



Nascitur exiguus,

vires acquirit eundo.

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IT is perhaps a matter for some little regret that one of the most comforting forms of charity is also one of the cheapest.

Not for one moment would we seek to depreciate the value of perhaps the greatest alleviator of misfortune that can be imagined or conceived. Be the donor and the recipient whom you will, true sympathy has always been a most acceptable gift; and it is because it costs so little, that it is given so freely.

Yet there is one thing often wanting which very greatly enhances the value of sympathy; it is experience. Sympathy generally takes the form of encouragement. How often does one person try to comfort another in distress, and tell him to go on, for all will come right in the end. Has the sympathiser had experience in this particular kind of trouble? No; then his encouraging words are kind, but empty. But if he himself has gone through it, it is another matter. 'What man has done, man can do;' and the object of sympathy takes comfort.

A school above all needs sympathy from those who have been at school, and especially from those who have been there lately. There is a class of persons of whom one is accustomed to say: 'He never was a boy; he does not know what school is.' We are mistaken; as a rule these persons were once boys, and very possibly once knew what school was like. The truth is, they have forgotten it.

How many reasons has Westminster School for congratulating itself in this respect. A school which lives in its past, and is filled with a generation who love to hear what the School was like a generation before them.

And many there are to tell them; to talk over all that is old, and to learn from them all that is new. We have good reason to be proud of the old Westminsters; not so much of their

achievements in the world (for it cannot be denied that the School has not lately had the rearing of so many great men as formerly) but in their devotion to their old School, which every match-day, every day of note in the Westminster year, presents a spectacle of the most enthusiastic interest. Then you may hear an old Westminster eagerly questioning some present member of the School: 'I hear such and such a movement has been started; tell us about it.' And his young informant, who, it may be, was in the under-school when the interrogator was in the sixth, enters into a glowing account of the latest School news. Thus every fresh enterprise, every little improvement in the School, meets with a cordial interest which is both complimentary and encouraging.

This sympathy, it may be added, is by no means one-sided. Westminster School "has no greater joy than the good report of her children;" and the success of each old Westminster is welcomed by a hearty joy, little of which, we may assert, owes its birth to an occasional half-holiday which does honour to such heroes.

Long live the loyalty and devotion of old Westminsters, and of old Grantites in particular; and may a lively and a lasting sympathy continue to exist between them and the School.

NOTES.

The second number of the *Westminster Review* contained a very good article on the School Repairs and Alterations; also an account of the match v. F. Bickley's XI.

It added two lines to the first issue and then, calling it a supplement to the first, published it

at the same price. Thus doth the School Mission profit.

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We hope the Glee Society will resume its diverting Entertainments as soon as the School-room has left the workmen's hands.

* *

The only new fellows up Grants are R. S. L. Boulter and C. N. Lambton, who have come as boarders. F. Y. Eccles, J. Corbett and R. O. Jones have come up the 'House' as boarders, formerly having been half-boarders.

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The Grantites who have as yet represented the school in the football field are: W. N. Winckworth, E. A. Everington, A. R. Woodbridge, R. O. Mills and A. G. Lambert.

WESTMINSTER PAST AND PRESENT.*

Under this title appears a small volume of 62 pages, consisting, ostensibly, of verses on Westminster Abbey, written in the so-called Heroic metre, and well printed and very well "spaced" on good paper. The title may, we fear, cause some to think that the volume is in some way connected with Mr. Forshall's interesting book. As far as we can see, no reference is made to the School in the verses before us, though by what means it is overlooked we cannot understand, since, according to Dean Bradley, we are part and parcel of the Abbey, and can in no wise be separated therefrom.

The book commences with an introduction of two pages, wherein we learn that Church and State sprung from "savage hordes of men" and on this spot fought with those from whom they sprung. We also have a very picturesque, if somewhat fanciful passage (on page 2), descriptive of the outward aspect of the Abbey. Then follows an account of the hermit's vision of St. Peter, which, though clothed in strange garb, is of course recognizable to all readers of Dean Stanley's "Memorials."

