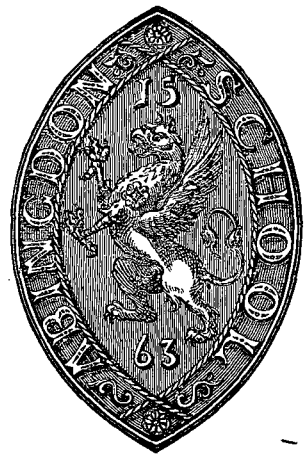
Misericordias Domini  in aeternum cantabo.

THE ABINGDONIAN.

No. 13. Vol. 1. DECEMBER, 1893. Price 1s.

Contents.

EDITORIAL.

LAST year it was resolved in imitation of other papers to issue a Christmas Number. The venture proved eminently successful, more especially from a financial point of view. This has encouraged us to follow the example set, and repeat the experiment of issuing a second Christmas Number. For we, like many other mortal men, are in want of money; in fact it might be argued that man differs from other animals, not so much as being a cooking animal or a clothing animal, but as being a spending animal, and the more he indulges his natural bent in this direction, the nearer he approaches the ideal man. We, as far as desire goes, have approached very closely to the ideal, but in means of gratifying that desire are far removed from it. When we have the means, the first use we shall make of it will be to re-publish the first number of the Abingdonian, which is now out of print, and has quite a fictitious value. We have had several applications for a copy; and if there are any others among our subscribers who would like to have one we should be much obliged if they would

send us their names. We here take the opportunity to express our hearty thanks to all those who have assisted us by contributing to the pages of the Magazine.

Our thanks are also due to the Town Council for the grant of £27 which they have made us from the Technical Education Fund in aid of Science Education at the School. We do not wish to engage in the fierce political struggle, which raged for at least nine days; indeed our mind when we look back on that furious fight, is filled with a bewilderment not unlike that to which old Kaspar gives such naive expression, when he says,

"But what they killed each other for
I cannot well make out."

But whatever the reasons for the struggle we shall be able at any rate, when in the Science Room, to feel the benefits of the victory.

A difficulty has arisen with respect to the pagination of the Abingdonian. The first number issued this year was marked Vol. II, No. 1, and our last issue Vol. II, No 3. In the first volume there were ten numbers, and to make confusion worse confounded, the issue which should have been numbered Vol. I, No. 7, was by an oversight numbered Vol. II, No. 1. Mr. W. H. Richardson, who has kindly consented to index the first volume as soon as a sufficient number have been issued to make the work worth the trouble, says as things are now the task is quite impossible. We have determined therefore to revert to the old system, and have numbered our present issue as Vol. I, No. 13, p. 163.

We are glad to see that much energy has been displayed in Football, and the team is playing well together. In several matches the forwards have been broken up by the loss of Brown, who got a bad kick at the beginning of the season; and consequently the passing lately has not been so good as in the first few games. The School played well to win the first two matches, against fairly strong teams got up by Mr. Prowde. Against Reading Grammar School, although our opponents won, the School played a hard losing game. Both the matches against St. John's School were easy victories, in one of which, ten goals were scored in the second half. The best School match was that against Magdalen College School, in which we have generally been badly beaten, but this year they only got three goals. In the first Thame match the School did not play as well as usual. The match against Pembroke College ought to have been a draw, but they got one undeserved goal. A very exciting game was witnessed when with the help of masters, we played the Town Second XI, in which we managed to beat them by one goal.

STAMPS AND STAMP COLLECTING.

Most boys at some time or other are smitten more or less severely with the passion for collecting, and in many cases this passion outlasts the days of boy-

hood. It takes many forms, and is practised on very different scales. But the collections of the boy are the same thing in the germ, to use the scientific language which is now so fashionable, which we see in its highest development in the museums and art galleries of the nation, and in the priceless treasures of so many of our great houses. Nor can it be denied that there is a high educational value in many of them, irrespective of the intrinsic worth of the things collected.

Birds' eggs, butterflies, and postage stamps are perhaps the objects which most commonly take the fancy of the young collector. There are of course many others: coins, crests, shells, fossils, botanical specimens, stuffed animals, and the like. The list might be prolonged indefinitely, but the three first-named have kept their place at its head for many generations of schoolboys. There is a spice of adventure in the two first, especially in the collection of birds' eggs, which has gone a long way to making them popular, and the recollection of the difficulties overcome, the risks run, possibly even the scrapes incurred, gives many of the eggs a history of their own, and greatly adds to their value in the eyes of their possessor. It is a very real and keen pleasure to come on the nest of some rare bird, to add to our collection a treasure long coveted, to find, for there is always this danger, that the eggs are neither addled nor too far set to be blown. But the pleasure is all the keener, it is to be feared, if there is a keeper about where the nest lay hid; for the prizes that are found by the birds' nester have often to be secured by a judicious and energetic use of the legs with which nature has provided him. There is certainly a great deal to be said for birds' nesting, and butterfly hunting too, besides the fact that they take us into the country, and make us familiar with some of the most beautiful works of nature. Both these amusements also cultivate the power of quick and accurate observation; they exercise the faculties of the mind as well as the muscles of the body.

The collector of postage stamps cannot boast that his pet hobby enjoys as many recommendations. But a time comes when the discomfort of torn trousers, muddy boots, and wet feet damps the ardour of the less adventurous; when the excitement of a row with a farmer or a gamekeeper grows less attractive, and conscientious scruples as to the morality of trespassing disturb the mind. The genuine collector never loses his interest in eggs or butterflies, but if he has not given away his collection he can only add to it by buying. Then he loses his advantages over the stamp collector, and besides, there are no new issues of eggs or butterflies coming out year after year to rouse his flagging zeal. But a keen collector of postage stamps is as much a collector as ever; his collection becomes more valuable every year; new points of interest are continually discovering themselves, and as the scrutiny of old issues is now continually becoming more minute, there is

always the possibility of a specimen which looks likes an ordinary one proving to be a rarity. This is how an amusement, which was formerly thought only fit for schoolboys, has almost grown into a science, until societies have been formed for its study in every country in the world, and journals entirely devoted to it are being published in every language under the sun, except those of the savages.

To begin with, it has the first scientific requisite, a long name. The title Philately, was especially invented for it by a M. Herpin, of Paris, about 30 years ago. It is Greek like all other scientific words, and the second part of it, ateleia, denotes exemption from tax, the idea being that a postage label or impressed stamp shows that the letter is entitled to pass postage free. A philatelist therefore really means a person who is fond of exemption from taxation, and the name must strike a sympathetic chord in every breast. It was adopted with alacrity into English, Italian, Spanish, Russian, in fact into every language which has a recognised standing of its own. Even Mexico has its El Monitor Filatelico no less than Germany its Der Philatelist to chronicle events of interest to the initiated.

It is probable that the exhibition at the Guildhall in 1890, to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of Penny Postage, did a great deal to popularize this pursuit. For one thing it lent an air of fashion to stamp collecting, by disclosing the fact that the Duke of Edinburgh and the Duke of York are collectors. But the exhibition itself would have been impossible had not collecting become a very different thing from what it was in the days when it stood on a level with the collection of crests or Christmas cards. It became generally known about that time that a Member of Parliament, Mr. Tapling, was possessed of a collection valued at £150,000, which has now, since his death, become the property of the British Museum, and one of the Paris Rothschilds is believed to possess a still more valuable one. Till then, very few people had an idea of the market value of a rare stamp. And indeed the price of these treasures has gone up with leaps and bounds. A few years ago it was a debateable question whether the value of a stamp would ever reach two figures; now the question is will it ever reach four figures? Soon after the Guildhall Exhibition, a rare old British Guiana fetched £50 at a public auction. Two years since, Mr. Palmer, in the Strand, sold an old American stamp for £200 and only two months ago the manager of the leading firm of dealers, Stanley Gibbons, Limited,* hearing of the existence of two fine old Mauritius stamps in a collection at Bordeaux, made a special journey to that place to inspect them, and purchased the two for £680, cash down. This is the record price up to the present time, but it is not likely to remain so when Rothschilds and Royalties are numbered in the ranks of the Stamp Collector.

