

Miseriçordias Domini



in æternum cantabo.

THE ABINGDONIAN.

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Contents.

	PAGE
EDITORIAL	97
OUR XMAS NUMBER	99
CHERMSIDE THE POACHER	100
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.....	102
A HORRIBLE EXPERIENCE	103
OLD GARENTE	106
A CHRISTMAS LETTER BY AN ANCIENT ABENDONIAN	108
GRISELDA	109
FOOTBALL MATCHES	111
A REMINISCENCE	114
THE CANON'S KNELL	115
HOW HIGGINS SPENT HIS XMAS	118
ABINGDON OLD LOCK	118
CORRESPONDENCE	120

EDITORIAL.

WE are deviating this year from the ordinary paths in the management of a Public School Magazine, by enlarging our regular issue by a few short stories and giving it the title of a

Christmas Number. We believe we are the first School that has ventured on such an idea; but why should we not arouse from the lethargic routine of School Magazines and go on with the spirit of the times, which in these business-like and go-a-head days, is everlastingly forcing its way through space, for the good, we hope, of all those who come under its exciting influence, and thereby issue a Xmas Number of the Abingdonian?

Now this was just the question which the Committee discussed and debated on November 29th, and after a short debate came unanimously to the conclusion that a Xmas Number should be brought out. We were greatly encouraged very soon after this decision became known, by our friends writing and saying, Well done! Go on and prosper, we will help you.

We think a Xmas Number will do good in more ways than one. Firstly, by the introduction of short stories, we shall be encouraging the younger members of our community to attempt something original, and who can tell, by this means, we may be kindling a literary fire within them, which would otherwise lie dormant, and this must all tend towards intellectual culture and the filling up of spare time with good work, which previously was wasted. Secondly, it will we hope tend to a wider interest being taken in our Magazine, and to its being supported more thoroughly by those directly connected with the School as well as by those indirectly, but who are interested in its welfare and therefore in its paper. Thirdly, that by old boys and friends giving us contributions, both literary and monetary, it will cause the link between the past and present to maintain its magnetic influence and thereby cause a current of good feeling ever to be flowing and oscillating between its old and young members, for therein lies surely the strength of the system, and by the power of this link, we maintain, that the past members of the school can by their influence and example encourage the present to take some literary work in hand of their own free will; and more often than otherwise, work done thus, is far superior to any done under pressure. And why! because their heart is more in it.

We sincerely thank old boys and friends for contributions to this, our first attempt at a Xmas Number, and thus helping our best endeavours to

increase the popularity of our School and paper.

We should be grateful to any of our readers for suggestions, which can be put before the Committee, for the better management of the Magazine.

We regret to say Mr. Cam is leaving us, having accepted the living of Birchanger, Essex, presented to him by the Fellows of New College, Oxford. There are a good many of us who have been under his guidance for some years. May we always have an authority to turn to in our troubles and difficulties in after life, who will appreciate them so keenly, and consequently sympathise with us and direct us aright so willingly as our present Head Master. We all shall equally miss Mrs. Cam, who has always taken a great interest in us—kind and sympathetic in illness, and willing to help us in our amusements. We specially thank her for acting as our Librarian. Lastly, we wish both Mr. and Mrs. Cam and Family health and happiness in their new sphere of life, yet not so much that, as a new sphere of locality.

A Scholar once a Scholar always, especially to one who:—

Finds tongues in trees; books in the
running brooks,

Sermons in stones, and good in every-
thing.

Mr. W. J. R. Cowell, B.A., Trinity College, Cambridge, succeeded Mr. Hodgson, as IV. Form Master at the beginning of this term.

He is an old Carthusian and a Lockite, therefore it is needless to say, he takes

a great interest in football, and is very popular. He is the Author of a comic song entitled "The Irish Parliament," music by Melvain Helmore, it is of a lively and political nature. May success attend it.

We congratulate the Football Captain on the amount of energy he threw into his work immediately on entering upon his official duties this term. We can never remember when the team was better and more regularly looked after between the first day of term and the first fixture. He would not let us have any rest, but every half-holiday we were playing scratch teams made up of friends and old boys in the town, got together by the masters.

At the beginning of the term the Captain found he had six vacancies in the team and to fill these was no easy matter, especially two of them, viz.: goal keeper and a full back; the latter was fairly filled up, but oh! the former! well, we hadn't got one. There was nobody to be found with nerve, activity and quickness of sight in any way combined sufficiently to resist our opponents' shots, but at last we discovered one in Forster, who fills his position well.

Although we have been defeated once or twice rather heavily, the team is all round a very plucky one, while combination has in some matches been excellent.

The team will be spoken of individually in another part of this number.

We have now seven old boys in residence at Oxford. J. W. Veysey, J. Townsend, F. Robinson, N. A. Saunders, H. E.

Mallam, P. H. Morland, C. B. Hayden, and from the Oxford letter it will be seen that those who have just gone up have become useful members of their respective colleges, while P. H. Morland won his heat in the Freshman's Sports and ran second in the hurdles, winning the 100 yards in his College Sports a few days afterwards.

After our own football, that in which our interest is mostly centred is the Abingdon Town Club, and this was evident to all those who witnessed the grand game played on November 26th, at Abingdon v. Reading Castle, when we all worked hard in cheering the town on to their victory of 5 to 1.

We have watched their progress in the Cup Competition with much interest, and well we might, considering five old Abingdonians are playing in the team. We hope in a future number to be able to give an account of how the Cup was brought into the Ancient Borough of Abingdon. Success to the Club and to its indefatigable Secretary.

We are all most grateful to Mr. J. L. Toole for so kindly helping us in our Xmas Number, by giving us a contribution.

Is not his reputation as a great friend to boys fully exemplified?

We wish all and every one a merry Xmas and a happy New Year.

OUR CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

We put our heads together,
And reckoned sagely whether,

Our Magazine should follow time worn
rules;
Or awaken from its slumber,
And produce a Christmas Number,
And give the lead to all the other schools.

At first this proposition,
Met with some opposition;
But in the end, to this, we all agreed
That something smart and witty,
With a cover neat and pretty,
Should be issued with the very utmost
speed.

And we very quickly found,
That all our friends around,
Would help us with a liberal subscrip-
tion,
"Go in and win" said they,
"Your venture's sure to pay."
And sentiments of similar description.

And dear old Johnnie Toole,
The friend of boys at school,
Was very kind in many different ways.
By which you'll clearly see
That his generosity,
Is not alone apparent in his plays.

But before our M.S.S.
Had reached the printing press
The treasurer a joyful tale told,
And we felt our spirits rise
To a level with the skies,
For every single number had been sold.

Our thanks we gladly tend
To every kindly friend,

Who has helped this little venture to
appear.
And as it's Christmas time,
We wish you all in rhyme,
"A merry Christmas and a bright New
Year."

CHERMSIDE THE POACHER.