After a few pages of what is briefly described by the Author as "Growth," we find (p. 14)

* Westminster Past and Present (by J. Cave Winscombe.) Allen and Co. 1887, price 1/-.

that an old man, being left in the Abbey alone after the Coronation of William I., was praying to St. Peter for aid to avenge the death of his sons (who had been "cut down by Norman axes," at Hastings), and that, whilst so engaged, he saw a vision of "the living Christ" who descended from the altar rail, and addressed him. We confess to a certain feeling of dislike to this passage, and that feeling increases when we find that this Vision is but used as an introduction to a long and Valpy-like Chronology of all the Sovereigns to come till the signing of Magna Charta. Here the vision comes to an end, and we are told that

— "At morn the friars found
An old man dead beside the altar rails."

Now if the old man was found dead immediately after his seeing the Vision, we have some difficulty in discovering how the Vision ever became public property! Perhaps Mr. Winscombe will explain, or this may simply be a strong instance of "poetic license."

On page 25, when the author bursts from the bonds of his Chronology, we have a really beautiful passage describing the morning of Runnymede, and a fierce, but no doubt just, attack on the King who was compelled to sign the memorable document of Magna Charta at that place.

On page 31 occur a few lines on the Abbey tombs—to remind us, apparently, that the subject of the book is really the Abbey—and then the Chronology is continued for twenty pages, more Valpy-like than ever, now it is stripped of its Vision-setting. On page 32 is a neat couplet on the Black Prince, who is buried at Canterbury:—

"Far from the father whom he loved in life
Parted in death, in deathless memory blent."

Thereafter occur some animated lines on Cressy.

We learn some decidedly strange things from this little book.

In page 14, we read that

"The people read
The Book of Doomsday, and their voice was dumb."

We have always understood that a king of those times who could read passably was considered a very wonderful person, and we have serious doubts whether "the people" ever read a word of Doomsday Book, for the portions of it which are still extant are by no means miracles of legibility.

On page 27, we have a Chorus or Chant by priests, commencing with the lines

"We, who have anointed kings
From the dross of common things."

Mr. Winscombe so likes this couplet that he makes the people reply

"Priests, who have anointed kings
From the dross of common things."

We think it much more probable that, considering that this chant was sung immediately after the signing of Magna Charta, some bold baron would have taken a few of the priests' heads off by way of showing his gratitude for being termed a "common thing."

On page 34 we are informed that Richard II. *still rots* beside Edward his grandfather. On page 44, we hear that Elizabeth, who died over 200 years after Richard's death in Pontefract, is "dust and ashes." We believe that no one turns to "ashes" unless he is cremated, but Mr. Winscombe only follows others in this. But really poor Richard II. might have been allowed to decompose thoroughly by now, if Elizabeth, who was, so to speak, handicapped by 200 years, has turned to dust?

After this little theory about King Richard we hear, with but little surprise, the statement that Elizabeth still speaks (p. 52.) Certainly! why not? On pages 46 and 47 we have a good instance of that tribal prejudice which sometimes distinguishes weak intellects, and, in this particular instance, leads to utter disregard of facts.

In his haste to sneer at Scotland Mr. Winscombe becomes quite enthusiastic in praise of Mary of Scotland, whom he says the Scots betrayed and murdered in spite of her virtues.

But on page 45 he gives a warning to his "youthful friends" who "play with Roman ritual," and he calls Mary of England a "scourge." Possibly the fact that Mary of Scots was "fair to look upon," has something to do with Mr. Winscombe's apparent forgetfulness of the fact that she was a member of the "Roman ritual" faith which he so strongly deprecates, and, had she been free to work her will, that she might possibly have turned her attention to burning (why not?) some of her "heretic" subjects in Scotland, as Mary of England did this side the Tweed.

On page 52 Elizabeth is adjoined to rise

"And see
The Queen of England hold her Jubilee!"

If the representation of the Good Queen (which is among the "Waxworks" over the Chapel of St. John (Islip's Chapel) is a faithful portrait, we suspect that Mr. Winscombe would seriously repent if his incantation was successful.

A Jubilee Ode (another!) and a political attack follow. That a book cannot be written on such a subject as our Abbey, without the dragging in of political invective, is indeed a sad "sign of the times."