* This firm have just received a Gold Medal at the Chicago World's Fair for their exhibition of rare stamps.

Schoolboy collectors are not likely to find such valuable specimens as these in their collections, but they often have stamps given them from old letters, and these are sometimes of considerable value. One of the chief objects of this article is to give young collectors a few hints which may prevent them from parting with valuable specimens, or from destroying the value of any rare stamp which they may possess. And the first hint is—never cut or trim a stamp. An envelope stamp cut square from the envelope, leaving a margin of about a quarter of an inch of paper round the stamp, is worth four times as much as the same stamp trimmed close, as boys love to trim them. The same caution is even more necessary with adhesive stamps, for the edge of these stamps is often the only clue by which the issue can be determined. For instance, the 6 cents British Guiana of 1863 is found variously perforated with 10, 12, and 15 holes, and the varieties are priced respectively at 2s. 6d., 3s. 6d., and 20s. If the perforations have been trimmed away the stamp may perhaps fetch sixpence. The 4d. Ceylon imperforate cannot be bought under £8; the same stamp issued four year later with perforations costs £1, while an issue of three years later still, with a different watermark, can be obtained for half-a-crown. The boy collector of 30 years ago, if he was fortunate enough to possess these three stamps, probably looked upon them as duplicates, and more likely than not he kept the least valuable because its colour was the brightest, destroyed what value it had by trimming it—for it is octagonal in shape—and exchanged the others for stamps which he had not got, of the value of about twopence apiece. A second caution, scarcely less important, is always to remove the paper at the back of the stamp either by cold water or by pressing the stamp on damp blotting paper, and then to look for the watermark. Stamps are often issued in the same colour and design, but with different watermarks. Most of our colonial stamps had originally a star watermark; later issues have a crown and the letters C.C., while the watermark of most of the present issues is a crown and C.A. The 1d. Jamaica blue, with a crown and C.C., is a very common stamp, and is priced at 2d., but the 1d. blue with a crown and C.A., though issued as late as 1885, costs 15d., and will probably, in ten years time, be procured with difficulty for 5s. Varieties in watermarks should always be noted and preserved. Another caution which it will be well to bear in mind is this. Always carefully compare what you think to be a duplicate with the stamp you already possess before you part with it. Most boys look only at the colour and the design, and don't trouble about the details. Not only the perforations and the watermark should be observed, but also the lettering. At a hasty glance, the 25 centimes French of 1852, and the 20 and 25 centimes of 1853, look just alike. The design is the same; they are all blue of nearly the same shade; they are all imperforate;

they have no watermark. Their present prices are 4d., 1d., and 2s. respectively. But the earlier stamp has the inscription Repub. Franc., while the two last are lettered Empire Franc., and the figures which denote the value, though small, are quite distinct. Again the 20 and 25 centimes stamps of 1870, with the head of Liberty, are identical except for the figure value; and the rarer, which is worth a shilling, has certainly been often exchanged or given away in mistake for the 25 cents, which is hardly worth a penny. Stamps, too, are occasionally printed by mistake in the wrong colour, and these errors are very valuable. A few sheets of the shilling Swan River of 1865-1880 were printed by error in bistre, the colour of the penny stamp of the same issue, and specimens of this error are worth more pounds than the others are worth pence. Indeed only two are known to be in existence, and one of these was found by a dealer in a small collection which he purchased from a young collector, who certainly had no idea of the value of what he was parting with. It is not impossible that there may be others, still undiscovered, in the hands of other boy collectors. Attention should be directed also to the way in which the stamps are put into collection. Gum should never be used. Many stamps are irretrievably damaged in process of removal. Part of the stamps gets left behind, or the watermarks lost, or the colour spoiled. They should be fastened in by labels, one end of which is stuck to the stamp, the other to the book. If they have been gummed or pasted in, they should be removed by putting a damp sheet of blotting paper at the back of the page, closing the book for a few minutes, and then slipping a penknife under the stamp, when the paper is sufficiently moistened to allow it to come off without tearing. Only one side of the page should have stamps on it.

Beyond the common pleasure of collecting, the stamps themselves often repay study. Many of them are almost works of art, of admirable finish. The old 5s. New South Wales is beautifully engraved; and the shading of colours and execution of many new issues, of Liberia for example, is very fine. The designs, too, of many stamps, are lessons in history and biography. The changes of Government in France may be traced in the successive issues of postage stamps. The United States has on her stamps the heads of many of her greatest men—Washington, Franklin, Adams, Jackson; more lately, Lincoln, Grant, Sherman, Garfield, men whose names summarize the history of the States. The last, or Columbus issue, is very interesting. The stamps are little pictures, filled with scenes in the life of the great discoverer. Some of them will become costly, but they have been so much advertised that most of them will not be very rare for some time to come. Stamp collecting also brings home to us the greatness of the British Empire. The Queen's head is to be found on the stamps of more than 60 stamp issuing countries—some of them colonies of which the names

REV. RICHARD GRAVES, M.A.

Rector of Claverton.

even are unknown to the average man; for most people would be a little puzzled if asked to describe off hand the exact situation of Labuan, Lagos, the Seychelles, Montserrat, or the Oil Rivers Protectorate. Some of the French Colonies—Obock for example and Nossi be are still more bewildering. The French have lately been multiplying their colonial issues in a truly alarming way, partly to flatter the national vanity by persuading themselves that they have a great Colonial Empire, partly to help pay expenses out of the pocket of stamp collectors. They do the dealers a good turn, for ten 1 centime stamps can be bought for 1d., and they are rarely sold at less than a penny apiece. Nine hundred per cent is a very respectable profit. The Central American States have utilized the stamp mania to a still greater extent. A certain American engraver, a Mr. Seebeck, has contracted to supply them gratis with a new issue of stamps annually for ten years, on the condition that they hand over to him all stamps unsold at the end of each year. The stamps are pretty ones and well executed, but the whole proceeding is very like a fraud on the collector.

There are many points untouched—notably forgeries—which would interest the few, but this article has already taken up too much space. Enough has been said to show that an amusement cannot be dismissed with contempt which has made way so generally and so rapidly; which has a literature and scores of journals of its own; which deals with objects which are valued in some instances at £300 a specimen, and which last, but not least, has recently been honoured by the Englishman's oracle—the daily paper—with a respectful leader all to itself. When Philistine friends deride, the boy collector can comfort himself with the reflection that he is one of a great company which numbers in its ranks men of every social standing, and of almost every degree of eminence—or the reverse.

OLIM ALUMNI. III.

Rev. RICHARD GRAVES, M.A.

At the foot of an original M.S. Roll of Abingdon School for the year 1732, and at present belonging to Mr. A. E. Preston of Abingdon, are the names of three boys elected at the August "Visitation" in that year, to Scholarships at Pembroke College.

One of these, Richard Graves, chosen to a Scholarship on the Wightwick foundation, was the second son of Richard Graves, Esq., a distinguished antiquary and genealogist, of Mickleton, Glos., by Susanna, his wife, daughter and co-heiress of Thomas Morgan. Richard Graves, grandfather of the antiquary, appears to have been the first of the family who came to Mickleton; he was Reader at Lincoln's Inn, and Receiver-General for Middlesex, and died in 1669, aged 59. His father, also

Richard, lived in London, and dying in 1626, aged 54, was buried at St. Martin's, Ludgate: the three previously recorded generations resided in the West Riding of Yorkshire, and of these the earliest mentioned is John Graves, who lived at Cleckheaton, in the West Riding, in the reign of Edw. IV.