A dull September day, with the rain
drizzling thickly, is not a very inviting
day for returning to School, but the day
will come, and the rain must be put up
with, so it happened that on this day
two boys, Stephen Chermshire and Dick
Henderson, were going by coach to Mr.
Rodwell Roper's school in Hampshire,
they had both started at 8 o'clock in the
morning (not living very far apart), and
it was now 7 o'clock at night, and they
were still 12 miles from the School. The
coach now stopped for change of horses,
and while this was being done, Henderson
strolled into an Inn, and sitting by the
fire, listened to the wonderful stories of
the innkeeper. Presently it was time
for the coach to start again, so getting
inside, as the top was crowded, he curled
himself snugly up in the corner, but just
as the coach was starting, a fat old
woman bounced in and trod on his toe,
which caused him to give a loud squeak,
but she took no notice whatever, and
pushing her head out of the window,
cried out in shrill tones, "Good-bye till
next market-day," having said this she
promptly sat on Henderson's knee, and
he quickly jumping up, compelled her
to slide rather violently on to the floor
of the coach, but with numerous

apologies, and at the same time helping Sally Bunts, as her name was, up on to the seat, he quickly soothed down the offended dame. But at length the coach rumbled by the play ground of the old school, and the two boys strolled leisurely up to the Head-Master's door, and having rung the bell, at last entered the hall, and then into the school buildings. "Any new boys," was the first question asked by Henderson to an elderly boy. "Yes," replied Dickson, about 8 boarders, two are to be in our dormitory, one is an awful soft; but the other knows who he has got to deal with. Chermiside had now gone upstairs, directly he had departed, Dickson said, "How did old Chermiside get on in the Holidays, did you ever see him more in the blues than he is now, won't shake hands, won't speak, one would think he was dumb." "Well," said Henderson, "he has hardly spoken to me coming up, and as for the holidays, really, I don't think I will say what I think about them, but will wait till I hear more to convince me of my fears." Bed time came at last, and all the boys in dormitory 3 made haste to get into bed as they were fairly tired from travelling, except Bully Sharp, who went to Harry Eason's bed, who was the new boy, and after forcibly ejecting him, pulled his hair and pinched him, and finally slopped a lot of cold water over him, and kicked him into bed. There were others in the bully gang, but they were tired, so did not help, two or three merely joined because they were afraid of being bullied themselves, or because they were afraid of

being laughed at. Usually most bullying went on before the bigger boys came to bed, and if the smaller ones dared to tell the older ones, they were so cruelly treated the next night, that they always in future held their tongues, but Eason was no coward, and determined next night to go straight at his tormentor. On the next day he asked Henderson if it was wise to hit back when the bully began knocking him about, Henderson replied "yes." So that night, when the bully came to him, with about five others, and began hauling him out of bed, he leapt to his feet and gave him such a blow on the jaw that sent him reeling across to the other side of the dormitory. The bully, enraged at this, flew across at Eason with a big boot in his hand, and flung it at his head, but Eason jumping aside, the boot hit one of his comrades named Richardson on the arm, making him cry out with pain. Eason once more struck at Sharp and hit him in the eye, this made him go back to his own bed, uttering fearful threats.

The Term at length slipped by, and one day Chermiside asked Henderson if he could lend him a little sum of money, as he was rather hard up. Henderson asked him to wait while he fetched it; but just as he was going he heard a low whistle the other side of the play-ground wall, and wishing to find out who it was, he stopped still a minute to see if the person would whistle again. Just then looking round for Chermiside he found that he had vanished, his suspicion was at once aroused, and on going outside the school gate, he saw Chermiside

walking along with a man who was carrying a pheasant and two rabbits; Henderson at once turned back into the school ground again, and presently Cherm-side returned. When Henderson saw him, he walked up to him, and asked him if he wanted the money, he replied, "that he had found that he had some in doors, and did not want any more," "but I thought you went out of the school ground, and not in doors," remarked Henderson. "It does not matter what you thought," said Cherm-side, "you see that you are wrong for once." He then walked away sullenly to avoid further conversation.

That night Henderson saw Cherm-side get out of bed very quietly, dress himself, and when he was satisfied that everyone was asleep, creep gently out of the room. Henderson jumped up when he was gone, and following him, presently saw him getting out of a low window. Henderson got out after him, and dogged his footsteps for a mile down a dark lane, then across a gate, and into a large wood. Suddenly the stillness of the night was broken by a low whistle and he saw the same man as he had seen in the afternoon step out from behind some trees and speak to Cherm-side, they then proceeded to get some nets out of tangle, whilst they were occupied with this, Henderson walked back to where a keeper lived, whom he knew very well, and called him up in a few minutes, and told him what was happening. He immediately set out with Henderson, being armed with a heavy stick. Wending their way down

a dark avenue, so as to come out close by the poachers, they rapidly approached them, but when they were within 10 yards of them, a black dog leaped from a bush with an angry growl, and seized Henderson by the leg; one blow from Telling the keeper's stick, broke the skull of the dog, the poacher was up in a moment with a long knife, but Telling's stick again came down with such violence on the poacher's head that he lay stunned on the ground. Cherm-side seeing his fellow poacher down, seized a gun and pointed it at Telling, but Henderson, knocking the barrel up, seized him by the throat, and bore him heavily to the ground. He was quickly bound, and the noise of the gun having been heard by other keepers, who soon arrived, the two were carried off to Telling's house. The news soon reached the school, and a half was given in honour of Henderson, who could scarcely escape being torn to pieces by the enthusiastic boys.

"JOBSON."

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

Again the winter has begun,
 Christmas greeting every one;
 Boys return from School once more,
 A good deal wiser than before;
 And mothers glad to see them back,
 Declare their sons a genius crack.

On Christmas day through snow and
 shine,
 Skating or hunting all the time;
 But some prefer to sit and sleep,

O'er a fire in slumber deep ;
And some will always have some fun,
Before with Christmas they have done.

Ah ! when the evening breaketh in,
Dancing and games do soon begin ;
Many people fall in love,
In the amusements named above ;
We mean to have some fun they say,
If parents don't impede our way.

But when this festival is past,
The holidays must end at last ;
And just as fast as the time doth slip,
The boys look round for their Christmas
tip ;
At last the day for departure has come,
Oh ! says Tommy, " I've sprained my
thumb."

KNOCK-ME-DOWN.

A HORRIBLE EXPERIENCE.

I am not a particularly brave man ;
you see, I don't belong to a particularly
brave family—brave I mean in the vulgar
sense of the word. I have heaps of
discretion, and so had all my ancestors.

My grandfather went into the army,
much against his will, I confess ; and
was ordered abroad on active service—
likewise very much against his will ; he
much preferred Church Parade at Ports-
mouth to fighting the blacks.

He had no silly desire to cover him-
self with glory and die on the battlefield,
yet, as a really great man always will,
in spite of every obstacle, he made a
name for himself. They used to say in

the army that there was no man in the
service more capable of *leading* a retreat
than my grandfather.

For my part, when a man insults me,
I treat him with silent contempt—by far
the best kind of contempt—especially if
the man who insults you is bigger than
yourself ; and besides a fellow doesn't
like to be put down as a low pot-house
bully, who can't take a little bit of inno-
cent chaff from a big man, without flying
at him and half killing him.

No, when a man is rude to me, I think
of my glorious ancestors, especially the
one who was a soldier, and maintain a
dignified silence, unless, of course, we
happen to be on opposite sides of a wide
river, and then I feel that my position
justifies me in speaking my mind freely.

I have made these few prefatory re-
marks in order that in the thrilling
experience which I am about to relate,
you may, my dear reader, sympathise
with my state of mind.

So now for my story.—

It was a dark and drenching night in
the latter part of November, when the
one solitary conveyance which the place
boasted of, deposited me, my portman-
teau, and my faithful collie Pops at the
entrance of the " Dragon " inn, in the
little country town of D—. I had
important business to transact at D—
on the morrow, and as I was carrying
on my person some very valuable
securities, and also a large sum of
money, I had thought it advisable to
bring old Pops with me as a guard
against possible thieves.

