

QUEENS' COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

FOUNDED by the care and munificence of two Queens, the college once dedicated to St. Bernard has a beauty and stateliness which well become its august origin. The unity of its design gives us a pleasure which is not afforded by some of its prouder neighbours. It is neither a collection of anachronisms nor a museum of architectural styles. As

has often been pointed out, it is built on the model of a country house. It might be a sister in nobility to Haddon Hall. There is nothing conventual or monastic in its arrangement. It seems designed less for study than for an amiable life. The simple, well-ordered elegance of the front court is not surpassed in any college of either University, and the Tudor

gallery, a later addition, emphasises the character of the college, linking it yet more closely with the great houses of England.

The Queen who transformed the College of St. Bernard into the foundation which we know was Margaret of Anjou, the wife of Henry VI. She was persuaded to her grateful task by Andrew Docket, the first President and life-long well-wisher of the society, "accounted by some," says Fuller, "if not by his purse, by his prayers, the founder thereof." Margaret's motive for her generous endowment is picturesquely described, also by Fuller, himself a loyal alumnus of the college. "As Miltiades his trophy in Athens," writes he in his "History of Cambridge," "would not suffer Themistocles to sleep, so this Queen beholding her husband's bounty in building King's College was restless in herself with holy emulation until she had produced something of the like nature, a strife wherein wives without breach of duty may contend with their husbands which should exceed in pious performances." The emulation was honourable, the enterprise successful. Nor did Elizabeth Woodville fall below the lofty example set her by Margaret of Anjou. She, too, gave a favourable answer to Andrew Docket's solicitation, and if any consider how it was that that worthy scholar gained the help of both houses, let Fuller explain. "A good and discreet man," says the historian of Docket, "who, with no sordid but prudential compliance, so passed himself in these dangerous times betwixt the successive Kings of Lancaster and York that he procured the favour of both." The favour was worth procuring, and after the gracious interposition of Elizabeth Woodville, the college was called Queens', not Queen's,



to celebrate the generosity of two ladies.

The benefactions of the House of York did not end with Elizabeth Woodville. That much-maligned Prince, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, took a keen and practical interest in the affairs of Queens' College. As early as 1477, we are told by Mr. J. H. Gray, the last historian of the college, he was permitted by Edward IV. to grant to the President and Fellows the manor and advowson of Fulmire, to found four fellowships with stipends of eight pounds a year for priests, who are to "pray satisfactorie for the prosperous astates of Richard the sayde Duke of Gloucester and dame Anne his wife, and for the souls of the Duke's father and of his friends slain at Bernett Tukysbery or at any other feldes or journeys, and for all christen soules." Fuller, echoing the opinion of his time, pretends that Richard "endeavoured to render himself popular" by conferring benefits upon colleges and religious houses. But he was already generous



Copyright.

THE BRIDGE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

to Queens', when it could avail him nothing, and he should not be robbed of his proper meed of thanks. The gifts which he made as Prince he increased as King. In 1484 he granted to the college lands belonging to the Earl of Oxford, and to the Countess of Warwick, the Queen's mother. The grant, as Fuller says, made more noise than profit. After Bosworth Field, the lands, taken from the nobles proscribed by Richard, were resumed by their owners and Queens' College lost its hope of wealth. The col-

lege, less censorious than Fuller, esteems the wish as the deed, and in its badge of the boar's head still keeps green the memory of Richard III.

It is not walls only that make the history of a college: it is men; and it was the good fortune of Queens', in its earliest days, to boast the presence of great scholars and distinguished statesmen. No college played a better part in the revival of learning than this one. For four



Copyright.

IN THE LONG GALLERY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

years John Fisher, the eloquent Bishop of Rochester, was President, and it was due to his persuasion, perhaps, that Erasmus, when he came to Cambridge, took up his abode in the rooms which are still associated with his name. Erasmus has always been the sport of gossips. Aubrey, it will be remembered, thinks it worth while to record that Erasmus ate no fish, though "born in a fish town (Rotterdam)." Fuller, acknowledging the credit that the greatest of scholars did to Queens' by sojourning therein, is doubtful of his motive. "Either invited thither," says he, "with the fame of the learning and love of his friend Bishop Fisher then Master thereof, or allured with the situation of this college so near the river (as Rotterdam his native place to the sea) with pleasant walks thereabouts." Other colleges were equally near to the river, and it may be set down to Fisher's credit that Erasmus, the peculiar glory of the college, lived in the rooms still associated with his name, and used the tower, which still surmounts them, as his oratory. The years which Erasmus spent in Cambridge were fruitful in study as in performance. If the undergraduates did not flock to his lectures, as he hoped they would, he had all the more leisure for the pursuit of scholarship. Yet, if Cambridge is still proud of the



Copyright.