Richard Graves, the subject of this biography, was born at Mickleton, 4th May, 1715, being his father's second son; and was at first educated at home, his tutor being the Rev. Wm. Smith, curate of the parish, with whom he read Hesiod and Homer when but twelve years old. At the age of thirteen, (that is, in 1728 or 1729) he was sent to Abingdon School, which, at that date, (so the writer in the Gentleman's Magazine informs us) was "a public seminary of note," a statement fully confirmed by the School Roll for 1732, for it contains the names of one Peer, two sons of a Peer, and a Baronet. This Roll, as I have already said, shows that he was elected to a Pembroke Scholarship in August, 1732, and he matriculated, with the two other Abingdon scholars chosen at the same time, on the 7th of November in that year, being then 17 years of age. His life at Pembroke is said to be described in his "Life of Shenstone" the poet, who entered at Pembroke earlier in the same year, and eventually became his intimate friend; this work, however, is not to be found in the library of the British Museum, and appears to be very difficult to meet with. Among Graves's other friends while at Oxford, were William Hawkins, afterwards Professor of Poetry, but then an undergraduate of Pembroke; Richard Jago, of University, another embryo poet, and Shenstone's former schoolfellow, and also Blackstone, so distinguished in later years as a judge and legal commentator. It is said that a very early period Graves wrote verses for the magazines,—possibly when at Abingdon—for among his Epigrams I find one "On the accomplished Miss——," which is distinguished as "By a Schoolboy." This poetical tendency was no doubt agreeably stimulated by the similar tastes of his associates, so that, as his apologist declares, "he contracted a violent propensity to rhyming, which by long habit became a kind of chronical disease." He took his B.A. in July 1736, and in the same year was elected to a Fellowship at All Souls, upon which he proceeded to London to study medicine, and attended two courses of Lectures on Anatomy; but his progress in this direction was interrupted by a serious illness, and on his recovery, he returned to Oxford, proceeded to his M.A. degree in 1740, and then took Holy Orders. His first preferment was the donative living of Tissington, in Derbyshire, a place still famous for its annual perpetuation, on Holy Thursday, of the ancient local custom of "well-dressing." On resigning this charge, which he held for 3 years, he made a tour in the North of England, and was afterwards appointed to the curacy of the remote parish of Aldworth, commonly called "Alder," in Berkshire, renowned for the great tombs and effigies of the de la Beches,

which well-nigh fill its little church. Graves was certainly in residence here in 1744, but it so happened that at the time of his coming the parsonage house was out of repair, and he was therefore lodged at the house of Mr. Bartholomew, a local farmer, who resided at Dunworth, or Dumworth, a place within the parish, and in no long time it came to pass that that he fell deeply in love with Lucy, his host's youngest daughter, who is described as "a beautiful but uneducated girl of about 16." His courtship is related at considerable length in vol. II. of the "Spiritual Quixote," under the name of Rivers, and eventually, although he was now nearly 30, he married her, and thereby lost his Fellowship at All Souls, besides offending his relations. He himself, it seems, was not altogether satisfied with the result of his adventure, for about 1748, like the pedantic author of "Sandford and Merton," he sent his wife to London to acquire knowledge and manners, and it is reported that she did both, to the great satisfaction of her husband. During her absence, or at all events in the same year, he was presented to the rectory of Claverton, near Bath; in the following year he was inducted, and came into residence in 1750, and here he continued to reside until his death, although holding concurrently some other preferments, for in 1763 he accepted the vicarage of Kilmersdon, in the same county; and also became chaplain to Hester, Countess of Chatham, *suo jure*, Baroness Chatham, and wife of the first Earl of that name, the celebrated statesman; and in 1793 and for some time afterwards, he held the vicarage of Croscombe, near Shepton Mallet, so that on the whole he was a fair example of a pluralist. In 1767 he purchased the advowson of Claverton, and enlarged the rectory house, into which he then moved, having previously occupied the "great house" at Claverton, where, as well as in his enlarged parsonage, he received pupils during a period of 30 years, a number of these being sons of persons of distinction, and including Ralph Allen Warburton, only son of William Warburton, the learned Bishop of Gloucester, T. R. Malthus, the well-known political economist, and Prince Hoare, the artist and dramatic author. Mindful, no doubt, of the old "Visitation Days" at Abingdon, which some of us still remember so well, he was accustomed, it appears, to compose "panegyrical" pieces for occasional recitation by his pupils, and several of these are in print. His works, chiefly poetical, were numerous, and a list of twenty-two is given in the memoir of him in the Dict. Nat. Biog., the earliest, apparently, being a collection of Epigrams entitled "The Festoon," which was published in 1766, and of which I have a copy. Of his prose works, the most famous, and that indeed by which he is best known, is his "Spiritual Quixote," a "Comic Romance," intended as a satire on the evangelising progresses of the early Methodists. Graves had learnt a good deal about the new sect while at College, for the afterwards celebrated preacher, George Whitfield, was his contemporary at Pembroke, having in fact, matriculat-

ed on the very same day. The band of Methodist students in Oxford was then exciting much attention, and Whitfield, who soon passed into their fellowship, is said to have "rivalled the most ardent in devotion and austerity." Graves clearly distrusted their aims, and what he thought of them may be gathered from some lines on the love of notoriety, which he wrote at All Souls in 1747, just before resigning his Fellowship, and which contain this couplet.—

"E'en Whitfield's saints, whose cant has filled the nation,
Toil more for fame, I trow, than Reformation."

The "Spiritual Quixote" is framed on the model of the immortal romance of Cervantes, the knight-errant in this case being one Mr. Geoffrey Wildgoose, a young country squire, who has become infected with a glowing enthusiasm for the Methodist doctrines and practices, and finds his Sancho Panza in a certain Jerry Tugwell, a cobbler and general smatterer in the village, at whose cottage the meetings of the sect had commonly been held. These two, deserting their homes, and casting themselves loose from local ties and duties, set off on an evangelistic mission, in the course of which they visit Bath, Bristol, Shropshire, and the Midland Counties. The adventures they meet with are often ludicrous, and occasionally, according to our modern notions, a trifle coarse, but they probably reflect not inaccurately the varied experiences of the first Methodists in the prosecution of their itinerant labours. The book was first published in 1772, and ran through a number of editions up to 1808, the copy I have, published anonymously in 1792, being in 3 vols, 12mo, with some illustrations. The original of "Geoffrey Wildgoose" has been identified, among others, with Graves's younger brother, the Rev. Charles Caspar Graves, a demy of Magdalen College from 1736 to 1741, and during part of that time an ardent associate of the young Methodists in Oxford; in December 1740, however, apparently under compulsion, he recanted his Methodistic principles, but according to an entry in Mr. Wesley's Journal, (Vol. I. 376, ed. 1827), Mr. C. C. Graves subsequently met both the Wesleys, John and Charles, at Bristol, on Monday, 20th August, 1742, and under their guidance wrote a letter, thus dated, to the Fellows of Magdalen College, withdrawing his recantation, and he was afterwards (1759-87) rector of Tissington, where, as previously stated, Richard Graves held his first curacy.