The destinies of the inn were presided over by an old lady of a somewhat masculine, not to say menacing, appearance, who seemed to regard it as a piece of the most unqualified impertinence that I should require a bedroom at that hour of night. To which, in a silly moment, I made reply, that bedrooms were not generally required in the day time.

This remark of mine had such a terrible effect on the landlady that I had great difficulty in obtaining a bedroom at all.

After supper, I took my candle and accompanied by my faithful dog, made my way to my bedroom.

We were just crossing the threshold, in fact, Pops had preceded me, and was already sniffing at and examining the furniture, when the harsh tones of the landlady fell on my ear.

"I can't 'ave that dog in the bedroom—messing the place about. Enough trouble getting the room ready, without a great beast like that spoiling the place," and she ascended the stairs in hot anger.

I attempted to remonstrate with her. "I'm always accustomed to have the dog in my bed-room," I said.

To which she made reply, that whatever tom-foolery I chose to practise in my own home, she'd have none of it here, and that if her ways didn't suit mine, I could clear out. "And a good riddance to bad rubbish."

I reflected that if this dreadful old woman turned me out, I should probably

spend the night in the open air in the rain, for there was no other accommodation to be obtained in the place, and so, reluctantly, I yielded; only stipulating that Pops should find a night's lodging in the smoking room.

To this she consented, and dragged the disappointed Pops off by his collar. As soon as the old woman's footsteps had died away in the distance, I proceeded to examine the documents which I should require next day.

Presently I heard the household retiring for the night, and the masculine tramp of the landlady as she passed my door.

And then, I am a nervous man, a feeling of loneliness crept over me, I missed the companionship of old Pops, I felt unhappy. Suddenly I noticed that my supply of matches had run out.

Now if there is one thing which I dislike more than another, it is to be short of matches at night, especially in a strange house; so remembering that I had seen a box of lucifers on the table, I unlocked my door and descended to the smoking room in search of them. I found Pops restlessly strolling about the room, as if bare boards did not suit him for a resting place, but the matches had disappeared; the landlady had evidently been afraid the dog would play with them and set the house on fire; and so had removed them.

Suddenly Pops, in his frantic endeavours to express his affection for me, knocked my candle out of my hand, and I was left in complete darkness, and

without a single match wherewith to obtain a fresh light.

There was nothing for it now but to go to bed in the dark; so having addressed a few remarks of an uncomplimentary nature to the delinquent Pops, I groped my way out of the room, carefully closing the door to prevent Pops from following me, and in a few minutes was in bed with my valuables under my pillow.

I tried to get to sleep. But no! The more I tried to woo the drowsy Goddess, the more awake did I become. I tossed about feverishly on the bed, while visions of evil sodden faces with murder in their eyes and blood on their lips, and recollection of tales of horror and of blood, long ago in my childhood's days, told me by a nurse, made my brain reel with the delirium of horror. I thought of lonely inns, of wearied guests, of murderous hosts, when suddenly—The marrow froze in my bones.

There was someone under my bed.

My heart stood still. The cold sweat gathered on my brow. I gasped for breath.

And then again! There could be no doubt about it this time. *The bed was shaken violently.*

I longed to put my head under the clothes, but the thought, that if I did so, the midnight intruder would certainly smother me as I lay, prevented me.

"*Dead men tells no tales*" seemed written in letters of fire in the darkness.

I thought of making a rush for the door, but remembered that I had locked

it, and that the key was on the dressing-table at the other end of the room.

And then again, that terrible shaking of the bed, accompanied by a kind of upward motion, as if someone creeping from under it had struck the bars with his back.

Extreme terror will make a hero of the veriest coward, the cornered rat will turn and face the terrier, and so it was in my case.

With a bound I sprang from the bed and grasped the poker from the fender. I had heard that a bold front will cow the most savage beast; and why not a burglar, I thought. So brandishing the poker round my head, and summoning up all my courage, and in a voice which shook, but which was intended to be awe-inspiring, I thus addressed my unwelcome visitor. "Who's that under the bed? I know who you are! Come out at once, or I will bash your brains out! Come out you scoundrel!"

I paused for breath and listened.

No response.

I have cowed him. I thought. Then, reassured by the silence, I continued, "It's no use making any resistance! I am armed to the teeth," and (a sudden and brilliant idea) "I am a Police officer so you had better yield quietly."

Suddenly the moon shone out from behind a cloud and filled the room with her light, and I beheld the draperies of the bed slowly raised, and a dark figure emerging from beneath them.

The poker dropped from my nerveless hand, my knees gave way beneath me,

and from sheer terror — I fainted away.

When I came to my senses, I was still lying as I had fallen, and something was weighing heavily on my chest. Mechanically I raised my hand, and encountered the head of — old Pops, who was utilising me as a pillow. And then suddenly the whole matter dawned upon me.

My midnight visitor was none other than Pops who, while I was stumbling about the smoking room, in the dark had sneaked off to my room, where he had concealed himself under the bed. While that horrible, blood-curdling shaking, was nothing else but old Pops scratching himself.

WHAT HAPPENED TO OLD GARENTE.

By J. L. TOOLE.

“Old Garente” as they called him was a famous East-end pantomimist, and a friend of Harry Carles, the well-known English clown, who had settled in Italy.

“Garente had taken several English pantomimists as attractions on his Continental tours. Amongst them was a certain East Ender, who on his return related to his admiring friends many strange and curious adventures. He had the gift of imagination, and his hearers mostly had every desire to assist him in making his points. In a White-chapel smoke-room, favoured by a select and regular company, he had a chair of his own, and was always willing to

narrate his Continental experiences, and his friends were never tired of listening to them. There was one story in particular which they more especially enjoyed. They always drew him promptly for this for the benefit of any new friend, and however often he narrated it they never called it old, and the prologue of the draw was often in itself amusing enough.

One of the company would remark
“You know Italy, mate?”

“Rather!” he would answer.

“Wonderful country?”

“I should think it was,”

“You were there with old Garente?”

“I was, mate,” and so on, until at last some other drawer would ask,

“Did you ever cross the Alps?”

“Did I ever what?”

“Cross the Alps?”

“Why, it was a-crossing the Alps as me and Garente had the ottest adventure of all as occurred to us.”

“Tell us about it,” the questioner would say in a spirit of inquiry, as if he had not heard the story a hundred times.

Then the pantomimist would remove his pipe from his lips and relate his affair with the bandits.

“We had had good business,” he would say, “very good business, and old Garente stuck to the bag—oh, he was the dooce to stick to the bag, old Garente.” He always carried his money in a bag, and never parted with it—a closish chap, like all them furriners, never wasted a coin on extra drinks, nor nothing in the way of good fellowship.” Well, he was a-going along all right,

a-crossing the Arlps, when all of a sudden we thought we hears military music. We stops and listens, and old Garente, he becomes most uncomfortable, a-listening with all his might. We all listens likewise, and we hears far off in the distance the sound of a band, playing a regular bandit's march, the sort of music as you've all 'eard no doubt at old Drury in *Timour the Tartar*, a regular bandit's march—*Taratar, taratar, taratar, thrum, thrum, thrum! Taratar, taratar, taratar, taratar! Schsch, schsch. Thrum!*" (imitating the well-known march from *Timour*, cymbals, drums, and the rest). "We was not listenin' more than ten minutes when they comes round a bend of the Arlps, a reg'lar army, all a-glittering on prancing 'osses, with flags and banners a-waving, and in front a band of at least fifty performers, with silver trumpets, and cymbals and side-drums, and the entire rig out. It was a grand sight, in them spotless mountains, the 'osses a-prancin' and all of 'em with saddle-cloths embroidered with gold and silver, and the army a-comin' on behind the band, with sabres a-flashing in the sun, and marchin' orderly as if they was Hinglish 'Orse Guards, but of course differently dressed—turbans and simytars, and gold lace, and jewels on the bridles of the 'osses; and, well there, such a turn-out as would 'ave been a honour to any country, and to tell you the truth, *Timour the Tartar* weren't in it with 'em, grand as *Timour* were when I see it in it's glory. And the band comes blazing on, in all it's splendour—*Tara-*

