

THE OXFORD AMATEURS

ALAN MACKINNON



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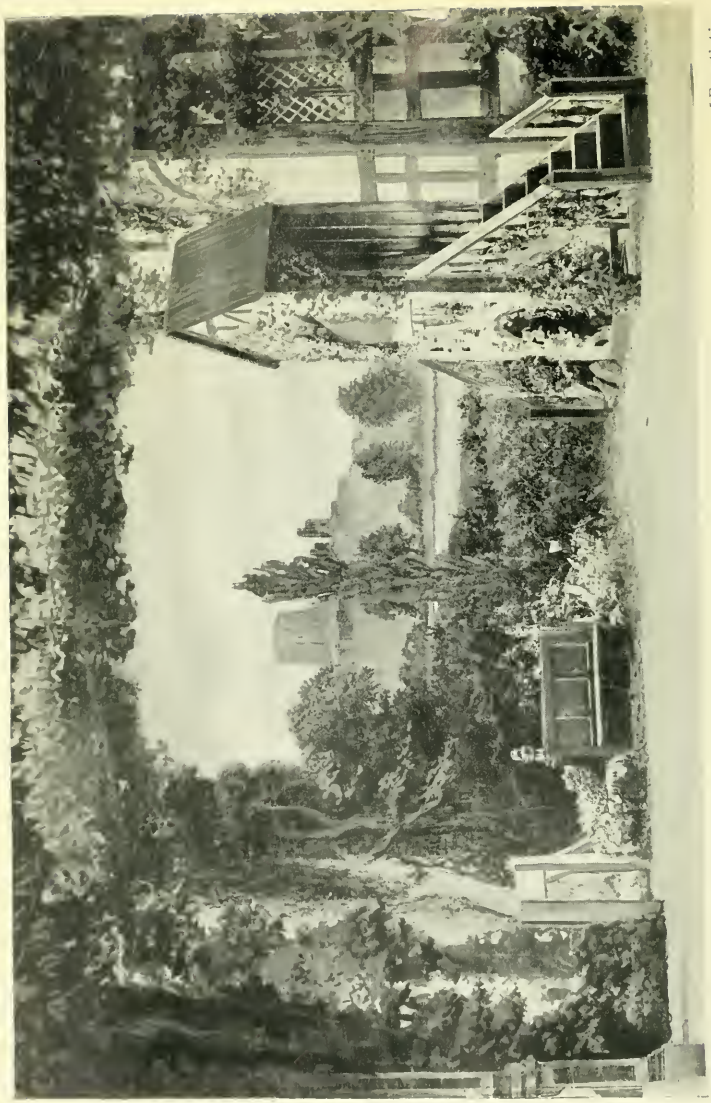


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THE OXFORD AMATEURS



[Frontispiece.

STAGE SETTING FOR "THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR," ACT I.
1888.

THE OXFORD AMATEURS

*A SHORT HISTORY OF THEATRICALS
AT THE UNIVERSITY*

BY

ALAN MACKINNON, M.A.

(TRINITY COLL. OXON.)

WITH A FOREWORD

BY

THE HON. & REV. JAMES ADDERLEY, M.A.

(CH. CH. OXON.)

Ham. My lord, you played once i' the University, you say?

Pol. That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

Hamlet, III. ii.

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

I WISH to record my best thanks to the members of the O.U.D.S., past and present, and all those in and out of Oxford who have generously assisted me in the compilation of this little book. Especially ought I to mention (besides my dear friends Messrs. Adderley and Bouchier) Sir Simeon Stuart, Messrs. W. J. Morris, W. L. Courtney, G. T. Treherne, Arthur Waugh, F. Madan, Philip Carr, A. N. Tayler, Paul Rubens, Sydney P. Hall, the *Oxford Magazine*, the *'Varsity*, and last, but not least, my friend, Mr. Beckles Willson.

The excellent photographs, which of themselves form a connected history of modern Oxford theatricals, are chiefly by Messrs. Hill & Saunders, whose studio has long been a familiar resort of the Society.

A. M.



HON. AND REV. JAMES ADDERLEY.

[To face p. vii.]

FOREWORD

LIKE all great institutions, the O.U.D.S. has come out of great tribulation, and has evolved from hard times and difficult circumstances. I am one of those who tried to flourish in the hard times.

In 1879, when I first went up to Oxford, there was not only no amateur society, but there was not even a respectable professional drama at the university. The "Vic" was the only place of amusement: a low music-hall.

The Censor in his wildest moments has never been so mad as the authorities of Oxford were in those days. By their boycott on the legitimate drama they put a premium on inanity in things theatrical. Why they snubbed the professionals I never could understand. Why the amateurs were suspected I do know. There had been some splendid amateurs at Oxford in former days. Men had acted who had become famous in after life, notably Dean Hole, Dean Purey-Cust, Sir Stephen Gatty, Hon. Alexander Yorke, Mr. Cotsford Dick, Herman Merivale, T. H. Escott, Edmund Yates, H. Reece, and many others.

But, most unfortunately, the "Shooting Stars" fell into bad ways and the authorities suspected them. It was, then, with a severe handicap against us that my

friends, Sir Frederick Adair, Sir Elliott Lees, Sydney Platt, Hubert Astley and myself started the Philothespian Society in 1879.

We were, in fact, the militant suffragists of the movement, and the O.U.D.S. came into the enjoyment of the fruit of our labours. The link between the new and the old Oxford amateurs lies in the names of Alan Mackinnon and Arthur Bouchier. I do not think we should have come to anything without those two stalwarts.

The most interesting interview I ever had was with Mr. Jowett on his accession to the Vice-Cancellariate. Canon Scott-Holland, as senior proctor, sat behind the chair, making faces at me and evidently enjoying my terror of the Master. But Mr. Jowett was really very kind. He made some remarks about Lord Lytton's *Money*, which we were proposing to play without his leave, and finally blessed our programme. He then laid down the principles of the new charter which he promised to grant us.

We were to act Shakespeare only in future, and ladies were to play the female characters. I think he was right in restricting us to Shakespeare, but now, after twenty-five years' good behaviour, I am of opinion that the O.U.D.S. might be allowed to perform other plays. I think the rule about ladies is good.

It was in 1884 that we blossomed out into the "Oxford University Dramatic Society," or the "Ouds" as we have always been called for short. Nothing of the kind succeeds at the university unless it is backed up by the "bloods" and the "blues," so we put on our first committee the presidents of all the crack clubs and the

cricket, football, and boats' captains. We were already in touch with the best dons for our purpose, notably Mr. W. L. Courtney, then a Fellow of New College, and now so well known in all literary circles.

Though Mr. Arthur Bouchier has now developed into one of the greatest artists of our time, it is no exaggeration to say that even twenty-five years ago he was hard to beat for variety and capacity. I have known him play two or three parts in one day, and do them all with the coolness of a professional. Even while a boy at Eton he would astonish "My Dame" (Rev. Thomas Dalton), especially when in the famous scene in *Still Waters Run Deep* he persisted in defying all school regulations by smoking a cigar to the bitter end.

Alan Mackinnon, too, still remains the best amateur stage-manager to be found anywhere, and so great is his genius in that direction that his advice is frequently sought in the profession. There is probably no play of Shakespeare's that he could not sketch out the plans for at a day's notice.

Then there was Harry Irving, already at Oxford, showing that marvellous talent which enables us now to find in the revival of the old Lyceum dramas something much more than the mere echo of his great father's name and fame. Lionel Monckton, too, served his apprenticeship in the O.U.D.S.

It is significant to note how many of the old Oxford actors have shone in other walks of life—in Church and State. Lord Curzon of Kedleston used to act charades with me, and with Lords Middleton and Salisbury. Both he and the Archbishop of York were prominent members of the O.U.D.S. It is even possible that I might have

risen from the ranks if I had not become a Socialist and a black lamb.

I never like to write on the dramatic revival at Oxford without mentioning Frank Benson. For though he never belonged to our society, it was his scholarly performance of "Clytemnestra" in the Balliol *Agamemnon* which did more than anything else to turn the attention of the Oxford dons from the imbecilities of the "Vic" to the seriousness of real art. One of the most beautiful sights of our undergraduate days was to look at Benson's long, black hair flying in the wind as he raced the "three mile" at Oxford and Lillie Bridge. Since then, during this past quarter of a century, no one has done more than he to familiarize the whole nation with Shakespeare.

These few words appear by way of introduction to my friend's most interesting narrative dealing with the Oxford Amateurs. My own acting days are over, but the O.U.D.S. will always have a warm place in my heart. I hope the readers will take with a gigantic grain of salt all the laudatory things which Alan Mackinnon says of their humble servant in these pages.

JAMES ADDERLEY.

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THE OXFORD AMATEURS

CHAPTER I

“Stories strange were told, I trow,
By Baker, Holinshed and Stow
Of Cocks and Bulls and other quere things
That were done in the Reignes of their Kings.
Hough the bloud, etc.”

All Souls' Revels.

It is related of the worthy Dr. Jenkyns, sometime Master of Balliol, that, addressing a young pupil whom he caught inditing some doggerel beginning, “Musty, fusty Jenkyns,” he thus said—

“Young man, there are nine Muses. But if you'll take my advice you'll pay your addresses to one only—Minerva—and have as little to do with the others as possible.”

The story itself is probably mythical and meant to ridicule Jenkyns' alleged weakness as a classical scholar. But certainly if there was one of the “Sisters Nine” whom he would have objected to strenuously, it was Thalia. He had no taste for “amateur theatricals.” Yet it is perhaps hardly surprising that numbers of the youths who for so

many centuries have resorted to the banks of the Isis should be more catholic in their tastes, and, resembling the celebrated Mr. Foote in *Verdant Green*, desire some outlet for their histrionic talents.

It is probable that such histrionic talent is innate in many a college youth, and that it is little likely to find scope for its expression in class recitations or in explanations to proctors and others at moments of crisis. Consequently from the earliest times we find the students at Oxford among the chief promoters of mysteries, moralities and miracle plays.

At the beginning of the twelfth century the miracle play of *St. Catherine* was acted at Oxford, and no doubt the sufferings of the saints and the miracles of the confessors which delighted London and provincial cities were first rehearsed at Christ Church and All Souls. But long before the Reformation these performances had departed from their religious character, and burlesque and irreverence became a feature of them.

“At All Souls did the scholars make mysterie
Full of conceits and drollerie,
At which the crowd did gape right gredilie.”

Out of these Oxford mysteries and miracle plays sprang the “moralities,” in which allegorical impersonations of the Virtues and Vices were introduced as *dramatis personæ*. Some Balliol students are known to have mounted and acted a morality play

Balliol College Private Theatricals.

ON WEDNESDAY, DEC. 9th, 1857.

IN MR. WARRE'S ROOMS,

WILL BE PRESENTED

The well-known COMEDIETTA by TOM TAYLOR, Esq.,

TO OBLIGE BENSON.

CHARACTERS.

MR. BENSON (a Barrister)	MR. OWEN TRELEEK.
MR. TROTTER SOUTHDOWN (his friend)	MR. SCHÖNTHAL.
MR. MEREDITH (a pupil of Mr. Benson)	MR. BELLUMY.
MRS. BENSON	MRS. KEWSEE.
MRS. TROTTER SOUTHDOWN	MRS. MOUNTAIN.

Time.—The Present Day. *Scene.*—Mr. Benson's House.

To be followed by AN ORIGINAL MELODY by QUIS?

After which will be presented immediately,

THE SCREAMING FARCE,

CRINOLINE.

MR. COOBIDY, a Commercial Gentleman in } the Manchester trade, aged 29	MR. F. MOUNTAIN.
CAPTAIN LE BROWN, of the Blues, aged 26	MR. BELLUMY.
JOHN LIPTROT, also an officer of the Blues, aged 30	MR. BLACK.
JACOB GRIMES, a representative of the indus- } trial interests	MR. TRELEEK.
MRS. COOBIDY, the Commercial Gent's wife	MRS. KEWSEE.
BELLA, Ditto's niece, aged 19	MISS GOODCHILD.
MISS TITE, a fashionable Spinster, aged --?	MADAME RIZIA.
NANCY BITTERS, a Domestic, with an excellent } character from her last place, but not so } well provided for the next	MISS ECEER.

VIVAT REGINA.

PROGRAMME BALLIOL AMATEURS.

1857.

[To face p. 3

in the reign of Henry VI. Moralities ushered in the regular drama during Elizabeth's reign.

But if, as often happened, buffoonery and rude impersonation were the aim of the undergraduate of the Middle Ages, he had plenty of scope for his talents in the ancient custom of the Boy Bishop. The Boy Bishop was chosen on St. Nicholas' Day (December 6) to superintend the revels which lasted until Holy Innocents' Day (December 28).

Naturally the ceremony was one which would appeal to irreverent undergraduates who might, or might not, subsequently become grave dignitaries of the Church. In country towns some pupil of the Grammar School was chosen; in Oxford, some undergraduate was arrayed in episcopal vestments and attended by a crowd of subordinates in priestly dress, got up songs and dances, and administered a mock blessing on the auditors, who, says old Bishop Hall, "stood grinning in expectation of that ridiculous benediction." This practice, at both Universities, was accompanied by secular shows and entertainments, and was the occasion of such dramatic representation as then obtained hearing at Oxford. The undergraduates of Christ Church were responsible in the fifteenth century for a Latin play performed before King Henry VI, and these were of frequent occurrence.

After the suppression by Elizabeth of the Boy Bishop, plays in English began to be acted by the

students. In fact, during this reign there was a dramatic activity corresponding to that in the world outside. The Queen visited Oxford in 1566, when plays were acted before her in Christ Church Hall, one being in Latin, entitled, *Progne*, written by a Christ Church canon, and another, *Palæmon and Archyte*, in English, by Richard Edwards. In the latter a pack of real hounds were turned loose in Tom Quadrangle to lend realism to a hunting scene. But "realism" was then in its infancy: the audience was unprepared for it, and the Quad was emptied amidst great uproar. Of Queen Bess herself old Aycliffe writes—

"And as she was in the daytime pleased with scholastic exercise, so was she diverted at night with tragedies and comedies acted by scholars: for which Her Majesty with much sweetness returned them her thanks in a Latin oration: and with a promise that she would be always ready to promote and encourage them she took a most gracious farewell."

On two evenings during the visit of Prince Alberto to Oxford in 1583, "after sumptuous suppers in his lodging, he personally was present with his traine in the Hall; first at the plaieing of a pleasant comedie intituled *Rivales*; then at the setting out of a verie statelie Tragedie named *Dido*, wherein the Queen's banket (with Eneas narration of the destruction of Troie) was livelie described in a march-paine patterne; there was also a goodlie sight of

hunters with full crie of a kennell of hounds, Mercurie and Iris descending and ascending from and to a high place, the tempest wherein it hailed small confects, rained rose-water, and snew an artificiall kind of snow, all strange, marvellous, and abundant.”

On the occasion of her second visit to Oxford, in 1592, Elizabeth was lodged in Christ Church. The usual plays were held in the Hall, but a committee was appointed to manage them. This committee consisted, not only of members of Christ Church, but also of the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors and only those officials of the University who were in authority within the college walls. By proclamation of the committee, scholars who could not gain admission to the Hall were forbidden to make outcries or “undecent noyse” in the Quadrangle or on the Hall stairs. The punishment for breaking this rule was imprisonment or other penalty, as the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors decided.

A play entitled *Vertumnus* was performed by members of St. John’s College early in the reign of James I. Three of the scholars, dressed as witches, came out to meet the King, and foretold for him a long and happy reign.

In 1607 the graduates and undergraduates of St. John’s College met and appointed a Prince of the Revels, an office which seems apparently to have grown out of the ancient one of the Boy Bishop.

He was chosen to be a kind of master of the Christmas ceremonies, or, in other words, a "Lord of Misrule": which honourable office lasted until it, and other gaieties, were done away with by the Puritans. Therefore, when the members of St. John's College reintroduced this office, they were following a precedent of their own in 1577, in addition to following the example of Gray's Inn in 1594.

"After long uncertainty and an enormous amount of discussion," according to Mr. Courtney,¹ to whom the modern institution of acting at Oxford owes a great debt, "it was decided to make the first appointment by formal election. The general choice fell on a Mr. Thomas Tucker, who in after life obtained the third stall in the Cathedral Church at Bristol. No sooner was he aware of his new dignity than he instantly hid himself (being of a retiring disposition), and for some time managed to elude his over-zealous subjects: he was, however, soon discovered, and forced to accept his new honours. His formal title was:—'The most magnificent and renowned Thomas, by the favour of Fortune, Prince of Alba Fortunata, Lord St. John's, High Regent of ye Hall, Duke of St. Giles's, Marquesse of Magdalen's, Landgrave of ye Grove, County Palatine of ye Cloisters, Chief bailiff of ye Beaumonts, High Ruler of Rome, Master of the Manor of Waltham, Governor of Gloucester Green.' The first task of the newly-elected King being to provide himself with money,

¹ *Murray's Magazine*, 1889.



WHATELY AS
MRS. BENSON,
G. G. T. TREHERNE
AS BENSON,
1857.



H. A. HILLS AS
MRS. SOUTHDOWN,
H. C. MERVILLE AS MR.
TROTTER SOUTHDOWN,
1857.

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an indiscriminate collection was made, one of the contributors being Mr. Laud, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. This was followed by the public installation of the Prince, which took place on the evening of St. Andrew's Day. *Ara Fortunæ, or Fortune's Altar*, was the first play produced, but its success was not an unmixed one. The Hall being crowded, there was very little room for the actual performance of the play; while at the second outburst of admiration from the audience, the canopy of the Altar of Fortune suddenly collapsed. No damage was done, but the Prince's Fool sat down rather hurriedly at his monarch's feet, and broke his staff in two."

The second performance was given on Christmas Day, when Prince Tucker was given a banquet which included the usual boar's head. The latter was brought in to the accompaniment of the following song—

"The Boare is dead!
Loe heare is his head;
 What man could have done more
Than his head of to strike,
Meleager like,
 And bring it as I doe before.

He livinge spoyled
Where good men toyled,
 Which made kind Ceres sorrye;
But now dead and drawne
Is very good brawne,
 And we have brought it for ye.

Then sett down ye Swineyard,
The foe to ye Vineyard;
 Let Bacchus crowne his fall.
Lett this Boares-head and mustard
Stand for Pigg, Goose, and Custard,
 And so ye are welcome all."

An ingenious interlude, consisting of *Saturnalia*, finished off the evening. It seems that its success was chiefly due to no strangers being present. On December 29 the tragedy *Philomela* was performed, the Prince, suffering from a very bad cold, just managing to enact the part of "Tereus." The carpenters had by no means completed the stage; but this appears to have been a minor consideration. The representation of a show called *Time's Complaint* on New Year's Day was, however, not at all successful. The procession of the Prince and his suite through the Quadrangle, to the accompaniment of three volleys from fifty or sixty guns, was carried out without mishap; but misfortunes arose with the commencement of the play. The "prologue," having only six lines to say, was totally unable to remember any of them: the "Goodwife Spigott," one of the comic characters, appeared before she should have done, and tried to fill in the interval with "patter" which the audience did not appreciate: the comedian acting the part of a drunken cobbler gave far too realistic a representation, and only succeeded in filling his hearers with disgust: and lastly, the assembling of the entire



ROBERT REECE AS NANCY BITTERS.

1857.

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GEO. THOMAS TREHERNE AS BILLY BARLOW

1857.

company so filled the stage that it was nearly impossible to proceed with the play. However, the ill-success of this venture was atoned for on January 10 by the success of a mock play entitled *The Seven Days of the Week*, afterwards produced for the benefit of the Vice-Chancellor and many learned Doctors. This was followed on January 15 by *Philomathes*, performed with considerable success. The Canons of Christ Church then invited the Prince to a rival entertainment called *Yule-tide*, which contained many jokes at his expense. When his wrath had died down, and being unwilling to lay down his dignity, he decided to produce a "Vigilate" instead of a form of abdication. At this "Vigilate" every member of the College had to be present. On those who made an attempt to go to bed, the following vengeance was taken: "The marshals were sent to knock at the chambers of those who were absent: if no answer was returned, they had full authority to break open the door, to seize the delinquents in their night-shirts, and to carry them down in state to the Hall. The procession was most august and formal. The marshals walked first, with lights in their hands; two squires followed, one bearing the gown and the other the hat of their captive; then came two other squires carrying his doublet and breeches. Next followed the prisoner himself, carried in a chair and covered with a blanket, and the procession was ended by a last

squire carrying his shoes and stockings." At the resignation of the Prince on Shrove Tuesday, the 9th of February, the close of his reign was commemorated by an exhibition entitled *Ira Sen Tumulus Fortunæ*. At the end of this, a successful, performance, the Prince was conducted to his own private chamber in solemn funeral order. "First came attendants bearing lights and torches, followed by scholars who bore on their shoulders a tomb, adorned with scutcheons and devices appertaining to the Prince's dignity. The next figure in the procession was the Prince himself alone in his scholar's gown as the chief mourner, after whom walked the rest of his Council, likewise attired in gowns and in deep mourning, to accompany their quondam lord to his last resting-place." By special request, one last entertainment was given on February 13, this being the performance of *Periander, the Tyrant of Corinth*. Mr. Tucker appeared as "Periander," and gave a final exhibition of his powers. It may be mentioned that, in the course of the play, he very nearly deprived one of his fellow-actors of his life. While pretending to kill "Eugenia," his daughter, he accidentally drove his dagger through her clothes, fortunately avoiding any vital part. This seems to have been his last way of celebrating the close of his Christmas Princeship.

I cannot ascertain, though, perhaps, Mr. Andrew Lang might do so, if this particular Oxford amateur

was the original of that "Tommy Tucker" who "sang for his supper," still so famous in countless nurseries. But it all gives us a striking picture of how Oxford undergraduates diverted themselves in Shakespeare's day. I fear we are far less pompous and ponderous in these days, although, as will be seen later in these pages when dealing with the Greek plays, we are fully as conscientious.

King Charles I and his Queen went to Oxford in August 1636, accompanied by Prince Rupert and his brother, the Prince Elector Palatine. In the evening a performance was given of a comedy called *Passions Calmed, or the Settling of the Floating Island*. Antony Wood describes it thus—

"It was acted on a goodly stage reaching from the upper end of the Hall almost to the hearth place, and had on it three or four openings on each side thereof, and partitions between them, much resembling the desks or studies in a library, out of which the actors issued forth. The said partitions they could draw in and out at their pleasure upon a sudden, and thrust out new in their places according to the nature of the screen; whereon were represented churches, dwelling-houses, palaces, etc., which for its variety had very great admiration. At the upper end a great fair sheet of two leaves that opened and shut without any visible help. Within which was set forth the emblem of the whole play in a very sumptuous manner. Therein was a perfect

resemblance of the billows of the sea rolling, and an artificial island, with churches and houses heaving up and down and floating, as also rocks, trees, and hills. Many other fine pieces of work and landscapes did also appear at sundry openings thereof, and a chair also seen to come gliding on the stage without any visible help. All these representations being the first (as I have been informed) that were used on the English stage, and therefore giving great content, I have been therefore the more punctual in describing them, to the end that posterity might know that which is now seen in the play houses at London, belonging to His Majesty and the Duke of York, is originally due to the invention of Oxford scholars."

On the next day a performance of Cartwright's *Royal Slave* was witnessed by the royal party in Christ Church Hall, R. Busby took the part of "Cratander." They must have been pleased, for the Queen, later in the year, borrowed the dresses and scenery for a performance of the play at Hampton Court. Cartwright personally superintended the production, but with less success than at Oxford.

Mention should not be omitted in any book on Oxford amateur theatricals of the All Souls' Mallard Feast, as it was called, which was often the occasion of a good deal of ingenious acting.

". . . Before I leave this Colledge," writes



H. T. HOOD AS APOLLO,
G. GUMBLETON AS BACCHUS.
1864.



G. GUMBLETON
AS KARL IN "LURLINE."
1864.



F. M. ALLEYNE AS MERCURY.
1865.



M. H. PATERSON.
1865.

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Baskerville, "and the good people in it, I must remember their mallard night. ffor the grave Judges have sometime their festivall days, and dance together at Sergeants Inn; The Country people will have their Lott-meads, and Parish ffeasts; And schollers must have some times of mirth to meliorate their great sobriety, for

“ There is a time
 When wit and wine
 Will tickle the pate with pleasure,
 And make one breath
 And vent with ease
 The debates o’ the mind at leisure.’

“ As touching the first institution of this Ceremony (which is very ancient saith Mr. Stodman) I cannot give any account of it; but when they have a mind to keep it, the time is always within a night or two of All Souls, then there are six Electors wch nominate ye Lord of the mallard, wch Lrd. is to beare the expenses of the Ceremony. When he is chosen he appoints six officers, who march before him with white staves in their hands, and meddalls hanging upon their breasts tied with a large blew ribbond, upon ye meddalls is cut on the one side the Lrd. of the mallard with his officers, on the other ye mallard as he is carried upon a long Pole.

“ When ye Lrd. is seated in his chair with his officers of state (as above sd.) before him, they carry him thrice about the Quadrangle and sing this song—

“ Griffin, Turkey, Bustard, Capon,
 Let other hungry mortalls gape on,
 And on their bones with stomacks fall hard,
 But let All Souls men have the mallard.
 Hough the bloud of King Edward, by ye bloud of King
 Edward,
 It was a swapping swapping mallard.
 Stories strange were told, I trow,
 By Baker, Holinshed and Stow
 Of Cocks and Bulls and other quere things
 That were done in the Reignes of their Kings.
 Hough the bloud, etc.
 Then let us sing and dance a galliard
 To the remembrance of the mallard,
 And as the mallard does in Poole
 Let’s dabble, dive and duck in Bowle.
 Hough the bloud, etc.’ ”

In *Evelyn’s Diary*, under date of July 10, 1669, there is the passage—

“ The next day began the more solemn lectures in all the Faculties, which were performed in their several scholes, where all the Inceptor Doctors did their exercises, the Professors having first ended their reading. The assembly now returned to the Theater, where the ‘*Terrae filius*’ (the Universitie Buffoone) entertained the auditorie with a tedious, abusive, sarcastical rhapsodie, most unbecoming the gravitie of the Universitie, and, that so grossly, that unless it be suppress’d, it will be of ill consequence, as I afterwards plainly express’d my sense of it both to the Vice-Chancellor, and several Heads of Houses, who were perfectly asham’d of it, and resolved to take care of it in future. The old facetious



C. F. CUMMING AS DUCHESS.
1865.



E. H. SELFE.
1866.



THE HON. A. G. YORKE.
1865.



H. D. TRAILL.
1865.

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way of raillying upon the questions was left off, falling wholly upon persons, so that 'twas rather licentious lyeing and railing than genuine noble witt. In my life I was never witness of so shameful entertainment. After this ribauldry the Proctors made their speeches. Then began the Musick Act, vocal and instrumental, above in the ballustrade corridore opposite to the Vice-Chancellor's seat."

Clearly, the "Universite Buffoone" thus deplored by the diarist would have been far better employed acting "Falstaff" or "Bottom the Weaver" than in wasting his histrionic talents in such a manner.

Dr. Gayer (afterwards Dean of Christ Church), during a long residency on his Studentship, was celebrated as a writer of Latin poetry when events of especial academic interest occurred. He was also pre-eminent as a dramatic writer, *Dido* and *The Rivals*, among others, being his works.

This worthy, we are told, was once engaged on a controversy with Dr. Rainold, of Queen's College, on the subject of the morality of stage plays. The doctor's chief aversion was for men to appear in women's clothes on the stage; and he supported his arguments by lengthy quotations from the Book of Deuteronomy and the example of Achilles, etc. Indeed, he emphatically considered actors to be infamous persons, and as long as it lay in his power he discouraged any uprising of the dramatic spirit amongst the undergraduates.