The latter, "through his preferments and scholars, gradually acquired considerable means," and he purchased, among other properties, the manor of Combe, in Combe Monckton, Somerset. In person, he is described as being "short and slender," and "and eccentric both in dress and gait, but his features were expressive, and his conversation was marked by a sportive gaiety." In Bath he was well known, and when almost 90 years of age, being then an "amiable, well-read, and lively old man," he was still wont to walk there almost daily with all the briskness and vivacity of youth. Ecclesiastically he was, as might be expected, a zealous churchman, and,

in politics, a Whig, but possessed, withal, of so much tact, that he mixed agreeably in all shades and gradations of society. While at Claverton, he often entertained Shenstone, who repeatedly visited him during the period 1744-63, and in his last illness he was attended by his old pupil Malthus, who was by this time a controversialist rather than a clergyman; nevertheless he administered the Holy Communion to his former master, who expired at Claverton rectory, 23rd November, 1804. His wife predeceased him in 1777, *aet.* 46, and to her memory he erected a monument in the church, with a funereal urn, and a Latin inscription. He left six children, a daughter Anna Maria Lucilla, who died unmarried in 1820, and five sons, four of whom were at Pembroke, and two, Morgan and John, held scholarships there on the Bennet foundation, but whether either was previously at Abingdon, does not at present appear. In a list of pictures at Mickleton Manor House in 1845, there is mention of two portrait groups of the children of Richard Graves the antiquary; one of these, representing three children with cherries, includes a portrait of the subject of this memoir, who would then have been from 10 to 12 years of age, and appears as standing behind his sister Mary. This picture, which has never been engraved, is still at Mickleton House, which is now the property of Sidney Graves Hamilton, Esq., M.A., J.P., and Fellow of Hertford College, Oxford. Graves's portrait was painted or sketched in his later years by Gainsborough, during his stay in Bath, and also by Northcote. The latter portrait is now (so Mr. Hamilton informs me) in the possession of the Rev. John Graves, M.A., J.P., of Bradenham Manor, Bucks, but the present locality of the Gainsborough seems to be unknown. The portrait which accompanies this memoir, has been reproduced for me by the Meisenbach Co., from a mezzotint engraving by J. Scott, after Gainsborough, kindly presented by Mr. Algernon Graves, the eminent printseller of Pall Mall.

The arms of the family are: Gu. an eagle, displ. or: beaked, membered, and ducally crowned arg. within an orle of cross-crosslets of the 2nd.

Dict. Nat. Biog.; Gent. Mag. 1804, pt. ii. pp. 1083, 1165-6; Rev. F. Kilvert's Remains. 1866.8o; Hewetts Hist. of Compton, pp. 96-152; Pedigree by Sir T. Phillipps, Bart., Broadside, 1848. Foster's Alumn. Oxon.

WM. H. RICHARDSON.

CHRISTMAS CHEER.

BY AN O. A.

Not taste my pye! I vow you must;
My daughter Fanny made the crust;
I know tis good; pray make a trial:
Come, Sir, I will have no denial.

* * * * * *

Your Ladyship's extremely kind,
But pray excuse me: I have dined.
And tho' I'm sure your pye is good
(And so is all your Christmas food)
I must refuse—even from *your* hand—
Nor can the logic understand
Why your old neighbour, honest Dick,
Must eat and drink himself quite sick;
Because forsooth! old carols say
That "Christ was born on Christmas Day."
Or, since th' all bounteous will of Heaven

Has to our lives so kindly given
The blessings of another year—
"Bring us another jug of beer."

* * * * * *

But would you then prolong my life?
Oh! lay aside that carving-knife;
Nor tempt me to transgress the rules
Of Stoic and Galenic schools:
Nor let me thus a martyr die
To turkey—chine—and Christmas pye.

RICHARD GRAVES,
(From "Euphrosyne," 1776.)

UNCLE GABRIEL'S RICHES.

BY ABEL MORE.

At the time this story begins, my great-uncle Gabriel was practically a stranger to me. Some years before I remembered having seen him, and passed a few words. That was at my father's funeral, and some surprise had been expressed at his troubling himself to be present; for he had the reputation of being a recluse and a miser. None of my relatives knew much more about him than I did; but he was supposed to be rich, having made money which he did not spend freely, what he did spend being for the most part exchanged for antiquarian treasures—curiosities, plate and jewels. So far as I knew, I was his only surviving near relative, and some people, in my position, would perhaps have endeavoured to keep their relationship before his notice. I, however, prided myself somewhat on my principles, which in a spirit of virtuous self-flattery I considered were different from most people's. I would never go out of my way to court anyone's good graces from mercenary motives. If Uncle Gabriel remembered my existence and our relationship, and chose to benefit me by his will, I would gladly and gratefully accept the benefit; but I preferred that the first advance should be from his side. Perhaps at heart I secretly hoped he would some day remember me. My position as a married man with a small family, having to work hard for my income, though that income was not inadequate, precluded me from despising the chance of a windfall to augment it.

Under these circumstances my interest was fully aroused—not without a mixture of pleasure—when I received one day a vague and brief intimation from my great-uncle. He said that he would like, before he died, to have another friend to talk to, and believing that I, his nephew, was thoroughly worthy of his regard, would be glad if I would visit him shortly for a few days. Such an invitation I considered I could well accept without prejudice to my conscientious principles. Nay, my duty to those dependent on me—so I told myself—forbad me to throw away a chance of honourable advantage; while I owed another duty, if this lonely old man desired my friendship, of doing my best to cheer his closing years. I need not, in fact I would not, demean myself by any covetous insincerity; I would maintain a stern attitude of disinterested respect for the age and kinship of the old gentleman.

My introduction to my strange relative confirmed in part, and in past falsified, the notions I had formed of his habits and character. He lived in a manufacturing town in an unfrequented street. His house was old-fashioned, but in former days would probably have been regarded as a high-class residence. On first entering the massive dingy front-door, I was led to believe that the stories I had heard of Uncle Gabriel's miserly habits were modified rather than exaggerated. There appeared no signs of the house being inhabited. The dust lay undisturbed in the hall; the stairs were uncarpeted, and the corners were filled with rubbish and broken goods. I found, however, that Uncle Gabriel confined his habitation to the upper floor, and here I was surprised with quite a different state of things. The rooms were well, though not newly furnished. There was no extravagance or uselessness of ornament; but on the other hand there was nothing to suggest discomfort or penuriousness, still less the squalor generally associated with a miser's abode. The old gentleman himself was of venerable aspect, with silver hair and well-trimmed whiskers. His attire was plain but tidy. He greeted me courteously, and showed every care I could desire for my comfort. At dinner, which again was far from being as frugal as I had expected, I had fuller opportunities of gauging my host's character. I had heard more than once in former times that Uncle Gabriel was mad; but by degrees I came to the conclusion that such reports were the exaggerations of ignorance. Eccentric he might be. His habits proved that to a certain extent. Moreover, the cast of his features, and a certain keenness in his eye, betokened a man with individuality. But he spoke well, and half-surprised me at times with indications of learning, and with his acquaintance with what went on outside —as I had thought—his secluded existence. He even showed that though mixing hardly at all with his family, he had still kept up some knowledge of their doings. I came to the conclusion that he was a man who was happy without friends, and, except for the fancy of gathering riches which he did not want to spend, was no more mad than his neighbours.

We had finished dinner, and there was a pause in the conversation, when my uncle gave a slight cough, as though preliminary to some especially important remark. "It has no doubt occurred to you, my dear nephew," he began, "that my desire to renew—I may say, to open—my acquaintance with you, was not altogether unconnected with my property, and the desirability of making some disposition of it before I died."

I acknowledged, as in truth I was bound to do, that I was aware that he had property of some extent.

As though anticipating my protestations of disinterestedness, he interrupted me:

"I know you have showed no undue, no unseemly anxiety to make good your

claims upon my natural affection for my own blood; and perhaps that in itself has in some degree influenced me in my present determination. There is no need to beat about the bush, or to conceal from you any longer that I am contemplating leaving my property to you. You are a worthy man as far as I know, and your father in times past was a dutiful nephew to me. Besides, I have no other relative of sufficient proximity to have any claim upon me."

