census is taken on the first Monday in April, when Wight is full and Man is empty. If the first Monday in August could have been substituted, Man would have made a braver show. Thus is the dignity of Man sacrificed to a pedantic love of accuracy.

And while comparing the two, let me pause to note that WIHTGARESBYRIG, the old name of the southern isle, had presumably nothing to do with a wight, or man, and that Mannin, the old name of our isle, had nothing to do with a man or wight; but that the forces of erosion and attrition have made one into a Wight and the other into a Man.

To the ordinary tourist the island is unknown. A lady whom I asked whether she knew it, enquired with some surprise if it was a place to which people went. But, in the summer, trippers from Lancashire and Cheshire come in hundreds of thousands; there is the pleasing punishment of a four hours' sea voyage; on the island there is cheap board and lodging, with magnificent air and varied scenery. Our visits were, perforce, concluded before the mass of the trippers arrived, and rather before the warm weather set in; but it was a delightful break in the monotony of town work. Our school journeys did not take us into the Glens, which are the pride of the Manxman; and the rest of the country is rather pretty than beautiful. But in May and June we had all the charm of wild flowers, the fresh green of the beeches, and the splendour of the gorse and the broom. Song birds abounded in the plantations, and on the coast sea-birds did their best to

prove that personal beauty is compatible with the entire absence of a musical faculty.

Walter Scott makes the island the scene of part of *Peveril of the Peak*; but it does not appear from his life, or from his journal—still less does the novel show—that he ever set foot there. Wordsworth wrote some fine sonnets on the island, from one of which I have borrowed the lines at the head of the chapter. Mr. Hall Caine, of course, has done ample justice to the traditions and local colour. It is some years since I read, and much enjoyed, *The Manxman* and *The Deemster*, and at the times of reading I was in blackest ignorance of the scenery. To me the Sacred Bard of the island was T. E. Brown, whose letters,[49] and especially those from the island, I read and re-read. I skimmed through a good deal of his poetry also, in the hope of finding something suitable for the Manx children to learn, but there was little or nothing of that special kind, and the teachers would have none of it. We are told that Browning, George Eliot, Max Müller, and W. E. Henley united in praising his poetry very highly, but his dialect poems are the most admired, and teachers wage war against dialect. I wonder whether Scotch children learn Burns?

The Letters, however, are a priceless treasure; and the island which produced him, and introduced me to them, earns from me a double share of gratitude. Dip into vol. i. if you see no chance of personally inspecting his haunts:

> The island blooms like a rose. Primroses make no secret of it now —they are everywhere, and begin to bring with them young blue-bells, “ter’ble shoy,” but they’ll soon get over that. I went up Sulby Glen a bit the other day: the gorse there, as elsewhere, is a mass of golden flame; and I heard the cuckoo....
>
> Ballaglass is delicious in the sunlight with the beechen spray breathing over it. Also its primroses are good, also its blue-bells. As yet the blue-bells are hesitant or apologetic. Of course you know that later on they will attend the funeral of the primroses with a mighty mourning of hyacinthine blooms; and then they will become quite cheeky and truculent, and make the ground their own.
>
> Hills above the Gob-y-volley at the mouth of Sulby Glen, twice; perfection of gorse hassocks, tufted with bell-heather, also of ling in

> sheets, sprinkled with the bell-heather—the sea-rim rounding all with glorious blue—the steamer going round the island with an almost impudent familiarity of approach, like a "Cotton"[50] throwing his arms round the neck of a pretty Manx country-girl —"smookin, too, the dirt."

Only fragmentary glimpses of these scenes were vouchsafed to us, but they were enough to enhance our enjoyment of the book. Schools were our urgent suitors; they engrossed our attention, and what we saw of the beauties of nature was, in the main, what we passed on our way to and from schools.

Of the schools themselves there is little to be said that could interest even a professional reader. They are for the most part hampered by poverty. Not that the island is poor, though it produces little, and the harvest of the sea is sorely reduced at present; the trippers are a copper-mine of wealth. It is said that on an average each visitor spends at least a sovereign, and I have heard the income calculated at £1,500,000. A fair proportion of this must reach the farmers, but it requires a specially high tide to bring it to the door of the school. It must be remembered that the island is afflicted with Home Rule. It pays £10,000 a year to the Imperial Exchequer, and manages its own affairs. No Act of the Imperial Parliament affects it, unless it is specially named. Certain Acts are adopted by Tynwald (the Insular Parliament) when they are considered suitable. But the Education Act of 1902, substituting a central authority for the parochial organisation, and increasing the Government contribution, was not so adopted. Therefore the twenty-one School Boards, with £1,000 worth of clerks, &c., remain to manage the forty-seven schools, and teachers find their salaries so low that they seek their fortunes across the water.