CHAPTER II

“The Squire and the Sileger
Were sitting both indoors;
They wept like anything to see
The lack of good actors:
‘If we could only found a club,’
They said, ‘We’d soon *make scores.*’”
Song of the Olympians.

THE wine-bibbing, card-playing, dice-throwing eighteenth century was a century very unfavourable for amateur theatricals at Oxford, the undergraduates seemingly having other and more fashionable forms of diversion. Yet Latin plays, charades and even farces are occasionally performed at the different colleges. But acting and the drama formed no feature of University life, as it is described to us by Gibbon, Colman the Younger, and others, although many students were the authors of plays written in their undergraduate days. There is even the tradition of a farce both written and acted by Lord North (George III’s Prime Minister) at Trinity College, but of these chance performances little or nothing has been preserved. Coming down to a later day we find certain students at Trinity and Oriel and Pembroke acting charades and farces of the Foote order privately in their rooms, and there is an occa-

sional quasi-public burst about Commemoration time. There is a legend that no less a person than John Henry Newman not only wrote an opera in his undergraduate days (unregenerate days, according to Wesley) but tried to form a Trinity Musical Society in order to have it performed. But we may dismiss as apocryphal and the invention of an enemy of the future Cardinal that the title of the opera was *Jezebel, or the Scarlet Lady of Rome*, while one of the alleged stage directions was, "Enter twenty-four devils, fiddling furiously." A contemporary of Newman's, Denison of Oriel (afterwards the Arch-deacon), also, it is believed, endeavoured, but unsuccessfully, to found a dramatic club. He himself had great dramatic powers and was particularly strong in elocution. Mozley records his once having summoned the college cook into the Hall and rated him in the style of Garrick's "Coriolanus" for fifteen minutes because he had presumed to serve rhubarb tart hot, instead of cold. This speech was afterwards put into a college farce, beginning (or ending), "And thou, base culinary caitiff, dost dare to mock our fevered vitals with this ridiculous mess of reeking rhubarb, hissing from thy detestable stew-pans!"

But to tell the truth, until early in the Victorian era Oxford was a dull place for the undergraduate, without athletic sports or decent distractions, so that the student had perforce to fling his high spirits and animal zest into Puseyism, Chartism or some of the

other 'isms with which Oxford then abounded. But all this began to show signs of change about 1845. I believe a group of Eton students had a good deal to do with the change, but to even more was it owing to the new fashion of outdoor sports which lent a keener zest to life and made the undergraduate return to more joyous recreation when he was perforce indoors than would have been approved by the highly-strung, sloping-shouldered, bulging-browed fraternity. To Brasenose belongs the credit of being the first to start those college theatricals, which, in spite of one or two checks, have gone on ever since, gathering strength with time until they were able finally to conquer and overcome official prejudice and become, as they are now, if not a part of the official curriculum, at least a regular Oxford institution.

In speaking of the dramatic talent at Oxford, we must not forget the illustrious Mr. Foote, as described in the pages of that Oxford classic, *The Adventures of Mr. Verdant Green*. "Mr. Foote's rooms," we are told, "were altogether a very gorgeous instance of a Collegian's apartment: and Mr. Foote himself was a striking example of the theatrical undergraduate. Possessing great powers of mimicry and facial expression, he was able to imitate any peculiarities which were to be observed either in Dons or Undergraduates, in Presidents or Scouts. He could sit down at his piano, and give



HON. A. G. YORKE.
A. M. HEATHCOTE.
1866.



DAVENPORT.
J. BIDDER.
1866.



COTSFORD DICK AS CECILIA.
1866.



SIR STEPHEN H. GATTY.
1867.

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you—after the manner of Theodore Hook, or John Parry—a burlesque opera; singing high up in his head for the prima donna, and going down to his boots for the basso profundo of the great Lablache. He could also draw corks, and make monkeys, cats, dogs, a farm-yard, or a full band, with equal facility. He would also give you Mr. Keeley, in ‘Patsy Baker’: Mr. Paul Bedford, in ‘I believe you, my bo-o-oy!’ Mr. Buckstone as ‘Cousin Joe’ and ‘Box’ and ‘Cox’: or Mr. Wright as ‘Paul Pry’ or ‘Mr. Felix Fluffy.’ Besides the comedians, Mr. ‘Footelights’ would also give you the leading tragedians, and would favour you (through his nose) with the popular burlesque imitation of Mr. Charles Kean as ‘Hablet.’ He would fling himself down on the carpet and grovel there as ‘Hamlet’ does in the play-scene, and would exclaim with frantic vehemence, ‘He poised hib i’ the garded, for his estate. His dabe’s Godzago: the story is extadt, ad writted id very choice Italiad. You shall see adod, how the burderer gets the love of Godzago’s wife.’ Moreover, as his room possessed the singularity of a trap-door leading down into a wine-cellar, Mr. ‘Footelights’ was thus enabled to leap down into the aperture, and carry on the personation of ‘Hamlet’ in Ophelia’s grave.”

Although, as one of its alumni confesses, Brase-nose might not have been as much to the fore in the class-lists in the middle of the “forties” of the last century, they had “as good oars, as skilful

cross-country riders and as prominent humourists as any community in Oxford, and we were reckoned excellent hands at inventing new kinds of diversion. Legends of the exploits of Theodore Hook, Thomas Ingoldsby, and of Surtees (the author of the immortal *Jorrocks*) still lingered in the college, and it had recently sent into the reading world two admirable Oxford jest-books—*The Art of Pluck* and *Hints to Freshmen*, the latter the composition of that most genial of writers, Canon Reynolds Hole, whose towering form had just been invested with the sleeves which marked the ‘new-made Baccalaure.’ ”

The latest performance of Brasenose men in the way of relieving the tedium of the Lent Term had been “the institution of a fancy-dress ball in college, all the guests being of the sterner sex, but sundry ludicrous assumptions of female attire furnishing a semblance of the other element in ordinary reunions. The best mimic among the undergraduates had appeared in lawn sleeves, and made a speech at supper in exact imitation of the tone and manner of the late principal, Dr. Gilbert, newly promoted to the See of Chichester; the stroke oar of our boat, a hirsute giant, had assumed the garb of a Red Indian, and made himself so intolerable, as the violence of his exertions in the war-dance caused the paint with which he was plentifully besmeared to dissolve, that he had been forcibly requested to



F. H. SELFE AS PHEADIA.
W. E. GOSCHEN AS THESEUS.
1866.



A. B. PAGNOLD AS MINOS.
W. R. ANSON AS DISCORDRA.
18-6.



W. L. SELFE AS DUC DE CHARTRES.
1866.



C. F. CUMMING AS ARIADNE.
1866.

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retire to his wigwam. In fact, to the somewhat feeble standard of University fun, the whole thing had been a great success and an exquisite joke, and the more enterprising spirits in the college longed for a new field of amusement."

At that time it happened to be the turn of this undergraduate, W. C. Bedford, to "sit in the Schools," where he passed the time in whispered conversation with his neighbour, George Robert Comyn Chilton, of Christ Church. The suggestion of theatricals arose, and Chilton asked Bedford if he knew Talfourd, also of Christ Church. Bedford replied that he did not, and received an invitation to meet him. Frank Talfourd was an enthusiastic dramatist, and was then engaged on his now well-known *Macbeth Travestie*, at the reading of the first draft of which Bedford was present. When it was finally decided that theatricals would be better than a fancy-dress ball, Bedford and his friends arranged to get the "Travestie" up for production at the Henley Regatta of that year, 1847. Talfourd took the part of "Lady Macbeth," as he admitted that he had written the part specially for himself; Samuel Brandram, of Trinity, acted "Macbeth"; and Bedford, besides sharing the stage management with Talfourd, was "Rosse." The other members of the cast made up an extremely scratch company, as most of them had never attempted acting before. Indeed, many of the members were selected for very

obvious reasons. For example, one country gentleman was given the part of "First Witch" simply because his rooms in Brasenose were large and remote, and therefore particularly suited for rehearsals. But in spite of this, and in spite of a horrible orchestra and terribly shabby scenery, the performance is recorded as having been a great success. Bedford, describing it in his *Reminiscences*, says—

"The most amusing and conspicuous figure of all was the representative of the principal of 'Banquo's' assassins, 'Paddy' Nicholson—afterwards a banker, and author of sundry grave works on the currency question—then the hugest and rowdiest of Irish undergraduates. He could never rehearse, he declared, except in his stocking-feet. No one who was present will easily forget the dismay of our prompter, a little man from Drury Lane, recommended by W. H. Payne, when Paddy proceeded to deliver an entirely new version of his principal speech. He had armed himself with a huge blunderbuss, or *trabuco*, with several barrels; and upon the prompter venturing to interfere, he turned and took deliberate aim at him with the firearm, and continued, in a more stentorian voice than usual—

"The young bhoj, beneath the moon's pale light,
 The turf I lit my poipe with sees,
 And says, "I scent tabaccky in the breeze."
 "Come on," says Banquo, "I don't care a curse!"
 The son replies, "Go, father, and fare worse!"

I need hardly add that he was permitted to use the Hibernian version. But the eccentricities of some of our recruits were much more embarrassing on the night of the representation, for instance, . . . a despairing voice suddenly burst on my ear: 'That wretch W—— has got screwed, and vows he won't go on without a sword'—as the 'Gentlewoman,' forsooth—and a dirk had to be assigned to the fair creature before the sleep-walking scene could be presented."

Both Brandram and Talfourd were excellent in their respective parts, and so was Winter (George Robert) of B.N.C. The last-named was that year rowing in the 'Varsity boat, and he was greeted with shouts of delight when he appeared on the stage in the well-known hard straw hat and broad blue ribbon of the Oxford eight. The reason for this innovation was that he had mislaid his helmet. Bedford says, "He was a good fencer, too, and his combat with 'Macbeth' went off with immense spirit."

Bombastes Furioso was given as an after-piece, Talfourd taking the part of "Bombastes"; Frederick Pigot Johnson, Christ Church, the "King"; Brandram, "Fusbos"; and Bedford "Distaffina."

The first act, after the appearance of the whole cast in their night-gear with chamber candlesticks, and the ensuing chorus and dance, was closed by a tableau modelled on the then famous print of the

pas de quatre, in which were represented Taglioni and other stars of the ballet—"Macbeth" and his consort, "Macduff" and "Rosse" being the four central figures.

In the following winter the Talfourds, father and son, Brandram, and several of their friends, used to act at the Judge's house in Russell Square. "On more than one of these occasions," says the Rev. Bedford, "a most brilliant audience approved our efforts, chief justices and chief barons and other legal friends of the host mingled with literary men like Dickens and Albert Smith, and artists like Leech and the Keeleys. I was not there on the night when Serjeant Talfourd—as he was then—essayed to act 'Adrastus,' and signally failed to realize his own conception; but I was one of the performers on a night recorded by Crabb Robinson, when the diarist with prescient judgment picks out 'one Brandon, an Oxford man,' for high approval and promise of distinction in the histrionic field."

The various members of the party returned to Oxford with great ideas of "Oxford Dramatic Amateurs," and immediately turned their attention to the programme for the coming Henley meeting, when was produced *Ion*, by Talfourd Senior. The part of "Clemanthe" was taken by R. M. Preston, and both his elocution and make-up were excellent. But the production was attended by several unlucky



S. H. STUART AS UNCLE BROWSER,
1877. [*To face p. 24.*]



C. G. COTTSFORD DICK,
1867.



W. R. BARNES,
1867.



accidents. Purey-Cust, of B.N.C. (the present Dean of York), deserted his part for the pleasures of a Queen's Ball, and his part had to be read by G. W. Latham (B.N.C.), who was not suited to meet his requirements. But an unfortunate event happened, that probably had much to do with the fact that no more performances were given at Henley. Bedford describes it in these words—

“ I had a servant, Adam by name, a vast favourite with my undergraduate friends, a bit of a character, and, alas, a bit of a tippler also. He was set to act as checktaker at the top of the stairs which led to the loft or long workshop, which served as our theatre, as well as a place of worship for some heterodox denomination on Sundays. Just as I was dressed for the first piece I heard a horrible din of voices and scuffling, and in a moment one of our managers appeared in mingled amusement and wrath. The Mayor of Henley had obtained from me a free admission for self and party; but on presenting my order had been promptly denied admission by Adam, doubly vigilant and consequential in consequence of many friendly drinks round, which had been going on in honour of some Oxford victory; and after a brief altercation the affair had culminated by Adam knocking his worship down-stairs, an act hardly to be condoned even by the abject apology immediately proffered.”

But to return to the subject; writing about the

performance of *Ion*, and the difficulties under which it was performed, Bedford says—

“Our wardrobe was very shady indeed. Austin (Wiltshire Stanton Austin, of Exeter) and I, who played ‘Ion’s’ two fellow-conspirators, had but one pair of sandals between us, about which we squabbled all the while we were off the stage. But the second night the most ludicrous *finale* took place. The play ends by ‘Ion,’ who has slain himself to appease the anger of the gods, hearing the messenger announce that the plague is stayed, raising himself for a moment and exclaiming, ‘The offering is accepted; all is well!’ Our messenger was no actor, though a most popular fellow, and generally required to be pushed on after his cue had been delivered. On this night he totally lost his presence of mind, and regardless of the frantic whispers of the prompter, blurted out, ‘The people have got well of the disease!’ The corpse of ‘Ion’ quivered with irrepressible laughter, and down went the curtain.”

On the night of the University boat-race in 1849, the Royalty Theatre (Miss Kelly’s) was hired, and a varied programme was put on. The *Macbeth Travestie* was preceded by a drama entitled *Patronage*, the characters of which were sustained by Brandram, another friend of Talfourd’s, and Mrs. Stirling. Next followed *Box and Cox*, with Brandram and Talfourd in the name parts, and Bedford as



F. E. SHAFTO ADAIR
AS VILLIKINS.
1879.



F. E. SHAFTO ADAIR AS MRS. BOUNCER
IN "BOX AND COX."
1879.



HON. J. ADDERLEY.
1879.



F. E. S. ADAIR, H. D. ASTLEY, HON. J.
ADDERLEY, AND W. OGLE IN "VILLIKINS
AND HIS DINAH."
1879.

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“Bouncer”: and afterwards a scene from *Othello* for the two Talfourds.

The last exhibition of the O.D.A. was at Maidenhead in the same year, when again several plays were staged. A farce by Talfourd, called *Number 1A; Box and Cox*; and Reynolds Hole's *Hamlet Travestie*: these constituted the programme. In *Box and Cox* the two Talfourds were the hatter and the printer. Brandram could not act, and only sang “Caller Herrin'” between the pieces. The *Hamlet Travestie* was, according to the Rev. Bedford, “literally murdered for want of rehearsals.” He goes on to say, “The first act went fairly, Murray (George William Murray, of Queen's), an admirable singer, doing justice to the ghost; and the first scene of the second act, between ‘Polonius’ (Cust) and ‘Ophelia’ (the writer) was smooth enough; but the remainder of the piece was a scramble with the prompter and the property man, and a disgraceful hash altogether.”

The flame of the drama continued on the whole to burn brightly at Oxford during the next twenty years. But there was no organized club or society. Balliol and Brasenose took the lead, and on the 9th of December, 1857, a really distinguished performance took place, acted by Balliol amateurs. As will be seen by the programme, herewith reproduced, two pieces were given, the theatre being the rooms of Mr. Edmund Warre, now Provost of Eton. The

celebrated Tom Taylor, afterwards Editor of *Punch*, came especially to Oxford to attend the performance. As to the cast, a key is necessary. The "Owen Treleek" is G. G. T. Treherne, who still survives, a well-known Lincoln's Inn solicitor: "Shonthal" was H. C. Merivale: "Bellumy" is Edmund Warre: "Mrs. Kewsee" was Mr. Whately: "Mrs. Mountain" was the late Judge Hills: "Quis" was Treherne, who wrote the "original melody 'Billy Barlow.'" In the farce, "Mr. Black" was C. A. Dawson, and the two ladies, "Madam Rizia" and "Miss Greer," were none other than Robert Reece, afterwards well known to a generation of play-goers. Reece, who was born in 1838, was the life and soul of amateur theatricals at Balliol during his undergraduate days. He was a native of Barbados, "Bimshire," as the natives proudly call that tropical island, and this fact exposed Reece to a good many shafts of wit from his fellow-collegians. He was, for instance, supposed to know all about the price of sugar, and on one occasion he was awakened at six o'clock one winter's morning to receive a deputation to protest against the local grocer's charge of a half-penny more the pound for that article, an imposition which was alleged to have been instigated by Reece. The young dramatist really desired to write sentimental plays instead of farces, but Merivale's remark on hearing one of Reece's early efforts read out in Warre's rooms, that it was far too sugary,

settled the matter. Reece produced no more plays of sentiment while at Oxford. He was a capital actor of female parts, and showed himself most adroit in doubling the rôles of "Miss Tight" and "Nancy Bitters." I shall have a good deal to say about the acting of female characters later on, but, in the opinion of the best judges, the only man at Oxford who surpassed Reece in this line was H. D. Astley.

"My scholar times at Oxford," writes Mr. Herman Merivale, "such as they may have been, were spent, as has been my way of life, with older men. Youth had its fling in odd forms, as things went. We were much impressed by a sermon of the famous Mr. Spurgeon, in which he said there would be no harm in dancing if the sexes mixed not, but only danced apart. We took that hint, and did; inaugurating Spurgeon balls in Balliol. Lyrist and dramatist afterwards, Robert Reece would take the piano. The youths who stood for ladies took their coats off for a sign, and we danced into the small hours merrily enough. Bouncers and Jokers were ever to the fore. Then, the theatricals! Unknown before, we brought them into Balliol under the tutelary care of a strolling actor who came to Oxford with an entertainment and stage-managed us. He was short and red and earnest, and said that within a few years he would be dead or famous. I never heard of him again, so I suppose he's dead. We enacted an Olympic play-

let of Tom Taylor's, called *To Oblige Benson*, and a farce of the day called *Crinoline*. Our cast included, amongst others, two who became playwrights, one who turned solicitor, an Egyptian judge, a man of fashion, a distinguished civil servant, and a headmaster. The latter was our *jeune premier*, a strong-knit and determined man, great in the 'Varsity eight as on all rivers afterwards, who practically bossed the undergraduate farces of the college from a fixed purpose to have his own way in everything. I do not know that he was a great scholar; but when he told the examiners to give him a first class, they did. He certainly was not a great actor; but we engaged him out of policy, otherwise we might not have been allowed to act. Still in my mind's eye I can see his stalwart figure now, in a frock-coat and a violent perspiration, stammering out something inaudibly his *jeune premier's* creed: 'Where women are concerned, I am inflammable. And glory in it.' And he is headmaster at Eton now."

The little red professional made us all up. And "Toody," as in *To Oblige Benson* my fair wife was called, looked, in a wig of close curls, I must say more wildly unfeminine than any performer I remember. We got some regular scenery down from London. The larger gates of the college, which was much excited, had to be opened to let that scenery in. That more distressed our dear mild college Dean than anything connected with the show. "Tay



Asketch at the Vic

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INTERIOR OF THE VICTORIA THEATRE.

1879.

[To face p. 30.]

tay!" he said, with a strange interjection that belonged to him, "those gates have only been opened once before in my memory, when the Prince Consort came!" It was an odd performance, I should think, though we had crowded houses for two nights under difficulties, since illness took us from the staircase chosen only the day before. And in the space of time remaining to us, our theatre had to be moved bodily to other rooms hard by, and cut about to suit the new proportions.

There exists a great sympathy between Oxford and Cambridge. I am reminded of the small boy who, when asked what the constituents of the atmosphere were, replied, "Equal parts of Oxygen and Cambrigen." Whatever one wants the other will soon hanker for. But Oxford was "more stern than Cambridge, which about that time, under Burnandian and kindred auspices, started upon its famous A.D.C. We wanted one, but Dame Oxford, more pedant or more prudent than Dame Cambridge, said us nay. So some of us indulged our proclivities by forming a little club of our own, and acting in other towns when we could get the chance. I have no reason to think that our performances were great. The strangest was the last. I had just taken my degree as Bachelor of Arts, when, with Reece and Ponsonby and another, I joined a provincial company for the fun of it, touring at Leamington and Coventry under our red friend's management.

Leamington was distinctly fashionable; Coventry was distinctly not. At the first city all was as it should be; at the second it was nothing of the kind. At Leamington our houses were full; at Coventry they were exceedingly empty. Touring companies, be it remembered, were not the functions that they now are. They were still the days of the Bingleys and the Snellicci."

The Balliol amateurs added a new farce to their Coventry repertory, and as Reece, who had not been with them at Leamington, was to bring the only book with him from town for study the night before, much depended on him. He did not arrive until the day of the performance at midday. "We rushed upon the book to copy out our parts, and then and there discovered that there was one more woman in the play than there was in the company. A brief and summary consultation resulted in our dressing up our red-poll'd manager in female guise, and in the evening on we went, our parts concealed on scrip beneath our hats, unconscious of all save cues. I remember suddenly coming across in mine a passage which made necessary a glass of sherry at the wing. A local swell was lounging at that entrance, and I rushed up to him. 'Have you,' I said, 'anything about you like a glass of sherry?' The audience roared. 'Well, no,' he answered; 'would a cigar do as well?' 'It would,' I said, and took one, which I lit. So we got through that drama. Ponsonby,



ALAN MACKINNON (Trinity).

OXFORD PHILOTHESPIAN SOCIETY.

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18

FARCE :—ICI ON PARLE FRANCAIS.

COMEDY :—SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL [*Screen Scene*].

BURLESQUE :—VILLIKINS AND HIS DINAH.

Tickets to be obtained from Hon. J. G. ADDERLEY, Ch. Ch. ; HUBERT
D. ASILEY, Ch. Ch. ; J. W. GILBART SMITH, 23 Cornmarket.

No. 34

PHILOTHESPIAN ADMISSION TICKET.

1880.

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who had no part in that especial play, was seated in the dress circle next an old gentleman in wrath. 'Oxford amateurs,' said he; 'why, it's disgraceful! They don't know one syllable of all their parts between them.' Ponsonby turned round to him and shook hands. 'You are quite right, sir,' said he; 'that is the most sensible remark I've heard since I have been in Coventry.' Oh, those days!

"Finding a tail-coat wanted in one piece, Ponsonby borrowed a frock-coat from our landlord and stuck the back halves up with pins. At another crisis, in a costume piece in two acts called, as I think, *Our Wife*, clever but not consecutive, we got so mixed at one point in Act I. that those of us who were on the stage stuck fast. Ponsonby brought on all the company at once. And we finished the first act with a brilliant *finale* which properly belonged to the second. The applause on fall of curtain was all that could be desired. And when the situation recurred in Act II., we did that scene again. Nobody found it out!"

In spite of all this, the Oxonian troupe was not a success at Coventry. The weavers didn't like them, and gathered round their lattice at the inn at night, even so far as throwing stones. "We bore it bravely, and for the next night sent out double orders without result. Nobody used them. So, as the fair was on, we walked through it two and two, beating drums and blowing trumpets. And yet they

came not. We picknicked, all of us, at Kenilworth, and the leading lady played Juliet to my Romeo from a ruined window, to the amazement of some honest families about. We wound up our engagement with a dance upon the stage, the band from Leamington having come over in our honour. We danced into the night, and I yet remember our boldest in his shirt-sleeves, a tankard of beer beside him, waltzing with the critic of the *Coventry Herald!*”

The company had to be left behind at Coventry in pawn, and when the quartette got back to Leamington they bailed it out. On returning to Oxford, they raised a dummy in the corner-seat of the train. “We set up a great-coat in sitting attitude, and covered our leading lady’s muff on the top of it, looking just like back hair, with a tall hat leaning down over it. We inflated a glove, and set a cigar between the fingers and a ticket in the hatband. And then we threw a rug across the figure. When the guard asked for tickets, we said the man was ill, and we dared not disturb him. The guard declared that he must, and crossed between us. Then roused the dummy, who fell into bits, much to the guard’s horror.”

In 1859 *The Little Savage* was produced at Brasenose, in which the part of “Lady Barbara” was played by W. B. Woodgate. “After the play,” writes Mr. Woodgate, “there was a supper on the usual college lines of those days : pretty substantial

—oysters, dressed crab, grilled bones, poached eggs, etc., done justice to after a 6 p.m. dinner in Hall. Then an adjournment to other rooms, where stood four steaming punch-bowls—whisky, rum, gin and brandy.

“Every one had taken wine with me twice over at the heavy section of the meal, first as a lady, secondly as a freshman. My head swam before I reached the punch-room. I was still in my petticoats (velvet dress and lace). Presently (so I said) my chair broke down; friends afterwards assured me that I fell off it.” Ah, those uncharitable assurances of our friends!

The punch-bowl was prudently removed, and Woodgate subsequently underwent a spell of repentance. Where amateur acting is undertaken out of sheer high spirits, there are pretty sure to be moments of conviviality. But the collegian of to-day does not sin as often in this respect as did his grandfather.

A Wonderful Woman formed part of the Brasenose theatricals in 1863. David Landale gave a brilliant rendering of the character of “Crepin, the Cobbler.”

The demise of the Oxford Amateurs and the growing practice of college theatricals, in spite of the lukewarmness, not to say the opposition, of the authorities, particularly of certain colleges, the idea of the dramatic talent at the University acting

together led naturally to the formation in 1866 of a new society. The leading spirit in this new society was Vincent Amcotts of Balliol, a talented actor and musician with a great sense of fun. He it was probably who invented the name "Shooting Stars."

"Every mummer is a star,
That there's no disputing,
So we who blaze and disappear
Obviously are shooting."

There was no doubt about the "blazing." The phrase was even applied later to the indiscretions of some of the members. And it was, alas, to disappear permanently all too soon. But of the talent of the coterie there could be no question. Amcott was supported by a large number of men, amongst whom figure Alleyn of Merton, Cumming of Oriel, Cockerell of Christ Church, Anson of Balliol,¹ Cotsford Dick of Worcester, H. D. Traill of St. John's, and Gumbleton and Selfe of Christ Church. We are told that a delighted audience assembled in June 1866 to witness a double bill played by these amateurs. According to a *Times* notice on the following day, "In the first piece, *The Comical Countess*, it was difficult to say which performer was most admirable, Cockerell of Christ Church as the lover posing himself as his own servant, C. F. Cumming of Oriel as the 'Countess,' or F. M. Alleyn of Merton as the outwitted 'Baron.' The after-piece,

¹ Now Sir William Anson, Bart., Warden of All Souls.



H. D. ASTLEY AS LADY TEAZLE.
1880.



S. H. L. STUART IN "CAMOMILE TEA."



A. BOURCHIER AND HON. J. ADDERLEY.
1881.



H. D. ASTLEY AS LADY NANCY.
1881.

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Lalla Rookh, a new burlesque by Amcotts of Balliol, full of point and well cast. W. R. Anson of Balliol (a recent first class), who played 'Faladeen,' Cumming, 'Lalla Rookh,' and Gumbleton of Christ Church the Prince Poet."

In November the society played *Dearest Mamma* and Amcotts' piece, *Fair Helen*.

The following year the Commemoration festivities terminated with a really brilliant representation by the "Shooting Stars" in the Victoria Theatre. The pieces selected were *A Thumping Legacy* and another burlesque by the ingenious Amcotts called *Ariadne*. The acting of Selfe of Christ Church in the former piece was declared by the *Times* critic to be "perfect," while that of Selfe, Alleyn and Anson in the latter "left nothing to desire. Cumming, who played 'Ariadne,' was less happy than on former occasions." Gumbleton's dancing was much admired. Amcotts conducted the music of his piece in person and covered himself with glory.