The pathos of an address to the Abbey is turned to bathos by the introduction of such a dissonance as the slang phrase "parliamentary hand!"

Whatever Mr. Winscombe's knowledge of his subject may be, (and we wish to point out (p. 44) that Mary Queen of Scots is *not* buried by the side of Elizabeth!) he is evidently filled with love of, and reverence for, the Abbey, and as the book of a lover of Westminster, the new *Westminster Past and Present* should be in every Westminster's Library.

We were not a little surprised at the beginning of this term, by the appearance of a pamphlet bearing the high-sounding title of the *Westminster Review*. This elegant production is issued, we believe, weekly, and the proceeds, if any, are to be given to the School Mission. (Where will the deficit, if any, go?) The Editor of this upstart has already begun his arduous and self-imposed task of attacking Westminster Literature all round. In an article on School Magazines he accuses the Editors of the *Grantite Review* of writing correspondence to one another, which the Editors of the *Grantite* never have occasion to do. Then this eloquent corrector of others goes on to state flatly that the July number is habitually issued in the winter term; an accusation which is founded on untruth, and which shews clearly the unlimited supply of exaggerations at the command of the unknown author of that wordy article. Why should the Editor of that paper (pamphlet, we should say) complain of unpunctuality, of being behindhand, when he himself, three months after the occasion, takes it upon himself to thank the Old Westminster Members of Parliament who so kindly obtained for us our seats in the Abbey at the Jubilee

Thanksgiving service. We thank him for his advice; we implore him to give us another dose of his patronage, if he would condescend to do so. But let us ask him at the same time whether he is ashamed of the composition which he advances by picking to pieces those of others, that he conceals his name so effectually? He shews admirable foresight in so doing. And moreover we have only to add that he should not preach about the clumsy and ill-timed ridicule of the school paper, when his own is far more clumsy, far more ill-timed. Let the Editor of the *Westminster Review* apply to himself his splendid cautions against blighting the praiseworthy efforts of those who desire to please. Let him see that he himself is free from those faults which he imputes to others. We are willing to hear our real short-comings in our Editorial duties, and we try, if possible, to correct them; but are we to endure without a word the personal abuse and unfounded imputations of a scurrilous little leaflet?

How often has the question been repeated, "Why shouldn't we have a Debating Society Up-Grants?" Only the other day we heard it from a rising young member of the house, who evidently thought that it would be an excellent institution. Few Grantites, we fear, would agree with him, and that on account of many reasons. First of all we have a School Debating Society; at least there exists an institution of that name, which unluckily is not at present in a most flourishing condition, we are sorry to say. This society deserves the utmost support of all its members, and we venture to say that if half the fellows who join it, took a real and lively interest in it, the society would in time become the flourishing institution of former days. But we are wandering from the subject. —Up Grants we should not try to start a like society, until the older one is itself again. Then, for the sake of argument, let us suppose that we have started one, are we enough to keep it going? and would the members use that small but useful member, the tongue? These are questions which naturally spring to the lips of every one, and which must be answered. The Glee Club, singing and other School societies would occupy the time of some

members, at least; and it would want the energy and interest of all who joined it, to keep its head above the surging billows of extinction, we fear that we cannot look forward to this support; it is unreasonable to expect it. No! as yet it is too early, we think, to try to get up such a society. As we have said before, we must wait till the School Debating Society is on a more prosperous footing and until we are quite sure of the support and attendance of all the Grantites who join it, before we begin to think of a Grantite Debating Society.

And then another objection confronts us, which is common to most, if not all, small Debating Societies. When political and scientific subjects are under discussion, we can only reiterate that, which has often spoken before by older and wiser tongues, we are not sufficiently advanced in the scientific world to be able to make many, if any, good suggestions or improvements. All those that are possible have been discussed and estimated at their proper value by men who are more skilled than any boy at school can be. And this of course tends to monotony in many cases. Most of those who are listening, know or have read all that the speaker is saying and so they take little or no interest in attending to what is being said. These suggestions may serve as an answer to those who desire a Debating Society up Grants and our readers must agree that at this time it would be a useless and profitless institution.

NOTICES.

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