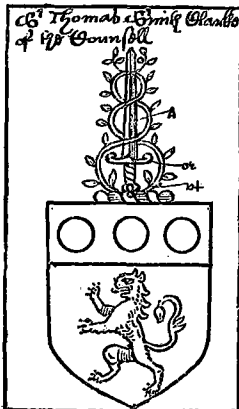
tar, taratar, taratar, thrum, thrum. Thrum! Taratar, taratar, taratar, taratar, taratar! Schsch, schsch. Thrum! Old Garente says, "Hide, boys, hide," says he. He knowed what they was, and what we'd got to expect. Well, we hides like a shot, we vamooches behind a rock; but the heagle eyes of them bandits, they was on us, make no mistake, they'd been on us no doubt all the time; and they dooced soon 'auls us out. "Halt! halt!" says the chief, first in Italian, and then in Hinglish. "Right about," he says. "Forward for the bandit's cave! and they turns, and off we was marched, the band a-playin' as before, and old Garente a-trying to hide the bag under his cloak, but it weren't no good; besides, what was the good of the bag when our lives weren't worth a hour's purchase? Well at larst we come to the bandit's cave."

Here one of the listeners would ask what sort of a cave it was; the narrator expected questions, and was always prepared for them.

"Oh the regler thing," he would say, "the regular bandit's cave—blood and bones and all chat sort of thing about—Turkey carpets, silver shields, drinking-cups, and gold tables—the regler thing," we was in a pretty funk, I can tell you, when all of a sudden Garente's brother, who'd been a-hyeing the bandit chief a long time—and I'd begun to notice it—all of a sudden he looks the chief in the eye, turns a flip flap, and shouts "Oh! here we are! Why it's Harry Carles!" and blest if it worn't! It was Harry Carles, the clown as had guv' up the

show business and settled down into a bandit-chief; and here he was with all his army, on the march! Well, I needn't say as they not only spared our lives, but they was awful good to old Garente as an old pal of the chief's; they let him keep his bag; and what is more, a lot of 'em dismounts and they puts us on their 'osses, and marches off—*Taratar, taratar, taratar, thrum, thrum. Thrum! taratar, taratar, taratar, taratar, taratar! Schsh, schsh. Thrum!* right to the bandit's palace, where they entertained us. Well, I fails for language to tell you how they entertained us. Every kind of luxury, champagne—well we could have swum in it if we'd wanted—dancing-girls with coins a-hung round their necks, and Turkish trousers above their ankles. And Lord! such eyes they had! And it was more like a dream than any thing earthly; and as for the palace in a general way, the palace of *Timour the Tartar* was a fool to it.

A CHRISTMAS LETTER BY AN ANCIENT ABENDONIAN.



The letter following was written by Sir Thomas Smith, (whose biography appeared in a previous number of this Magazine), at an early period of his career; after his appointment as one of the Clerks of the Council, but

before either he or his colleague, Mr. Edmundes, had received the honour of knighthood. There is nothing on the MS. to show to whom the letter was addressed, but it is at any rate interesting, as affording us a glimpse of the vigorous character of Christmas gaities at the court of "Good Queen Bess," when even the Council Chamber itself was given up for the purposes of "a dancing schoole." Besides this, there are important references to current European politics, and at the close a pathetic allusion to the Earl of Essex, who had returned in disgrace from his brief Vice-Royalty in Ireland, and was now "sick and in prison." The letter is dated, it will be observed, from the Palace of Richmond, a royal residence from the time of Edward I. Here in 1509 Henry VII. died; and here in the year following, Henry VIII. entertained the Emperor Charles V. During her long reign, Queen Elizabeth frequently resided at Richmond Palace, where in 1559, she entertained Eric XIV., King of Sweden, when he visited England to make her a proposal of marriage; and it was within its walls that she sadly expired on the 24th of March, 1602-3. The Council Chamber, the scene of the festivities of Christmas, 1599, is no more, and of the whole building, scarcely anything is now left but the gateway to the Wardrobe Court, still adorned, however, with the carved arms of the Tudor Sovereigns.

The MS. runs as follows:—

Sr,

This tyme of the yeare affordes no other newes then of dauncing & playes and Christmase pyes. The

Courte is the onely schoole of wisdom in the worlde; it taketh not thought for any thing or any person. you may not therefore expect any newes from me, unlesse I shall tell you who hath the best grace, or sheweth the best tricks in dauncing (this very place where I now write, giuing me that commoditie, because it serueth at this time for the use of a dauncing schoole); otherwise I haue nothing to say. For of other tricks in the Courte a man may not write. I canne only aduertize you that Mr. Edmundes, a messenger of peace, is at this instant vpon his dispatch here, toward the Archduke,¹ and goeth, as I thinke, by the way of Calais. If these proceedings take effect, it will be Christmasse all the yeare with some; But me thinks there shold go a great many wordes to so great a bargayne: and therefore (as a man, through ignorance, somewhat hard of beleife) I cannot imagine that wee shall see the bargayne made vp in haste. They that are in prison, & in extremitie of sicknesse finde: little comferte, notwithstanding all Christmase mirthe. And it is with them rather good friday, or at the least view Ashe wednesday. God & our Lady healep them, for I see the Catholiques are in the right, that pray to oure Lady. And unlesse oure Lady do healep, as she may if it please her, I know not when this Purgatorie will be at an end. But if it end not the sooner, it is very lyke to purge away life and all. The best is, the chaunge shall (be for) the better. Neuer man better disposed or in a readier way toward heauen, yet if please God to restore him, some of his pore frendes would be gladde a while longer to haue his companie; & I pray God the want be not founde to late. This is all I canne write; but rather this idle lre then none; And so I end commending my seruiceable affection vnto you, & will euer be

Yours assuredly to comande,

TH: SMITH.

I pray you Sr. do me the fawoure to comend me to Sr. Anth: Powlett.
from the counsaile chamber at Richmond the 23 of rober [1599].

Following the letter is a warrant to Mayors and other officials to expedite Mr Edmundes's journey to the port of his embarkation. He had been dispatched by the Queen as envoy to Brussels, apparently to negotiate a peace with the Archduke, who in September of this

year had re-commenced the war against the Protestants, but was defeated by Prince Maurice at Nieuport, 2nd July, 1600, and eventually concluded a treaty with Holland for 12 years.

I avail myself of this opportunity to repair an omission in the memoir of Sir Thomas Smith, where I should have stated that he was M.P. for Cricklade in 1588-9; for Tamworth in 1593, and perhaps for Aylesbury in 1597-8.

The illustration of the arms and crest of Sir Tho: Smith at the head of this article is taken from Harl MS. No. 3526.

WLL. H. RICHARDSON.

¹Albert, Archduke of Austria, Cardinal and Archbishop of Toledo, and at this time residing at Brussels as governor of the Netherlands.

GRISELDA.