Speaking of Gumbleton, one of the chief characters in Burnand's farce, *Villikins and his Dinah*, which was then enjoying a popularity which still survives, was Grumbleton Gruffin, the "Parient." Gumbleton's patronymic was too much like the name of this worthy for Gruffin not to be added. It is probably for this reason that Gumbleton refused, when the proposition was mooted, to have anything to do with *Villikins*, although it was pointed out

to him that the part of Grumbleton was admirably suited to him. His own objection was, however, stated thus—

“It would ill become members of the ancient University of Oxford to give any further prominence to any organized tomfoolery originating in any other University.” Burnand was a Cambridge man, and his farce was first performed at the A.D.C. rooms in 1855. But a time came, as I shall relate, when Oxford amateurs, myself amongst the number, were glad to “give further prominence” to such capital “organized tomfoolery” as *Villikins and his Dinah*.

In February 1868 the “Shooting Stars” further distinguished themselves by the performance of *A Wonderful Woman* and *Lurline*. But already there were undesirable ingredients in the society, and trouble was brewing.

Excellent as it was in the acting line, the “Shooting Stars” did not monopolize all the talent at Oxford. St. John’s College had a dramatic society of its own, of which E. Nolan was the guiding spirit, and between 1866 and 1868 inclusive, this coterie produced *The Rivals*, *She Stoops to Conquer*, *A Scrap of Paper*, *Still Waters Run Deep*, besides the burlesques *Iphigenia* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Oriel also had its theatricals, in which the Hon. Alexander Yorke took part. M. H. Paterson, A. B. Bagnold, W. E. Goschen, W. R. Barnes, H. T. Hood were also well-known amateur actors of the time.

In truth, the youth of Oxford, forty years before so grave and sober, were now in some danger of overdoing a good thing. Oxford went acting mad. There was talk of separate dramatic societies at Pembroke, at Christ Church, and perhaps half-a-dozen others. Acting was to be like boating or cricket; the colleges were to vie with each other. But by this time the authorities came to the conclusion that acting, whether of farce or comedy, whether the undergraduates were clothed in female garb and in their right mind or otherwise, was exercising a baneful effect, taking up too much time, and thereby diverting the student's mind into unprofitable channels. One can overdo everything—one can vulgarize everything—even religion.

So the fateful fiat went forth in 1869 in the shape of a Vice-Chancellor's decree. There were to be no more theatricals, amateur or otherwise, within the jurisdiction of the University.

CHAPTER III

“To Oxford a Freshman so modest,
I entered one morning in March,
And the figure I cut was the oddest—
All spectacles, choker and starch.
Whack fol lol, lol iddity, etc.”

WHEN I came up to Oxford in 1879, a decade had passed since the unfortunate “Shooting Stars” had vanished into stellar infinitude. The drama was only a tradition to a new race of undergraduates. When a young collegian with histrionic aspirations wished to rejoice his soul with visions of the mimic world—the “fairyland of the footlights”—he paid a visit to the Victoria Theatre.

There be some to whom the name Victoria Theatre—the “Vic”—conveys little significance. To such it might be a place of high and even austere respectability. It might be one of the academic institutions of Oxford. I believe foreigners were occasionally under this impression, and the story is told of a distinguished German savant considerably startling a dinner-party at the Vice-Chancellor’s by the enthusiastic remark—

“To-day I have seen your colleges, the Radcliffe Library and the Sheldonian Theatre. It is all quaint and beautiful. To-morrow I devote to the Bodleian Library and the Victoria Theatre.”



H. C. BUSH AS LUCY.
1881.



H. D. ASTLEY AS LADY NANCY
IN "LORD LOVELL."
1881.



HON. JAMES ADDERLEY AS DINAH'S NURSE.
1881.



SIR FREDERICK ADAIR.
1881.

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This is on a par with the letter of the American who, writing to Matthew Arnold (then Professor of Poetry at Oxford) from Stratford-on-Avon, remarked, "I shall leave these classic scenes tomorrow, as I am looking forward to seeing our great Shakespeare worthily acted in the theatre you scholars of Oxford have dedicated to your gracious Queen." Poor man, what a shock it must have given him when he reached the "Vic," then dedicated, not to England's gracious Queen, but, if my memory serves me aright, to the "Great McDermott," that rollicking, blustering music-hall star who first sang that stirring ballad—

"We don't want to fight,
But, by Jingo, if we do, etc."

Nothing that I could now say of the old "Vic" would adequately describe its squalor and evil associations. Drama being forbidden, the entertainment consisted solely of vaudeville turns of no very elevating character. It was the only licensed building of its kind in Oxford till the year 1886. It could not be dignified with the appellation of a theatre, but was a glorified barn which afforded a fine field for low-class representations of every kind, and was looked upon by the undergrads as a legitimate prey upon which to exercise questionable jokes and rampant rowdyism. Good companies, such as German Reed's, Toole's, etc., when they did visit Oxford, were forced to put up with the dreary Town Hall

or the cheerless Corn Exchange, sooner than associate with the surroundings of that squalid resort. Nevertheless, such as it was, the "Vic" was our only resource, and without being ultra-fastidious, many of us naturally shrank from the fare there provided. Amongst those who thus felt strongly in the matter, that positive evil was resulting from banning all decent dramatic amusements from Oxford, was a young student from Christ Church, the Hon. James Adderley. To Adderley must be accorded the credit of being the pioneer of the modern dramatic movement at Oxford.

A College Shakespeare Society, of which the Hon. Gilbert Coleridge and I were the originators, was the only diversion which can be termed theatrical in which I indulged during my first days at Oxford, until one day I received a visit from an old school friend, F. E. Shafto Adair, begging me to come and make the acquaintance of a Christ Church man who was bent on starting at Oxford what had met with such success at Cambridge—an A.D.C. So I went, and found in some ground-floor rooms in "Peck" a man seated in an arm-chair, literally smothered in volumes from French's library, whilst around the room were scattered fragments from a wardrobe of theatrical properties and dresses. Amongst them was what appeared to be a "singing chambermaid" awaiting her summons from the call-boy. This proved to be H. D. Astley, the best male delineator



S. H. L. STUART.



HON. GILBERT COLERIDGE.

1883.

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of female rôles I have ever seen. A charade was in progress, in which I was asked to assist.

Adderley had done but little in the acting way before he came up to Oxford, although coming from a house celebrated in Warwickshire and beyond for the excellence of its annual theatricals. Arrived in Oxford, he determined upon the task above alluded to, and in order to feel his way (previously to this date) had given a small performance in his rooms, consisting of a travestie of Irving and Ellen Terry, and *The Area Belle*, in which he was assisted by his brother, Adair and Astley.

The programme had been varied and well adapted to display the talents and abilities of what one or two undergraduates delighted to call the *corps dramatique*. It began with an original farce in one act, *The Area Belle*, in which Astley played the principal part of "Penelope" with striking skill. Adair threw spirit into his representation of "Pitcher," while Ogle did well with "Tosser." The full programme, which well deserves reproduction, is as follows—

"THE AREA BELLE."

PITCHER (in the Police)	.	.	F. E. S. Adair, Esq.
TOSSEY (in the Grenadiers)	.	.	W. P. Ogle, Esq.
WALKER CHALKS (a milkman)	.	.	Hon. R. Adderley.
MRS. CROAKER (the Missus)	.	.	Hon. J. Adderley.
PENELOPE (The Area Belle)	.	.	H. D. Astley, Esq.

SCENE.—A kitchen.

SCENE : MACBETH, ACT II., SCENE II.

MR. HENRY IRVING *Hon. R. Adderley.*
 MISS BATEMAN *F. E. S. Adair, Esq.*

Song, "Camomile Tea," *Hon. J. Adderley.*

Song, "Capt. La-di-da-di-doo," *F. E. S. Adair, Esq.*

Song, "I've been photographed like this," *H. D. Astley, Esq.*

To conclude with the Romance of Real Life entitled—

"BOX AND COX."

BOX (journeyman printer) . . . *Hon. J. Adderley.*
 COX (journeyman hatter) . . . *Hon. R. Adderley.*
 MRS. BOUNCER (lodging - house
 keeper) *F. E. S. Adair, Esq.*

SCENE.—*Mrs. Bouncer's Lodging.*

The supper, which the programme announced for 11 o'clock, gave the hosts some considerable forethought, and but for the diplomacy of Adderley no supper would have been forthcoming. There is an old rule at Christ Church allowing no more than four supper rations to each person, and when on this occasion forty suppers were applied for, the Censors saw their way to hinder the performance by refusing the request. Adderley, however, fell back upon the rules and seeing nothing there to prevent his ordering forty luncheons, which he accordingly did, adding much to the success of the evening.

The rendering of Act II. scene ii. of *Macbeth* gave the Hon. R. Adderley the opportunity for his powers of imitation, and in face, gesture and voice the great tragedian was produced before a



HON. JAMES ADDERLEY,
1882.



REV. H. D. ASTLEY AS DINAH,
1882.

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highly appreciative audience, while Adair (now Sir Frederick Adair, Bart.) cleverly represented the "Lady Macbeth" of Miss Bateman.

This daring exploit of Adderley's roused the ire of the Christ Church authorities, and the time had now come to decide whether the pet scheme should be attempted or not. I remember when I first came up reading several letters published in the *Oxford Magazine* commenting on the above performance, and asking why Oxford had heard no more of the dramatic promises of the former term, and why, with such talent as that of Adderley, Astley and Adair, Oxford was so far behind the sister University in this important branch of art. Accordingly in this term (1880) James Adderley formed a small society, giving it the grandiloquent title of "Oxford University Philothespian Society." The original members were as follows—

Hon. J. G. Adderley, Christ Church (President).

Hon. R. Adderley, Christ Church.

H. D. Astley, Esq., Christ Church.

F. E. Shafto Adair, Christ Church.

Sir George Sitwell, Bart., Christ Church.

Elliott Lees, Christ Church.

J. W. Gilbert Smith, Christ Church.

Sir Henry Lambert, Bart., Christ Church.

W. Ogle, Esq., Christ Church.

A few days later, although I was not "Christ Church," I was introduced into the circle in the manner above described. The life of the little

clique was kept up by repeated festive gatherings in its author's rooms, accompanied by charades, burlettas and the like; but it was felt by all that if a move were to be made, it should be made at once, for though we were all near about the same standing, the oldest members being only in their second year, and consequently had a fair spell of 'Varsity life before us, yet it was high time to awake the public to a sense of the usefulness of our association before we entered upon what proved to be a long struggle against prejudice in all its various forms. The society resolved upon a performance immediately, and to avoid the visitations of the Christ Church dons, J. W. Gilbert Smith lent his rooms, 23, Cornmarket, for the occasion, as the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Evans of Pembroke, had refused his sanction. "You may do what you like in your colleges," he is reported to have said, "but publicly I forbid you to act."

The preparations were hurried on with profound secrecy. On May 31, 1880, the performance commenced with a prologue delivered by Smith, after which came *Ici on Parle Français*, the screen scene from *A School for Scandal*, and *Villikins and his Dinah* burlesque. Punctually at half-past eight the curtain rose, displaying a bijou stage—necessarily a trifle near the ceiling—and the slightly nervous figure of Gilbert Smith, who was for the nonce stage-manager and host. Having made his bow, Gilbert

Smith proceeded to deliver the following prologue of his own composition—

“Hail, kindly friends! The world is but a stage,
 So Shakespeare saith, and we’ve rehearsed a page.
 To act upon it—and to be complete,
 We’ve got a prologue, which I now repeat:
 ’Twas writ by Thespis, who, when time was young,
 Trod the same stage, and spake with silvern tongue:—

I

When the early bloom of spring,
 Blossoms into life and form,
 Every hope the heart can bring,
 Shelters it from wind and storm.

II

Grudge us not your fostering care,
 Faithful friends who view our play,
 Speed our efforts till they bear
 Crown of laurel and of bay!

III

We attempt no taskless thing;
 Passing brief in Pleasure’s flight:
 Sooth! we seek to steal his wing
 That he bide with us to-night!”

The “house,” or rather room, was crowded with undergrads only at 2s. 6d. per head on the first night, and as we entered in our various successive costumes we felt that each entrance would probably be our last, the noise of the applause, Slapoffski’s band and the songs and dances producing a babel of sound which attracted a large crowd in the street outside, and which, we very naturally expected after our

prohibition, might attract a smaller and less welcome crowd with the customary demand for names and colleges; the Proctors, however, either did not hear or spared us, but I am strongly of the opinion that the former was the case. On the second we should certainly have been interfered with, for the pursuer was at our very door, but here we were saved by the first tender of help, outside the society itself, in the kindness of Mrs. Liddell, who was bold enough to bring a party of ladies from the Deanery, and left her carriage at the door.

Here is the full cast—

“ICI ON PARLE FRANÇAIS.”

MR. SPRIGGINS	<i>Hon. James Adderley.</i>
MAJOR REGULUS RATTAN	<i>J. W. Gilbert Smith,</i> <i>Esq.</i>
VICTOR DUBOIS	<i>Elliott Lees, Esq.</i>
MRS. SPRIGGINS	<i>Alan M. Mackinnon,</i> <i>Esq.</i>
ANGELINA (her daughter)	<i>Hubert D. Astley, Esq.</i>
JULIA (wife of Major Rattan)	<i>F. E. Shafto Adair, Esq.</i>
ANNA MARIA (Maid-of-all-work)	<i>Wilfred Ogle, Esq.</i>

SCREEN SCENE OF “THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.”

SIR PETER TEAZLE	<i>J. W. Gilbert Smith,</i> <i>Esq.</i>
JOSEPH SURFACE	<i>Elliott Lees, Esq.</i>
CHARLES SURFACE	<i>Alan M. Mackinnon,</i> <i>Esq.</i>
LADY TEAZLE	<i>H. D. Astley, Esq.</i>
SERVANT	<i>Sir Henry Lambert,</i> <i>Bart.</i>



SIR F. E. S. ADAIR AS LORD LOVELL.
1882.



HON. G. COLERIDGE AS CAPTAIN MOUTH.
1882.



GUY LUSHINGTON AS LADY FRANKLIN
IN "MONEY."
1882.



S. H. LECHMERE STUART AS
TUBAL.
1883.

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"VILLIKINS AND HIS DINAH."

THE BARON BOSKI BUMBLE ("the lovier galliant and gaye") .	<i>Wilfrid Ogle, Esq.</i>
VILLIKINS (suitor to Dinah) . . .	<i>F. E. Shafto Adair, Esq.</i>
GRUFFIN (the original "parient," a rich soap merchant) . . .	<i>Hon. James Adderley.</i>
DINAH (daughter of the above) .	<i>Hubert D. Astley, Esq.</i>

In *Ici on Parle Français*, every one knows Mr. Spriggins and his mania for "French before breakfast": the high descent, the outraged feelings of his wife when, forced by the untimely resignation of the maid-of-all-work at a critical moment, she is obliged to descend to the menial offices of shoe-brushing and coffee-making: the terror which the bluster of Major Regulus Rattan provokes when he challenges the sentimental Frenchman to give him satisfaction for a fancied insult put upon his wife Julia across the table: and the general hilarity which ensues when the misconceptions are all cleared up, and the fiery Major gives the lovers his blessing, while the penitent Spriggins renounces *à jamais* the letting of lodgings and the learning of French. Spriggins stood forth to the life in the person of the Hon. James Adderley, who was capitally made up, *à la* Toole, and created general laughter by his blunders in the polite tongue.

According to a contemporary criticism, "Mr. Mackinnon was the impersonation of the shrewish dame, proud of her long descent, her corkscrewy curls

trembling in harmony with passions that surged in her matronly breast," a criticism which, I need hardly add, delighted me beyond measure. As for the performance at large, I am told that a copy of the local journal, with the following remarks heavily marked with red and blue pencils, was duly laid on the breakfast-table of the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Evans—

"The wonder to us, after carefully watching the whole performance, and the altogether unexceptionable nature of the pieces played, is that the University authorities should continue to withhold their countenance to a body of gentlemen who are capable of yielding so much pleasure and legitimate amusement to those who, in the absence of such means of passing a rational hour or two, are driven to seek more questionable enjoyment. All this emphasizes the complaints that have recently been made of the conservatism of the authorities, and provides an unanswerable plea for the relaxation of the Spartan-like rules which chafe the undergrads. If all things were done so 'decently and in order' in this 'at home,' there need be, we apprehend, very little fear that under the eye of the authorities the most sensitive taste would be outraged by the Philothespian Society."

A word of explanation regarding the eminent musician, whose name, Slapoffski, figures on the programmes of our earlier entertainments. Slapoff-

ski was the leader of the "Vic" orchestra of five performers; he was also in request at the convivial Bullingdon dinners, and the story goes that a frequent item in the bill following those festive gatherings was "to bursting drum by Bullingdon gents, £5 os. od." So frequent did this become that it became a recognized feature of the bill. On one occasion, however, the drum escaped destruction at the hands of the merry-makers. Slapoffski, it was said, was overwhelmed with astonishment, and more in sorrow than in anger he indicted the bill, with a slight modification, "To big drum, not burst as usual, £5 os. od."

Poor Slapoffski! How we chaffed and badgered him! It wasn't his name, of course, although he took it from us as he took everything else, including our money, with perfect good-humour. He was a Pole, and the story ran that when he first came to Oxford and asked if he could play the latest tunes he exclaimed, "Oh yes, sare; slap off!" "Very well, Herr Slapoffski," was the retort, "give us all of them," and so Slapoffski thenceforward was his name, which might have been Hertz or Poniatowski or—who knows?—Svengali.

Commem. immediately followed, and as we went down for the Long we nursed the comforting assurance that the struggle had commenced in earnest, and that so far at least we might claim some advantage from the first skirmish. We had ample diffi-

culties to contend with, but a fresh trouble was about to spring upon us from an unexpected quarter. Whether or no the representation of the old Greek drama is a satisfactory venture has often been made the subject of dispute, and as, in consequence of the immense lapse of time and the predominance of modern ideas, it is impossible to give even a faint resemblance of the original, it seemed to many unwise to repeat so often what was merely an interesting experiment. The bare construction of Greek plays would certainly never be attractive to the modern audience. Time has proved this view was wrong; the idea was a novel one, and as such pleasing; and too much praise cannot be given to the original authors thereof for their enterprise.

The hero of this revival, Mr. F. R. Benson, was well known at Oxford as an athlete, but had, strange to say, not trodden the boards before this undertaking, which was destined to make him a prominent figure in a brilliant success such as the amateur dramatic world does not often see, and, for the time being, the most important factor in the destinies of the drama at Oxford. He had, however, other designs, and utilized his position as a stepping-stone to the theatrical profession, which his feat at Oxford led him to adopt. For this reason, probably, he did not associate himself with the new Philothespian movement, and had he continued to produce the Greek plays, it would probably have brought the

S. H. L. STUART.

H. CAREY.



W. H. SPOTTISWOODE.

ARTHUR BOURCHIER.

LIONEL MONCKTON.

W. BROMLEY-DAVENPORT.

1883.

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two societies into a conflict which would have been an unequal one, for the authorities favoured the one, while they repressed the other. That he should have taken up the profession immediately, left us free to assume his position, and further to represent that the Greek drama should herald in the English. This position was completely occupied when, some seven years later, we absorbed the latent ardour for Greek plays into the bosom of our Society in its later development, and so avoided the disadvantage of the dual control, such as Cambridge experiences with its A.D.C. and Greek Play Committee, and which was experienced by us at this time.

Of this scheme the really responsible manager and originator was Mr. W. L. Courtney, who from his position as a don, and his well-known dramatic proclivities, naturally possessed the largest influence in such matters. Courtney was eventually to be a great upholder of our movement, but at this time he did not identify himself with it. Later, at considerable personal sacrifice (for his busying himself with such matters was not entirely to the taste of most of his colleagues), he exerted his influence to prevent the demolition of the rising club at a time when the dons made a regular raid against it, and when he was not much enamoured of it himself, an act of friendship which those friends of his in the Society for whom he did it were not slow to recognize.

Just now, however, it was James Adderley who

alternately bore the heat of the day and encountered the frost of perpetual repression, and he should be permitted to reap the firstfruits of satisfaction, even though some of his followers may have jeopardized the scheme. But the name of Courtney has led to anticipation; and indeed the Greek play was so separate from the work of the Philothesians (I being the only member of the latter who was connected with it in any way) that it is only the above circumstances which have led me to mention our own Society in connection with it at all. The Master of Balliol had offered to place his College Hall at the disposal of the audacious Grecian band. Next to James Adderley, its originator, the dramatic movement at Oxford owes no deeper debt of gratitude than to Dr. Jowett, Master of Balliol and future Vice-Chancellor; he at all events did not draw the subtle distinction between Æschylus and Shakespeare, which was generally held in Oxford as the reason why the Greek play was sanctioned where any English one was not. True, we had not yet dreamt of Shakespeare, and it has been urged against us that we degraded the public taste with burlesque. But we had to conform to the principles of demand and supply. Small beginnings lead to great endings; nor could we in any case have supplied a higher class of wares, because our employers did not afford us the necessary means to invest in such luxuries.

We were bound to have difficulties at the outset, owing to the ill-odour which had attended the fall of the "Shooting Stars," who perished ten years previous to the first Philothespian performance. Hence the hostility displayed by some of the authorities at Oxford to the idea of a dramatic club. It made our task doubly difficult: and here again let it be said that untold thanks are due to the man whose high principles regulated the management of affairs in these early days during his period of office, which have so far been embodied in tradition, that at no time since has a recurrence of the events of ten years before been possible or probable. Burlesque at Oxford there was, but compare the burlesque of the eighties with the musical farces of the twentieth century! The mere shadow of anything objectionable either in the pieces or in their rendering I can conscientiously say would have been more distasteful to the performers than to the audience. No: they had set themselves the task of preserving the honour of the drama intact, an ideal which those who have since been responsible for O.U.D.S. management have carefully maintained.

Very striking is the contrast when we observe the attitude of the Vice-Chancellor towards the "Vic." An amusing caricature appeared about this time in Shrimpton's shop-window representing the Vice-Chancellor with head averted, horror-stricken at the enormity of the harmless farce performed by under-

grads, while on the other side he sat with beaming countenance, applauding to the echo the vulgar extravagances of a music-hall buffoon. This was, of course, elaborate, but such was the logical deduction from his conduct in permitting the "Vic" to remain open during term-time, while the Philothespian supplicants were ruthlessly dismissed. It will always be a source of infinite gratification to us that the ascendancy of the University Dramatic Society implied the ruin of this miserable place, and paved the way for the erection of a building which should now be a source of pride to the inhabitants, both Town and Gown.

BY PERMISSION, AND UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE REV. THE VICE-CHANCELLOR



«The Oxford University Philothespian Club»

WILL PERFORM

SHAKESPEARE'S COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS,

«THE»



MERCHANT OF VENICE

IN

«THE TOWN HALL,»

(By permission of His Worshipful the Mayor.)

On Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday,
December 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th, at 7.45,

AND

On Friday Afternoon, December 7th, at 2.30.

Stalls, 7s. 6d. Second Seats, 5s. Back of Hall, 2s. 6d.

PLAN OF ROOM AT MR RUSSELL'S.

Stalls for Friday Afternoon may also be obtained of The Hon J G ADDERLEY
55, Eaton Place, London

HALL AND SON, PRINTERS OXFORD

PROGRAMME COVER OF "MERCHANT OF VENICE."

1883.

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CHAPTER IV

“All those who e'er the classic drama wooed
Will surely speed to Oxford from afar
And leave delighted, having understood
Καὶ ὄν and γὰρ.”

The 'Varsity.

ALTHOUGH the honour of initiating the *Agamemnon* belongs not to Balliol, but to New College, both Benson and the Hon. W. N. Bruce, the joint undertakers of the preliminary details, decided that they were far more likely to get Balliol Hall for the venture than any other at Oxford. Bruce, therefore, volunteered to apply to the famous Master of Balliol (who was also, by the way, master of a rather caustic wit of which undergraduates stood in some awe). He tells us that he was half afraid Jowett might ask him if he could construe, instead of act the *Agamemnon*!

“I told him very shortly,” writes Mr. Bruce, “that we had a notion that a Greek play could be made quite as interesting on the stage as an English one, and that we wanted to try it in Balliol Hall. He chuckled a good deal at some of my dramatic opinions, asked who was going to take part, said, if I remember right, that he wished it should be done by Oxford undergraduates only, and then promised

to ask the College. He continued to show great interest in our proceedings and preparations, and often talked to me about them. I remember his coming to one of the rehearsals with John Farmer, who was staying with him, I think. We got a good many snubs from other distinguished University magnates, but never anything but encouragement from him: we thought all the more of it, because we were none of us good scholars, and were often rather scared at our own audacity, and quite prepared to be told we were 'fools rushing in where angels fear to tread'! The morning after the first performance he sent for all of us to see Browning, who was one of his guests for the occasion. We were all delighted, of course, and heard the great man defend his own translation, especially from the charge of crudity. He seemed to think the chief objection made to it was its literal plainness!

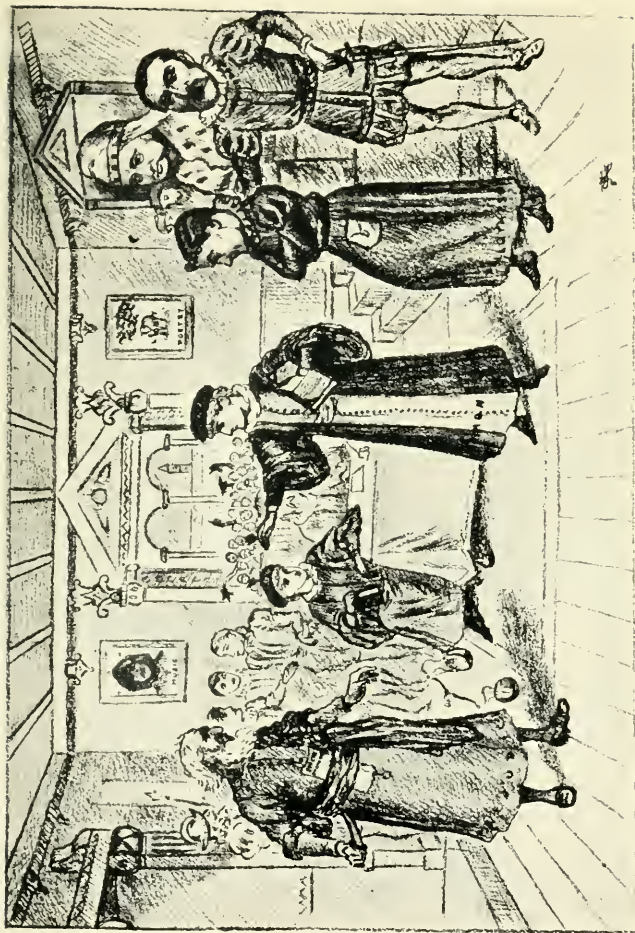
"But what I remember best about our relations with the Master was the very earnest remonstrance he made both to Benson and myself when he heard that we meant to act the play elsewhere. He wrote to Benson on the subject, and also to me, besides sending for me more than once to talk about it. We had decided to give a performance at Eton, Winchester and Harrow, and afterwards in London. I think I was able to reconcile him to the performances at the Schools, but never to the London one, and about the latter I felt at the time he was in the right,

and feel so still more strongly now. He expressed the pleasure it had given him that it should have been done at Oxford, and his satisfaction and pride that Balliol had been so closely connected with the performance, but he pointed out that its great success under the conditions of the Oxford performance ought to make us careful of repeating it under different conditions, which he thought were to be dreaded for their possible effect upon our own characters, and for the risk which they involved of that very impertinence towards Æschylus which our Oxford critics had resented, and of which under Oxford conditions he had declared us so innocent. I was much impressed at the time, and have always remembered vividly how very earnest he was about it, though he never said an unkind or a hard word either to us or of us."