No doubt the island suffers, as all tourist places in our country suffer, from Parasitism; and the sentence which Mr. Drummond, in his chapter on that social disease, quotes from Professor Ray Lankester, should be pondered in all such resorts:

> Any new set of conditions occurring to an animal which render its food and safety very easily attained, seem to lead as a rule to degeneration.—"Natural Law, &c.," p. 317.

For ten weeks or so there are crowded hours of prosperity: then comes the long period of retrospection, followed by a longer period of anticipation, neither being remunerative. Even in the season of prosperity I doubt if the contemplation of Lancashire trippers, frequently tripping, can be any more beneficial to the parasite than it is pleasant to the philosophic onlooker. (See T. E. Brown, *passim*.)

Of other work than agriculture there is little: there is some—I know not how much—lead-mining: the herring and the mackerel have all but deserted the coasts; men say that the steam-trawlers have ruined the trade.

The really serious cloud on the horizon is the want of a career open to talent: young men who have brains, or ambition—still more those who have both—seek their fortunes in a larger market, and the tendency to fill up the gaps with the weedy *poitrinaire*, and the seedy genteel indigent, is still more alarming.

As for the children—the 8,774 children—I lost my heart to them individually and collectively. But I received no encouragement. They are very shy, "ter'ble shoy," in Mr. Brown's dialect. In most schools they never see a stranger, except the inspector; and though by the desire of the Council we made a point of visiting every school twice a year, there was no time to establish an acquaintance, and the second visit was paid by a different official. In an oral examination it was most difficult to get an answer even from the boys: the girls sat mute, blushing, trembling. In Cheshire phrase, I "got no forrader."

The Manx language is almost extinct. At the last census 4,500 people, out of about 50,000, recorded themselves as Manx-speaking, but we must not suppose that anything like this number was monoglott. In the district between Peel and Port Erin on the west coast there is a school, where I was told that the children heard little but Manx at home; but I have never heard it spoken. On my first visit to Douglas I was under the impression that the children in the streets were talking Manx; but it turned out to be English with all the short syllables eliminated. This local variety is much in use in school. The children pitch their voices high, and rise by an imperfect fifth on the last word; thus they would chant on and around A, and would end on E flat. It is strange that a very similar inflexion is in use in parts of Norfolk. The Manx school recitation of poetry is conducted on this principle, and the

effect is this—the italic representing the high note (*Merchant of Venice*; Trial Scene):

> PORTIA: Th' qualt' merc's not *streen'd*:
> 't droppth 's gentl' reen f'm *heav'n*
> 'pon th' pleece *b'neeth*: 'ts twice *bless'd*:
> 't blessth him th't gives, 'nim th't *teeks*:
> 's mightst 'n *mightst*.

If I laughed, or remonstrated, however tenderly, the sensitive plant would shrivel up.

Both in the island and in North Wales I have often been told that on a fishing fleet in the Irish Sea the Manx, the Irish, the Gaelic, and the Welsh fishermen could converse freely. It would be rash for a man who speaks none of those languages to lay down the law. But we know that they differ widely: the Welsh are Cymric, the other three are of the Gaelic branch of Celts; all four would have the Indo-European joint stock and the Celtic roots in common. But conversation cannot subsist on roots. Judging from the names of places in the island there is little kinship between Welsh and Manx. I do not remember any Manx place-name beginning with Llan, or Lan; there is no Welsh town or village beginning with Balla, the general Manx prefix; Bala, the nearest approach, is the name of a modern town on Llyn Tegid, and in the parish of Llanycil. But Bally is common enough in Scotland and Ireland. So with other names.

I imagine that what happened in the Irish Sea was this: a Manx fisherman held up a fish, and shouted the Manx name for it—which, I think, resembles the Welsh "pysgodyn"; whereupon a Welshman held up a whisky bottle, and shouted "Iechyd da chwi" (good health); and they parted with mutual satisfaction. Yet, if there is any truth in the novels of Scott and Lever, the Gaels and Erse should have preferred some such word as "slaint" for "health"; the bottle is pan-anthropic.