"Dont try to thank me, please," he went on: "I have other things to say; and I want to show you what it is that I intend to leave you. I might have made a will, and said nothing, but I sent for you because I wanted a friendly and sympathetic ear to which I might tell things which I would like to tell before my death."

These last words were somewhat enigmatical to me. But I had little time to think of them, when Uncle Gabriel rose and bid me follow him.

"I am going," he said, "to show you some of my riches. Some plate as you see I have in this room, and some books in my library, but the bulk of my treasures I keep downstairs."

I followed him downstairs through the dismal, deserted hall, into a room on the ground floor.

"This house," he explained, "was once used as an office. Through this inner door are stairs leading to a strong room. Mind how you follow me: this candle gives but scanty light."

The strong room, as I saw it in the dim light, seemed of ample proportions and massively constructed. Along the walls were chests—many of them of valuable workmanship—and some iron safes. Uncle Gabriel produced a bunch of keys, and seemed to know readily to which box each belonged. He displayed to me with a few explanatory remarks, but mostly in silence, a store of quaint and curious valuables, such as suggested some weird fairy tale rather than the effects of a modern collector. Jewels were there, and plate, some antique, some of the rarest foreign workmanship; curiosities too, even books and pictures of various kinds. I was wonderstruck with all I saw, and impressed again with the eccentric nature which prompted a man to store away riches like these away from sight, and beyond his own enjoyment.

Uncle Gabriel himself seemed to feast his eyes on the rich accumulation. In fact he showed excitability akin even to agitation. He looked intently at me, and spoke again:

"Here you see a part of the wealth I purpose to leave you. All this, with some money I have on deposit, and some house property, represents a sum that will make you a man of affluence. But I have yet something more to show you; and I have the story of my fortune to tell."

I was quite unable to conjecture what was to follow. Uncle Gabriel walked to an iron door which appeared to belong to a further safe, or chamber, in the wall.

He turned the key, and paused with his hand upon it.

"I ask you," he said, "to take my wealth when I am gone. But I ask you to take something with it. Riches involve cares always: my riches will be loaded with a responsibility of no ordinary sort. I have my skeleton in a cupboard,—yes, a skeleton indeed. Now listen. Once I had a friend. That was some forty or fifty years ago. I have had no real friend since. Confidence and sympathy we imposed in one another. When his business took him away, as it did for lengthy periods now and then, he entrusted me with the care of anything of value or moment that he left behind. Here in this chamber I kept his property."

"One day it so happened that I was expecting his return from a journey. With new investments in view most of his property was realized, and I had the securities and money here in my keeping. He arrived, bringing with him further wealth, most of it in notes. He was, by repeated strokes of good fortune, a rich man, and all the riches we had at the moment in our hands. He was with me down here, just as you are now, and—*he is here now*!"

I began to think my uncle was not so sane after all. What could he mean?

He soon showed me. With increased agitation he went on:

"The devil came into me. Ah! how often has a sudden temptation ruined a man through his covetousness. I saw the money: I saw, too, my chance of getting it at the cost of a crime. No one but myself knew where my friend was. *No one should*! He was standing at the door of this vault. To push him in, and to lock the door, was as sudden an act as the tempter's prompting. There I left him to starve or suffocate; and there he is!"

He pulled open the door, disclosing to my horrified gaze a grinning skeleton huddled on the floor of the dank, dark, vaulted cupboard.

"Now," exclaimed the agitated old man, "now you know the secret you have to keep. These riches shall be yours, but you must preserve the secret of their history. I have lived not altogether a hermit. Some even I have done good to; and from such I would preserve my memory untarnished."

Where were now my high-minded principles? Here was wealth conferred upon me, as I had thought, without any unbecoming solicitation of mine. Yet if I had hesitated to gain it unworthily, how could I accept it knowing it to be branded with the mark of Cain.

My mind was quickly made up. "Uncle Gabriel," I said, "I cannot accept your bequest. My conscience may perhaps be more sensitive than you anticipated, but I could not enjoy a fortune with the taint of blood-guiltiness upon it. I thank you for what you had intended for me. Your reputation shall be respected by me; no word will I breathe of your miserable secret. But as for the unhallowed riches, they shall go where you will, or where they may."

I left the house next day, hardly having seen my uncle after the scene in

the strong-room. He died a few months after, and by his will his fortune was divided among certain persons with whom indirectly he was concerned. His housekeeper received some benefit; so did his medical man.

Some years later I met and became fairly friendly with the son of this doctor. One day showing me a skull and some bones in his surgery, he told me that he bought them at a sale of some of my uncle's effects. "A strange old man" he remarked, "keeping an old skeleton among more or less valuable curiosities."

"Was the skeleton a mere curiosity, with no interest attached to it?" I asked guardedly.

"Oh! yes," my friend replied, "It was evidently some surgeon's specimen he had picked up somewhere. It was fastened together with wire."

My friend went on to talk of my late uncle, remarking, among other things, on strange fancies that he had, and the imaginary notions he was inclined to form.

So my strange relative was mad after all, and madder than anyone had thought. For from enquiries I made, I satisfied myself that he had only this one skeleton in a cupboard. Its history he had imagined, brooding over the story till it was firmly fixed in his mind. His friend —a partner he was—as I found, had been lost at sea. Perhaps this loss had in some degree helped to disturb my uncle's mental equilibrium.

My conscientiousness is not as unbending as it once was. I think sometimes my principles were formerly somewhat quixotic; at any rate I regret that they forced me to make a useless sacrifice when my Uncle Gabriel offered me his riches.

A BUNDLE OF OLD LETTERS.

"Whatever are you laughing at?" said my sister, looking up from her work.

"Ho! ho! dear me! how ridiculous! It all comes back to me like yesterday."

"Perhaps it would come back to *me* 'like yesterday,' if I knew what it was."

"No, indeed, I'm sure it would'nt. But, however, I don't mind telling you. You remember Conolly, don't you?"

"Oh, yes. That little man who came to preach for the S.P.G. last summer. You said he was an old College friend of yours."

"Yes—well, I've just come across some old letters of his, and, if I read you a few extracts, you will see what I was laughing at."

"Thanks, I should like to hear them."

"Now, this is a specimen of the kind of letter he was always sending me from the "Union." You may imagine that it was rather mortifying to receive through the post an important looking document containing nothing but rubbish of this sort"—

'My dear Signior,'

"He always called me 'Signior.' Don't know *why*, I'm sure."

'My heart is oppressed with a deep and mighty care. My health is rapidly declining from the same deplorable cause. My spirits (usually full to overflowing) are now as low as the tide when it is 'out.' Even my dear old pipe smokes not in the mellow manner that it once did. My flowing locks curl not in their usual Adonis-like style.'

"His hair never did curl at all, you know. It was as straight as"—

"Well, never mind, go on."

"There are several pages more, all in the same strain, and then, at the end, he says the cause of the trouble is a great anxiety lest the *pancakes* on Shrove Tuesday should disagree with me!"

"I didn't know that pancakes were a special weakness of yours."

"No, they're not. I was quite disgusted. But is was no use. A day or two afterwards he took me in in the same way with a letter containing nothing but the words"—

"Now, by thy black beard, do I adjure thee to restrain thy excitement, and apply cement to thy capillary organs."

"Whatever *did* he mean?"

"Why, 'keep your hair on,' I suppose, a slang phrase just then coming into vogue. I was indebted to the non-arrival of a newspaper for the next, it seems."

My dear Signior,

It is most annoying. The Guardian has not come yet, and here I am wanting greatly to read it. Ugh! I tear my hair (metaphorically) and blow my nose (sonorously). I really am very much annoyed! Ah, my dear old man that dwellest in Corporeal Halls'—

"Corpus was our College, you know."