The rumour ran that in the new Hall at Balliol just completed there was to be given a performance of the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus, under no less distinguished auspices than those of the Regius Professor of Greek and the Fellows of Balliol College. There was naturally great perturbation in certain quarters. There were some, indeed, of the severer sort who, in Mr. Philip Carr's words, "were disposed to regard this as a sort of illegitimate back-door to making scholarships easy, or even interesting." It seemed to rob the classics of their exclusive interest, and to place the scholar in no

little danger of being lost in the crowd. Among undergraduates, on the other hand, the proposed innovation was greeted with enthusiasm. Many, burdened though they were by schools, began to read Æschylus. In the punts on the Cherwell, hitherto sacred to the yellow-back novel, might be noticed copy after copy of the *Agamemnon*—sometimes in Greek. The excitement spread even to North Oxford, and fluttered the dovescotes of the Woodstock and the Banbury roads, where the educated lady was in those days really a new woman, and this form of “education made pleasant,” an excellent opportunity to make a trial of strength, and a first exhibition of newly-acquired culture.

When the performance actually took place, the result was more successful than the actors or their friends had dared to anticipate. An audience composed of all Oxford and some of Cambridge discovered that not only could a Greek play be acted, not only were the characters human beings and not mere abstractions, but that this particular play possessed an engrossing dramatic interest. The mounting was of the very simplest; but although those who organized the performance disclaimed “any intention to produce a facsimile of a Greek drama which, if it were possible, would seem to all but antiquaries grotesque and unmeaning,” yet this first of the Greek play productions was probably more classical in feeling than any of its successors, with



Published by Shrimpton, 1883.

THE TRIAL SCENE AS LATELY ENACTED AT OXFORD.
(Dedicated with all respect to the Philothespians.)

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the possible exception of the open-air performances at Bradfield College. The scenery, for which a drawing had been made by the late Sir Edward Burne-Jones, was painted by Professor W. B. Richmond, who also designed the costumes. There was no curtain or wings or proscenium. The palace front of the Atreidæ was the scene throughout the play, and occupied the upper stage; while on a stage below were placed the chorus round an altar of Dionysus. It was upon the chorus and the question of its management that discussion had chiefly centred before the production, and no doubt it was the greatest difficulty which the promoters had to face. What was to be done with these long passages of reflection on the story of the play and on life which are placed in its mouth, and which might seem rather painfully lacking in dramatic effect to a modern audience, although they include some of the finest lines of Greek tragedy? In later productions the difficulty has been met by setting the longer passages to music, and assigning the shorter ones mainly to the Coryphæus. The Greek plays at Cambridge have always been produced in this way, and with a full orchestra. In the *Agamemnon*, however, there was no orchestra, and with the exception of a few bars of austere music composed by Mr. Parratt, organist of Magdalen College, for the beginning of the opening chorus, and for a short strain before the death-cry of "Agamemnon," there was no music. The lines

of the chorus were either recited in monotone, for which the note was given by a pitch-pipe and a tuning-fork, or were distributed as dialogue amongst its members; and in spite of a rather natural desire on the part of the audience for more music and less monotone, and some criticism on the liberty of changing chorus into dialogue, it was felt that the difficulty had been very successfully overcome. Indeed, it is probable that for the chorus of a tragedy this was the best method which could have been adopted. The breaking up of some parts among various speakers gave movement and dramatic action to those passages which dealt most closely with the story, while the delivery of the rest in monotone gained at least as much in dignity and impressiveness as it lost in variety through the absence of music. In the case of a comedy, in which variety is the chief aim, the problem presented by a chorus is a different one, to which music is better, possibly the best solution. Even here the question of how far modernity is justified by its introduction of variety proved, when the later production of the *Frogs* took place, one which provoked the most widely different opinions.

The testimony of George Eliot, describing the pleasure she derived from witnessing it later in London, will alone prove a lasting token of the fame of our revival, and the successes at Cambridge and again at Oxford which followed are so many

tributes to its renown. All Oxford thronged to see the play which had been in constant rehearsal for many weeks previously. The general idea of the production was to adhere as much as possible to the strict severity of form of the ancient Greeks. Certain features, such as the masks, the voice-trumpets and the division of the principal characters amongst three actors only were necessarily discarded, but the gestures, the arrangement of the chorus and so forth were rigidly kept to the most mechanical simplicity. The principal choral odes were set to music, being all choruses in unison, with the addition of one baritone solo, also unaccompanied, to the words—*ἰω ἰω βασιλευ*, rendered by J. G. Tait (now a master at Charterhouse). The remainder of the chorus work was split up into fifteen individual parts, each member of the chorus at times taking up his part, with the exception of the oft-repeated line—*αιλινον αιλινον ειπε τοδ εν νικατο*, which was given as a kind of chant by the entire chorus. The composer gave the music a rise and fall, observing strictly the anapaestic measures, which had a severe but by no means unpleasant effect. The introductory chorus—*Δεκατον μεν ετος*—and the solo mentioned before were the principal features of this clever composition. Some slight amusement was caused at the outset of the play on the first night by the arrival of the “Phylax,” who mounts the battlement to light the beacon-fire, but who, prior to this, startled the breathless

audience with the sound of a Bryant & May's safety match : this, however, was a very slight *contretemps*, and the play proceeded throughout triumphantly to its close. The play was repeated at Eton, Harrow and Winchester with several alterations in the cast of the chorus, several of whom, myself among the number, were unable to manage these dates, but I returned to the company when a few weeks later it was given at St. George's Hall in London before audiences which comprised most of the literary and dramatic world. It was on one of these occasions that Mrs. Cross (George Eliot), a fortnight before her death, was present; her last public appearance. Irving and Ellen Terry were also amongst the audience. The London press was unanimously laudatory, the chorus coming in for a fair meed of praise.

CHAPTER V

“I past beside the reverend walls
In which of old I wore the gown;
I roved at random through the town
And saw the tumult of the halls.

Another name was on the door.
I lingered; all within was noise
Of songs and clapping hands and boys
That crashed the glass and beat the floor.”

TENNYSON.

THE very next performance of the Philothespians nearly cost them their life. As we had advanced from a private performance in College to a public performance in lodgings, so now we advanced from the latter to a place of public entertainment, the Liberal Hall in Pembroke Street. The stage was the smallest possible, and upon it we were venturesome enough to mount Byron's *Dearer than Life*, followed by the inevitable burlesque, *Lord Lovell and Nancy Bell*.

The cast was as follows—

“DEARER THAN LIFE.”

MICHAEL GARNER	.	.	.	Hon. J. Adderley.
UNCLE BEN	.	.	.	Hon. G. Coleridge.
CHARLEY GARNER	.	.	.	Mr. A. Mackinnon.
BOB GASSITT	.	.	.	Hon. R. Adderley.
OLD BOLTER	.	.	.	Mr. F. E. Shafto Adair.

MR. KEDGELY	<i>Mr. Sydney Platt.</i>
MRS. GARNER	<i>Mr. Hubert D. Astley.</i>
LUCY (her Niece)	<i>Mr. H. Bush.</i>
MRS. MINGLE	<i>Mr. C. Lloyd Mitford.</i>
MRS. PELLET*	<i>Mr. W. Ogle.</i>

“LORD LOVELL AND LADY NANCY BELL.”

LORD LOVELL (a swell betrothed to Lady Nancy Bell) . . .	<i>Mr. F. E. Shafto Adair.</i>
BARON BILLY BELL (father of Lady Nancy)	<i>Mr. Sydney Platt.</i>
RUMTIFOOZLE (brigand of Bakum- boilum)	<i>Hon. J. Adderley.</i>
LADY NANCY BELL (daughter of Baron)	<i>Mr. H. D. Astley.</i>
FIRST BRIGAND } (making in all {	<i>Hon. G. Coleridge.</i>
SECOND BRIGAND } Two Brigands) {	<i>Mr. A. Mackinnon.</i>
THE BOUNDING BRIGAND (intro- ducing prestidigitorial effects)	<i>Mr. C. von Buch.</i>

Adderley chartered the services of the scenic artist of the Prince of Wales's Theatre, Birmingham, and two pretty little scenes were the result. Gilbert Coleridge made his first appearance in the Society in the character of “Uncle Ben.” Mrs. Liddell, owing to a personal request from the Vice-Chancellor, was not present this time, but we were preserved from intervention during the actual nights of performance by the presence on each occasion of certain dons and several ladies of the neighbourhood, including a small party of Christ Church dons, headed by the Rev. H. Scott-Holland, who came to sym-

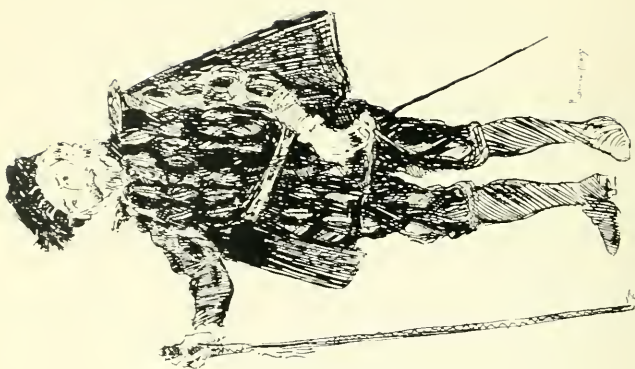


W. L. COURTNEY AS BASSANIO,
1883.

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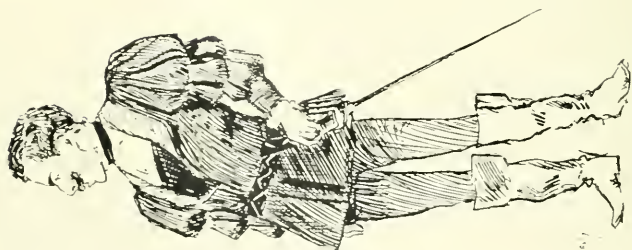
MRS. W. L. COURTNEY AND MISS BICKNELL,
1883.



A. N. TAYLER AS GREMIO.

1897.

[To face p. 67.]



P. CARR AS PETRUCHIO.

1897.

pathize with the performers. Courtney was there in a more critical capacity, and with him Benson. The name of Scott-Holland is another that should be enshrined in the memories of those who fought for their privileges in these stormy days: this was his first kindly action, and a more active support has to be recorded later. His influence was very considerable in Oxford, and he was not the man to wait for the tide to turn in our favour before he ventured to express his opinion openly. Scott-Holland had been an actor of distinction himself, and did not behold the amusement in its terrible aspect. But if we escaped attacks on the occasion of the performance, it was morally certain that the stir which the affair created, and what the *Oxford Times* described as "the unusual sight of a string of carriages in Pembroke Street," would sooner or later draw down upon us the wrath of the V.-C., following as it did upon his recent prohibition. The very next day Adderley received his dread summons as the representative of the Society. He delivered a pithy defence of the position we had assumed, making capital out of the performance of the *Agamemnon*, in public and with full sanction, and letting fall a hint that matters would be greatly improved by the countenance or even co-operation of the mighty University functionary himself! The answer of the latter was that he would take a week to consider, and at the end of that time would inform us whether

we were to be "sent down" or not, for such, dear reader, was the contemplated penalty.

That same day we all started for Aylesbury, where Astley had made arrangements for a repetition of the programme. Owing to the necessity of our being (like so many Cinderellas) in Oxford again that evening, the performance commenced at the remarkable hour of 4 p.m.

The Bullingdon drag brought a party from Oxford, and it was only by a very small balance of minutes that the respective travellers by road and rail reached their academic beds after a highly successful day.

The Vice-Chancellor, after considering the matter according to promise, came to the conclusion that he would not deprive Oxford of the pleasure of our society. He ordained, however, that our association was strictly illegal in accordance with the University statutes, and graciously consented to overlook the past, *if we never did it again*. In consequence of this edict, a meeting was held in Adderley's rooms, where we found ourselves broken into two parties, one having for its motto "Defiance," and the other "Dissolution." Fortunately the former triumphed, but only, I think, by the President's casting vote. At the same time we were all of opinion that it would be necessary to remain dormant for a space of time. In order, however, to keep up the Society, we resolved to enlarge



J. C. LEDWARD AS QUINCE.

[To face p. 68.]



PHILIP CARR.



it somewhat by means of accredited agents in Colleges to gather recruits. As a consequence of this, I proposed a motion to the effect that some test of dramatic capabilities should be established for candidates coming up under this new arrangement, *i. e.* that they should qualify by assuming a part of some small piece to be performed in the presence of members only, a member of the Society to act as stage-manager, and, if necessary, to take part also. This was carried, and the first and (I believe) the only representation under this rule took place in Lord George Fitzgerald's rooms in Christ Church.

During this Vacation I organized the first of a series of Vac. performances, which afterwards became rather a feature of the Philothespians. This performance, however, had nothing to do with the club, but was quite private, the main actors, however, being members of the club. *The Poor Gentleman*, by George Colman, was selected, and the performance took place on the stage of the Dilettante Circle in London, on behalf of the Belgrave Hospital. I secured Coe of the Haymarket Theatre as stage-manager, and Miss Robertha Erskine of Toole's for the character of "Lucretia MacTab." Nearly all her scenes are with "Ollapod," and, needless to say, I derived sound instruction from the clever actress. We repeated *The Poor Gentleman* with nearly the same cast just a year after this date at the Great Hall, Tunbridge

Wells. Ffoulkes was the "Worthington," "Dobbins" was played by Everard Hopkins of *Punch* fame, and Adair and Coleridge were the "Harrowbys."

In the Summer Term of 1881, the Philothespian Society became a club, and this proved to be an eventful period in its career. As a result of this change, the first of those constitutional disturbances became very faintly manifest, which proved the bane and ultimate ruin of the Philothespians. Up till the termination of the performance of *Dearer than Life* the constitution had been a dictatorship, which no one thought of questioning. The general feeling amongst us was that the unique position of Adderley as founder and first president gave him almost the rights of absolute ownership, and by the rules this was the case. Here were obviously the seeds of future trouble. As had been foreseen, so long as Adderley was president, his personal popularity, his claims as founder, his impartiality and unselfishness prevented even a breath of demur against his position, even at a later date than this when he gave up the reins of government over a club far larger than the present. Albeit, every one felt that the presidency of a Varsity club could not be permanent and dictatorial, and the discontent which under other circumstances would have found vent in an attack on the president, became now manifest, but very faintly, against the predominance of one College in

the Club, and a fine field was open to future malcontents in the fact that according to our rules the election of candidates lay in the hands of all the members, although up till now it had been exercised in an informal way by the president. During my first year, with one other exception, I was the only member who did not belong to Christ Church; in point of fact, the O.U.P.C. might be called a College Society. In the latter part of the year I went upon the Committee, and in the spring of this year Gilbert Coleridge was elected to it, there being thus two Trinity men in that body. It was natural, therefore, that when the Club became more cosmopolitan and the jealousy of the one College began to grow, we two should be the first to have the matter hinted to us. The admission of members from other Colleges dated from the move which took place in the term before this, when, as already mentioned, the prohibition of the Society necessitated our finding some wider field for the preservation of its vitality during the time we were obliged to lie *perdu* in Oxford, and this was the first move in the direction of making it more of a 'Varsity Society. As to the predominance of one College, the natural order of things generally equalizes matters in the end, provided the members themselves are of the right sort; and at this time the leading Christ Church men kept the Club on the right lines. Eventually, as I will explain in due course, it was the party opposed to them

who caused the Club first to become unpopular, and then to expire.

To accommodate the increased number of members, rooms were taken in St. Aldate's (Bennett's lodgings), and the Society so became a Club, with a certain number of periodicals, etc., and eventually came the opening of dining-rooms. During the Eights' Week we ventured upon a concert in the Club-rooms, but given privately, and the many ladies and guests present were regaled with a theatrical performance to wind up the concert, in the shape of Sullivan's operetta, *Cox and Box*.

A very bold stroke was now made. The Vice-Chancellor's leave was requested for a public performance during "Commem."—it being represented to him that we had abstained from public performances during term-time. Greatly to the surprise of every one, the Vice-Chancellor consented, and even signified his intention of being present. Whether he was weary of our pertinacity, or whether, as he said, he wished to gather some personal experience of our doings, I know not, but his permission was given only conditionally upon a promise that his permission should not again be asked, and that we should never again attempt to perform in Oxford. Upon this interesting subject Claud Nugent, afterwards secretary of the O.U.D.S., observes—

"This time the Vice-Chancellor was aroused, and sent to Mr. Adderley a few days before the per-

By permission and under the Patronage of the Rev. the Vice-Chancellor



THE OXFORD

University Dramatic Society

WILL PERFORM

SHAKESPEARE'S HISTORICAL PLAY

IN FIVE ACTS,



(PART 1.)

IN

THE TOWN HALL, OXFORD

(By permission of His Worship the Mayor.)

On Saturday, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday,
May 9th, 11th, 13th, 14th, and 15th, at 7.45.

AND

On Tuesday Afternoon, May 12th, at 2 o'clock.

Stalls, Numbered and Reserved, 6s. Unreserved Seats, 2s. 6d.

PLAN OF ROOM AT MR. RUSSELL'S, HIGH STREET, OXFORD

PROGRAMME COVER OF O.U.D.S. OPENING PERFORMANCE.

1885.

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formance, and remonstrated; but being a kind-hearted man, and knowing that the Society had been put to much trouble and expense, he gave them permission to act, but with the solemn charge that it must never occur again. The Philothespians made full use of this permission, and ordered to be printed a thousand circulars headed with the words, "By permission of the Vice-Chancellor." About four hundred tickets were sold. Heads of Colleges, even proctors came; and if it had not been for the deadening feeling that this was the last appearance of the Philothespians, there could not have been a pleasanter nor more successful show. There seemed nothing for it now but to dissolve the Society, and a meeting was called to consider the question; it was decided, however, by a majority of one to continue, and club-rooms were taken in St. Aldate's, where many minor performances took place."

Anyway, we took what we could get, and a performance of *The Clandestine Marriage*, and a burlesque *Belle of Barley Mow*, was held in the Holywell Music Rooms during "Commem.," with the permission and in the presence of the Vice-Chancellor. The comedy, I am told, he expressed himself fairly pleased with. I was "down," and neither took part in nor saw the performance, in which Adderley, Coleridge, Astley, Glyn, Shaw and Hodgkinson acted the principal parts. In the burlesque the pathetic statement, "We'll never 'play here' no

more, boys!" was sung to the well-known popular air from the *Forty Thieves* then running at the Gaiety, and the audience departed in the belief that they had witnessed the last effort of the popular Society.

We all amused ourselves with various shows during the Long and Christmas Vacations, but as a Society we were quite still till Lent Term of 1882, when we found a new outlet for our energies. It was scarcely possible, after the events of the preceding summer, to attempt any fresh series in Oxford, but it was suggested by some of the county that a performance of the Philothespians at Bicester in the week of the Hunt Ball would be very acceptable, and accordingly we commenced operations at once. *The Bride of Ludgate* was eventually selected, with the addition of the favourite *Villikins*. This was the first of the Bicester performances, which were given annually for three years till the fall of the Club.

Gilbert Coleridge was the swaggering "Captain Mouth," Lee was "Doeskin," and I appeared as "King Charles II." Hubert Astley made his last appearance as "Dinah." Hodgkinson was this time the "Gruffin," Adderley contenting himself with speaking a prologue and singing a character song. I replaced Adair as "Villikins," and Wilks was the "Baron."

It was just before this show that Adderley com-

mitted what, to my thinking, was his first mistake : he ceased to exercise a rigid supervision over the election of members. Men of very inferior stamp thus managed to creep into the Club, and the Christ Church set, the committee and one or two other members such as Hodgkinson (Magdalen), became the sole repositories of the traditions of the Club, and from now till the fall of the Philothespians, the Club ceased to be a united whole, and the Christ Church set kept completely distinct from the rest, supporting the committee by every means in their power, that body remained much the same as before : Adderley (Christ Church), Astley (Christ Church), Lees (Christ Church), Coleridge (Trinity) and myself (Trinity). We had lost Adair (now Sir Frederick Adair, Bart.), who left Oxford for Sandhurst in 1881. During the Easter Vacation I organized a performance of *The Poor Gentleman* and *The Honeymoon* at Tunbridge Wells, with nearly the same cast as before.

During the course of the Summer Term we confined ourselves strictly to our policy of quiescence, the only sign of our existence being a concert in the Clarendon Rooms, in which James Adderley, Gilbert Coleridge, Lees, Gordon, Stantial and I took part. But as "Commem." approached we yearned for another show, and resolved upon secretly preparing a piece and giving it publicly during "Commem.," when we hoped that public

feeling would save us as it had done before. This we were the more emboldened to do as the present term was the last of Dr. Evans's Vice-Chancellorship, and we did not know exactly what line his successor, Dr. Jowett, the Master of Balliol, would take. We had, however, every reason to hope for more encouragement under his régime: in addition to this, the Rev. H. Scott-Holland was now Senior Proctor, and we felt that in him we had a friend at court. Of Scott-Holland my old friend Nugent writes: "He was kind enough to throw himself heart and soul into the matter. He interviewed Dr. Evans, asking his leave for the performance to take place on condition it were conducted in a more private manner. Dr. Evans's reply was, 'That he would not object, provided the matter were not directly brought under his notice'; but as ill-luck would have it, it *was* brought directly under his notice, and on the very morning of the day upon which the performance was to take place, Mr. Adderley received a letter which read as follows: 'The Vice-Chancellor considers that the performance announced in the Holywell Rooms is a breach of the Statutes, and a contempt of his authority, and therefore requests Mr. Adderley to call upon him on Thursday at twelve o'clock.'

"Mr. Adderley knew too well that this implied that if he acted on that day (Monday) he would be sent down on the Thursday, which would be fatal



A. M. MACKINNON.
ARTHUR BOURCHIER. "A TIGER TAMED." HON. J. ADDERLEY.
1885.

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to his University career. He thereupon called at once upon the Vice-Chancellor, and obtained an interview one hour before the curtain was to rise. 'Why do you come here?' said Dr. Evans; 'I told you to come next Thursday.' 'I cannot wait till next Thursday,' replied Adderley. 'I hear you are going to send me down: I want to know if this is true before I go and act. I shall not act if you are going to send me down.' 'I decline to answer you. You must come on Thursday.' With a heavy heart Adderley left the room to play the parts of 'Madame Phillipeau' and 'Amanthis.' Through the mediation, however, of the Senior Proctor, Dr. Evans was induced to look lightly on the matter; and when the dreaded Thursday arrived, received Adderley in the most friendly manner, saying, 'I should be sorry to do anything disagreeable, as this is my last day of office: I shall not trouble you any more after to-day. Good-bye!' and they shook hands." But this is slightly to anticipate.

Owing to pressure from the Trinity authorities, and our intention of pursuing a somewhat more serious train of thought and action, both Coleridge and I had intended to take no share in the forthcoming pieces, but at the eleventh hour, through the persuasiveness of James Adderley and Elliot Lees, I yielded, and promised to play in the farce under a *nom de théâtre*. The Holywell Music Room was again the scene of action, and the pieces

chosen were *A Husband to Order* and *Little Toddlekins*.

This was the cast—

“HUSBAND TO ORDER.”

BARON DE BEAUPRE . . .	Mr. G. Gurney.
PIERRE MARCEAU . . .	Mr. H. Pryce Hamer.
ANATOLE LATOUR (a lawyer) . . .	Mr. H. Lee.
PHILLIPEAU (a farmer) . . .	Mr. J. Carwood.
SERVANT	Mr. F. Oswell.
JOSEPHINE (the Baron's niece) . . .	Mr. G. W. Hogg.
ELISE (the Baron's ward) . . .	Mr. C. J. Shaw.
MADAME PHILLIPEAU	Hon. J. Adderley.

“LITTLE TODDLEKINS.”

MR. JONES ROBINSON BROWNSMITH	“Mr. A. Murray.”
MR. BARNABY BABBICOMBE . . .	Mr. E. Lees.
CAPTAIN LITTLEPOP	Mr. G. Lushington.
AMANTHIS	Hon. J. Adderley.
ANNIE BABBICOMBE	Mr. C. J. Shaw.
SUSAN	Mr. F. Oswell.

I shall never forget my first impression of Adderley as “Amanthis” in Matthews’ most laughable farce. It will be remembered that the interest of the audience is aroused by Brownsmith’s long soliloquy concerning this handicapping step-daughter of his—

“My wife had left me a legacy—a thumping legacy—a great lump of a daughter eighteen years older than myself, a daughter who calls me ‘Papa!’ before the women, too! and who does nothing but grumble from morning till night, because I don’t take her out walking, to exhibitions, concerts and balls. Fancy me with a great forty-eight pounder of a

girl hanging on my arm—for she will be forty-eight next birthday—flaunting up St. James's Street, running the gauntlet of the clubs, with such a gushing young thing as that by my side—ugh! I've tried to marry her off two or three times, but to no purpose. I wouldn't care if her age only stood in the way of her own marriage, but confound it, it prevents mine. The moment I present my lumbering daughter there's an end of me; the stoutest heart quails at the sight of this Great Exhibition of the produce of 1804. Now, you'll see what a playful little kitten it is." (Enter Amanthis.)

Amanthis's entrance was the signal for a shriek of laughter. I myself had the greatest difficulty to keep my countenance at the first rehearsals, Adderley's make-up was so truly comic; and his arch *moue* as he murmured—

"What! Not kiss your little Amanthis? What have I done? Have I been naughty?" was delicious and marked the beginning of fresh peals of merriment. This passage reminds me that once when Matthews was playing the part of Amanthis's step-father, a voice roared out from the pit—

"Excuse me, Mr. Matthews, but when did you say your daughter was born."

"Eighteen hundred and four," replied Matthews, unabashed.

"Then, sir, she's fifty-eight," bawled the man.

"Heavens, how her mother has deceived me!" was Matthews' instant rejoinder, which, of course, brought down the house.

We ourselves, I remember, deliberated whether to

alter the time of the action from 1852 to 1882, and I always at this juncture expected an interruption from some chronological genius in the gallery informing me that my daughter was seventy-eight. But it never came off.

This time we had no Astley, although C. J. Shaw looked very bewitching in the comedy.

A crisis was now rapidly approaching. The event which had always been certain to bring matters to a head now occurred at the beginning of Michaelmas Term, 1882, *i. e.* the resignation of our first President. James Adderley was in for his schools at the end of the following term; I was in the same condition. Astley's acting days were past: Gilbert Coleridge, also for purposes of reading, had severed himself from active share in the Philothespians; Lees was going down at the end of the term. Thus all the old leaders were removed from the scene. James Adderley, feeling that he could not properly look after the affairs of the Club during the next year, and thinking that delay did not improve matters, resigned the Presidency at the close of this Summer Term, remaining, however, upon the Committee.

The condition of the Club at this juncture was anything but satisfactory: I have already alluded to the injudicious admission of members; this had now increased to such an extent that the latter had become, if not numerically, at all events in

By Permission of the Rev. the Vice-Chancellor and the Worshipful the Mayor



OPENING

OF THE

NEW LITERATURE OF OXFORD

BY THE

Oxford University Dramatic
SOCIETY.

DATES OF PERFORMANCE :

OPENING NIGHT, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13th, at 7.45 p.m.

Doors open (to avoid inconvenience) at 7 p.m.

EVENING PERFORMANCES

*Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, February
15th, 16th, 17th, 19th and 20th, at 7.45. Doors open at 7.15.*

MORNING PERFORMANCES

*Thursday and Saturday, February 18th and 20th, at 2 o'clock.
Doors open at 1.30.*

*Prices of Admission. Stalls, 7s 6d, Dress Circle, Reserved, 6s; Unreserved, 5s; Inner
Circle, 2s. 6d, Balcony, 1s.*

PLANS OF THE THEATRE AT MR. RUSSELL'S, HIGH STREET

PROGRAMME COVER OF "TWELFTH NIGHT."