About 1904 some local enthusiasts attempted to introduce the study of the Manx language as a part of the island school course. It was manifest after careful enquiry that the language had no literary value, for there is no Manx literature beyond some fairy stories and folk songs. Nor has it a commercial value, for obvious reasons. It has an antiquarian value; but between 9 A.M. and 4.30 P.M. the time is already fully occupied, and the

rates and taxes will hardly bear the additional strain of sentiment. The Board in Whitehall are very unwilling to interfere with Manx local option in education, for the island pays all the school grants, and he who pays the piper may call the song. Whitehall confined itself to the sprinkling of cold water on the scheme. I heard no more of it.

It is strange that in our crankful England no crank has arisen to demand the teaching of Old English (which we used to call Anglo-Saxon), the language of our forefathers. Why do we not all feel it to be monstrous that the "Lay of Beowulf" is a sealed book to our six million children, and that the tongue of Ælfred should be unknown to the subjects of Edward VII.?

The Manx language may not be a remunerative study, but the history of the island is full of interest, and the excellent patriotism of the Speaker of the House of Keys has provided the children with a school history, abbreviated from a larger work. I wish it were more generally used. Manx history is tangible; the monuments lie all round; Celts and Scandinavians have left traces everywhere. Saints and martyrs, such as were Patrick, German, Maughold, Bride; kings and warriors, King Orry and—and others; Stanleys and Murrays. Who would not be proud to be a Manxman?

Who was King Orry? I have great gifts of forgetfulness when it comes to history instead of story, and I do not recollect the details of that monarch's career. It is all in that book on the shelf. A Manx boy to whom I put the same question—Who was King Orry?—replied "a boot." It was explained that he meant "boat" and that one of the Liverpool steamers is called after the king. That does not carry us any further: but I remember the story of Bishop Wilson, which a colleague told me as we came back from Castle Rushen, and (like an examination candidate) I offer the one in place of the other:

Thomas Wilson was for 57 years (1697-1755) the saintly Bishop of Sodor and Man. The Governor's wife had, it was alleged, declared that Mrs. Z. was no better than she should be. Mrs. Z. said she was as good as Mrs. Governor. The matter was referred to the Bishop, who decided in favour of Mrs. Z. and ordered her assailant to apologise. On the lady's refusal he excommunicated her. But she "got at" the Archdeacon—("ploughed with my heifer," said Bishop Wilberforce of his Archdeacon 150 years later)[51] —and persuaded the inferior officer to admit her to Communion.

Thereupon the Bishop inhibited the Archdeacon. Whereupon the Governor seized the Bishop, and put him in the dungeons of Castle Rushen, till he should be purged of his contempt.

There is much to be said for Home Rule.

FOOTNOTES:

[48] One of my colleagues was unable to land on the Island, and was carried on to Barrow. Till I had seen these lines, I fully believed that it was the ordinary result of an easterly gale. Now I see that he was after no good.

[49] *Letters of T. E. Brown*, 2 vols. (Constable.)

[50] "Cotton" = Lancashire man?

[51] That was when the Archdeacon of Oxford acted as "Chairman of Hardy's Committee"; the Bishop favouring Gladstone. Mansel's epigram is famous, beginning—

> When the versatile Prelate of Oxford's famed city
> Spied the name of the chairman of Hardy's Committee,
> Said Samuel (from Samson his metaphor seekin')
> "You have ploughed with my heifer,—that is my Archdeacon."
>
> &c., &c. (see Burgon's *Life of Mansel*).

CHAPTER XXX

RELEASE

"We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the surge was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-fountains in the sea."

"*Lotos-Eaters*."

The Psalmist fixed three score and ten years as the limit of man's age; but he did not go into the question of efficiency. That has been settled with less liberality by the rules of the Civil Service, which "pluck away five lagging winters and five wanton springs" from the more generous sum, and decree that survivors shall be put on the Pension List at 65.

But this, as Isabella (she of *Measure for Measure*) would say, is for the soldier: the captain is free. The Prime Minister[52] is five years my senior: the Secretary for India, and the late Secretary for Ireland, now Ambassador in Washington, took their degrees at Oxford in my first or second year. These hoary statesmen, still as I write, flourish like green bay-trees, and I am become a lean and slippered pantaloon. For these high offices, says the Treasury, there is no need of restriction; but for posts requiring activity and intelligence (such as the Inspectorate of schools) there must be an age limit.

Nay, more: a later circular of the Board regrets that men should be kept on to 65 when "in many cases they have lost that freshness and originality which, &c., &c." And it proposes to cut down the limit by degrees to 60.