Such was her name, she being my fiancée. We had been engaged about a month, and she was the only daughter of a country rector. I had only known her for a fortnight before I proposed, but we got on so well together that, it seemed as if I had known her for years. She was alone in the house with her father at the time, her brothers, four in number, being at school, and her mother being dead. Oh! what a happy time we had, always together day after day. She was so innocent and confiding that she would have captivated any man's heart. I thought then that her brothers would somewhat resemble her. She had, it is true, told me that they were not much like her, but I was hardly prepared for the sight that met my eyes

when they came home for the holidays which they did during the fifth week of our engagement.

The two elder ones were to arrive at 4 p.m. on the Thursday, and we had just come in from a walk when they arrived in the rector's tumble-down brougham which had gone to meet them; but for a minute my heart almost stopped beating, for one was deformed and the other squinted.

They greeted their sister effusively and rushed off to the garden to see the guinea pigs, followed by their sister, leaving me disconsolate. Fancy if she should want me to take them about London with me. No, I could not do it. Murmuring this to myself I went up to wash my hands for tea, and when I came down, found them already seated at the table. I took my usual seat and the meal began. The boys behaved fairly well, but would insist on calling their sister "Grisly," a pet name evidently, but still it annoyed me, for it was'n't pretty.

Once or twice during the meal I fancied my chair was rather damp, but was not prepared to hear the eldest boy suddenly shout out "Mr. Dirtycur (for so he pronounced my name, which was really "Durtcher") I believe you are sitting on my guinea pig," and so I was. No wonder I had felt damp. Oh! what a row there was, besides a mess. I had of course done it on purpose to spite him. In vain I protested that it was an accident and that I had spoilt my new trousers but it was no good and at last I left the room to go home, followed by

the squint-eyed boy to see that I did not take his father's great coat, he saying as he came "a fellow who sits on a guinea pig might do anything."

The next morning I determined to go up and make my peace if possible with the boys, so started accordingly. I soon arrived at the gate of their garden which opened out of a lane, and going in, walked down the path where my Griselda was accustomed to meet me. I had not proceeded far before I felt a sudden pain in the guinea pig portion of my clothing, which caused me to start with pain. I heard a smothered laugh and guessing who my adversary was, and that he was avenging the guinea pig by peppering me with his air gun, deemed discretion the better part of valour, so ran as fast as I could towards the corner of a wall so as to get out of shot. True enough I succeeded in getting out of reach of his fire, but as soon as I stopped under the shelter of the wall to recover my breath, the other little fiend turned a hose on to me through a hole in the wall drenching me to the skin. I immediately returned home and changed my clothes, and just as I had finished, my servant brought me a note. It was from Griselda to say she would meet me at 12 at the four cross roads to go for a walk, appointing that place to meet as she had to see an old woman first.

I accordingly met her and she told me that her two other brothers had come home. I asked her if they were at all like the others. She seemed to take offence at this, and remarked that she thought it very unkind of me to have sat down

on the guinea pig. A coldness then sprang up between us, and after a miserable walk, we returned each to our respective homes. I did not venture near the house that night, but went to bed early, intending to have a good night's rest, but on getting into bed I thought my feet seemed to strike against something damp, I quickly got up and examined the bed, and found an object which on closer inspection proved to be the remains of the squashed guinea pig.

This was beyond a joke, but having procured a fresh sheet, I got right into bed this time, only to fall clean through on to the floor into my bath, which someone—I conclude her younger brothers—had considerably filled with water.

Eventually I turned in on the floor, and lay in bed reading a book, when I was suddenly startled by the candle sending off a squib which was concealed within it. I extinguished the sparks and got to sleep, only having two windows smashed in the night.

The next morning I wrote to Griselda and told her I had fancied that the members of her family were gentlemen, but as I had evidently been mistaken, I could not visit the house till they had left. To this I received no answer until two days had elapsed, when I had a curt note from her as follows:—

Dear Mr. Durtcher,—After carefully considering your remarks about my family, I have come to the conclusion that you desire to be released from our engagement. This being the case, I am

happy to tell you that I willingly release you, for I could never marry a man who sat down and squashed a guinea pig. The sooner you leave this neighbourhood the less annoyance you will cause me, for I am already an object of ridicule for ever having become engaged to a man who could do such a thing.

Yours truly,

Griselda.

After reading the above, I determined to leave at once, so packed up accordingly and drove to the station. Just as the train came in, a telegram was handed to me. I opened it in haste, thinking she had relented, but read “the guinea pig is avenged.”

Moral—When engaged, be careful not to sit down on a guinea pig.

FOOTBALL.

On returning to School at the commencement of the term, the Captain found that he had a hard task before him, in filling up the vacancies in the Eleven, caused by the departure of no less than six who played regularly in the team last year. These were P. H. Morland, (Captain), H. E. Mallam and N. A. Saunders, forwards, H. G. Veysey, half-back, W. Russwurm, back, and A. P. Blandy, goal keeper.

In the place of the forwards, promising players have been found in H. Lovett, A. H. Batten and G. Brown, who with the brothers Holmes, make a very fair set of forwards, although lacking the size and strength of their pre-

decessors. Veysey's place has been filled by A. W. Morland, who is a hard working player, and very keen on the game. The absence of Russwurm is most of all missed, there being no one to take his place who has ever played back before this term: and here has been substituted H. Shopland, who, though he does his level best, yet is too small and slow to occupy the post with any very great success: we think however he will greatly improve. The remaining gap left in goal has been filled up by Sam Forster, who has the advantages of being big and heavy, and at the same time cool and active. The team as a whole, though by no means a strong one, nevertheless plays together far more than any at the School has of late years, and great praise is due to its members for their play, which gave them their victory over St. John's School and Newbury Grammar School, and also for its plucky uphill game against Magdalen School, when all played remarkably well together, and in a manner which might be imitated in the future with great advantage.

Below is a list of the chief matches with the dates and results.

On Saturday, October 8th, was played the first match of the season against Abingdon Second XI, on the School Ground. At first the School looked like winning, but in the second half T. Skurray for the Town did the work of three or four, and the home team lost by 2 goals to 3.

Wednesday, October 12th. The School Second XI met the Abingdon Juniors on the home ground, and a fast game was played.

The Visitors were considerably heavier and played a rough game, but the science of the School XI was too much for them, and the School won a well deserved game by 6 goals to 2. Batten, Lovett (2) and P. Holmes (3) were the scorers for the home side.

Saturday, October 15th. The School XI played St. John's School on the home ground. The School were the first to score, and at half time the game stood one goal all. On resuming, the Visitors quickly scored, thus getting the lead, but the School then played up hard, and in the end won by 3 to 2. The School played well as a whole, and Shepherd's play at half back was chiefly noticeable. P. and W. Holmes scored for the School.

Wednesday, October 19th. For this date a Match was arranged against "Oxford High School," and the Visitors turned up with 4 masters and a few friends and old boys to strengthen their team. The High School experienced exceptionally good luck and were inclined to be rough, which helped them to win an uninteresting game by 2 to nil.

Saturday, October 22nd. Another Home Match: this time against Magdalen School, Oxford. The Visitors brought a strong team, and the Match was certainly one of the best School Matches seen here for a long time. The Magdalen eleven had some good luck in the first half and scored 4 goals, but in the second half the home team played up magnificently, and the game ended in 5 goals to nil.

Wednesday, October 26th. We visited St. John's School, Oxford, to play the return Match. A most feeble game was played on a disused plough field, which was dangerous to say the least of it. The Oxford team seemed quite used to ridge and furrow and won by 7 to 1.