'An invitation hath reached me to-day from the Rev. J. G. Malone, D.D., B.I.G., A.S.S., Q.E.D., etc. What thinkest thou? He asketh me to a breakfast at the Lion Hotel, on Monday next, and to listen to an 'exposition' by his Reverend brother. What shall we, O Signior, conjecture at this same 'exposition'? I hope it will not prove an exposition of longwindedness lest I should yawn or whistle. I am inclined to think (after consulting the best authorities) that an exposition meaneth a discourse delivered *ex*, or *out of* position, *i.e.* in some extraordinary attitude. Probably the learned doctor standeth the while on his head, or lyeth upon his broad and saintly back, or balanceth himself upon the hind legs of his chair, with his venerable feet gracefully reposing on the breakfast table. Thus some weighty commentators explain the word, but there is much difference of opinion on the subject.'

"What a long letter!"

"Oh, there's a lot more."

'What, then, my dear Signior Wilhelmo will it be? I know thou are ingenious; have I not seen portraits of illustrious persons drawn on the margins of thy classics?—to wit,

Œdipus and Antigone, and eke our friend 'Socrates' Smith with shining bumps, who sitteth opposite us at Lectures, and evermore inanely smileth. Have I not seen thy dark eyes twinkle like the twinkling of the morning star? Will anyone deny it? ? Will anyone willingly become a liar??? If so—therefore—why not?—nevertheless!!

O Signior! O Wilhelmo!! relieve my terrible suspense by unfolding the dark doors of futurity!

"The Guardian must have been a long time coming, I should think."

"Yes, but that isn't quite all. The end is most wild and extravagant."

'O Wilhelmo! apply thyself to this deep problem concerning the 'exposition,' I beseech thee, and let me know the result. O! O! O! Wilhelmo! Wilhelmo! Wilhelmo! Farewell Wilhelmo! Adieu Signioro! Farewell! Farewell! The Guardian hath come at last!! Hooray!! Hooray!! Hooray!!

Ever most *infernally* yours,
T.T.C.

"His next is dated from New Wansworth, after he had left College.

'My dear Signior,

Your last letter, accompanied by sundry old gents, and two old gamps very 'groggy' about the nose"—

"What does that mean?"

"Haven't an idea!"

reached me on the morning of this wery eventful day, and narrated to me your fearful adventures in search of friends and a dwelling-place.'

"And whatever does *that* mean?

"Oh, I think it must refer to my going to Uncle Fred's once, on a Saturday night, only to find everybody gone to the sea side, and an old woman taking care of the house."

'My dear Signior, I condole with you in your adversity. I congratulate you on having escaped from an awkward position. My dear Patriarch, I should advise you to curl your moustache!

As for myself, I went yesterday with my two brothers and Mr. Thompson to a place near Staines for some fishing in the Thames. For ten mortal hours we squatted solemnly in punts, using all diligence to ensnare the wary inhabitants of that watery region. But it rained hard for 15 minutes every quarter of an hour, and we caught nothing worth speaking of except rheumatics and colds. *These* were fine, well-developed specimens.

I went over the Bank of England to-day, and was mightily astonished at the extraordinary things there to be seen. They put into my hand a *million* pounds in notes. This was a *sore* temptation! They asked me to take up £1000 in sovereigns. I did, and lust for gold burned strongly within me! Farewell, &c., &c.

"That was a comparatively mild epistle."

"Yes, but the next makes up for it."

W. Edkins.

(To be continued.)

"NUNC, NUNC INSURGITE REMIS!"—*Verg.*

'Tis sweet in a cushioned punt to lie
'Mid a thousand scents and a thousand hues,
While the lilies look up to the summer sky
Through the swaying shade where the ring-dove coos:
Yet who but the "slacker" would doubt to choose,
When the hand on the rasp-roughened oar is laid,
And eight men swing on the sliding "pews"?
Oh, the rush of the boat and the swirling blade!

"Too hot!" or "Too hard!" let "footer" men cry:
Let summer-*tied* cricketers rain abuse:
Triumphant we to the river hie
Though the hot sun burns, or the storm-cloud brews.
In the glare of the noon, in the dusk and dews,
In the hail or the snow we ply our trade:
When December freezes, when August stews,
There's the rush of the boat and the swirling blade.

And oh, when in emulous sport we vie,
And the river throbs with the racing crews,
And the tall reeds bow as the eights sweep by,
And the stretchers bend to the creaking shoes,
Though we may be only would-be "Blues,"
Never will that mad triumph fade,
The joy of the race that we win—or lose,
The rush of the boat and the swirling blade!

ENVOY.

Boys, you will sit with the "lines," and muse
(When your daughters scull you in randan staid,)
On the thumping heart, and the straining thews,
The rush of the boat and the swirling blade.

E. F. SHEPHERD.

AN ADVENTURE AT ROME.

I, Thomas Murdoch, am a gentleman of private means. In the spring of 1890, I went on a visit to Italy, and there met with a little adventure, which I will proceed to relate:—

It was on one sunny morning in April, that whilst I was out for a walk before dinner, an idea came into my mind, that I should like very much to go to Italy for an Easter's trip.

Accordingly, I settled for my journey to begin in three days' time. On the day appointed, I set out, and in a few days arrived at Naples. I stopped there several days, and then determined to go to Rome. Having arrived there on an afternoon, I employed my time in finding a good Hotel. Whilst doing this, I noticed the man who had driven me the last part of my journey that afternoon, following me some way off. I took not a great deal of notice of this, and after looking about a little while, soon found an hotel to my liking. After having had my dinner, as the evening was sultry, I took a walk out into the street, and there was rather surprised to see the same man whom I had seen before, loitering about near the Hotel. But dismissing the thought that he could have any evil intentions concerning me, I resumed my evening stroll, and at about eight o'clock, wended my way back to the Hotel. Being rather tired with the journey which I had undergone, I retired to bed at 10 o'clock, and after a short time fell soundly to sleep. How long I had been sleeping I

do not precisely know, but I should judge that it was about two o'clock when I slowly opened my eyes, and looked around me. Why I did so, I cannot tell you, but it must have been through providence. The moon was shining brightly in at the window, and to my horror my eyes rested on the dark form of a man, the very man whom I had seen near the hotel on the preceding evening. He was standing at the foot of my bed, eagerly examining my purse. My first impulse was to leap up and grapple with him, and I was only stopped from this by seeing the point of a knife, which was glittering in the moonlight, sticking out from under his coat. Therefore I remained still in bed, and waited.

Having satisfied himself with my purse, he put it in his pocket, and advanced to take my watch, which was hanging directly over my head. It was a trying moment, I closed my eyes and pretended to be asleep; he came close and bent over me, I suppose to see whether I was really asleep or not; and then not being quite sure about it, I heard him fumbling in his jacket for his knife. It was a moment of intense anxiety, every instant I expected to feel the cold steel enter my neck. I felt now that I must try and save myself, and with a tremendous effort, I threw myself out of bed. The scoundrel was so taken by surprise, that he hesitated to plunge the knife into me. I now threw myself upon him with such violence, that he dropped the knife, and we both rolled over together. Luckily I came on the top of him, and whilst holding his throat with one hand, I managed to catch up my walking-stick, which was lying close by on the floor, with the other, and with this I stunned him. Then having called in assistance, he was bound, and carried safely away. I heard no more of him, as I left Rome the next day, and after a few more days of travelling, set out for England, which I reached without further adventure, and I am not particularly anxious ever to go to Rome again.

JOBSON.

THE ISLE OF ANDERSEY.

The low-lying meadow land enclosed by the main river and the old navigation stream (the latter, as described in a former article, leaves the river a few yards above the 'Lasher,' again to mingle its waters with "Father Thames" at the upper end of Culham reach), was long known as the Island of Andersey, and is still so designated in the ordnance maps. This island, across which runs the causeway * to Culham, has a history of some domestic interest in connection with the Saxon domination of England.