1886.

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activity the most important clique in the Club. The Christ Church members had taken up a position of complete indifference to affairs, which proved infectious. Gerald Gurney, the next President, was not associated with either party, and nothing could have been wiser or nicer than his conduct in resigning after one term of office in favour of a man whom he deemed to be more useful for the future of the Club.

When I heard of Gurney's candidature I came to the meeting, and on the spot proposed in opposition the man who, of those that were available, seemed, from his standing and past achievements to be the fit and proper candidate, *i. e.* F. K. Hodgkinson of Magdalen. Adderley abstained from voting, and Gurney secured a small majority. A day or two later I resigned my place on the Committee, a course in which I was speedily followed by Gilbert Coleridge.

I had now practically severed my connection with the Philothespians, and therefore the events of Michaelmas Term are gathered from hearsay. It appeared that a contest soon arose regarding the choice of the play which it was contemplated to give at the end of the term. The party who were in the ascendant at the beginning of term enjoyed their majority merely in contemplation, for they now found themselves face to face with fresh opposition, and opposition of sufficient strength to compel the

new President to abandon the play proposed by his former colleagues in favour of Lord's Lytton's *Money*.

The leader of this new combination, Arthur Bouchier, was in his first term. I see him now in all his tall slenderness and breeziness. He had come up with a dramatic reputation from Eton, and as he was by way of preparing for the stage, he seized the opportunity of coming to Oxford to take a share in the rising dramatic spirit of that University. Introduced to James Adderley, the latter immediately brought him forward, seeing the benefit which had accrued in his own case from having a man of the necessary qualifications to manage matters, with plenty of time before him. Through Adderley's influence he was elected on the Committee this term to one of the vacancies upon our resignation in the capacity of Secretary, Lushington being elected as Treasurer. He had the wisdom at once to see that the present administration was hopeless, and laid himself out for opposition. Adderley was determined to bring us together, and one day I was dragged from my study of recondite passages of history to a rehearsal which was proceeding in Holywell Music Room, and there the formal introduction took place which was to produce many a pleasant theatrical bout together in the future. I remember being at once impressed with his enthusiasm and geniality, and regretted to be obliged to refuse the proposition to

join in the performance to be given during the Christmas Vacation at Brighton.

Lord Lytton's *Money* and the farce *Taming a Tiger* were given in the Holywell Music Rooms. Four performances were given of *Money*, which was preceded by a prologue and a farce. The prologue was delivered by the old President and founder, Mr. Adderley. The last four lines are as follows—

“But now farewell, they call for my removal;
I'm only here to buy your best approval.
This is a serious sale, and nothing funny;
You give us your applause, we give you 'Money'!”

Needless to say that the snuff-box episode in the club scene occasioned numberless practical jokes. On one occasion it was filled full of cayenne pepper, with disastrous results; on another occasion with appalling asafœtida, which made its presence felt even on the audience; and on more than one occasion a general game of hide-and-seek was played with the harmless, necessary box, for which the “Old Member” perpetually cries out. The part of “Georgina Vesey” was played by the present Lord Wolverton, then “Freddy” Glyn, who greatly objected to shaving his moustache, and at the entreaty of the Committee finally consented to compromise the matter by having it gummed over with gold-beater's skin, which was always proving refractory, and qualifying the fair “Georgina” to enter the ranks with the “bearded lady.” “Georgina”

also spoke with a very gruff voice, and her father, impersonated by Arthur Bouchier, possessed a somewhat high-pitched one, this reversal of the right order of things frequently causing much amusement. What proved to be quite among the best of Bouchier's many excellent impersonations at Oxford, his "Sir John Vesey," was praised on all hands. Of the other characters, Gurney was admirable in "Graves," and Lushington proved himself second only to Astley in the petticoat line by his delineation of "Lady Franklin." R. Goring Thomas was a good "Stout," and an immense hit was made in the duplicate *rôle* of "Sharp" and an "Old Member" by W. J. Morris.

Morris, though a B.A. of some standing and a lecturer at Jesus College, had always taken a keen interest in the progress of the drama at Oxford, but had never before actively allied himself to the Philothesians. His accession at this moment was one of the signs of the change that was coming over Oxford generally in its attitude towards the Club. Morris was the nearest approach to a don who had appeared on the boards, and without doubt afforded the link which made it possible in due course for an "ex-Proctor" to tread the hitherto forbidden ground, so that the Club naturally welcomed so valuable an addition. The new Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Jowett, was present, and was highly satisfied, though not yet prepared to sanction the continuance of the Club,

E. A. MITCHELL-INNES, LADY ST. LEONARDS, F. HUTH JACKSON, H. V. PAGE.



ALAN M. MACKINNON.

HON. GILBERT D. COLERIDGE
GROUP, "HENRY IV."
1885.

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having several conditions to affix previous to that step. From this time, too, dates W. L. Courtney's friendly association with the Philothespian fortunes. *Money* was given at Brighton during the Vacation, and the President was assisted in all his arrangements for the tour by James Adderley, who accompanied the Club in the capacity of nurse, and himself played in a farce.

Well did we realize the difficulties under which Shakespeare must have laboured in our want of ladies to fill the female rôles. "There were," writes Mr. W. J. Morris, "many unrehearsed bits of comedy, which must ever be the case when men appear upon the stage as women, under which disadvantage the Cambridge A.D.C. still labours.

"Our 'actresses' were beautifully and indeed extravagantly gowned, but the *voice* gave the show away. When a man who has been known in stentorian tones, and with a ring of Shimei-like cursing, to roar at an *indifferent* torpid, 'You are *all* rowing *badly* except Five—and he's rowing d—d badly,' attempts the part of a sweet, fragile young heroine, what can one expect? Surely it were no lack of charity to apply the criticism so lavishly bestowed on Number Five to such a presentment on the stage. When a gentleman exquisitely got up in what is called a 'ravishing costume' came to the line, 'How about the ear-rings you promised me, dear papa?' the house fairly rocked with laughter, for the

daughter had the deepest bass voice I have ever heard!"

As the time again approached for the Bicester performance, I received a request from Adderley to undertake the management of the contemplated burlesque. To avoid the censure of the authorities, who disapproved of these performances, which, being out of Oxford, they could not well stop, we gave the performance under the name of "Oxonians." Byron's *Cinderella* was the burlesque, and I assumed, for the first time in Oxford, the duties of stage-manager, and played the "Prince." James Adderley was laid up a fortnight before the performance, so the management of *To Parents and Guardians* was entrusted to Morris, and Goring Thomas took the vacant part in the burlesque. A special train ran each night to bring us back into Oxford by twelve, and on the second night the Proctor was waiting at the London and North-Western Railway Station to make a bag, but the train pulled up a few hundred yards before the terminus, whereupon we all left it, and an empty train rolled into the station to greet the minions of the law!

In April in the Easter Vacation I got up a performance for the O.U.P.C. at Folkestone. Gurney, who was to have played "Copp" in *Charles II*, was taken ill at the last minute, and his part was taken at very short notice by A. E. Stantial, who got his lines into his head in wonderful form. Burnand's



HON. GILBERT COLERIDGE
AS FALSTAFF.
1885.



ALAN MACKINNON AS
PRINCE HAL.
1885.



HON. F. BOYLE.
1887.



A. E. W. MASON AS HERCLES.
1887.

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burlesque, *Alonzo the Brave*, was played both nights, being preceded on the first night by Foote's comedy, *The Liar*, and on the second by *Charles II*.

In the latter play Bouchier, in the part of the "Earl of Rochester," had to enter the tavern at Wapping dressed as a sailor. He had very little time to change, and there had been no dress rehearsal. Now, it is the custom of costumiers in amateur theatricals to pin the name of the character on the uppermost garment of the bundle. On this occasion Bouchier entered with "Rochester, Second Dress," pinned on the seat of his breeches. As I was playing "Charles II" I gave a most realistic performance of the merry monarch for at least two minutes, much to the confusion of "Rochester." While he was wondering at the cause of my laughter, hands appeared at the wings to grab the offending placard, which was eventually accomplished.

I was down in the Summer Term of 1883, and consequently know little of the progress of the Club at that time, except that on the resignation of Gurney, alluded to before, Bouchier became President of the Club. It was during this term that the celebrated decision of the new Vice-Chancellor was promulgated, by which the O.U.P.C. were formally recognized, but two conditions were annexed to the sanction—

- (1) Shakespeare, or a Greek play, to be the only dramas permitted in Oxford.

- (2) No men to undertake female *rôles* without special leave from the Vice-Chancellor, and lady amateurs only to take part in the performances of the Club, not professional actresses.

Such were the famous rules, which, with occasional modification, have continued in force ever since

CHAPTER VI

“Aha! what’s that? Yes, once again I seem
To see the drama of this evening’s dream.”

Villikins and his Dinah.

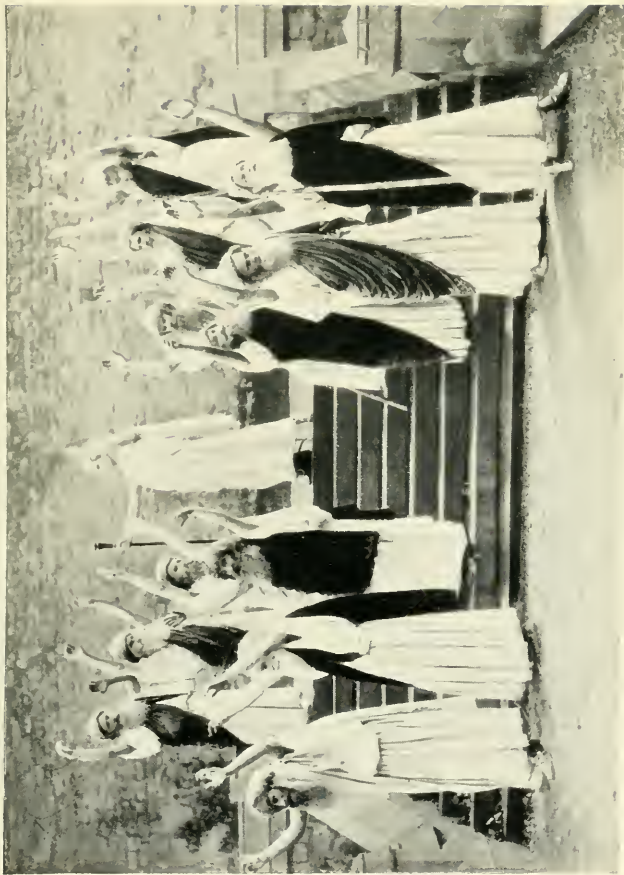
THE Club now being recognized, became larger, and new Club-rooms were taken at Canterbury House, King Edward Street, and small private entertainments given there from time to time during term. The dining arrangements were also increased, and colours introduced for the Club, consisting of a ribbon of pink and old gold, and a “sash” to be worn at the dinners.

We of course bowed to Destiny with regard to a selection of a Shakespearian play for the next term, but were resolved to hold to our modern pieces anywhere out of Oxford; and I undertook the management of a performance to be given during the 'Varsity cricket-match week in town. The bill was to have consisted of *London Assurance* and *The Liar*. Just, however, as the performance was about to take place at the School of Dramatic Art, a difficulty arose about the licence of the building, and I was obliged to tear about town to find a suitable place, and eventually found Ladbroke Hall, which was very out of the way and not large enough for *London Assurance*. Accordingly we changed the programme

into *The Liar* and *Little Toddlekens*. The performance was given in aid of the Ophthalmic Hospital, and £35 was cleared. Charles Allan kindly stage-managed.

During the Long the Committee decided upon *The Merchant of Venice* as the play to be given by the Club in Michaelmas Term, according to the new regulations. Rehearsals began in the Club-rooms at the beginning of term. E. G. Gordon, who was an excellent reciter, played "Antonio." I was cast for "Gratiano," and W. L. Courtney himself undertook to play, having just relinquished his proctorial duties, and to appear as "Bassanio." Now came the great difficulty as to how we were to obtain ladies to help us. Much gratitude is due to Mrs. Courtney, who came forward regardless of all prejudice and lack of precedent, and volunteered to help the Club by playing "Portia," on condition that she was not obliged to play every night, and obtained Miss Ethel Arnold's assistance to relieve her on the night she could not appear. As rehearsals proceeded we also found ourselves with two "Lorenzos." Truly the Club seemed bubbling over with superfluous talent! Mrs. Woods, wife of the bursar of Trinity, also kindly consented to play "Jessica."

Just before the play came off Bouchier arranged a small show at Abingdon for some people who wanted a play for a charity there, and we took the old study *Little Toddlekens*, in which Bouchier played "Babbicombe" for the first time. James



W. A. PHILLIPS (Leader),
CHORUS, "ALCESTIS."

1887.

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Adderley had gone down and did not play, and I resumed my old part.

At last the eventful day arrived, and the first of that series of the legitimate drama, which has become annual in Oxford since, was launched before a friendly audience in the Town Hall on Tuesday, December 4, 1883.

On the opening night, as we were coming from our temporary dressing-rooms—a bicycle shop next-door to the Town Hall—to gain the stage, an over-officious Proctor, instigated by a couple of surly bull-dogs, raided us. We not being in cap and gown, our names and addresses, in the usual way, were demanded. When it came to Bromley-Davenport's turn ("the Bromer," as we affectionately called him), he was so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of his part that he answered instantly—

"Launcelot Gobbo. Number 1, High Street, Venice."

On the first night most of the daily papers were represented, and gave long accounts of the new development of dramatic ideas at Oxford. *Finis coronat opus*. If the Philothespians existed only for this they did not exist in vain; the only tinge of regret one feels in looking back is that they did not survive their crowning success. A short and chequered existence followed this great achievement, and forced them to yield to a society which sprang out of their own body and was destined in name to eclipse them, though it must never be for-

gotten that the Philothespians sowed the seed, tended it, produced the first crop, and the O.U.D.S. reaped it.

On this occasion the prologue was written by F. E. Weatherly, the well-known song-writer, then an Oxford coach, and delivered by Adderley. It contains some very neat lines and some shrewd hits, but only about a third related to the subject of the evening, then occupying the minds of all the undergrads, whether dramatically disposed or not.

Clement Scott wrote a long and most laudatory article on the play in the *Daily Telegraph*.

The Vice-Chancellor came formally to the play on the third night, when every seat in the building was occupied, and was pleased with the performance. Thus only three and a half years after that first stealthily arranged programme in the Cornmarket lodgings, Oxford assembled publicly to see a play given by the same Club in the presence of the Oxford authorities, supported by the London Press, and figuring upon the boards was an ex-Proctor, a College tutor, and the daughter of the Dean of Westminster. Well might men wonder!

And now let me present the prologue in which James Adderley, habited as a D.D., gave vent to reflections very much in the above vein. The old Doctor comes to the church of his youth, and is horrified to perceive a bust of Shakespeare with a bill of the O.U.P.C. beneath it, on which he blurts out, as he reads—



HON. R. SCOTT-MONTAGU.

W. A. R. MARRIOTT,
"ALCESTIS,"
1887.

LORD ASCRAM.

Two faces p. 92.

“I scarcely know if I’m asleep or waking,
And (looking round and seeing poster)
Eh! what’s this? a poster—six by four!
‘Permission!’ ‘Patronage!’ ‘Vice-Chancellor.’
Stage plays in Oxford!—there I go again,
Another muddle in my foolish brain.
We used to think (belief of strange vitality),
The statute book the standard of morality.
We swore—nay, don’t be frightened—to obey
Each statutory detail night and day;
Tobacco, taverns, marbles, to eschew,
And don but garments of a subfusc hue;
To cut our hair, to wear no ruffled satin,
All this and more we swore to—and in Latin;
And vowed all plays to be the devil’s snares,
To catch the guileless student unawares.
But time has changed that notion like the rest.
This change at least is surely for the best,
To own the stage is better after all,
Higher and nobler than the Music Hall;
A little better than a sham-Greek bard,
A whit more wonderful than Madame Card;
Somewhat more feeding to our hungry souls
Than reams of sermons from the worthy Bowles.
Then let us need no howlings of distress,
No trams and dams that mar our loveliness.
We have at last the Light within our ken
That shows the crannies in the hearts of men.
We have at last the voice that moves our tears
E’en in these cold and calculating years,
And spurned so oft, Thalia comes, tho’ late,
’Mid smiling welcomes thro’ our open gate.
One thing remains: in welcoming the maid
Let her not pine in lodgings in the shade,
But prove your welcome, or the maid will roam,
Give her a resting place, a worthy home.
Then if Biology must reign supreme,
If each old faith be but a melting dream,
If we must hear the helpless victims squeal,
Shakespeare, at least, shall teach our hearts to feel.”

We had in Morris, Bromley-Davenport, Gordon and Courtney, not to mention the ladies, actors of no slight experience.

The full cast is as follows—

DUKE OF VENICE	<i>W. J. Morris, B.A., Jesus College.</i>
PRINCE OF ARRAGON	<i>H. S. Carey, Pembroke College.</i>
ANTONIO	<i>E. G. Gordon, Merton College.</i>
BASSANIO	<i>W. L. Courtney, M.A., New College.</i>
SALARINO	<i>G. Pritchard, University College.</i>
SALANIO	<i>G. F. Stafford, Balliol College.</i>
SALERIO	<i>E. Harrington, Christ Church.</i>
GRATIANO	<i>A. M. Mackinnon, B.A., Trinity College.</i>
LORENZO	<i>G. H. Aitken, Oriol College.</i>
SHYLOCK	<i>Arthur Bouchier, Christ Church.</i>
TUBAL	<i>T. H. Lechmere Stuart, Magdalen College.</i>
LAUNCELOT GOBBO	<i>W. Bromley-Davenport, Balliol College.</i>
OLD GOBBO	<i>W. J. Morris, B.A., Jesus College.</i>
LEONARDO	<i>Earl of Norbury, Christ Church.</i>
PORTIA	<i>Mrs. W. L. Courtney.</i>
NERISSA	<i>Miss J. F. Arnold.</i>
JESSICA	<i>Mrs. Woods.</i>

The three ladies were each most charming in their respective rôles.



MRS. JAMESON AND MRS. SIM.
"MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR."
1888.



F. H. JACKSON.
1885.



MR. E. H. CLARK.
1885.

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It was most gratifying to the O.U.P.C. to be invited, as they were, by the Council of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon to give a representation there. The play mounted with the scenery which John O'Connor painted for Stratford-on-Avon was enthusiastically received, and so far we added to our laurels by this first venture of the tour. The neighbourhood very kindly put up between them the entire cast, so that our expenses there were comparatively small, and the event is one which I look back upon with pleasure and satisfaction.

One droll incident I recall. During the performance the local supers were rarely told precisely what they had to do, owing to the short rehearsals. Mr. Morris was the Doge of Venice, and when he left the Court the two stalwart guards, who should have preceded him, lined up alongside of him, and apparently took him in charge.

At Oxford we had a capital orchestra of undergrads, who performed the clever incidental music and a delightful glee, all written for the occasion by Lionel Monckton, a member of the Club.

The play was repeated at Leamington, at the Vaudeville in London, and at Charterhouse, where, though space was limited, the whole thing went off very tidily. The only mishap that occurred was the effective exit of a messenger, who, when crossing the bridge on the Rialto, slipped and fell in head foremost with anything but a watery sound, while

his legs remained very palpably above water! More amusement was caused when Mr. W. L. Courtney, who was the "Bassanio," entered in the first scene (representing the Rialto at Venice) and leant in an easy attitude on a piece of profile scenery at the back. It turned out from the front that he was leaning his elbow on the roof of a house.

Altogether *The Merchant of Venice* certainly deserves to rank high among the Oxford productions.

A few weeks afterwards our Vacation Club, which now practically consisted of James Adderley, Bouchier and myself, under the name of "Oxonians," burst out afresh, we being asked to take part in the annual theatricals at Lord Norton's (James Adderley's father) in Warwickshire. The theatrical week there had always been justly celebrated, and they always endeavoured to be wide in representing the various amateur talent of the country, and the "Oxonians" now came in for their share. In *Good for Nothing*, Miss Mabel Clerk was "Nan." Astley appeared as the "Eton Boy," this being, to our great regret, his last performance on the boards previous to reading for the Church. *The Serious Family* was played with Mrs. Copleston, Miss Clerk, James Adderley, and Bouchier and I in the principal parts.

The year 1884 was mainly notable for the fall of the Philothespians. As I have noticed elsewhere, *The Merchant of Venice* was really the outcome of the old Club, and owed little or nothing to those

members who now became conspicuous by wearing gaudy blazers with the colours of the Club about the streets of Oxford, and spending the greater part of the day in playing baccarat in the Club-rooms. As the time for the Bicester performances came round, a programme was arranged consisting of *Vice Versa* and *Withered Leaves*. Bouchier, Morris and Vane-Tempest were the leading performers. Summer Term saw the last performance of any kind given by the Philothespians, as the previous term had witnessed the last of the Bicester shows. This was on the occasion of a concert given by the Club in aid of the Oxford Fire Brigade. James Adderley and I appeared in *An Unwarrantable Intrusion*; Morris and Stuart in Scene from *The Rivals*, and Bouchier in *Cox and Box*. The room was crowded and a good sum was made.

It was at the close of this term that the great split began in the Club, which was the main cause of its speedy collapse. It was perhaps natural that a man like Bouchier, far ahead of his companions in dramatic ability, should create jealousy, but as he really did care for the Club being preserved on popular lines, he was bound sooner or later to come into contact with the non-dramatic element which was gradually outnumbering the rest.

Matters stood thus at the end of the Summer Term. It was towards the end of September or the beginning of October that I went to stay with

Bourchier at Newbury, and it was out of this visit and a subsequent meeting with Adderley that the idea of starting the O.U.D.S. became a certainty. We talked it over together, and in the middle of the visit made an appointment with James Adderley by telegram. Bourchier and I left Newbury in the morning, and we three had an interview together at a room in the Mitre at Oxford, a memorable one. James Adderley felt the idea of breaking with the past most keenly, as was natural; I had certainly felt the same. However, preliminaries were settled, and we parted, though Adderley still hung back, for reasons which the following letters will explain—

“10th October, 1884.

“MY DEAR A.,

“I have been thinking over a great deal that we talked about the other day, and I must confess that I don't quite understand what the proposal is that you and Bourchier really make in *re* Philothespians. If you can explain it fully, perhaps I can give you a more decisive answer as to my action in the matter. Firstly, I want to distinctly understand whether you mean to entirely blot out the Philothespian in name and existence. Mark you, I don't say that I object to this at all, but I want to know if that is what you mean to do. Do you mean to blot it out, and then start a new Club or Society? If so, what I want to know is—have you carefully considered if this is the best thing to do? I



PROGRAMME COVER OF "JULIUS CAESAR" BURLESQUE.
1889.

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confess I haven't had time to think of it in this light, and that is why I was rather undecided the other night at the Mitre. It was a new idea. I have always, as you know, wanted to keep up the Philothespian itself in name and everything. It always seems to me that one is rather eating humble pie to hand over a Club which one has been instrumental in founding to a lot of people of the — type, and then to found a new one. Is it really impossible to keep up the old Club and improve it? Are you quite sure these factious people cannot be got rid of? Are you quite sure they exist in any formidable number? Is it quite impracticable to turn them out and form a new Committee? Of course I know you have thought these questions out, but if you could see your way to form some plan by which the old Club could be kept up, I should naturally take more interest in it. It seems almost absurd for me living in London and seldom at Oxford to put myself at the head of an entirely new movement! Let me know what you and Bouchier think.

“Yours,—J. G. A”

To which I sent the following—

“12th October, 1884.

“MY DEAR J.,

“I can assure you that it was not without much consideration and considerable reluctance that I was induced to take the view of affairs Philo-

thespian which resulted in the proposition made to you at Oxford; I know you will believe me when I say that the maintenance of the Club in name and existence, as you first originated it, has always been my chief object with regard to acting at Oxford, and I have, I think, given you proof of it on one or two occasions. But now I feel that the question presents itself in a new light. Those who know more of the interior of the Club itself, and of University feeling in general, from the fact that they are in residence, assure us that the prevailing class of members have rendered the Club little more than a 'set,' which has so annoyed both the authorities and, what is worse, the 'Varsity itself, that the very name is sufficient to deter the kind of men you and I wish to see in it from joining, while the authorities, never more than lukewarm, are ready to put a veto on an institution which is likely to present such a minimum of organized resistance. The seeds of this undesirable state of things, which were sown previous to *The Merchant of Venice*, have now had time to bear fruit, and the success of that play must rather be looked upon as the crowning effort of the old system than any indication whatever of the merits of the new. The long and short of this is that the Club as you originated it no longer exists, and as a consequence of this the name has fallen into disrepute, and you know the old proverb.

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“I hear there is not the least chance of the Club being allowed to live beyond the year. . . . How can a new Committee be formed when the right class of men won't join the Club? and how are we to patch up an impecunious club without a sufficient number of members to pay off their debts? . . . As to standing out and observing a neutrality, I am sure you would not approve of that. . . . Besides, men will look to the prestige of your name for the cue, and it will be the powerful means of bringing the old members like Coleridge, Adair, etc., to look upon the larger Oxford Dramatic Club as the result of their efforts under your guidance, not a Club, but a 'Varsity institution. By these means we shall absorb the really good members of the present Club, while presenting no obstacle to the prejudices of the 'Varsity in general, and the remaining ones whom we want to get rid of will die a natural death.

“. . . Believe me, when I reiterate my assurance that no one can possibly sympathize more thoroughly than I do with the sentiment which attaches you to the old name: naturally it is so, because I glory in the earlier work of the dear old Philothesians, but have we not to choose between the speedy destruction of the Club and the establishment of a Society which will carry on the old social feeling of its mother Society?

“. . . I really think Bouchier has honestly no

personal feeling in the matter beyond social and dramatic considerations. Forgive this tedious harangue, and let me hear from you soon.

“Yours,—A. M. M.”

Whereupon Adderley returned answer that he was satisfied that he could not undertake the active exertion of heading the movement, but that his name was at our disposal.

Courtney was at this period of valuable service to us, for he really, out of friendship for Bouchier and myself, prevented the veto of the authorities being again put upon the Philothespian until we had time to formulate the new Society to which he now gave his name and support.

I wrote to Coleridge and obtained his adhesion to the new scheme at the same time. The wearing of the colours and the playing above alluded to by the Philothespians about now became the subject of sharp articles in the London papers. Suppers, too, were frequently given in the Club-rooms, and not paid for by the members who partook of them, so that in consequence the Club had large debts to its name. In this state of things, after every one had been carefully prepared for the new revival, Bouchier, at a meeting of the Philothespian Club at the beginning of Michaelmas Term, 1884, announced the formation of the Oxford University Dramatic Society.



ALAN MACKINNON,

1890

[To face p. 102.]



A REHEARSAL,
H. B. IRVING,

1889.

ALAN MACKINNON,

CONINGSBY DISRAELI,

Dates were booked for the new Society at the Town Hall for a performance this term, thus defeating the Philothespians in their idea of producing a play in spite of opposition. The Provisional Committee of the O.U.D.S. was constructed on popular lines. The dramatic element was represented by Adderley, Bouchier, Courtney, Coleridge, Spottiswoode and myself, whilst the remainder was made up to include the President of Vincent's, President of Bullingdon, Captain of O.U.C.C., President of O.U.B.C., President of O.U.F.C., President of the Union, President of O.U.A.C., etc. During this term the two clubs were co-existent.