Saturday, October 29th. Return Match against Abingdon second XI, (with Skurray). The School on the whole did not play well, with the exception of Mr. Paul, Batten and Shepherd, and lost by 6 to nil. In this match Mr. Cowell had the misfortune to break a rib, and had therefore to retire before the match was over.

Wednesday, November 2nd. A strong team from St. Catherine's, Oxford, visited us and beat us by 9 to nil. The play of the School at the start was decidedly bad, but after half time they pulled themselves together and made a stout resistance. In this match Lovett played well all through, and at times P. Holmes was as good as we have ever seen him.

Wednesday, November 9th. Our opponents on this day were Pembroke College, Oxford, and though they were considerably stronger, yet we gave them a good game and made them play hard to win. The best on the School side were, W. Holmes, Shepherd, Lovett, Forster and Anwyl, all of whom worked hard. The rest of the team were by no means bad.

Saturday, November 12th. The return Match between the School Second XI and the Abingdon Juniors; in which the Abingdon team won an even game by 2 goals to 1.

Thursday, November 24th. An extra half holiday was granted on this day at the request of the newly elected Mayor, Edward Morland, Esq., an old boy of this School. Mr. Cowell got together a scratch XI against us, and a good game ended in 1 goal all.

Wednesday, November 30th. Newbury School drove over to play us on our ground. The home team played remarkably well all through the match, and showed a great improvement in their combination. The Visitors'

defence was rather weak, and we won by 6 goals to nil, a victory of which the members of the team are justly proud.

Saturday, December 3rd. We went to Oxford for the return Match against Magdalen School. Our play was far below its usual form, and the whole team seemed utterly lost. Lovett and P. Holmes played fairly well at the beginning but afterwards fell off. Our opponents on the other hand, had improved since they visited us, and won by 7 goals to nil.

Saturday, December 10th. The Annual Match against the Old Abingdonians. The Old Boys, captained by P. H. Morland, brought one short, and Mr. Cowell played as substitute in goal. The Present team started well but soon fell off and lost heart, and finally lost by 7 goals to 2. P. and W. Holmes scored for the Present, and for the Past, H. E. Mallam played a brilliant game at half back.

Besides the above, several scratch games were played, and three times the Boarders played the Day Boys and were beaten twice, but the matches were very even on each occasion.

Below is a list of the Eleven with their characters.

CHARACTERS OF THE ELEVEN.

S. Forster (goal). A good player and never loses his head. Should use his hands more and not trust so much to kicking.

*H. W. Anwyl (back). A splendid back. Seldom makes a mistake, and makes good use of his weight and pace. Is inclined to lose heart however when beaten, but still plays up hard.

H. Shopland (back). A steady player, but lacks pace. Is frequently inclined to hesitate in tackling, but will soon get over it.

*N. P. Shepherd (half back). Has shown great improvement on his fine form of last year. A remarkably good tackler and keeps up his spirit in any game.

*W. T. Morland (half back), Captain. Is by far the best half back in the XI. Kicks neatly and is a fine tackler, and is especially brilliant in a losing game.

A. W. Morland (half back). Plays a good game and well deserves his place. His kicking is neat and effective, and his defensive powers are good.

*W. O. Holmes (centre). Has made a marked improvement on last year's form. Keeps his place, but his shooting is weak.

*P. A. Holmes (left wing). Has hardly improved as much as he promised to last year, but is however a most useful forward, and plays well with his partner.

H. Lovett (left wing). Perhaps the most promising forward in the XI. Quick and tricky in his passing, and never seeming to be out of his place.

A. H. Batten (right wing). Has greatly improved since the beginning of the season. Is fast and makes good use of his pace, but he does not centre soon enough.

G. Brown (right wing). A plucky player with a good idea of the game. Promises to make a good forward or half back.

*Played in last year's XI.

A REMINISCENCE.

As to the exact year of the occurrence I am referring to, I am not certain, it was, however, in the sixties of the present century.

The old Grammar School was then experiencing a "full term," and the

sleeping accommodation was so taxed, that the Head-Master asked me to spare him a large bed-room in my house, that three or four of the young gentlemen who were amongst his boarders, could sleep in. He felt, he said, he could leave them in my charge with confidence. My house was close to the school, and overlooked the old play ground. The boys came in regularly each evening, after supper had been partaken of and evening prayer attended, and I had no trouble with them, "all going merry as a marriage bell."

Soon after six in the morning they used to bestir themselves for early school, and I would not see them again till the evening, as they had their meals in the dining hall.

* * * * *

It was a beautiful clear fresh morning in early summer when I was roused from my slumbers by a loud knocking at my front door and on going down stairs and opening the same, I was confronted by the Head Master, who, with anxious face, asked me if "my boys" were all safe. I said I believed so, and at once proceeded with him to their bed-rooms. My birds were startled at this early visit but answered when the muster-roll was called, and then I learnt from the Master that three or four were missing from the school and had undoubtedly run away. Steps were at once taken to capture the delinquents, and as it was deemed not unlikely they would make for their homes in the direction of Didcot and Blewbury this track was followed up, and so successfully, that it was not many hours

since the alarm of their disappearance was sounded, before the young escapades were overtaken, brought back and lodged within the walls of the old school.

The splendid character of their Head-Master, the late Rev. Dr. Strange, could not be better exemplified than in the following brief announcement, written in pencil and sent to me soon after the return of the captives, the manuscript of which I still preserve and prize :—

“Dear John,—The fugitives are recovered, and very glad they are to be in the beds they foolishly left, having a nice warm breakfast. All that I can gather is—“they did it for a lark!” A very fatal one, I fear.

Your affectionate Uncle,

W. A. S.

It is superfluous to add that severe punishment, if not expulsion, followed this foolish act of boyhood, but we may rest assured from the kindly nature of the above letter that mercy was tempered with justice, and the offence dealt with as lightly as consistent with the high discipline of the school.

Since this event happened the culprits have grown to manhood, and the “good old Doctor” has been called to his eternal rest.

In the words of one of his brightest scholars ;—

“Well done.” That highest word of praise,

Perhaps by this hath reached thy ear,
It was well done to spend thy days,

In teaching youth its God to fear,
And love.”

Softly to fashion boyhood's mind,
To grasp the right and spurn the
wrong ;
Is a high task ; no whit behind,
Aught here, and sure of a glad song
“Above.”
J. G. D.

Littlemore,

Nov. 28th, 1892.

THE CANON'S KNELL.

BY ABEL MORE.

The Rev. Canon Deverell, B.D., sat alone in his study on Christmas Eve. Open books and MS. remained on the table. The Canon had just completed the preparation of the morrow's sermon. The congregation of St. Martin's would look for a stirring and masterly discourse on the great feast-day ; for the Canon was a noted preacher. Indeed there was that about the personality and manner of the man which invited, and even compelled, attention ; and attention almost invariably turned to curiosity and wonder. The Canon was an interesting, but an inscrutable man. There were lines upon that handsome face which spoke of hidden thoughts and emotions, crusted over and repressed in the common actions and conversation of the outer life. Often would a passing look, or a sudden turn of speech, seem to indicate some deep-rooted inner perturbation, some great grief past, or some present mental struggle. To the vulgar fancy of the world this was a man with a mystery about him.

What this mystery was the people of

Alchester, even the busiest gossips, had never even guessed. The parishioners of St. Martin's knew their Vicar no better to-day than they did a week after he had come among them, fifteen years ago. He had come quite a stranger from a distant place; he had worked among them, and worked well. Many a troubled heart, many a sorrowful sinner, had been comforted by some gentle, serious word; many a weak vessel had been stayed on the verge of some dangerous act or determination, by words which came with all the more force from a speaker who seemed to know the very hearts of men, their weaknesses, their temptations, and their trials.