Years before the Abbey was founded, Abingdon, then known as Seovechesham or Sevekesham, was the residence of the Wessex Kings; but the place had been deserted by them—probably for many years—when, in 779, Offa, of Mercia, overthrew King Cynewulf at Benson,

* This Causeway was made in the reign of Henry V. Abingdon—more correctly Burford—bridge, was built at the same time.

and seized the town. Some time after the great Mercian over-lord had thus humbled the Dragon banners of the West Saxons, he visited Abingdon for the purpose of viewing the Abbey ; and the delightful situation of Andersey appears to have made such a favourable impression upon his mind that he determined to possess it. But we will let an old monkish writer of the early part of the 12th century tell the tale in his own cloister Latin :—Eo tempore Rethunus episcopus Merciorum, abbatiam Abendoniæ regebat, et postea ejusdem loci abbas factus est. Veniens, igitur, rex Merciorum et West Saxonum Offa, ut videret monasterium, et habitacula monachorum, venit ad insulam Andreseia, et quia vidit locum illum amœnum, præcipit ut sibi eodem loco regiæ domus ædificarentur, et pro loco illo dedit monachis villam quæ dicitur Gosie " (Goosey).

Andersey had been previously inhabited by a small body of wealthy men, who had built themselves a house, and had dedicated their lives to religion. This little brotherhood had bequeathed the property to the neighbouring Abbey; and, by its extinction, owing to the death of its members, the Abbey had duly become possessed of Andersey. (" Erat eo tempore in insula quæ dicitur Andreseia habitatio divitum qui monachilem habebant habitum, sed tamen possessiones suas quamdiu vivebant gubernabant, sed post obitum suum monasterium hæreditabant," says our monk.) At the time of Offa's visit, Abbot Rethune, (784—c. 795, as head of the Convent, held the island, but the King does not appear to have had much difficulty in persuading him to exchange it (as we have seen) for the royal vill of Goosey. And upon Andersey, as the chronicler also tells us, Offa built himself a palace.

A Saxon palace was not, of course, a very magnificent structure, and it is not difficult to form some idea of this "domus regiæ." Its most prominent feature was certainly a large Hall, built of wood and thatched with reeds, where the King, his thegns, guests and house-carles " sat at meat " before trestled tables, and drank deep draughts of ale and mead out of horn or wooden cups. Around the walls, hung, probably, painted or embroidered cloths " to keep the wind away ; " and here were also suspended the arms—the oval wooden shields with their painted iron bosses, the spears, curved swords, and battle axes,—and the harps of the bards and gleemen. The floor would be strewn with straw or rushes—probably the latter, for rushes were plentiful enough around Andersey. In the middle of the hall, a fire, in winter, warmed and partially suffocated the occupants. Beyond the Hall were the " buttery " and kitchen; and above—reached by a staircase without the walls—were the apartments of the Hlafdige or Lady (Matilda of Flanders the consort of William the Conqueror was the first in England to be styled " Queen ") and her attendants. Here were embroidered the church and other vestments for

which Saxon ladies became so famous; and here the maidens spun. The male household slept on the rushes in the Hall; the womenkind (*i.e.* of the palace) in the upper apartments. Surrounding the great Hall were the outbuildings —rude structures of woven twigs filled in with clay—where the mead was concocted from honey, the ale brewed, and the butter and cheese made. Close by were the barns where the corn was threshed and the wool and flax stored. The outdoor work would be done alike by male and female labourers, for the Saxons (who in this respect must be called an ungallant race) never spared women in such drudgery. Near the palace, were probably pleasant gardens, gay with flowers, among which it is likely bloomed roses, lilies, and poppies (Englishmen owe something of their love of horticulture to their Saxon ancestors); and it is likely that the more prosaic advantages of the kitchen garden were not overlooked, and that vegetables, such as garlic, leeks, cresses, parsley, beetroot, lettuce, and turnips, and herbs, such as mint and mallow, were in ample supply for the royal household. In the orchards fruit would be abundant. The fields yielded plenty of grain, and down by the rich river meadows (the lower part of Andersey has been subject to floods from time immemorial) horses, oxen, and sheep pastured. We must not forget that there would also be a falconry on the island, for the equipment of a Saxon of birth, when he "went abroad," would not have been complete unless he carried a falcon on his left wrist. For the defence of the place, there was the river, and (around the buildings) probably a stockade of wood, or, it may be, a quickset hedge, rising from a mound of earth, as a Saxon cared not to fight behind walls of stone as his Roman predecessors had done.

To the town and abbey, a ferry gave access (there was no bridge of any kind until Henry the Fifth's time); and we read that the crossing was frequently a dangerous one—"there were dyvers mischauncis sene at this Passage and dyvers Persones were drowned afore the bridge was made," says Leland. Beyond the island and the town—on the higher ground on each side of the river —were dense woodland tracts, where all the delights of the chase could be indulged in; while the river yielded abundant supplies of fish; and in the tangled brakes of the stream the beaver could be hunted. No wonder Offa liked Andersey. A truly delightful retreat it must have been for the war-surfeited Mercian King.

Thus, Abingdon once more basked in the sunshine of royal favor; but it was not destined long to retain the honour of being a royal residence. The King, as the Benedictine chronicler tells us, died not very long after he had built his house; and his son and successor Egfert (our monk calls him Edbert) died at Andersey in less than a year after his accession. Kenulf, who succeeded him, was too busily engaged in ravaging Kent to make many visits to his

river-girt home. Indeed he soon deserted it altogether, and at last the only occupants were the royal huntsmen, falconers, and a few other retainers of the court ("Regnante rege Kenulfo, soliti sunt venatores regis, et qui portabant acciptres, et cæteri aulici vassalli sæpissim e hospitari in domibus regiis in Andreseia.") These became a great nuisance to the abbey ("et multa incommoda et vexationes abbati et hominibus abbatiæ inferre"), for, as the king's men, it seems that they had the right not only to hunt over the Abbey lands, but to demand provender for their horses wherever they hunted, and even a fresh supply; and food also for their hounds. Rethune must have been sore pressed to know what to do to abate the nuisance that so troubled him and his monks. First, it seems that he wrote to the Pope (Leo III), who forbad the king to allow his men to ride over the Abbey property. The Pope's order, however, appears to have been of little use to the Abbot (perhaps he dared not enforce it); at any rate the trouble did not cease, and Rethune evidently came to the conclusion that in diplomatic action would lie his best chance of success. He therefore petitioned the King that he would—for a consideration—relieve him and his monks of the "many vexations and inconveniences" from which they were suffering. And this time he succeeded, for Kenulf appears to have lent a willing ear to the Abbot, now that he was able to support his petition with such a powerful argument. A bargain was soon struck. The King agreed to break up his establishment at Andersey, provided the Abbot paid him down one hundred pounds' weight of silver, and conveyed to him the manor of Sutton (Sutton Courtenay). But the astute Rethune, fearing a subsequent change of mind on the part of the King, managed to get inserted in the agreement a very important clause. He stipulated that not only should Kenulf retire, but that he should bind himself *never to come back.* ("Accipiens, igitur, rex villam et pecuniam prænominatam, præcipit ne aliquis suorum, sive regum amplius ibidem hospitaretur, sed haberent monachi locum illum in perpetuum.") The King kept his word. Neither he nor his ever troubled Abingdon again.