Here is a list of the original members: Hon. J. Adderley (Christ Church), P. L. Agnew (New), H. T. Arnall (Brasenose, *President*), A. G. G. Asher (Brasenose), C. W. Berry (Brasenose), Hon. A. Bligh (Christ Church), W. E. Bolitho (Trinity), A. Bouchier (Christ Church, *Acting-manager*), E. Buckley (St. John's), H. C. Bush (Hertford), H. W. Cave (Balliol), A. R. Cobb (New), Hon. G. Coleridge (Trinity), W. L. Courtney (New, *Auditor*), Hon. G. Curzon (All Souls'), E. Harington (Christ Church), F. J. Humphreys (Brasenose), E. Mitchell-Innes (Balliol), Lord Kenyon (Christ Church), S. E. R. Lane (Brasenose, *Secretary*), C. G. Lang (Balliol), B. P. Lascelles (Magdalen), A. Mackinnon (Trinity, *Stage-manager*), D. H. Maclean (New), A. McNeill (Trinity), L. Owen (New), H. V. Page (Wadham),

R. H. Pemberton (New), R. H. Philipson (New), S. J. Portal (Christ Church), G. W. Ricketts (Oriel), A. Rotherham (Balliol), W. H. Spottiswoode (Balliol), N. E. Stainton (Christ Church), S. H. Lechmere Stuart (Magdalen), T. C. Toler (Christ Church), J. H. Ware (Brasenose), E. M. Wood (Merton), R. Williams-Wynn (Christ Church).

I do not claim for the foregoing that like the signatories to the Petition of Right, the Invitation to William of Orange, or the Declaration of Independence, they have achieved immortality. They might, indeed, have been better employed in joining other societies, such as the S.D.P.O. (which I take to be the Society for the Distribution of Peppermint-drops in Otaheite); but such as they are, dear posterity, *les voilà*, the hoary fathers and pioneers of the twentieth century Oxford Amateur Stage.



W. J. MORRIS AS MARK ANTONY.
1886.

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CHAPTER VII

Hamlet. My lord, you once played in the University, you say?

Pol. That did I, my lord, and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar : I was killed i' the Capitol ; Brutus killed me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there.

IN Lent Term, 1885, the O.U.D.S. began to advance with rapid strides. Sidney Lane proved a most energetic Secretary, who enrolled nearly all the members who now joined. Grant Asher, the first President, who was also President of Vincent's, was most careful in framing the rules as to admission, etc., so as to keep the Society socially select. Owen was an invaluable Treasurer. To these three much of the success of the Club at starting was due, though in neither case were they dramatic members. A brochure entitled *The Fight for the Drama at Oxford* was published during the following year on the occasion of the opening of the theatre, nominally written by James Adderley. Bouchier, as I have said, took the lion's share in all the negotiations for the establishment of the new Society.

The books of the Philothespian are now in the

hands of the O.U.D.S., and a continuity has been regularly preserved. During this term the old Philothespian "rump" still flickered on and finally expired, leaving debts which it would have been really better if the O.U.D.S. had liquidated, though they were in no possible way bound to do so.

The next step was to find a home for the Society, and rooms for this purpose were taken in the High. How proud we all were when we got into those rooms one afternoon five-and-twenty years ago, each of us with the feeling that the fate of the 'Varsity drama was in our keeping! We hit upon *King Henry IV* (Part I) as the bill with which the Society should commence its career and justify its existence.

In an interview which I had with Dr. Jowett to announce our choice, he showed keen interest in the proposed cast, and his remarks were freely interlarded with ready quotations from the play. When I told him that Coleridge, with his lithe figure, was to play "Falstaff," he observed, "Am I not vilely fallen away?" And on my explaining that we had not yet found a "Mrs. Quickly," he dryly remarked that there were plenty to be found in Oxford!

The choice was a bold one. This first part of *King Henry IV* was the first big work in the way of stage management with which I had been concerned. The play had not been performed for half-a-century,

having but scant traditional business, containing two heavy sets of battle-scenes, and requiring costly dresses and armour. All these considerations might have damped others, but with us *esprit de corps* carried everything before it, and I am sure I do not exaggerate when I say that neither before nor since has such hard work been put into the 'Varsity play. As I look back now I see a group of ardent actors with many varying interests at Oxford. Many cherishing bright thoughts of a career, and all having plenty of other mental occupation, yet toiling like galley-slaves at rehearsals after heavy day's rowing, football, and, later, cricket, for two terms witnessed these rehearsals. Such was the spirit which led the Society on to a dramatic success far out-vying any of its forerunners—a representation which remained unique.

Mighty were the efforts required to convert the large and inconvenient Town Hall into a stage capable of bearing a battle of thirty or forty men—some of them, in spite of their exertions, no light weights—in suits of chain armour, besides a setting of rural scenes, some scattered bushes, and a fair-sized hillock. Our talent, I may mention, was not solely histrionic. Mrs. H. G. Woods, wife of the Bursar of Trinity (now Master of the Temple), as well as appearing in the character of "Lady Percy," also painted a most charming scene for the Boar's Head Tavern, one universally admired. Then Cosmo

Lang, of Balliol, the President of the Union (now Archbishop of York), spoke the Prologue, which was written by another member, George Curzon, of All Souls', which well merits quotation in full here—

“O, gentle audience, Don and Undergraduate—
 Less gentle might be if o'er long I bade you wait
 The Curtain's rising—at this shrine of Science
 We meet to join in nuptial alliance
Oxford, a bachelor *praeclaro nomine*,
 And the famed Grecian maiden called Melpomene.
 For her hath he vows of allegiance taken,
 For him hath she all other lovers forsaken;
 Her Virtue's self as pledge for her suffices,
 To him a sponsor generous *our* VICE is.
 Not singly comes the Bride, nor by a small staff
 Attended, but a goodly train. Jack Falstaff,
 Old England's Dionysus, God whose votaries
 'Tis said still linger in Collegiate Coteries.
 For still men love the “*Sack*”—until they've got it!
 To others are more tragic parts allotted,
 Three Henries, one of them the Fourth—enigma
 More hard to crack than head of OSMAN DIGMA—
 Next Hotspur, while the third (or fifth) is Prince Hal;
 These for the Bride all suffrages convince shall,
 Till each voice, bidden to pass judgment on her,
 Giving them ‘honours’ shall so give her honour.
 Nor less the Bridegroom's following, for Doctors,
 Learned Professors, Heads of Houses, Proctors,
 Players with whose fierce strife but late resounded
 A neigh'ring Theatre, have in this compounded
 For anæsthetic loss by gain æsthetical.
 And now join hands in union most poetical.
 'Tis *feigned* that then the gallery swelled the Babel—
 This time at least, Sirs, let it be no fable!
 But bid the Bride as now the curtain rises
 Loud welcome to a home beside the Isis.”



MRS. COPLESTON AS MRS. QUICKLY.
1888.



E. F. NUGENT AS SLENDER.
1888.



H. B. IRVING.
1890.



ALAN MACKINNON.
1890.

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The cast was as follows—

“KING HENRY IV.”

PART I.

KING HENRY IV.	<i>Mr. E. Harington.</i>
HENRY, PRINCE OF WALES	<i>Mr. A. M. Mackinnon.</i>
PRINCE JOHN OF LANCASTER	<i>Mr. H. C. Bush.</i>
RALPH NEVILLE, EARL OF WEST- MORELAND	<i>Mr. D. Tupper Carey.</i>
HENRY PERCY, EARL OF NORTH- UMBERLAND	<i>Mr. F. H. Jackson.</i>
HENRY PERCY, SURNAMED HOT- SPUR	<i>Mr. A. Bouchier.</i>
THOMAS PERCY, EARL OF WOR- CESTER	<i>Mr. S. Westlake.</i>
EDMUND MORTIMER, EARL OF MARCH	<i>Mr. S. H. L. Stuart.</i>
ARCHIBALD, EARL OF DOUGLAS	<i>Mr. S. E. R. Lane.</i>
OWEN GLENDOWER	<i>Mr. E. H. Clark.</i>
SIR WALTER BLUNT	<i>Mr. D. H. Hogarth.</i>
SIR RICHARD VERNON	<i>Mr. W. H. Spottiswoode.</i>
SIR JOHN FALSTAFF	<i>Hon. G. D. Coleridge.</i>
POINS	<i>Mr. E. A. Mitchell-Innes.</i>
GADSHILL	<i>Mr. S. Westlake.</i>
PETO	<i>Mr. F. H. Jackson.</i>
BARDOLPH	<i>Mr. H. V. Page.</i>
SHERIFF	<i>Mr. H. King Harman.</i>
FIRST CARRIER	<i>Mr. E. H. Clark.</i>
SECOND CARRIER	<i>Mr. S. H. Lechmere Stuart.</i>
FRANCIS	<i>Mr. F. J. Humphreys.</i>
SERVANT TO HOTSPUR	<i>Mr. C. Egerton Green.</i>
FIRST TRAVELLER	<i>Mr. T. C. Toler.</i>
A DRAWER	<i>Mr. H. M. Tomlin.</i>
LADY PERCY	<i>Mrs. H. G. Woods.</i>
LADY MORTIMER	<i>Lady E. S. Churchill.</i>
MRS. QUICKLY	<i>Lady St. Leonards.</i>

Bourchier's acting and—I will add—his *camaraderie* were invaluable to us all, cheering the perspiring stage-manager in many a weary rehearsal, and giving him the right to be considered the moving spirit in every production at Oxford until his lamented disappearance from the amateur stage.

E. Holman Clark, since so well known to playgoers, made his first appearance in the O.U.D.S. Lechmere Stuart left the ranks of the Philothespians and joined the O.U.D.S. as an original member. With Morris it was otherwise; he refused his election, but joined the Club about two years later. As President of the Philothespians it would have been hard for him to accept. All credit is due, therefore, to W. J. Morris, who refrained from joining the new Society in order that he might do his best to settle those outstanding debts with honour.

“Falstaff” was much disturbed as to the composition of his false stomach. On the first night, the padded one provided proved too hot and he refused to wear it, but could not otherwise produce the effect desired. To get over the difficulty, anything that came handy was used to fill the cavity. When other members of the cast wished to put on their own garments again, many were found to be missing! Eventually he appeared in a substructure of wicker, which, besides creaking during the performance, developed a tiresome kink when he fell headlong in the Battle of Shrewsbury. Others who



ARTHUR BOURCHIER AS HOTSPUR.
1885.



COLERIDGE AS FALSTAFF.
LADY ST. LEONARDS AS MRS. QUICKLY.
1885.



ARTHUR BOURCHIER AS HOTSPUR.
1885.



S. H. LECHMERE STUART
AS MORTIMER.
1885.

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contributed to the excellence of this notable cast were Mitchell-Innes, Hugh Spottiswoode, D. G. Hogarth, H. V. Page (the Cricket Captain), Lady St. Leonards, and Lady Edward Churchill, who rendered "Lady Mortimer's" song in Welsh after a coaching from the Celtic professor. George Curzon's prologue was, according to the *Times*, "fairly delivered by Mr. C. G. Lang, made up as doctor of divinity, though for what reason he was so attired was scarcely apparent to the house." May it not have been in this case an adumbration of the future honours of the present Archbishop? The complimentary allusion to Dr. Jowett, the Vice-Chancellor, to whom we were all so indebted, was well received.¹ Jowett himself was there, and amongst others of note who graced our initial performances were the Bishop of Oxford, Lord Coleridge, Lord Ronald Gower, the Deans of Westminster and Christ Church, Mr. Herman Vezin, Mr. Oscar

¹ Speaking of Jowett, Morris attributes his manner, so easily misunderstood by those who did not know him, entirely to shyness and nervousness, giving rise to chilling silences and short, snappy sentences—"savouring sometimes of the sting of sarcasm or the brilliancy of epigram." "The first time," says Morris, "that I had tea with him seemed (soon after I had sat down) like a 'Trappist' function, but I abruptly broke the silence as follows, 'Master, will you kindly give me some of your reminiscences of prominent stage-people you have known in the past? I believe you were a friend of Helen Faucit and her husband, Sir Theodore Martin.' This served as a cue, and the silence ended."

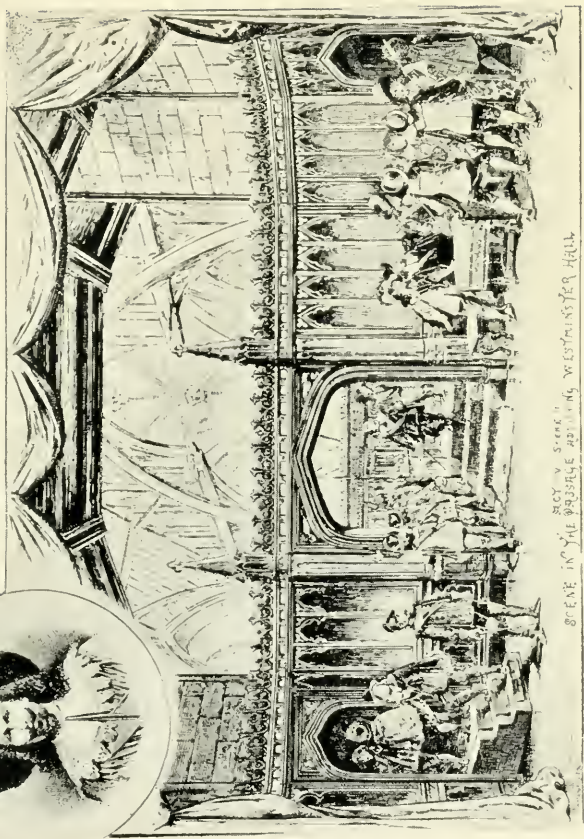
Wilde, and numerous other patrons of dramatic art of whom we naturally felt much in awe.

Whatever our deficiencies, that performance a quarter of a century ago awoke much speculation as to the future of dramatic art at Oxford. There were many then who hoped that the University would take some official notice of our efforts. Why should not degrees be granted for acting? it was asked. Are they not given to those who misunderstand Plato and mistranslate Aristotle? One writer—a brilliant man of letters whose career ended in tragedy—wrote suggesting that the D.C.L. should forthwith be offered to Bouchier, Coleridge and myself!

The good points among the minor parts was quite a feature of the performance, while the supers, recruited from the leading athletes of the 'Varsity, went through two whole acts of battle, and kept up the spirit right through, playing with such seriousness that not a single laugh was raised at any of the many and confusing incidents of a stage-fight.

The last night of the O.U.D.S. performances was generally hailed with joy by the supers, who are in the habit of treating it as an opportunity of bringing their parts into prominence. In the camp scene in *King Henry IV* one was enterprising enough to rig up an American bar in one of the tents, from which the popping of corks somewhat distracted the principal players.

King Henry IV set the O.U.D.S. firmly on its



SCENE IN "THE PURSUE" AT THE WESTMINSTER HALL

"STRAFFORD."

1890.

legs, and as a consequence of this the enemies of the drama in Oxford took to putting their grievances into the Press, and several letters appeared at this time in various papers denouncing the action of the Vice-Chancellor in suffering the Society to exist in Oxford. To one of these letters James Adderley sent an admirable answer in the *Guardian*.

We soon came to giving performances out of Oxford here and there, in which Adderley, Bouchier and I took part, such as one this summer in town at my aunt Lady Tarleton's, when we gave *Senior Wranglers* and *Cox and Box*. This was followed in the ensuing month by the production of an operetta, specially written for us three, which we performed subsequently very many times, until Adderley gave up acting, since when it has unfortunately been forgotten. It was called *A Tiger Tamed*, and founded on the old farce of *Taming a Tiger*. The music of W. Childe Pemberton was very bright and taking, and Miss Childe Pemberton's words exceedingly clever: the parts suited our respective styles, and altogether it formed a most useful little stock-piece for us. We gave it first as a kind of dress rehearsal at the Eton Mission, Hackney Wick, with *Two in the Morning* as a first piece: the actual production of it being reserved for a performance at Lord Norton's, where it went off capitally. In the following month we repeated it at their house in Warwickshire, preceded by *The Parsonage*,

an arrangement of *A Cozy Couple*, where its previous success was confirmed, and the next month again I got up a performance at Torquay, and we repeated the Warwickshire bill, a fair sum being realized by both the above performances. During the following term at Oxford the O.U.D.S. organized a concert (private), with leave, at the Holywell Music Room, and we again rendered our operetta on the historic stage of former days.

From this time my knowledge of the interior working of the O.U.D.S. ceases for a year and a half, as, having gone down, and being an old member, I did not concern myself beyond an occasional visit, until I was again called up to assist in 1887. Albeit, I went up during the performance of *Twelfth Night* and appeared as a super.

At the request of Lord Norton in March 1886, I arranged a performance at the School of Art in London for the benefit of the Mendicity Society. During the first piece, *In Honour Bound*, a panic was nearly caused by one of the wings catching fire through the overturning of a lamp by one of the carpenters. Miss Bicknell, with singular presence of mind, put it out with her ball-dress! The Hon. Alex. Yorke gave an amusing sketch between the pieces. The performance enjoyed the phenomenal distinction of being under the patronage of Her Majesty the Queen.

In a performance at Battersea in June 1886, Bouchier being unable to act, Gilbert Coleridge

took his place in our operatic piece. *The Tiger Tamed* was preceded by *The Parsonage*, with James Adderley as "Dormouse" (a capital performance) and Mrs. Copleston "Mrs. Dormouse." The performance of *The Tiger Tamed* at Folkestone immediately preceded this.

The last performance of our favourite operetta was given in July 1886. We learnt the music entirely by ear, as Childe Pemberton never wrote down a note of it, and he has since almost forgotten it; but the real cause of our ceasing to perform it was a sadder one. This was the last occasion when the trio acted together, owing to James Adderley's retiring from theatricals on account of his entering the Church. This broke up a little circle that had enjoyed numerous pleasant hours together, and though Bouchier and I continued to act together in a few performances, there was no farther representation purporting to be by "Oxonians" until I started the Pastoral Plays in 1889 by "Oxonians." It was the close of the early days of Oxford acting.

The first of the series of performances in which Bouchier and I appeared together took place at the New Theatre, Oxford. Tupper Carey, the Hon. Secretary of the O.U.D.S., organized it for Mrs. Liddell, and we all went to the Deanery. Bouchier and I played in *Uncle's Will*, and the veteran trio, Sir Spencer Ponsonby Fane, Sir Henry de Bathe and Quintin Twiss, in *Cox and Box* were as usual excellent. The theatre was crammed, and it was the

first time that I acted in the new building, which had been inaugurated by the O.U.D.S. in the previous year in their performance of *Twelfth Night*.

As I have previously said, I had little personal knowledge of the events which occurred in the O.U.D.S. between the performance of *King Henry IV* in 1885 and that of *Alcestis* in 1887. During that time, however, two events of great importance took place. The first of these was the opening of the New Theatre in George Street. I have referred previously to the lamentable condition of the "Vic"; it must always be remembered to the credit of the O.U.D.S. that in conjunction with the town they enabled the building of a theatre worthy of Oxford to be commenced. Courtney and Bouchier were the two real promoters on the part of the 'Varsity; Lucas, the proprietor, and Drinkwater, the architect, with the manager of the Cambridge Theatre, being the principal workers in the undertaking.

"The formation of the New Theatre," writes Mr. W. L. Courtney, "had been for many years talked about both in the city and in the University. The only place of entertainment when I was an undergraduate was a wretched, dismal, tumble-down structure called by courtesy the 'Victoria Theatre'! I had many talks with Jowett about this state of things and the absolute necessity of putting an end to this more or less disreputable place. At the same time a company was being formed in the city for the erection of a proper theatre. It was Jowett's happy



SIR SIMEON STUART AS CARDINAL
PANDOLPH.
1891.



H. B. IRVING.
1890.



H. B. IRVING.
1891.

[To face p. 116.]

idea (it was not wholly Jowett's, I fancy) that the Victoria Theatre should be shut up on the ground that it was unsafe in case of fire. It was easily shown that considerable risk was run by any one who went into the building, and as at that particular time some attention had been drawn to the safety of music-halls and theatres, official prohibition was without difficulty secured. The New Theatre Company had by this time matured its plans, and on February 13, 1886, the theatre was opened with the performance of *Twelfth Night* by the University Dramatic Society. Jowett himself was one of the earliest to enter the building, and as he took his seat in the stalls he was greeted with tremendous cheers.

“I need say but little concerning Irving's visit to Oxford, as it was fully commented on in the Press, and the lecture which he delivered on ‘Four English Actors’ was published in pamphlet form by the Clarendon Press. The whole ceremony, for it was nothing less, had been previously arranged when Irving came to Oxford on a previous occasion and met Jowett at dinner at my house. It was then that he formally invited him to lecture before the University, and fixed the place at the New Schools. The lecture was given at the end of the Summer Term of 1886, Irving on that occasion staying with Jowett at the Master's Lodge at Balliol. Of course Jowett himself was present at the lecture, and at the conclusion he read an extremely characteristic speech. There is probably no record of this little

address, which to my mind was one of the most graceful things which I ever heard from Jowett. There was one odd result of the meeting between Jowett and Irving, that both took away the same kind of impression of each other. I asked Jowett what he thought of Irving, and he said that what he particularly admired was his fine reserve: I asked Irving what he thought of Jowett, and the answer was almost identically the same. It was obviously too strong a contrast of personalities, each moving in a sphere with difficulty understood by the other.

“I may add that there were a good many caricatures—as far as I remember produced by Messrs. Shrimpton & Sons—in connection with the whole movement; one especially represented Jowett as a clown jumping over the back of the traditional policeman, who was on this occasion represented by the Senior Proctorial bull-dog. The likeness of Jowett was a capital one, the harlequin was Frank Benson, and I regret to add that the pantaloons was”—Courtney himself!¹

The O.U.D.S. took infinite pains over that inaugural performance in the Easter Term of 1886, Bouchier being stage-manager.

Truth to tell, the theatre was not quite ready for the public. There were certain intramural drawbacks which became evident as the evening drew on. According to my friend Morris, “the play made a lasting impression; so, too—here and there—did the

¹ See *Life of Jowett*, Campbell and Abbott.

paint. One enthusiast, able only to secure 'standing-room,' and leaning with no sign of discomfort against a wall, applauded during the evening with marked and vigorous applause at the back of the dress circle. Indeed, at the final fall of the curtain, so great was this gentleman's *dramatic* ardour, that apparently he seemed desirous of witnessing the entire entertainment over again.

"Being asked by an inquisitive person whether 'he could stick the show once more,' he replied with some asperity that he was already 'stuck.' It was not without an appreciable change in his dress-coat that he was ultimately rescued from the too affectionate wall."

Herewith I present the cast of *Twelfth Night*—

ORSINO, DUKE OF ILLYRIA . . .	W. Temple Franks,
	Wadham College.
SEBASTIAN (brother to Viola) . . .	F. T. Higgins, Christ
	Church.
ANTONIO, a Sea Captain (friend of to Sebastian)	F. H. Jackson, Balliol
	College.
A SEA CAPTAIN (friend to Viola) . . .	H. O. Whitby, Lincoln
	College.
VALENTINE	} (Gentlemen attending on the Duke) {
CURIO . . . . .		A. R. Cobb, New College.
	L. W. King Harman, Magdalen College.
SIR TOBY BELCH (uncle to Olivia) . . .	E. F. Macpherson, Brasenose College.
SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK	S. H. Lechmere Stuart, Magdalen College.
MALVOLIO (steward to Olivia)	E. H. Clark, New College.
FABIAN (servant to Olivia)	G. C. Lindsay, Wadham College.

FESTE (the Clown)	. . .	A. Bouchier, Christ Church.	
PRIEST	. . . . .	D. H. Maclean, New College.
FIRST OFFICER	. . . . .	H. O. Whitby, Lincoln College.
SECOND OFFICER	}	{ Coningsby Disraeli, New College.	
FIRST LORD			
SECOND LORD	. . . . .	A. W. Watson, Balliol College.
FIRST SAILOR	. . . . .	J. H. Brain, Oriel College.
SECOND SAILOR	. . . . .	A. D. Tupper Carey, Christ Church.
LORDS, SAILORS, ATTENDANTS, ETC.	. . . . .	Lord A. Osborne, Sir John Dickson, Bart., Hon. J. G. Adderley, E. Harington, D. Pack Beresford, H. Peel, J. A. Maclean, P. Coles, and G. W. Ricketts.
OLIVIA		Miss Farmer.
VIOLA		Mrs. Bewicke.
MARIA		Miss Arnold.

PROLOGUE

CHARACTERS

ANCIENT SPIRIT OF THE DRAMA	}	<i>Mr. Bouchier.</i>
MODERN UNDERGRADUATE		

Enter Spirit of Drama, dishevelled and bent.

"Lone and dishonoured, lurking in the shade,
 Creeping in twilight darkness, half afraid
 To met the eyes of honest men, I stand
 With lowered face and deprecating hand,
 Irresolute whether to remain or flee—
 Spirit of Drama, as it used to be.
 'Animula vagula'—how runs their patter?
 For in a learned city one must chatter



H. B. IRVING.
1891.



H. E. SNAGGE.



J. HEARN.



P. COMYNS CARR.

[To face p. 120.]

In learned language, or be reckoned silly—
 I mean, I'm badly clad and somewhat chilly.
 Years upon years of academic rule,
 Proctorial mandates, and the cruel School
 Of Statutes, framed by Laud, have left me this,
 A thing for all to mock at and to hiss,
 With tangled locks and battered wreath, and less
 Than nothing on to hide my nakedness.
 'Mid fumes of nicotine to make you sick,
 I've earned a wretched pittance at 'the Vic':
 I've tried to make you laugh with poor burlesque;
 I've tried to tempt the scholar from his desk—
 With nothing better the whole sad night long
 Than doubtful dance and more than doubtful song.
 What else was left for me to do or try?
 I knew the statute 'gainst 'funambuli'
 And oft the words have muttered 'mid my cronies,
 'Incarcerentur omnes histriones.'¹
 What's *this*? Where am I? Is it all a fancy?
 A product of some Eastern necromancy?
 Is this the Indian Institute of Monier?
 Or the New Schools? or something even funnier—
 Perhaps prophetic of the distant future—
 A model almshouse for the married tutor?
 A brand-new Theatre? Why, then, 'tis clear
 My day is over: I've no business here.
 At last! Instead of Darkness shines the Day:
 Arise, thou modern Spirit of the Play!" [Exit.

Enter Undergraduate.

"I thought I heard some ancient voice invoke
 The modern Spirit. Can it be a joke?
 No, everywhere around me signs arise
 Of some new order dawning on men's eyes.
 Disfranchised by some most unworthy dodge,
 Subordinated to a rustic Hodge,
 We yet can look unenvious on the shield,
 Whereon there stands too obviously revealed—

¹ Stat. XV, §§ 7-8.

Emblem of our new firm of cabinet-makers—
 Our city's cow, agraze on three blue acres.¹
 For we without a bribe, without a vote,
 Have found a *stall* for our dramatic *goat*;
 Yet e'en this goat to Politics we owe it—
 Aristotelian 'Politics' of Jowett.
 But cow and goat no politics shall sever,
 Both shall graze on 'mid cries of, 'Hall for ever!'

What, have we then no platform? Yes, the stage.
 No ticket? No, they've all been sold an age.
 A programme? Yes! 'The rule of Law and Order'
 Disguised in an admixture of soft sawder.
 New members with our novel house begin,
 Lawson is out, but *Drinkwater* is in;
 While from cross-benches, free from Irish taint,
Lucas will *look as* fresh as any paint.
 You have your seats, but all unseated we
 Stand for a critical constituency.
 If we're returned, there's none that disagrees
 To take the oath—to do his best to please.
 Now for our play, Shakespeare's, you may be sure,
 We aim no lower, nor a worse endure;
 Constant we hope our names will fill the bill,
 'Twelfth Night,' to-night; hereafter, 'What *you*
 Will.' " [Exit.