And now John Deverell sat musing by his fireside alone. Alone? Yes, in a sense, alone. But alone with his thoughts! Grim, undefined spectres haunted this lonely man. Ghosts of the Past flitted through his brain; faded away into the darkness of oblivion, only to return again with a suddenness that made them all the more terrible. Terrible they were, because they were incomprehensible. Unknown and yet familiar. John Deverell was a haunted man! Haunted by spectres that he could not combat, could not lay, because they never formed themselves into such definite shapes that he could recognise their nature and their origin; and yet they always were there. No wonder indeed, that the people of Alchester could not fathom the inmost nature of Canon Deverell, Vicar of St. Martin's, and could not discover his history. Canon Deverell *did not know himself*. His thoughts were

always turning to his past. And yet he could not formulate the terrors which, emerging from the misty vistas of that past, made him a melancholy, a haunted man. He remembered himself years ago. He remembered too other personalities, whose lives were interwoven with his own. He had a brother, younger by two years than himself, whom he loved with a real brother's love. Philip's welfare and Philip's prospects had occupied his thoughts, had engaged his energies, as much as his own. John Deverell had loved Philip, his brother, better than any being on the earth, until a higher form of love—not deeper perhaps—had come into his heart. The Canon remembered how he, young, energetic, and ardent in those days, had come to love Edith; how his love for her had grown until it shaped his whole soul. Not that this new love had slain the older fraternal one. Side by side the two loves grew and flourished in his heart. And then one day he ventured to speak to his well-beloved. And his glad confidence in a few moments was shattered. She told him that she esteemed him, nay loved him, loved him as a brother. Then all was revealed. Edith loved Philip, and had plighted her troth to him. And then John Deverell had passed through one of those great all-hazardous mental struggles which imaginative minds well might think and speak of as combats with the Devil. He came out of the fight as victor, resolved upon a life of loving self-sacrifice, illumined by the pure love of true brotherhood.

These were the prominent features of one era of his life that John Deverell remembered, though dimly and without the sharper delineations of circumstances. For soon after the great crisis, a year or two before he came to Alchester, he had been ill, nigh to death, under an attack of brain fever, brought on, they said, by overwork. And when at last he was convalescent, friends told him, with solemn faces, how both Philip and Edith were no more; how they had been drowned while seeking pleasure on the river, the very evening on which he himself had been prostrated by fever. Well might this great grief affect the man's whole life. And yet it was not only this memory that made him the haunted man he was. A large place indeed in the memories of the past was filled by this great bereavement. He even, in wild fancy, seemed to see, most vividly, the upset boat, the two forms struggling in the water; he even seemed, as in a dream, *to be there himself*, though all was like some past, but awful nightmare. But for the past fifteen years other spectral fancies had crowded through John Deverell's mind. And yet he could not account for them. Why this undefined terror of some past evil, about again to reveal itself? Why this weighty feeling of unreasonable remorse? Ever was the Canon pursued by a darkling unshaped notion of past sin and crime, and a presentiment of coming retribution.

As he sat by his study fire this Christmas-Eve, the memory of that accident on the river was very present to his mind.

So too was that grimmer, deadlier feeling of remorse. Gradually the former fancy took more real shape in his mind's eye than ever it had done before. More and more perturbed too was his mind. The harrowing workings of his brain went on and on, like some advancing torrent. And then—he saw! Saw the past, not dimly as before, but clearly as some present scene, with every detail and circumstance.

He himself was walking on the river-bank, saw the boat overturned, dragged the weaker and lovelier form to the bank. Then suddenly some madness seized him, a madness of jealousy hitherto unknown. He saw in the water one whom he loved indeed, but one who had deprived him of the highest bliss of another love. And the love for the brother turned to hate of the rival. And while feigning to help him out with a boat-hook, he had held him down, already exhausted as he was, and thrust him into the watery grave. Then Edith, thinking her lover had perished in spite of all a brother's aid could do, with one wild shriek had thrown herself anew into the black depths, and sunk to rise no more.

All this the Canon saw again, and at length knew all. Knew that he was a murderer! Knew, too, that he was mad! Mad, mad had he been with the sudden phrensy of jealousy; and, though seemingly recovering from the raging fever that followed, mad he had been ever since. Maddier than ever was he now; for his disordered brain told him that his soul was lost, condemned; that the fiends of Hell were pursuing him, soon to catch

him as their lawful prey. With wild look and reeling gait he rushed from the room, out of the house, while shrieking hordes of devils seemed to run and fly at his heels. Not knowing where he rushed, by force of habit he crossed the garden, passed through the churchyard, and entered the church.

* * * * *

The church-clock chimed the hour of midnight, heralding the Christmas morn. Then weirdly through the frosty night was heard the triple tolling as of a passing bell.

The Sexton entering the church in the morning twilight, climbed to the belfry, and there was rooted for a moment in horror to the spot. Hanging by one of the bell-ropes was a ghastly, black form—a human body. With his own hand Canon Deverell had knotted the noose of death, and by the very act of self-destruction had tolled his own knell.

HOW HIGGINS SPENT HIS XMAS.

Attend all ye people who wish to hear,
How I spent Christmas the other year;
There was snow as well as a good hard frost,
And I could not get home at any cost.

What was I to do all forlorn?
Standing there on the cold platform;
Where to sleep that chilly night,
Where should I choose my resting site?

Blankly I gazed both before and behind,
Till I found the Station-Master kind;
Says I to him "Can you give me a bed,

Or else I shall sleep with the sky over head."

Says he to me "if you sleep here,
For this nice bed you'll pay full dear."
Says I to him, "I have no cash,"
"So twixt us two there was a smash."

MORAL.

If you travel at Christmas or just before,
Be bound you'll sleep on the station floor;

And in the morning when you rise,
You won't digest the hot mince pies.

PICK-ME-UP.

ABINGDON OLD LOCK.

It is not perhaps generally known, that, in the olden days, the stream which leaves the Thames immediately above the "Lasher," to rejoin the river at the upper end of Culham Reach, was for long years the navigable water-way. In Saxon times (and even down to the early part of the present century) the ever-growing shallowness of the river about Abingdon seems to have given great trouble to the navigation, until during the sway of Abbot Ordric, who ruled the Abbey from A.D. 1052 to A.D. 1056, "the channel past the town became so blocked that boats could scarcely pass as far as Oxford; and at the joint prayer of the burgesses of London and Oxford, the Abbot dug a new channel through the meadow to the south of his church." Long before the conquest, London and Oxford were connected by a profitable river trade, and as time went on, probably each town established its guilds of

"bargemen" or boatmen." Hence, probably, the joint petition of the burgesses to Abbot Ordric, who in taking steps to improve the navigation, no doubt foresaw a satisfactory reward in the shape of tolls. But it was a public-spirited work, and says something for the usefulness of Monasteries in those early days. It seems likely that the "new channel" really only rendered navigable the existing Eastern stream, for in the Abbey's first Charter (granted A.D. 699, by Ina, King of Wessex, who first robbed, and then, repenting, greatly enriched the monks) occurs the following:—

"Insuper et de orientali parte fluminis Tamisiæ xx. cassatos quos mihi Cuthredus regulus, et Merciorum rex Ethelredus, necnon et Ina rex Saxorum tradiderunt, adjiciam x. quoque cassatos secus vadum Bestleford*, et c. in Bradenfeld ubi monasterium erexi, quos Ina et Cenred simul dederunt, pariter tribui qui faciunt simul cclxiii. cassatos."