Andersey does not pass from the purview of history with Kenulf's sale of it to Abbot Rethune; but we have not the space within the limits of this article to follow its further fortunes in any detail. Suffice is to say, that sixteen years before the Conquest, a rich priest named Blackman, built, by permission of Abbot Rutholf (1050-52), a handsome Church on the island, and dedicated it to St. Andrew—hence the name Andersey, (which means Andrews' Eyot) for such was not its appellation in King Offa's days. Priest Blackman took the side of Harold in his country's subsequent troubles, with the result that William confiscated the property, and thus the island reverted to the Crown. (Our chronicler says that "King William and his son, the second King William, often delighted to stop on the island

when they came to these parts.") Henry I, who, as a student, resided at Andersey while he was being educated at the Abbey, re-granted it, through the intercession of his Queen, Matilda of Scotland, to Abbot Faritius (1100-1117), who used the materials of St. Andrew's Church for the restoration of the Abbey which was then in a very ruinous condition. No vestige of the church now remains.

King Offa's palace was situated on the eastern side of the Culham road, a short distance beyond the Town Cricket field. Leland, who visited the spot about the time when the neighbouring Abbey was dissolved, and refers to the island as "lying between the old and new bed of Isis," tells us that the site ("a Medow agayne S. Helen's of a qwarter of a Myle ovar,") was then occupied by a barn. He calls the place a "castelet or fortresse," but this probably arose from the fact that in his time the site was locally known as the "Castle of Rhæ." At the Dissolution, the island still remained in possession of the Abbey (Abbot Richard de Salforde sold, in 1415, sufficient ground to two merchants of Abingdon ‡ for the causeway to Culham) if we identify it rightly as included in the entry of the pasturage, "vocato le Rye et Milhill in Culneham" in the long list given by Dugdale of the property surrendered by the last Abbot (Thomas Rowland otherwise Pentecost, 1515-1538) to Henry the Eighth's Commissioners in February, 1538. The pasturage is valued at £16 13s. 4d. yearly. Goosey, King Offa's gift in exchange for Andersey, also remained in the possession of the Abbey until the Dissolution.

J. H. Crofts.

‡ John Hutchings and John Banbury. The former gave a considerable sum towards the making of Burford and Culhamford bridges. The dangers of the fords had then become very great in winter time. Abingdon benefited immensely by these public works, as the main road from Gloucester and South Wales to London was thereby diverted from Wallingford.

OXFORD LETTER.

With this term commences a new 'Varsity year and we heartily welcome to the "Alma Mater" two Old Abingdonians, namely P. J. Martin and S. J. Forster. The former being now in residence at Queen's College, and the latter at Merton.

The 'Varsity Football teams have both done good work this term, and the XV. ought to, and we hope will, give a good account of themselves against Cambridge on the 13th of this month.

The Final tie for the Inter Collegiate Challenge Cup is between Magdalen and New College, and should prove a good game. As the result will probably be known by the time this letter is printed, I will not run the risk of committing myself by prophesying it.

The trial eights row at Moulsford this afternoon; I regret to say that Abingdon School is not represented in either crew.

The coxswainless fours at the beginning of the term ended in a victory for Magdalen, who beat B.N.C. in the final heat.

As for Old Abingdonians and their doings, N. A. Saunders was playing Football for Pembroke College at the beginning of the term, but was unfortunate in getting hurt, and has been unable to play since, he is now boating. F. Robinson is captain of the St. Catherine's Boat Club. P. H. Morland won the Hurdles easily in his college sports, and we believe was only prevented from winning the 100 yds. by a penalty. S. J. Forster has been keeping goal for Merton College. We congratulate J. W. Veysey on taking his degree at the end of last term.

In conclusion, I would wish the School all success, and propose the toast ever welcome to, and heartily drunk by, all who are connected with Abingdon School, namely, Floreat Schola Abingdoniensis.

OLIM ALUMNUS.

Oxford,
Dec. 2nd, 1893.

SCHOOL NOTES.

We hear that the first Annual Dinner of the Old Abingdonian Club will be held at the Holborn Restaurant, on Wednesday, 17th of January, 1894. The chair will be taken by the Rev. Cresswell Strange, President of the Club. Tickets, 7/6 each (not including wine), may be obtained from G. H. Morland, hon. sec., Abingdon. We hope that all members of the Club will make a point of attending, especially as it is the first of what we hope may be a long series of such annual meetings.

With reference to Davies, an Old Abingdonian, who has founded a New Abingdon School in Canada. We have received an interesting letter from O. J. Stockton, a contemporary of his here. Amongst other information he tells us that Davies won a scholarship at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and whilst there in 1883, he played La Crosse for England against the Canadian team. So he has a just claim to be ranked amongst distinguished Old Abingdonians.

Amongst the events of the term, we have to record the institution of prefects. This, we believe, is not altogether a new departure. We have heard of, though we do not ourselves remember, one prefect who exercised for a time absolute, nay, almost tyrannical power over the rest of the school. The present prefects are J. H. E. Morland (Captain of the School), M. Hannay, and A. W. Morland. There duties are not at present heavy, but will, we have no doubt grow as the school grows.

The half term holiday was given on Nov. 13th. Some of the boarders went home to recruit on the Saturday. Those who stayed had a practice game of Football—an attempt to arrange a match having failed. On Monday afternoon the whole school, by the kindness of J. B. King, Esq., whom we take this opportunity to thank, was admitted free to the Abingdon Cattle Show. Those who went, saw some excellent and clever jumping.

A half holiday was granted on Monday, November 27th, at the request of E. Morland, Esq., himself an old boy, on his re-election as Mayor of the town. It has been a custom from time immemorial, that the Mayor, on entering his office, should ask for and obtain a half-holiday; and this is a duty which he always performs with the same laudable regularity with which he goes to Church on the Sunday after his election.

The following are the arrangements for the end of term, which is fixed for Tuesday, Dec. 19th. In the afternoon the Old Boys' match will be played; the Old Boys' team is to be got up by W. T. Morland, our last year's captain. After the match, the team will be entertained by Mr. Layng. At 6.30 p.m., the form lists will be read, and later we shall have a few song and glees, and the entertainment will conclude with the singing of Dulce domum. This is the first time for some years that any musical entertainment has been attempted, and we wish it every success. There is a sad lack, we are told, of bass and tenor voices, and we ourselves have been asked to give vocal assistance. This we would do, but we have wished the performance success.

During the latter half of this term, afternoon school, on Monday, has been postponed from 2.30 to 3.45, to enable a game of football to take place in the afternoon. In the earlier part of the term a game was played every day after school, but since the beginning of November the day has closed in so fast, that this has been quite impossible. The new arrangement has given general satisfaction, and to football players is most welcome.

We were glad to see once more at the school the faces of our two late Headmasters—the Rev. E. Summers and the Rev. W. H. Cam, both of whom paid us a visit this term.

Could any of our readers oblige the Secretary of the Old Abingdonian Club with a copy of the first number of this paper? We think it of no small importance that the Club should have a complete set for reference.

We beg to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the following magazines :—The Cranleigh School magazine, the Lily, the College Magazine, Stratford-on-Avon, the Brightonian.

"ABINGDONIAN" BALANCE SHEET.

No. 12.

RECEIPTS.

	£	s.	d.
Receipts up to present ...	2	13	10½
Twenty-six copies not yet paid for		13	0
Six Annual Subscripfions not yet paid		3	3
Sale of back numbers ...		6	0
	3	16	1½

EXPENSES.

	£	s.	d.
Printing No. 12	3	4	0
Postage, etc.		6	0
	3	10	0
Balance		6	1½
	3	16	1½

	£	s.	d.
Deficit on No. 10		17	7½
„ „ 11	1	3	6
	2	1	1½
Balance on No. 12 and on sale of back numbers		6	1½
Total deficit ...	1	15	0

December 4th, 1893.

HERBERT MORLAND, (Hon. Sec. and Treasurer.)

Baylis & Co., Printers, Market Place, Abingdon.