I saw the first three performances from the front, and appeared subsequently as a super, as did also James Adderley, who was up in Oxford reading for Orders. One regrettable incident occurred during this performance—a criticism of one of the ladies in one of the 'Varsity journals, written by a St. John's don, who was eventually forced to apologize. The 'Varsity press at that time was invariably the medium whereby the enemies of Oxford acting attempted to

¹ Oxford city arms are: Argent an Ox gules, armed and unguled Or, passing over a ford of water in base, proper.

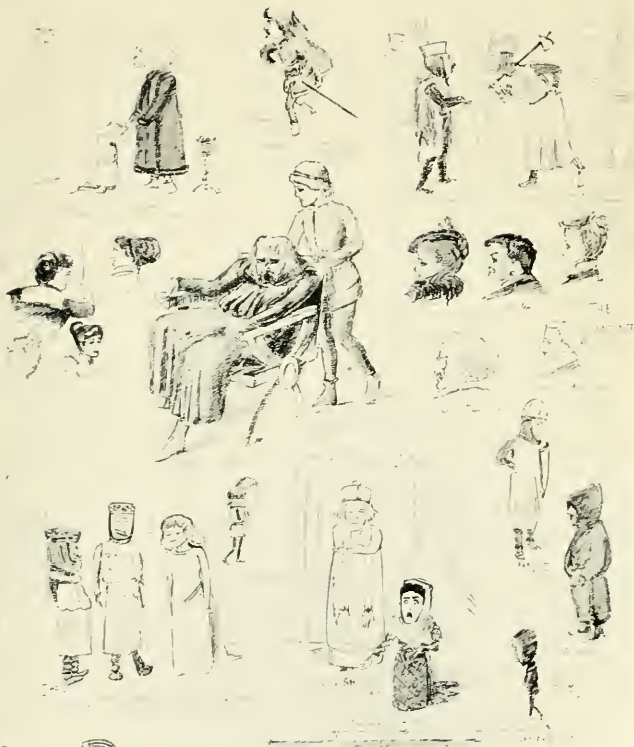
throw contemptuously upon the efforts of the O.U.D.S. Fortunately they failed, owing to the sense of justice and appreciation displayed by the London press.

During the year which elapsed between *Twelfth Night* and the *Alcestis* the Society underwent a considerable change. The Club-rooms in High Street were abandoned and taken by the "Gridiron" Club, which was started at that time, and affairs seem to have been considerably muddled. Subscriptions were not paid up and not extorted. The members never used the rooms, and as fresh ones were not elected as the others went down, the Society in a year's time became almost extinct, and there ceased to be a subscription to the Club. When the time came round for the annual performance I was called upon to come up and assist.

It was then that I found, to my astonishment, that the Society had practically ceased to exist, that there was really no Committee, at all events none that could be got to meet, and the whole of the preparations for the Greek play were carried out by a triumvirate consisting of Courtney, Bouchier and myself. We met at Vincent's one afternoon in the winter, and had a regular discussion about the choice of a play. We all three decided that a Greek play would be an admirable move, both for the sake of pleasing many of the authorities, who preferred it to any other form of acting, and for the sake of the pecuniary advantage to be reaped from the representation of such a play. Whatever balance had resulted from

Twelfth Night had vanished, and it was necessary to practise economy in the forthcoming revival, and at the same time to ensure success by a thoroughly artistic production—a somewhat difficult task. Bouchier was to undertake the business part, whilst I was to undertake the direction and stage management of the piece, and Courtney was to assist either of us as required.

The time of preparation for the Greek play was a most anxious one. So many strings were pulling, so many irons were in the fire, and added to this the desire to give a Greek play that should be considered an advance upon the *Agamemnon*, that should compare favourably with the recent successes at Cambridge in that time, and as an end the credit which we hoped to gain for the O.U.D.S. thereby: for the Greek plays at Cambridge were the work of a Committee of dons, and the *Agamemnon* at Oxford had been constituted on much the same principles, and as both Courtney and Marriott had always been on the verge of producing a Greek play independently of the O.U.D.S., which would have damaged us as the Greek Play Committee damaged the A.D.C. at Cambridge, it was a most satisfactory move to absorb this spirit in the Society itself. But there was another and a deeper current to contend with: the O.U.D.S., as I have already observed, had become almost extinct, and it was a desire at this time that the Society should disappear, and in its place should follow a similar state of affairs to that of the Greek



THE
O-U-D-S P
PERFORMANCE
OF THE KING JOHN
FEB. 1891

CARICATURES OF "KING JOHN."
1891.

[To face p. 124.

Play Committee at Cambridge, so that men should only be chosen at random from the 'Varsity as the time of the annual play came round, whether Greek or Shakespearian.

The scheme was plainly hinted to me, and it was suggested that it would be needless to go through the farce of summoning a Committee, considering everything was being carried out by Courtney and Bouchier and myself. To this I was strenuously opposed. As we had no capital whatever, Courtney very kindly backed the performance.

We had, however, one man on the moribund Committee who was anything but a cipher, and as he had been duly elected to the office of Treasurer, he proved of the greatest assistance at this juncture, and when the week of the play arrived there were daily sessions of the Committee. The Treasurer had all the proceeds handed to him daily, and signed cheques for the expenses in due form, and as the performances resulted in a balance of over £200, he paid off the debt of the Society to Courtney, and had the balance put in the bank in trust jointly in the names of Courtney and of himself, as Treasurer of the Society. So that by the end of the week a Committee was, at all events, in *esse*, with some control through its officers on the proceeds of the Greek play. I have entered somewhat at length into this subject, because I feel that it was the most important crisis that the O.U.D.S. ever passed through since its formation.

CHAPTER VIII

“We may be gone away or laid a low
Fulfilled of fears or justified of joys—
New hands shall write and other hearts shall know
Our zest in these the annals of our noise
Our longings for the Oxford that is ours.”

NEVER before had the O.U.D.S. such brimming houses as during the week of the *Alcestis*. For the chorus we were obliged to travel outside the ranks of the Society and obtain the assistance of members of the 'Varsity who possessed voices, but Alison Phillips, the chorus leader who gave the baritone solo $\tilde{\phi}\nu\alpha\tilde{\zeta}$ Παιάν, was one of our members.

I may mention that the rigid economy which we had to practise in the production proved actually the cause of one of the most striking points in the performance. Villiers Stanford, who wrote the music for the Greek Plays at Cambridge, had employed a full modern orchestra, which is naturally a source of great expenditure. When I had an interview with C. H. Lloyd, organist of Christ Church, who kindly promised valuable help, I was obliged to own that the Society could not afford more than a very modest sum for the music, and I asked him whether it would be possible to curtail the expense in this direction by only utilizing instru-

ments which should represent the archaic music employed in the original representations. Lloyd, who is a scholar as well as a composer, carried out this idea with the most marvellous results. Selecting merely three instruments, the flute, clarionet and harp, he composed the entire music of the play, the vocal part being rendered by the chorus of male voices and one baritone solo. Hence Parratt's music to the *Agamemnon*, which with pristine severity was confined to an unaccompanied chant in unison, and Lloyd's music to the *Alcestis*, as described above, had this great superiority over the justly admired and lavish compositions employed at the other University, that they were most clever and successful attempts to reproduce the music of the past. Lloyd's music is published at Novello's, and is well worth studying quite apart from the dramatic action to which it was wedded. My principal idea in planning out the *Alcestis* was to make a somewhat new departure by the introduction of modern stage rules into the actions of the principal characters of the drama, whilst preserving faithfully whatever traces remain to us of the original treatment of the chorus and their entrances. Such an experiment would have been hopeless in Æschylus, whereas Euripides lends himself easily to this design, the *Alcestis* especially being quite reducible to the general arrangement of a modern play. The characters are so like characters of to-day, so life-like and so full of

passion, whilst the long orations of Æschylus are almost absent from the play. I took the subdivision of the chorus in several speaking characters from the plan of the *Agamemnon*, but whereas in the latter there were fifteen speakers in all, including the chorus leader, in the *Alcestis* we had the chorus leader and three speakers only, the remaining twelve being singers. The chorus were drilled strictly on the old lines, so far as it was possible to preserve them, the rectangular formation being occasionally utilized, as well as the ordinary division into *στροφή* and *ἀντιστροφή*. The only modernism that I indulged in with regard to the chorus was in the funeral march referred to below. The principal modernisms for which indulgence was asked in the programme consisted of the following. The avoidance of the hitherto adopted style of giving the speeches without movement, but merely gesture: all the characters moved and grouped themselves as in an ordinary play. The employment of a steam apparatus for the entrance of "Death," the effect thus obtained with the aid of the limelight being very weird. The illumination of the figure of "Apollo" with the aid of limelight. The division of the play into two acts. The termination of the first act with an interpolated funeral march during the singing of *ἰω, ἰω, σχετλια πολυμης*, where the chorus entered from opposite sides, filed on to the upper stage, strewed flowers before the bier of "Alcestis," descended in



By permission of "The Graphic."

"KING JOHN,"
1891.

[To face p. 128.

a diagonal march, with wailing and waving of arms, to the lower stage, sang their dirge round the thymele, and then ascended the steps again in a long line, until the act drop fell on an empty stage, the lower stage of the chorus and thymele being in front of the curtain and stretching into the audience. These, with a few other movements, were the main effects used to heighten the impression of the play that had no strict warrants in old custom. The scene we purchased from Professor Todhunter: it had been designed by Professor Goodwin for a performance of the *Tale of Troy* in London. Herkomer most kindly presented the Society with a drop curtain only used on this occasion, painted with his own hand. A blindfolded figure of Titanic size was seated upon a globe that glittered with the iridescence of a gigantic bubble, within the depths of which could be descried the facial lineaments of the painter himself. We were indebted to a neat sonnet by Courtney for some inspired notions concerning the artist's meaning; but the general public seemed shy about committing themselves to an opinion.

One of the more irreverent critics suggested "Art sitting upon a Slade professor"! the artist having reproduced a faint representation of his own features in the bubble upon which the figure of Chance was seated. For the *rôle* of "Alcestis" we obtained the kind assistance of Miss Jane Harrison, professor of Greek at Cambridge, whose scholarship

was considered by the critics more than her dramatic power.

“ALCESTIS.”

May 18, 1887.

APOLLO	A. M. Mackinnon.
DEATH	A. Bouchier.
HERACLES	A. E. W. Mason.
ADMETUS (King of Pheræ)	A. H. E. Grahame.
PERES (father of Admetus)	J. A. R. Marriott.
SERVANT	Coningsby Disraeli.
ALCESTIS (wife of Admetus)	Miss J. E. Harrison.
MAID-SERVANT	M. F. Davies.
EUMELUS	} (Children of {
PERIMELE . . . . .		} Admetus) {
	Bertram Whitelaw.
	Miss Maggie Walker.
	Mrs. W. L. Courtney.
HANDMAIDS OF ALCESTIS	Miss Edersheim.
	Miss Arnold.
	Miss Gordon Watson.
	Lord Ancram.
ATTENDANTS ON PHERES, ETC.	Hon. R. Scott-Montagu.
	W. H. Spottiswoode.
	Hon. F. Boyle.
CHORYPHEUS	W. A. Phillips.

Marriott, who had played in the chorus of the *Agamemnon*, was the “Pheres,” but the really finest part of the whole performance was the chorus and the supers, who worked with a will. Owing to the unwillingness of “Alcestis” to be carried off on the bier during the funeral scene, and to the difficulty of providing a suitable-looking dummy, I undertook the dual rôle of “Apollo” and the corpse of “Alcestis” nightly! The bearers were jovial on the last night, and the danger which I then underwent was considerable!

An intensely humorous burlesque of this performance, entitled "Alcestis-Up," was produced in New College by the Hon. Lancelot J. Bathurst, in which Slade, of Balliol, played "Alcestis" with great spirit. The piece was packed with topical allusions, and travestied the mannerisms of some of the more conspicuous dons with much good-humoured vivacity.

As penned by one to whom 'Varsity theatricals owe much, I must give the following amusing account by Sir F. C. Burnand of *Alcestis*, which appeared in the pages of *Punch* at the time. He affects to be a chance play-goer, who knows nothing of Greek, in charge of a friendly undergraduate.

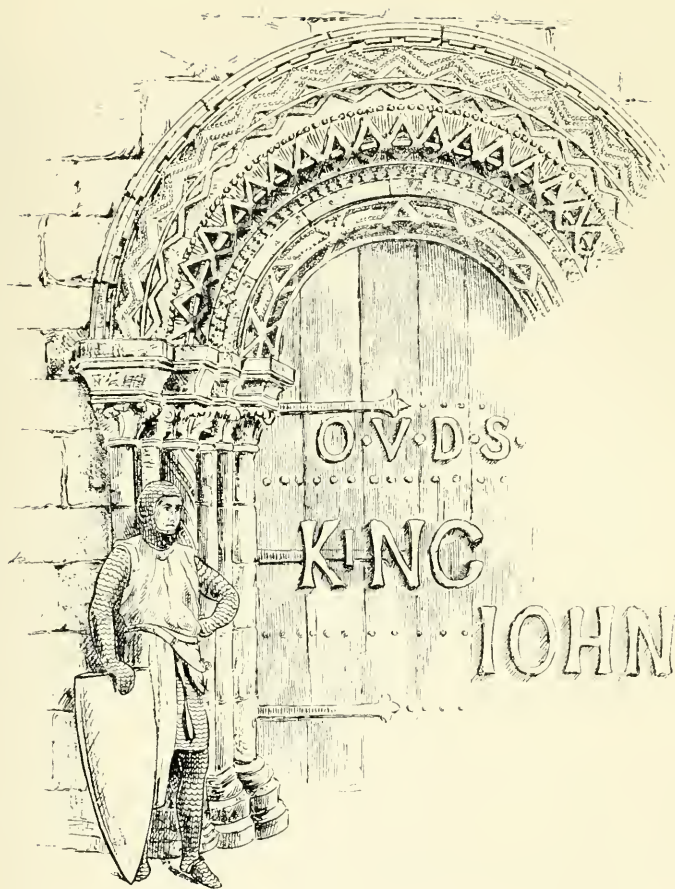
"A House on a raised platform on the principle of a show in a Fair Country landscape in the distance. In front of the stage is a property stone table on which is a dessert of apples, oranges (no bills of the play), bananas and grapes, with a spirit-lamp to keep the coffee hot when it comes, or for lighting cigarettes. 'Apollo' (I know he is 'Apollo,' having seen him frequently in classical burlesques) enters and speaks. My young friend asks me 'if I understand what he's saying.' I reply, 'Perfectly.' 'It's Greek,' says my young friend, looking at me with an expression implying a vote of want of confidence in my statement. I listen to it for a few seconds, as if I were catching

a tune, and then reply, 'He is not very distinct, but it does sound like Greek to me.' This is strictly true. I follow it at a more respectful distance than I should an opera in German.

"My young friend further whispers to me, that the piece was, when first written, an exact model of the old Classic Greek Farce, but that the Vice-Chancellor had refused to license it, unless it was considerably altered and cut down.

"The result seems to have been that most of the fun has been taken out of it, which, however, I think, could not originally have been screamingly humorous.

"'Did your new fellow you mentioned just now write it?' I ask. My youthful informant pauses a second or so—he cannot have a very good memory—and he answers, 'No, it was another fellow.' He forgets his name at the moment, but is sure it is something like Mr. Hugh Rippites; and do I know him? No, I do not. Is he an Oxford man? 'Oh yes,' replies my young friend with certainty. 'He's an undergraduate here.' Really! Now this is encouraging. That an undergraduate, Mr. Hugh Rippites, should have written a play in Greek, is an excellent sign of the revival of learning. I regret my want of a classical education, and contemplate going to Oxford as a student. Never too old to learn. I do not blame Mr. Hugh Rippites for having introduced many English words which every



PROGRAMME COVER.
1891.

[To face p. 132.]

now and then caught my ear—and indeed they were pointed out to me by my neighbour—because, after all, as a first attempt, it is most creditable.

“‘Apollo’ talks. My young friend nudges me whenever there is a *double entendre* in Greek, and laughs behind his hand. ‘Rather strong that,’ he whispers occasionally. I reply in an undertone, as if I were with difficulty stifling my laughter, ‘Hush! be quiet!’—but this only makes him laugh the more. The audience, I notice, scarcely smile once. Being in Greek, perhaps, the ladies don’t understand the ‘hits’ in the dialogue. I don’t, but this I keep to myself. Then steam arises (an anachronism, of course, but ‘symbolical of progress,’ as my friend assures me), and an old woman in grey muslin, with a knife, appears. ‘It’s the Demon of Socrates,’ my companion tells me. Very good. ‘Apollo’ and the ‘Demon’ have a dialogue, during which my companion is perpetually nudging me, so I suppose it’s full of good jokes which I don’t exactly catch. Again I pretend to be restraining my laughter, and beg him to be decorous. Off trips ‘Apollo,’ and the ‘Demon’ goes through some pantomimic action, then goes through a door, and disappears. Enter a lot of melancholy young-old men—with very evident beards of every description. They gather round the dessert and the cigarette spirit-lamp. No one touches so much as a grape. Then on the raised platform appears a

classically costumed gentleman. My young friend tells me that he is the show proprietor, and is called by a very appropriate name, 'Admittus.' The showman, 'Admittus,' tells the young-old men what is to be seen inside, in a speech, which my companion (who knows the play by heart) tells me is 'immensely witty.' His audience do not seem to appreciate it, but evidently there is no great attraction, as the young-elders show no sign of even wishing to 'Walk up, walk up!' but instead, stay outside, and commence singing an Irish dirge as they once more group themselves about the dessert and the cigarette spirit-lamp.

"'Admittus' talks about a 'se-gar,' which is also an anachronism pardonable in a young author's first work, but in keeping with the spirit-lamp and dessert. Then 'Alcestis' gets worse, and cries 'Ow! ow! ow!' and 'Admittus,' whose mind seems to run upon nothing but eating and drinking, offers her 'ducks and gunaiky' which, my young friend tells me, is very old Attic for green peas cooked in a certain way. I catch the plot now; she is suffering from having eaten 'ducks and gunaiky,' and having tried to correct the effects with 'toddy' and a 'se-gar.' 'Admittus' addresses her tenderly as 'Molly.' I thought her name was 'Alcestis.' 'Her family name is Alcestis,' my companion whispers, apparently annoyed at my tone of momentary doubt. 'She is Molly Alcestis.' I beg par-

don. I see perfectly. 'Molly,' the *petit nom*. Well, Molly expires. Every one is broken-hearted, and one of the leaders of the Chorus, addressed by 'Admittus' as 'Mr. Martin,' leads a walk round the dessert and cigarette-lamp. Enter 'Hercules,' with all the strength in his legs, which are enormous (and were probably provided by the costumier), but with no 'power to his elbow,' as his arms are comparatively very slight, which accounts for his not doing the usual strong-man business of lifting weights, etc. He belongs to the show, and goes in with 'Admittus,' who has upbraided him for not being there at the commencement of the performance. The young-old men then break out into a classic hunting chorus, with a refrain that sounds like 'Tiddy ti! Who cares?' They finish with a 'walk-round,' and *exeunt*, leaving the dessert untouched and the spirit-lamp unburning. This ends the First Part.

"My young friend bids me good-night, as he has to go to supper, and has seen it all before. I thank him heartily for his assistance and post this to you."

But the notice which tickled me the most appeared in a metropolitan journal, whose title M. Zola is said to have rendered *Chose de Rose*.

"On arriving at Athens I was agreeably surprised. I was frightened lest my dress suit would be out of place, but found that the other citizens and citizenesses had abstained from the use of peplum

or chiton. Having duly weighed in my obol for a programme, trodden on several Athenian toes, and been glared at by an outraged demos, I reached my seat, and had leisure to see what a Greek chorus is like in the flesh. In the *Alcestis* it consists of some twenty young men in pink legs and grey beards, all made up as if in imitation of Lord Alcester. Whether this was the nucleus for a subtle jest (*Alcester*, *Alcestis*; see?) I leave to Offalo Oscar, who was in the stalls blooming over with smiles and polysyllables, to determine."

Mention was also made of "Heracles," "whose drunken scene sent a thrill of envy through a thirsty audience."

Meanwhile during the progress of the performance members were being elected to the Society, and we took good care to have several meetings of the Committee after the play to settle affairs and arrange matters for the future. Tupper Carey, the Hon. Secretary, and Jackson, the Hon. Treasurer, were both going down at the end of the term, and so it was necessary to elect a fresh Committee before the end of term, and as no old members were available, consequently it would be necessary to search for suitable candidates among the newly-elected members. I was particularly requested to stay up and assist in reconstituting the Society, and accordingly I remained in Oxford till the end of term with that object. It had always seemed to me that the



CARICATURES OF "THE FROGS."

1892.

[To face p. 136.]

great difficulty with regard to the Society was the keeping it alive during the twelve months that elapsed between one annual play and another; and after thinking the matter over, I came to the conclusion that a system of smoking concerts with, perhaps, little pieces and sketches, might meet this requirement. This would naturally give the Hon. Secretary much more to do, and it consequently seemed better that the Hon. Secretary for the future be the chief officer of the Society, and as there was no President in office at this time, it formed a good opportunity for allowing this office, which since the old Philothespian days had been a mere figurehead, to drop out altogether. This led to considerable changing in the wording of the rules, which accordingly I carefully revised, introducing the new proposition with regard to the officers, and also to the smoking concert, to which I added the important proviso that the office of Hon. Secretary should always be an undergraduate; that the stage-manager should cease to be a regular member of Committee, but should only be elected for the purpose of a play, and should then be an *ex-officio* member of Committee. At a special General Meeting, with Tupper Carey, the then Hon. Secretary, in the chair, I laid these propositions and the general alterations in the rules before the meeting, with the result that after some discussion, in which Morris (who had held aloof considerably from the O.U.D.S. up to this

point), Hon. A. Capell, Hon. F. Boyle and others took part, they were all carried. At a subsequent meeting the present members of the Committee resigned, and a new Secretary and Treasurer in the Scott-Montagus were elected. The Hon. R. Scott-Montagu, who had taken a super's part in *Alcestis*, was very keen on the Society, and seemed to promise well as Secretary; and his brother, the Hon. John Scott-Montagu, who was a good hand at business, was already prominently associated with the various 'Varsity clubs, but was not a member of the O.U.D.S. With the exception of H. J. Greenwood, who was elected to the Committee, and Courtney as Auditor, there were now no old ones available. The scheme answered completely, for the ensuing two years were the most popular and prosperous which the O.U.D.S. enjoyed, recalling the days of *King Henry IV*. The smoking concerts answered splendidly, and I went up once or twice during the following terms and enjoyed several of them immensely. The member who gave the concert had it in his rooms, being stage-manager for the night, but the Committee had the supervision of the programme.

During the ensuing year Robert Scott-Montagu went down, having had a very short time of office as Secretary. John Scott-Montagu then became Secretary, and proved the most energetic the Society had ever had. He gave up almost everything to the

NOTES AT THE PERFORMANCE
OF "THE TWO
GENTLEMEN
OF VERONA"



"THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA."
(A SHRIMPION CARICATURE.)

1893.

[To face p. 138.]

Society, and though he was stroke of the New College Eight, he contrived during the Summer Term that he was in office to carry out the affairs of the Society and performances as though he had nothing else to do. It was during his time that the Committee had real power and exercised it to great advantage. This Committee, when I was again asked in the following year to go up and join it in the capacity of stage-manager, consisted of—Hon. J. Scott-Montagu, H. J. Greenwood, W. J. Morris, Earl of Ancram, A. H. Grahame; and a pleasanter or more hard-working Committee we never had. In fact, the condition of the Club at this time was as good as it could be, being up to the level of its first year of existence. In accordance with the principle first adopted in the case of *King Henry IV*, *i. e.* to give, if possible, representations of those of Shakespeare's plays which had been least often performed upon the stage, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* was upon my suggestion selected for the annual performances. The first difficulty was the selection of the ladies. The Countess of Abingdon kindly undertook the rôle of "Anne Page," but for the "Merry Wives" actresses of no slight experience were needed. It was owing to this that I had the pleasure of first making the acquaintance of Mrs. Charles Sim, who rendered such valuable help to the Society during the ensuing years. Mrs. Copleston, unrivalled among amateurs in her line, under-

took "Mrs. Quickly," and Mrs. Jameson "Mrs. Ford." Having secured the services of these ladies, I came up to Oxford early in the term to start rehearsals, which were attended with great regularity in the Halls of Trinity and New College. Feeling that for the first time the Society had to depend upon itself alone for success, seeing that *King Henry IV* was its inaugural performance, *Twelfth Night* had the additional attraction of the opening of the New Theatre, and *Alcestis* had all the fashion attending upon a Greek play, I determined to make a new departure in the shape of much more elaborate scenery than had hitherto been attempted. The dell in Windsor Forest, with three cascades of real water, shrubs, etc., and the stage broken up into rocky plateaux of different elevations, with Herne's oak overshadowing the whole, was quite a new effect in Oxford, and was the cause of much hard work owing to the faulty construction of the stage at the sides, where insufficient storage space is a great drawback. The first scene was admirably painted by the scenic artist, representing an old garden with a rising path through shrubs at back, a lovely backcloth with view of Windsor Castle on the hill, and an old house exterior with steps descending from the first floor, the design of which I got from an old inn of the Lancastrian period at Speldhurst in Kent. A pair of dark blue plush curtains with O U.D.S. in gold were presented to the



LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU,
SECRETARY O.U.D.S.,
1888.



LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU.
1888.

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Society by the Hon. Secretary, and were first used on this occasion. The first night went off really without a hitch, and the piece was excellently received by a large house, including Miss Mary Anderson. Beerbohm Tree came down to the matinée with a view to testing the piece for future representation, and he also paid us the compliment of borrowing our prompt copy.

Here I cannot resist giving a quotation from a gentleman who will be often heard from in these pages under the name of My Critical Don, and who seems on this occasion to have greatly enjoyed himself—

“Bourchier gave a splendid performance as ‘Sir John Falstaff.’ His rendering was full of subtle and artistic points, and once more proved indisputably his versatility. He was at his very best in the scene with ‘Ford,’ where he describes his sorry treatment in the buck-basket, on the supposed Mr. Brook’s behalf. One of the best hits of the play was the fighting scene between Mr. M. F. Davies, who had evidently acquired the Welsh accent, and Mr. E. H. Clark. Mr. E. F. Nugent gave a very clever performance as ‘Slender.’ His attenuated lengthy legs and excellent make-up caused great amusement. The part of ‘Justice Shallow’ was well filled by the Earl of Ancram, who succeeded in giving a capital impersonation of that gentleman, both in voice and gait. The other male characters

were all well filled. The charming naturalness of the Countess of Abingdon was very effective in the part of 'Anne Page.' The 'Mistress Quickly' of Mrs. Copleston was full of genuine comedy; and both Mrs. Charles Sim and Mrs. Jameson in their respective parts were greatly approved of by the audience." *O, si sic omnes!*

The full cast was as follows—

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF	Mr. A. Bouchier.
FENTON	Mr. I. Z. Malcolm.
SHALLOW	The Earl of Ancram.
SLENDER	Mr. E. F. Nugent.
MR. FORD	Mr. W. J. Morris.
MR. PAGE	Mr. A. H. E. Grahame.
SIR HUGH EVANS	Mr. M. F. Davies.
DR. CAIUS	Mr. E. H. Clark.
HOST OF THE GARTER INN	The Hon. J. Scott-Montagu.
PISTOE	Mr. C. A. Spottiswoode.
NYM	Mr. R. N. Dundas.
BARDOLPH	Mr. L. R. Wilkinson.
ROBIN	Mr. Harold Casey.
SIMPLE	Mr. T. G. Spyers.
RUGBY	Mr. A. M. Richards.
ROBERT	Mr. R. Peel.
JOHN	Lord Albert Osborne.
MISTRESS FORD	Mrs. Jameson.
MISTRESS PAGE	Mrs. Charles Sim.
ANNE PAGE	Countess of Abingdon.
MISTRESS QUICKLY	Mrs. Copleston.