THE CLOISTER COURT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Dr. Mullinger assures us that his income at Cambridge cannot have been less than seven hundred pounds a year of our present money. And it is in these terms that he writes to Ammonius: "Though poverty is a heavy burden, especially on the hard threshold of old age, I am more affected by shame than want; though in this too I can digest my sorrow, and put on as bold a face as I can." Worse than all, Erasmus found at Cambridge nothing fit to drink. "I do not like the beer of this place at all," he writes to

Ammonius, "and the wines are not satisfactory. If you can manage to get a skin of Greek wine, as good as can be had but free from sweetness, conveyed thither, you will bestow a real blessing on Erasmus." The wine—it was Cretan—came, but the cask was not big enough. Erasmus was thinking of "a largish

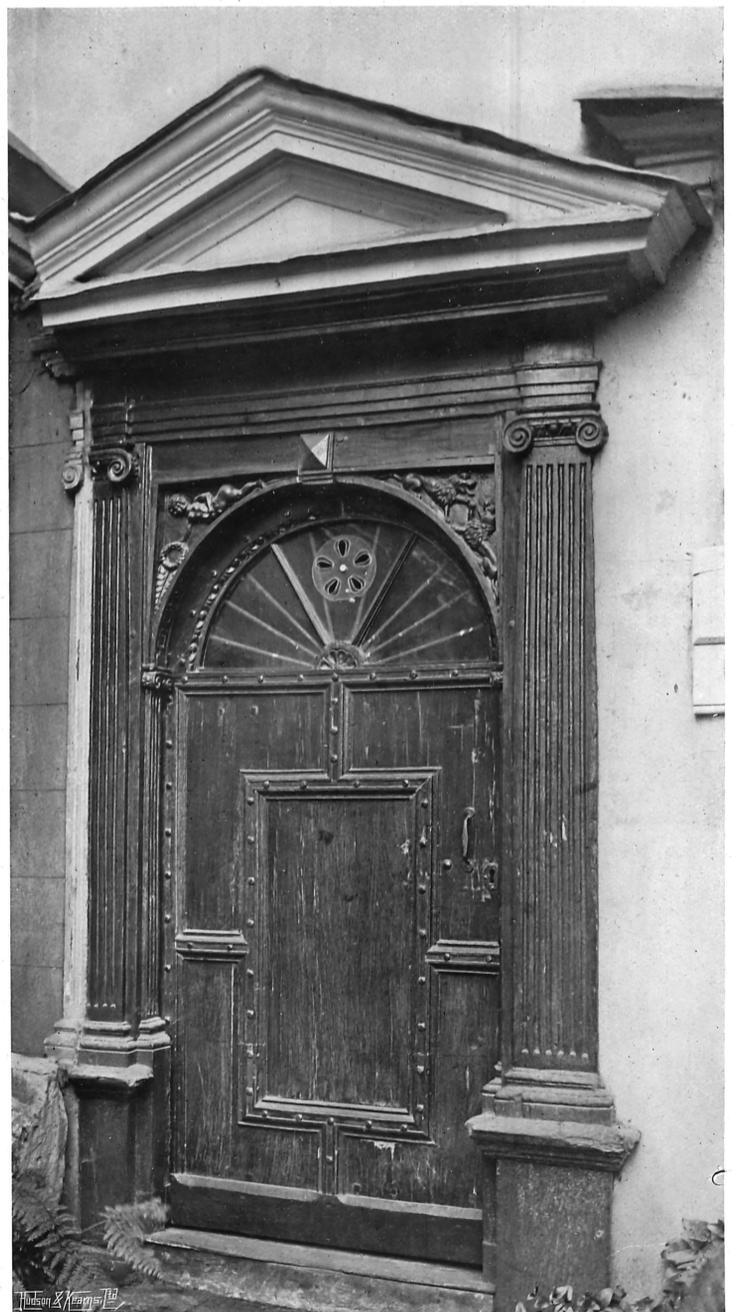


Copyright

ERASMUS' TOWER.