On the other hand, I have read that the Prime Minister has appointed one right reverend gentleman, aged 67, to be Bishop of A.; another reverend gentleman, aged 71, to be Dean of B.; and a third, who graduated a year before me, to be Bishop of C. But the Premier himself is 71, and this alters a man's point of view. I admit that a dean requires little freshness and originality: but in the annals of another branch of the public service I read,

that in 1857, when the Indian Mutiny broke out, the Government asked Sir Colin Campbell to take command of the British forces in India, he being then 65, and that he started in 24 hours.

> "It's Tommy this an' Tommy that, an' Tommy go away,
> But it's good grey 'eaded 'ero, when the band begins to play."

I have taken a slight liberty with Mr. Kipling's lines.

However, the arrangement suited me admirably, and it is only to preserve my British right to grumble, that I grumble. I had intended to retire at the age of sixty, when I became eligible for a pension: but, like Andrew Fairservice, whom I have already twice quoted, I had "e'en daikered on frae year's end to year's end." Therefore when the spring of 1906 clearly revealed to me that the coming December would bring me freedom, I made no complaint. That spring had added Salford, with 220,000 people, to my already enormous family. Salford, be it known to southern readers, adjoins Manchester much as Westminster adjoins London, but in part as Westminster adjoins Lambeth; for the Irwell is the boundary for some distance. Salford is a County Borough with three members of Parliament: there is no visible boundary between the Manchester and Salford types of M.P.: they have all bathed in Irwell. Nor is there any visible boundary between the two styles of school architecture: there, too, Manchester has set the fashion, and Salford, *nimium vicina Cremonae*, has followed it; but Salford, being the poor relation, is in a more deplorable state. Educationally, however, Salford is now full of zeal. We got on very well together, and—so far—I should have been glad to stay for another six months, in order to weld together the inspecting machinery of the two towns. "There's aye something to saw that I would like to see sawn, or something to maw that I would like to see mawn, or something to ripe that I would like to see ripen," said the same Andrew; but it could not be. My hands were full. I yearned to empty them, and fold them, and write no more reports with them. The prospect of another November in Manchester was unendurable, and I determined to retire on October 1st, thus incidentally relieving the country of the burden of maintaining me on the active staff for the two months before my birthday. "What loss is it to be rid of care?" said the deposed Richard II.

But the Board of Education, which would wrangle doggedly for three weeks about a charge of sixpence in travelling expenses, is both considerate and generous in greater matters. It was, they said, convenient to them that changes should be made at the end of the summer holidays, and if I liked to go at the end of September, they would give me "leave of absence" with full pay for the remaining two months. I gratefully accepted this really handsome offer: bought a new bicycle with the latest improvements to carry my tottering limbs, and went off to the Isle of Man to prove it.

On my previous visits to the island I had relied on trains and carriages, and had found some parts difficult of access. With a bicycle exploration is easy. There are rudimentary railways, which put one down at convenient spots, and thence there are good roads to nearly all the schools. It is advisable to make the journey agree with the wind, if possible, for the breeze is often fresh; but, with so much caution, there is unbounded delight. Two journeys stand out in my memory: one in the wild flat country to the north of the island, from sea to sea, and finally over T. E. Brown's Ballaugh Curragh: the other from Peel over the shoulder of I forget what hill, and then with free running wheel for miles down a smooth road to Port Erin. It was June, and I was only sixty-four.

Here let me record an event which certainly does not belong to the island, but may be conveniently hidden away here. I had been cycling, and inspecting, and cycling again all day, and I was weary as I got nearer home. There was a long stretch of smooth footpath, and no one in sight: the prospect of relief from "the 'ammer, 'ammer of the 'ard 'igh road" tempted me, and I strayed from the macadamised road of virtue to the cinder path of illegality. Suddenly a policeman shot out from a side lane and blocked my path. He demanded my name, and wanted to know whether the high road was not a good high road. I praised his high road fulsomely, but I went on to point out that I had been out all day, riding twenty miles *on H.M. Service*, and that I was wearied in doing good works. And I put it to him whether he did not think that members of the Civil Service, *like himself and me*, were entitled to some little indulgence. He was much moved, but not more than an official should be moved. He could not admit the justice of my plea, but he would "name it to the sergeant." I heard no more of it, and I asked no questions.