Here we have a distinct reference to the Eastern branch, which is directly south of the Abbey site, so that we do not think we can be far wrong in identifying this branch as the place where the Abbot dug the new channel.

A few yards from where the stream leaves, almost at right angles, the main river, we come upon the old lock. It must be well-known to many Abingdonians; but perhaps few oarsmen think of turning out of the river into the quiet stream.

We have not been able to find any record when the lock was built; but it

is still a substantial structure, solidly made of stone. The gates, of course, are gone, the river being kept to a navigable level by a strong brick dam built across the lower end.

Apart from the loss of gates, the old lock seems in as good condition as on the day when it was abandoned, one hundred and two years ago; and its level sides present a marked contrast to some of the modern timber-lined locks of the upper navigation. Through this stream the traffic of the river appears to have passed for seven centuries, but, in the end, the same cause that originally operated to prevent the traffic from passing Abingdon town, rendered nugatory the Abbot's work. The water-way shallowed. At its best the channel was very narrow, and the difficulty was accentuated by the ever-increasing traffic. The lock, however, continued to be used, until in the penultimate decade of the last century, matters came to a crisis, and the Thames Navigation Commissioners—the predecessors of the Thames Conservancy—decided to build a new lock by the Abbey stream (since officially known as the "Abbey Lock"). This lock was completed in 1790, and on 20th October of that year the Commissioners directed the navigation through the old lock to be "stopped up." Thus the narrow stream where the traffic of the river had ebbed and flowed for so many generations, reverted to the quiet peaceful aspect it bore when the Abbey was first built in the meadow to the east of "Abbandun."

The old lock is a pleasant spot to while away a few dreamy hours—

"When Thames in summer wreaths is drest."

The creak of the windlass, the hoarse shouts of bargemen, and the rush of waters through the sluices are never likely again to disturb the genius of the place. On the placid surface float the leaves of the water-lily; there is a stretch of bright landscape around, and quiet shade close by; and the stillness is only broken by the lazy drip of the stream over the dam.

J. H. CROFTS.

* Now Besselsleigh, about 3 miles from Abingdon.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the Abingdonian.

Dear Sir,

Allow me to reply briefly through your columns, to the letter of "A vexed Parent," which appeared in your last issue.

To begin with, he mentions the length of School Holidays. Now, in the opinion of the boys themselves, which is undoubtedly the best opinion on such matters, School Holidays are not nearly long enough; but no doubt it comforts many boys to think that in all probability, future generations of Schoolmasters will see their way to greatly reducing the length of the different terms.

Next, in reference to lightness of work, "A vexed Parent" suggests that the school hours should be lengthened and more work given for preparation. Of this there is no fear since, obviously, Masters would never consent to an arrangement which would deprive them of a great part of that ease which they now enjoy. Again, there is the health of the boys to be considered, and I am of opinion, (an opinion shared by all the boys of this School, as of every other), that afternoon School should be altogether abolished, and Prepara-

tion greatly decreased. By this arrangement much more time could be spent by Masters and Boys alike, in recruiting their weary minds and bodies with healthy exercises, such as Football and Cricket.

Lastly, with regard to Punishment, it may please "A vexed Parent" to know that the view commonly held now is, that Boys work far better without punishment, except (of course) a few hardened characters; but then, why should the many suffer for the sins of the few? Moreover, punishment by lines and similar impositions spoil a boy's handwriting, and unfit him for many of the occupations he might otherwise have chosen. The cane, too, is much more useful when kept locked up in a cupboard.

Apologising for so greatly intruding on your valuable space,

I am, etc.,

ONE OF THE MANY.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF THE ABINGDONIAN.

At a Meeting holden on November 29th, 1892, it was proposed to bring out a Christmas Number of the "Abingdonian." In consequence of this, Mr. Prowder resigned the office of Chairman, and also his seat on the Committee. Other rules were proposed and carried for the better management of the paper. The following members were also elected on the Committee, P. Holmes and H. Anwyl.

At a Meeting holden on December 1st, 1892, Mr. Paul was elected Chairman.

And at a Meeting holden on December 3rd, 1892, H. Morland was elected to fill the vacant place on the Committee.

The following form the Committee:

Mr. Paul, Chairman. W. Holmes, Secretary.
W. Morland, Treasurer.

Mr. Cowell. H. Anwyl. P. Holmes.
H. Morland.

OXFORD LETTER.

Oxford, December 8th.

Dear Mr. Editor,—

An Oxford letter to the Abingdonian must, I am afraid, contain much that is no news to most of its readers, as they live, as it were, in sight of all that is going on here.

We have to welcome several old boys who have come up this term. Saunders (Pembroke), Morland (St. John's), Mallam (Hertford), Hayden (St. Catherine's), and lastly Prowse (Pembroke), who was at the school in Dr. Strange's time, but who, since then, has been through St. Thomas's Hospital, and now intends to get an Oxford degree.

There has been the usual amount of "tubbing" going on down at the river this term, and during the last two or three weeks torpids have been out practising for the races next term. The coxwainless fours were won by Christchurch, after a grand race with Magdalen. The winners celebrated their victory in the evening by a bon-fire, the fuel for which cost nearly £100!

The trial Eights race was rowed at Moulsham last Saturday, Poole's boat winning by $\frac{3}{4}$ of a length.

The 'Varsity Rugby teams does not seem to be so good as last year: but still on several occasions they have shown themselves capable of playing fairly well together.

The Association match does not come off till next term, but so far our prospects look encouraging.

In the College Cup ties, the result of the semi-final between New and Magdalen has practically decided the winners of the cup. The match was played last week, and ended in a draw; but in the second trial last Friday Magdalen won decisively by 4 to 0. The final

between Magdalen and Wadham will be played off next term.

I must not forget to congratulate Morland on his getting 2nd in the Freshmen's Hurdles; and winning a lot in his College sports.

We have had Mr. Gladstone down here this term lecturing on Mediæval Universities. Over 1000 Undergraduates tried to get in to the upper gallery in the Sheldonian (which was the only space allotted to them), the consequence being that many of those who were successful in the scrimmage outside, only got in to come out again to get their wounds dressed, or change their coats.

Mr. Moody has been down to look after us; but where was Mr. Sankey?

We have seen Mr. A. B. Morland in a B.A. gown.

Yours,
Six.

OBITUARY.

We announce with regret the death of Charles Graham, an Old Abingdonian. We deeply sympathise and condole with the family in their grief.

CHARLES GRAHAM,
AGED 40,

DIED AT SPRINGFIELD, ABINGDON,
Nov. 28TH, 1892.

ST. JOHN GEORGE LYSAGHT,
AGED 32,

DIED AT SPRINGFORT, BRISTOL,
NOVEMBER 15TH, 1892.

THE ABINGDONIAN.

VOL. I. No. 8 (Nov., 1892.)

BALANCE SHEET.

	£	s.	d.
Copies and back numbers sold...	1	8	1
Share of Annual Subscriptions (Nos. 8 to 11) received and due (the remainder being carried forward to future numbers)		13	6½
	2	1	7½

	£	s.	d.
Paid deficit on No. 7	1	4	6
Minute Books, Wrappers, and sundries		4	8
Balance	12	5	$\frac{1}{2}$
	2	1	$7\frac{1}{2}$

						£	s.	d.
Due to Baylis and Co. for Printing No. 8	...	...	...	...	...	2	8	0
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					Deficiency	...	1	15 6½