"C.L."

master who once dwelt in its midst, Erasmus was not altogether content with Cambridge. His aristocratic temperament was not easily satisfied. Much as the society of Warham and Fisher pleased him, the insufficiency of money dogged him at Cambridge, as it dogged him everywhere. Not that he was ever in straitened circumstances. His complaints, constant as they are, mean no more than that the wealth that he hoped and prayed for still eluded him.



Copyright.

OLD GARDEN DOORWAY.

"C.L."

cask" to last him some months. Ammonius, generous as he was and delicious as was his wine, sent a cask that did not keep pace with Erasmus's desires. And then came the plague, and Cambridge was emptied of its scholars. So writes Erasmus: "We have been living, my dear Ammonius, for some months a snail's life. We shrink and hide ourselves indoors, and are busy as bees in study. There is a great solitude here, most people away for fear of plague; though when all are here it is still a solitude. The expense is big and heavy; the profit not a farthing." And thus, after four years, Erasmus shook the dust of Cambridge from his feet, disappointed and disappointing. If only he had suppressed his complaints for a while, and painted us a picture of Queens' College as he knew it, still fresh and trim, with portraits of his companions, we would cheerfully have gone without the harsh complaints of poverty, and even the praise of that "jug of Cretan wine, such as may remind you that Jupiter was nursed in that island, a product of milk and nectar."

Such, then, is the chief glory, not unalloyed, of Queens' College. Erasmus lived there. And the pride, still evoked, is not extravagant. But others lived there besides Erasmus. There was, for instance, Sir Thomas Smith, a great and good humanist, who in his full life played many parts, and played them all well. He was Professor of Greek, he was a statesman and an ambassador, as well as author of "The Commonwealth of England," a treatise which gives us the best picture of our country and constitution as it appeared to a sympathetic observer in Elizabeth's reign. There was Humphry Tindall, Bishop of

Ely, whose tombstone boasts that he was offered the crown of Bohemia and refused it, saying that he would rather be a subject of Queen Elizabeth than a foreign king. In the seventeenth century Queens' College suffered the same vicissitudes in which its rivals were involved. Torn asunder in the Civil Wars, it saw its President Edward Martin a prisoner and its studies interrupted by party strife. Yet it was fortunate in this, that Martin, its Royalist President, and Palmer, who was intruded by the Parliament, were both men of high courage and character. Palmer, indeed, was an admirable example of the superiority of mind over body. St. John's College refused him a degree on the ground of personal deformity, and Queens' in admitting him was justified of her liberality. "Though he was a little crooked man," says a pupil, "yet he had such an authority, that the fellows revered him as much as we did them, going bare when he passed through the court, which after his death was disused."

The greatest President who ruled the fortunes of Queens' College in the eighteenth century was Dr. Isaac Milner, a good scholar, a fearless autocrat, a man of sound courage and original character. Though he has not won the approval of the Whig historian of Cambridge, he governed the society with a strong hand for many years, and raised it to a height of prosperity which it had not before attained. Nor is the hostility of the Whig historian hard to explain. "The Society," says Gunning, "which, under the Presidentship of Dr. Plumtre, had been distinguished for his attachment to Civil and Religious Liberty, became afterwards as remarkable for its opposition to liberal opinions." When we remember that these words were written in 1792, and that Fyshe Palmer, one of the fellows elected under the auspices of Dr. Plumtre, was transported for sedition, we shall know what respect it deserves. Perhaps it was at Queens', of which he was an alumnus, that Thomas Creevey imbibed those liberal principles which he cherished throughout his long life, and which, it must be said, did not greatly profit him. At any rate, that man of the world, whose shrewd wit and keen observation still delight us, would have smiled to find himself in the august society which the history of Queens' College calls up before our eyes, and would be the first to recognise the wide gap that separates him from Erasmus and Fisher, Thomas Smith and Humphry Tindall. But these are some of the famous men whose ghosts haunt the courts and cloisters of Queens' College, and whose genius, with the exquisite buildings themselves, keeps green the fragrant memory of the past. C. W.



Copyright.

DINING-ROOM IN THE PRESIDENT'S LODGE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



QUEENS' COLLEGE: CHIMNEY-PIECE IN THE LONG GALLERY.