Those were delightful days, those last days on the island. There was heavy work; for besides the Manx schools, each of which wanted a report, there were six active sub-inspectors visiting and reporting on Lancashire schools, and there were boats from Liverpool weighed down to the Plimsoll mark with school portfolios from Manchester and Salford in particular, and the Palatinate in general, requiring "remarks," and "suggestions," and "reports." But one learns to think without "taking thought." All day long there was the charm of the island, and in the evenings, by great good fortune, I had the companionship of an old colleague, who was engaged in educational work for the Manx Council.

I grieved to leave thee, O Ellan Vannin![53] May the herring and the mackerel return to thy shores! May the trippers abound and behave decently!

And I was grieved to return to Manchester; but it was not for long. Late in July I finished the work there, and retired to North Wales, "on the way" to the Continent; and there, with a foreground of school portfolios and a background of mountains, I worked in peace.

Suddenly a new prospect was opened before me, dimming the sight of portfolios and mountains. There came two urgent letters, announcing a vacancy on the Chester Town Council,[54] and urging me to be a candidate! If I would accept I should be unopposed; and I should be put on the Education Committee, where I might give the city the benefit of that experience which, &c., &c. I laughed, and telegraphed back—"Impossible; contrary to rules of Civil Service."

That seemed to me to be conclusive. It merely produced an embassage of two, who begged me to reconsider. Finally I agreed to write to the Office for instructions. To my surprise there came a letter stating that I might stand, if I would before the contest hand over the mantle to my already nominated successor. In that case they would give me so much extra leave. This was more than generous, and it took away my last dilatory plea. I accepted the Chester invitation, and proffered the mantle with apologies to my successor. Then I proceeded to do all the electioneering things that I had read of other people doing in like circumstances. I had an indefatigable Committee. I issued an address; some one placarded the walls of Chester with my name. A hostile candidate appeared; there was canvassing, in

which I took a lamentably ineffective part; there was mural literature. At the critical moment, nay twice, on the day before the polling-day and on the fateful day itself, I had to go into Lancashire on an official enquiry. But by the afternoon post of the latter day I sent to Whitehall the announcement that I had handed over the seals of office, and I went to the poll a free man.

All day long the noise of battle rolled, and in the evening there was quite a thrill of excitement in the street. My excellent and friendly opponent and I sat on a low wall outside the polling station, and shook hands with our supporters as they filed by. I thought he was the favourite, but the ballot is as deceitful as the heart of man. At eight o'clock the poll was closed, and we adjourned to the Town Hall that the votes might be counted. It was a slow process, and I filled up the time by writing a report of the Lancashire enquiry, that was my last official act.

The poll was declared about 9, and to the surprise of my supporters I was elected by a handsome majority. I was a Town Councillor!

> "Quod optanti divum promittere nemo
> Auderet, volvenda dies en attulit ultro,"[55]

said a pedantic friend next day.

After uproarious rejoicings, I walked home, and in the narrow street that leads the traveller eastward from out the ancient city I found my best supporters. They were all under the age of 15, and they seemed to have been waiting for me. In the dim light, I came all unsuspecting upon them expectant. "Three cheers for Mr. Kensley: Oorĩ, Oorĩ," and I was in the midst of an innumerable multitude. Every child in the parish was there, and crowded round me. It was a personal victory for *them*: *their* inspector had been elected, and to *them* was the glory. Brawny mothers brought out babies in arms, and brandished them: "You examined me, Mr. Kensley: eh, I am glad." The crowd yelled on F sharp, and the drums of my ears vibrated like telegraph wires in I know not what condition of the atmosphere. "Oorĩ, Oorĩ." They surged round me up the narrow lane, and in at my gate, and up my modest drive, and on the doorstep, as I sought for the latchkey. It wanted little that they should enter like Bishop Hatto's rats:

> "And in at the windows, and in at the door,
> And through the walls helter-skelter they pour;

And down from the ceiling, and up through the floor,
From the right, and the left, from behind and before—”

But they paused, and I escaped the Bishop’s doom.

Good-night, children; good-night, and good-bye.

FOOTNOTES:

[52] This was written in 1907.

[53] This is not a lady’s name, but a synonym for the Isle of Man (Mannin).

[54] Not wishing to be biographical, I omitted to mention that I kept on my house at Chester while in charge of Manchester.

[55] “That, which no god dared promise to thy prayer, The wheel of time brings of its own accord.”

THE END

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Transcriber’s Notes

A few minor errors in punctuation have been corrected.

Page 83: “little by virture” changed to “little by virtue”

Page 197: “exist anny way” changed to “exist any way”

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