Gentlemen, Servants to Ford, Page, etc.—Hon. A. A. Capell, Hon. F. A. Boyle, Messrs. H. D. Beaumont, G. M. Harris, R. C. Hunt, W. R. W. Peel, and A. M. Mackinnon.

The Frogmore scene was perhaps the most successful as regards the acting, whilst the Windsor

Forest scene was the most striking in effect. Here the orchestra, conducted by Lionel Monckton, an old Philothespian, rendered Sullivan's quaint incidental music excellently, and the children, each representing a flower, and carrying illuminated lanterns on flower-garlanded staves, went through a maze of complicated dances and evolutions round Herne's oak with great precision. Monckton composed the rest of the incidental music.

Lady Abingdon ("Sweet Anne Page") frequently entertained the members of the Company at Whitham during the rehearsals. It was there Bouchier, as "Falstaff," was the victim of a practical joke in the shape of one of the old family chairs at Whitham. This chair when sat on promptly enclosed the occupant as in a vice, the only escape being through the pressure of a secret spring.

Some genius bethought him of substituting this Whitham chair for Falstaff's customary seat. The result, writes Nugent, was "imprisonment of Falstaff, terrible language, and ringing down of the curtain in the middle of the scene to extricate him from his sorry plight. The next day Bouchier was the recipient of a number of letters sarcastically asking his authority for certain words used on the previous evening not to be found in any of the folios, quartos, or early editions of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*."

With the termination of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* I practically bade good-bye to the O.U.D.S for two years. John Scott-Montagu went

down very soon after, and A. H. E. Grahame succeeded to the office of Hon. Secretary.

Ever since 1886 it had been the avowed intention of the Society to produce *Julius Cæsar*, and with a balance of over £200 in the bank it was deemed a favourable opportunity to select it for the next year. I was unable to accede to the request to come and stage-manage the performances, and for the first time in the history of the Society professional help was obtained. Alma Tadema's exquisite scenery was the great attraction of the play. It was all designed by him and executed by Hall, so that the very first talent in the country was employed in this part of the entertainment.

I remember going to see Alma Tadema to talk over the scenery which he had so kindly promised to design for *Cæsar*. I had my book in my pocket with all positions and scene plots planned out, and dared not produce it, for I thought the great artist would naturally rule my plans out as inconsistent with archæological detail, and so forth. But he immediately asked me what I had planned, and said it was for me to adapt it to my requirements, showing his grasp of the needs of the stage as opposed to picture-making.

One very valuable hint he gave. In the Forum scene on a small stage he said he would only introduce the *base* of the big columns, as if it were a corner only of a gigantic place; and suggested my



PROGRAMME OF COVER "THE TEMPEST."

By F. Oppenheimer (Balliol).

1894.

[To see p. 144.

placing my crowd far away and into the entrances. so that few might seem many, the idea of their being but the front rank of a large crowd would be suggested. I have always remembered and taken advantage of this. A notable case I recall in the crowd in a scene in Trafalgar Square in a play called *Votes for Women*, at the Court, when Mr. Granville Barker, I think, exemplified this in a very telling way.

Monckton again undertook the orchestra and the incidental music. The dresses were well designed, but not well carried out, by Barthe. Mrs. Courtney again came to the help of the Society and played "Portia"—her first appearance since her "Portia" of *The Merchant of Venice*. Mrs. Sim played "Calpurnia," and Miss Brigstocke sang "Lucius'" song, composed by Monckton. "Brutus" was Bouchier's last performance at Oxford. He was the life and soul of this as of every performance in which he appeared, besides being the leading spirit in the reconstruction of the 'Varsity Society. Such a varied series of performances as his "Sir John Vesey," "Shylock," "Hotspur," "Feste," "Thanston," "Falstaff" and "Brutus," would be an achievement of which any player might feel proud. W. J. Morris was the "Antony," and Henry Irving, Junior (as the now well-known actor was known in those days), made his first appearance in the character of "Decius Brutus."

The following is the full cast—

“JULIUS CÆSAR.”

1889.

JULIUS CÆSAR		<i>G. H. E. Grahame,</i> <i>Balliol College.</i>
OCTAVIUS CÆSAR	} (Triumvirs after death of Cæsar)	} <i>G. M. Harris, New Col- lege.</i> <i>W. J. Morris, M.A., Jesus College.</i> <i>G. K. Olivier, Merton College.</i>
MARCUS ANTONIUS		
M. ÆMILIUS LEPIDUS		
CICERO	} (Senators)	} <i>L. C. Liddell, Christ Church.</i> <i>E. F. Nugent, Christ Church.</i> <i>L. D. G. Little, Merton College.</i>
PUBLIUS		
POPILIUS LENA		
MARCUS BRUTUS	} (Conspirators against Cæsar)	} <i>A. Bouchier, B.A., Christ Church.</i> <i>E. H. Clark, B.A., New College.</i> <i>Claud Nugent, Christ Church.</i> <i>B. B. Leighton, Christ Church.</i> <i>H. B. Irving, New Col- lege.</i> <i>R. M. Laurie, Christ Church.</i> <i>Ian Mitchell, New Col- lege.</i>
CASSIUS		
CASCA		
TREBONIUS		
DECIUS BRUTUS		
METELLUS CIMBER		
CINNA		
FLAVIUS		
MARULLUS	} (Tribunes)	} <i>G. M. Harris, New Col- lege.</i> <i>W. Temple Franks, B.A., University Col- lege.</i>
ARTEMIDORUS OF CNIDOS (a teacher of Rhetoric) . . . . .			} A. M. Bradhurst, Christ Church.



LORD WARKWORTH.
(THE LATE EARL PERCY, M.P.)



A. ELLIS.

[To face p. 146.]

A SOOTHSAYER		<i>J. B. Seaton, Christ Church.</i>
CINNA (a poet)		<i>E. F. Nugent, Christ Church.</i>
LUCILIUS	(Friends to Brutus and Cassius)	<i>R. M. Laurie, Christ Church.</i>
TITINIUS		<i>J. B. Seaton, Christ Church.</i>
MESSALA		<i>I. Mitchell, New College.</i>
VOLUMNIUS		<i>Robert Peel, Balliol College.</i>
LUCIUS	(Servants to Brutus)	<i>Miss Brigstocker.</i>
CLITUS		<i>J. Gofton, St. John's College.</i>
STRATO		<i>A. Richards, St. John's College.</i>
FIRST CITIZEN		<i>J. Gofton, St. John's College.</i>
SECOND CITIZEN		<i>A. Richards, St. John's College.</i>
PINDARUS (servant to Cassius)		<i>H. R. Worthington, Christ Church.</i>
SERVANT TO CÆSAR		<i>W. T. Franks, B.A., University College.</i>
SERVANT TO ANTONY		<i>Robert Peel, Balliol College.</i>
SERVANT TO OCTAVIUS		<i>L. C. Liddell, Christ Church.</i>
CALPURNIA (wife to Cæsar)		<i>Mrs. Charles Sim.</i>
LADIES ATTENDANT ON CALPURNIA		<i>Mrs. Nugent Jackson, Miss Wigram, Miss E. Wigram, and Miss Mills.</i>
PORTIA (wife to Brutus)		<i>Mrs. W. L. Courtney.</i>

Senators, Citizens, Guards, Attendants, etc., etc.

The houses were nightly crammed, and the takings very considerable, but the expenses overbalanced the

receipts. "If," declares Claud Nugent, "Sir Robert Peel had not come forward and most generously advanced us £80 for one bill alone, we should have had no balance at all. Grahame now went down from Oxford, and I was elected secretary. In order to enrol fresh recruits we kept to the same policy of organizing fortnightly smoking concerts, which were now on a much bigger scale than usual. They were held in the Clarendon Assembly Rooms, and each member was permitted to bring in two guests. This system of concerts proved an excellent tonic for the revival of the Club, and caused its numbers to considerably swell."

Julius Cæsar did not escape the irreverence of travesty, for, within a week of its performance, a burlesque was produced at the Holywell Music Room, before a crowded audience, including the Proctors, W. L. Courtney, and many other dons and their families. *Julius See-sawcer, or a Storm in a Tea-cup*, was written by Arthur Waugh of New College, with incidental music by the late Claud Nugent of Ch. Ch., who himself played "Brutus," with many inimitable touches, taking off the business and mannerisms of Bouchier. Waugh burlesqued H. B. Irving, in a famous white bowler hat (Irving's own possession!) worn on top of the traditional toga, and J. R. Randolph of Magdalen was great as Mark Antony with reminiscences of W. J. Morris. But the outstanding success of the



ALAN MACRINNON AS KING CHARLES I.
1894.



J. GILLIAT AND MISS CLEMENTS.

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performance was "the crowd," played by E. F. Nugent and J. B. Seaton, both of the House, dressed as children, crowned with flowers, mincing, self-conscious, ridiculous, with a valse refrain, by Nugent, which was whistled in Oxford during all the following Summer Term—

"When we are out, we are shy!
Wittily, prettily shy!
Oh, when we're at home,
We're the worst kids in Rome,
But when we are out, we are shy!"

"Some years after our *Julius Cæsar* had passed into the store-house of tradition," writes Morris, "I was walking down a country road, where a navvy was breaking stones, but who, on perceiving me, stopped in evident relief from an uncongenial task, and broke the silence as follows: 'Lorks a mussy. Who'd 'ave thought it! Well, I'm blowed! Don't you remember, sir, as 'ow you play-hacted onc't with me?'"

"Thus there are obvious disadvantages in securing the professional super, ever more alert on the present need of liquid refreshment, than on the past memory of artistic association. These disadvantages are still further accentuated by the following reminiscence—

"One day just as I was about to get shaved, having been copiously, albeit uncomfortably, lathered—(and I use the word 'uncomfortably' with a due regard for truth, seeing that the barber

had abruptly disappeared upon the strident summons of 'shop')—an individual of leaden demeanour suggesting a 'British workman'—without any offence to the one and only of that ilk in Oxford—seized my hand.

“‘What, ho! What, ho!’ he exclaimed; ‘don’t you remember, sir, as ’ow you got hover me and my mates with your blatherin’ freends—Romans—and fhat-nots—especially what-nots. Lor, it makes me that dry, it do, to think as ’ow you made such a fool of me in that there ’umbuggin’ speech!’

“A momentary glance at the speaker caused me to reflect how powerless I must have been at any time to improve upon Nature’s handiwork in this respect; the barber’s opportune return serving not only to quicken into warmth the congealed and copious ‘lather,’ but to furnish welcome respite from further reflection.”

CHAPTER IX

“Farewell, O drab and reeking hall,
Where half-boozed mummers roared a glee,
And tutors, furtive from a stall
Beheld, spell-bound, the Sisters B.
The curtain’s down: thy walls are, too,
The Old has given place to New.
Drinkwater, hail! Old Tom, adieu!”

Lines on the Old Vic., 1886.

THE drama, as acted by undergraduates, seemed now secure of its position as an Oxford institution. The dangerous shoals had been successfully navigated, and we had also got through the treacherous shallows of apathy. It was still to be made abundantly evident that certain people cherished a natural hostility to acting which is sometimes hard to understand if, in Ingoldsby’s words,

“—you’re one of the play-going public, kind reader,
And not a Moravian or rigid ‘Seceder.’”

For the first lustrum of the Society’s career its efforts had been confined to plays by Shakespeare and Euripides. But there was even thus early a tendency to break away from the restrictions imposed by the authorities.

“At a private meeting of old members,” so runs

the Chronicle of the then secretary, "we thought it would be a bold, and perhaps a successful, step to make an effort to break through the original mandate of the Vice-Chancellor, and to apply for permission to produce Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*. Rather to our surprise, but be it chiefly through the intercession of W. L. Courtney, leave was granted; and Courtney set to work to revise it in such a manner as not to offend the moral sensibilities of an Oxford public. A. C. Swinburne kindly granted some matter relating to Marlowe, to be reprinted in the form of a preface, and everything was in preparation."

Claude Nugent went down that term and was succeeded by H. B. Irving. The air was full of Marlowe, and the suggestion was abroad that one reason why *The Jew of Malta* was chosen was because of the keenness of two members to play "Barabas" and "Ithamore." They had both become letter-perfect in the parts and spouted them on all occasions, being specially strong in the scene where "Barabas" puts the poison in the pot of pottage. On the river, on the football field, in the quad and in lodgings the Jew could be heard declaiming—

"Stay; first let me stir it, Ithamore.
As fatal be it to her as the draught
Of which great Alexander drunk and died;
And with her let it work like Borgia's wine,
Whereof his sire the Pope was poisoned!
In few, the blood of Hydra, Lerma's bane,

FC Woods Esq.
MA., Plus Bac, Exeter College
BOWS!!



By permission of "The Graphic."

SKETCHES AT "THE TEMPEST."

1894.

[To face p. 152.]

The juice of hebon, and Cocytus's breath,
 And all the poisons of the Stygian pool,
 Break from the fiery kingdom, and in this
 Vomit your venom, and evenom her
 That, like a friend, hath left her father thus!"

It so happened that a scout, the son of "Barabas's" landlady, was stage-struck, and hearing the foregoing speech so frequently rendered, paid more attention to the manner of it than the matter, with the result that he was overheard from the stairs by two trustworthy witnesses delivering it in this fashion to an audience assembled in "Barabas's" sitting-room—

"Barabas. Stay first! Let me stir it evermore
 As fatal be it to 'er as the draught
 Of which great Alex and 'er drunken died.
 And wither let it work like Bodger's swine
 Whereof aspire the soap was poisoned!
 In flew the blood of hypodermic Spain
 The Jews to heap on Uncle Titus's breath
 And all the poisons of the stodgy fool, etc., etc."

But just then there came a change of plans. Robert Browning had just died; the whole world was talking of his genius. I had long been struck with one product of that genius, to which it seemed to me fair treatment had never been accorded. *Strafford* had not been given, save by the Browning Society, since it was played by Macready in 1837, over half a century before. On my proposition, therefore, *Strafford* was to be substituted for *The Jew of Malta*, if we could gain the consent of the then Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Bellamy.

“Even amongst amateurs,” wrote a critic twenty years ago, “one occasionally finds unrestrained ambition breaking out in the direction of drama more or less historic, with a plot that involves upon the part of the audience, a mental furbishing-up and a consultation with Macaulay or Gardner, to properly appreciate its intricacies. More often than not the necessity of such close application to realize and discover the essence, so to speak, seriously affects the interest of those on the other side of the foot-lights.”

The critic intimates that “to be historical is to be involved; ambiguity becoming almost a corollary.”

Strafford certainly requires the attention of the student in order to fully appreciate what the writer seeks to convey. It is freely admitted that the drama is not historically accurate, and that in the portrayal of one who, rightly or wrongly, has been called an apostate, there are many severe diversions from a correct representation of his personality. But it is claimed in extenuation that as “Strafford” was the hero of the play, these diversions were wilfully committed to bring forward his character more prominently and render his individuality more striking. Whatever may be the correct deduction, Browning has succeeded in weaving around “Strafford’s” quixotic affection for his king, and the perfidy and the vacillation of the monarch an interesting play.

It was at the instance of Macready, the tragedian, that Browning, at the age of twenty-five, wrote the play, and at Covent Garden Theatre it was first produced in 1837. It ran for five nights with fair success, was withdrawn, and had never displayed much vitality since. As an educational work it possesses notable attributes, principally in delineating the character of "Strafford" and imparting an idea of the characteristics and circumstances of the rebellious times of Charles I, but even in this respect the modifications which the authors thought fit to make, affect its value as a perfect reflex of the incidents. "Strafford," it is generally admitted, was a great and devoted man, who thrust his individuality between Parliament and the weakened king in a vain attempt to save the prerogative of the Crown. A victim of kingly perfidy, distrusted of the people whose rights he had erstwhile championed, hated by his contemporaries, yet he was a model of devotion to his king, whom he served with his whole zeal to protect. It was his sole interest to get the confidence of the king, but his miserable littleness and vacillation, "Strafford" at last discovered, made it impossible for him to trust any one. Indeed, it is this self-sacrifice that forms the key to the plot, and "Strafford," with an almost incomprehensible affection, is made to idolize the monarch.

So much for the drama as literature. I do not suppose "Strafford" will boast many revivals, and if there was ever any sound justification on the

intellectual side for our existence as Oxford amateurs this play of Browning's furnished it.

To the Vice-Chancellor I therefore addressed a letter, asking permission for this departure from the rule laid down by Dr. Jowett. He replied that the occasion and the play justified it, but it was "not to be held as a precedent."

I remember one waggish don, whose knowledge of Browning was limited, remarking, "Well, MacKinnon, if you get Browning this year and Owen Meredith next, how long before you will be producing a work of the poet George R. Sims?"

Some doubts had been expressed before the performance, as to whether we should be able to grapple with so difficult a task as the rendering of Browning's drama. The doubts were soon laid.

The *Times* critic was good enough to say of the stage-management that it showed a "strong sense of the value of graphic grouping with reference to dramatic effect, and his handling of the individual scenes was excellent in every respect." The play went without a hitch, and the members of the cast entered into their parts with a thoroughness that told of a most careful and thoughtful study of the text.

Unquestionably the best piece of acting was that of H. B. Irving in the title-rôle. Much had been expected from him, and the power and grace of his rendering of the part seems to have been thoroughly appreciated by the audience. Holman Clark, as



H. T. WHITAKER AS VALENTINE.
1894.



MISS BRUCKSHAW AS ARIEL
1894.



A. ELLIS AS TRINCULO.
1894.



M. B. FURSE AS PROTEUS.
1894.

[To face p. 156.]

“Pym,” struggled valiantly with a somewhat incongruous make-up. His reading was marked by breadth and strength, and his last great speech was given with particularly true feeling. No less than five people had to be requisitioned for the part of the “King.” The influenza which was raging in Oxford at the time broke out in one of the dressing-rooms, and every member was laid low. After the third performance, R. Carew-Hunt had to relinquish the part of “Charles I,” and his understudy fell ill on the same night, so I had to step into the breach. As I had always resented the poet’s apparent exaggeration of the heartless, traitorous, weak, uxorious duplicity of Charles, I tried to invest it with a little more dignity and pathos, qualities which I had long associated with the unhappy monarch. Before the last night I also fell a victim to the scourge; fortunately the duties of a stage-manager had by that time become merely perfunctory, but yet another representative had to be found for the sovereign, whose ill-luck appeared to descend even to his imitators. Lord Warkworth (the late-lamented Earl Percy, M.P., and Hon. Sec. of the Society) was excellent as “Hollis,” and the minor characters were all well filled. The parts of “Lady Carlisle” and “Queen Henrietta Maria” were taken by Mrs. Charles Sim and Miss Kate Behnke respectively. The part of “Lady Carlisle” is very ill-defined and difficult to act, but Mrs. Sim gave an inter-

pretation that appealed to all by its sympathy and insight. We were fortunate indeed in having her assistance.

The cast was as follows—

“STRAFFORD.”

KING CHARLES I	<i>R. C. W. Hunt, Merton College.</i>
EARL OF HOLLAND	<i>H. T. Whittaker, Christ Church.</i>
LORD SAVILE	<i>W. M. Hornby, New College.</i>
SIR HENRY VANE	<i>P. Pullam, Christ Church.</i>
VISCOUNT WENTWORTH (afterwards Earl of Strafford) .	<i>H. Irving, New College.</i>
JOHN PYM	<i>E. H. Clark, New College.</i>
JOHN HAMPDEN	<i>P. Dearmer, Christ Church.</i>
VANE THE YOUNGER	<i>H. T. Farmer, Balliol College.</i>
DENZIL HOLLIS	<i>Lord Warkworth, Christ Church.</i>
BENJAMIN RUDYARD	<i>J. B. Seaton, Christ Church.</i>
NATHANIEL FIENNES	<i>L. H. Helbert, Oriel College.</i>
EARL OF LOONDON	<i>P. J. Shaw, New College.</i>
MAXWELL (Usher of the Black Rod)	<i>W. S. Dunn, Brasenose College.</i>
BALFOUR (Constable of the Tower)	<i>W. S. Holding, Christ Church.</i>
A PURITAN	<i>H. C. M. Lambert, New College.</i>
ST. JOHN (Solicitor-General) .	<i>F. W. H. Schwartz, Wadham College.</i>
SIR ARTHUR HASELRIG	<i>W. C. Pennyman, Brasenose College.</i>

MAINWARING	} (Adherents of Strafford)	{	<i>G. L. Calderon, Trinity College.</i>
BRYAN			<i>T. K. Ashton, Trinity College.</i>
WILLIS			<i>A. S. Cripps, Trinity College.</i>
SLINGSBY			<i>H. B. Grotrian, Trinity Church.</i>
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN			<i>H. F. Lyon, Trinity College.</i>
SECOND PRESBYTERIAN			<i>A. F. Turner, Trinity College.</i>
OFFICERS OF THE GUARD			<i>G. M. Style, New College.</i>
MESSENGER			<i>A. E. Haserick, Christ Church.</i>
MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF PEERS		{	<i>W. F. C. Holland, Brasenose College.</i>
			<i>A. E. Leith, Brasenose College.</i>
SECOND PURITAN			<i>W. E. Lloyd, Christ Church.</i>
A FOLLOWER OF STRAFFORD			<i>S. Johnson, Christ Church.</i>
STRAFFORD'S CHILDREN		{	<i>Miss Bessie Graves.</i>
			<i>Miss D. Gelpin.</i>
COUNSEL, OFFICERS OF THE TRIAL, SCOTS COMMISSIONERS, PRES- BYTERIANS, ADHERENTS OF STRAFFORD, SECRETARIES, SPECTATORS OF THIS TRIAL, ETC.		{	<i>Messrs. Glegg, Pease, Robertson, Schuster, (New College); Arnold, Deane, Hopkinson, Meade, Sainsbury, Stokoe, Zedlitz, (Trinity College); Hazerick, Oppenheim, (Christ Church); John- son, Owen, (Brasenose College); Abbot (Hert- ford College); Lips- comb (Charsley Hall); etc.</i>

QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA . . .	Miss Kate Behnke.
LUCY PERCY (Countess of Carlisle)	Mrs. Charles Sim.

Alma Tadema's designs for the scenery were, of course, in admirable taste. Perhaps the prison scene was deserving of special mention, where the sunlit river is seen through the suddenly opened door, with "Lady Carlisle" standing in the full glare of the light, and "Pym's" myrmidons rushing in to cut off the attempt of "Wentworth" to escape. Old English melodies were rendered by a professional string band in the intervals, the conductor being Mr. John Farmer, then director of the Harrow School of Music. W. L. Courtney materially contributed to the success of the play, and the enjoyment of the audience, by judiciously cutting certain parts of the play, and bringing *Strafford* into a more satisfactory condition for performance.

Strafford has a very deep interest, inasmuch as it is essentially a study of character; but few expected that it would prove a good acting play, and if we had failed it would not have caused any surprise.

In reviewing the performance, the *Oxford Magazine* said—

"The O.U.D.S. have some cause to complain that Oxford continually refuses to support them on the first night. Every one waits to hear some one else's judgment before taking the trouble to go and see for themselves. Consequently, on Wednesday

PERCY LEE, MISS LILLIAN BREATHWAITTE, C. H. CROKER-KING, J. HEARN, I. F. OLDERSHAW, PAUL RUBENS, MISS COPLESTON,



A REHEARSAL OF "THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR," 1896.
 A. N. TAYLER, MR. G. K. FOSS.

[To face p. 160.]

last—*malgré* the graphic words of the *Daily News*, ‘the house presented a most animated appearance, being packed from floor to ceiling’—the spectacle from the stage was most depressing. And yet no one need have been afraid of the first night. Everything went as smoothly as if the play had been running a week, and the *entr’actes* were of the briefest. A little additional nervousness might have been noticed at the beginning, and the lime-lights appeared at times to be making a determined effort to hiss the play down; but nothing else went wrong, and once more we congratulate the stage-manager on the striking success of his efforts.”

Writing of Irving’s acting in the part of “Strafford,” the *Musical World* said, “It may seem an anti-climax, but the last thought concerning this remarkable performance is inevitably one of regret that Mr. Irving should refuse to enter a profession in which his father is so splendidly distinguished; for the wig and gown of the barrister will cover, we make bold to say, an actor of absolute greatness.” For at that time, notwithstanding his success, young Irving was resolved not to be an actor, but looked to a legal career for distinction. If a perusal of his published works leads one to think he might have succeeded in either law or literature, such success would surely not have been more than he has actually achieved.

I have dwelt thus lovingly upon *Strafford* be-

cause it is associated with what I must always regard as the greatest success the O.U.D.S. has yet enjoyed at Oxford—and a harbinger, let us hope, of what may come to be in the future. For four years later, in August 1894, the University Extension had their summer meeting at Oxford. The lectures delivered that year under their auspices were on the Seventeenth Century, and the committee asked me if I would undertake a performance of *Strafford* to illustrate the period. I had long conferences with H. Snagge of New College, then secretary of the O.U.D.S., and together we arranged for a picked company of past and present members to produce *Strafford*. The cast of this memorable production was as follows—

STRAFFORD	.	.	.	.	.	<i>Alan Mackinnon.</i>
CHARLES I	.	.	.	.	.	<i>A. Ellis.</i>
PYM	.	.	.	.	.	<i>E. Holman Clark.</i>
VANE	.	.	.	.	.	<i>H. T. Whitaker.</i>
DENZIL HOLLIS	.	.	.	.	.	<i>H. Croker-King.</i>
HAMPDEN	.	.	.	.	.	<i>G. T. Kidstone.</i>
PURITAN	.	.	.	.	.	<i>W. Alison Phillips.</i>
LADY CARLISLE	.	.	.	.	.	<i>Mrs. Charles Sim.</i>
HENRIETTA MARIA	.	.	.	.	.	<i>Miss Behnke.</i>

It was quite as much an experience for us as our audience. We were now admittedly an educational institution, and acting at Oxford was at length justified. The committee of the University Extension voted us its formal thanks, and a portrait of *Strafford* was presented to me.

At the same time I want to make it clear that I doubt very much if being an educational institution is quite what the Oxford amateur—especially if he is a Freshman—wants. Acting is good fun, and it develops a side of his nature; but if it were part of the regular curriculum it might not be so funny or so welcome. In the character of “Pym” Holman Clark bade farewell to the amateur stage. “Glendower,” “Malvolio,” “Dr. Caius,” “Cassius” and “Hubert” provided a series second only to Arthur Bouchier; and while on the subject of such long runs, I may observe, by the way, that though for a few years more I continued to produce the annual play for the O.U.D.S., an event which I shall always cherish as amongst the happiest of my life, I did not again appear in the cast. “Gratiano,” “Prince Hal,” “Apollo,” the “Bastard” and the two above-mentioned rôles in *Strafford* were the means which led to happy association with valued friends, the majority of whom, with a few sad exceptions, I am still fortunately able to meet in the flesh at the present day.

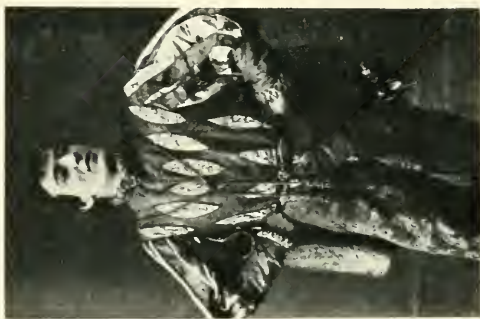
But this later revival of *Strafford* has led to anticipation, and I must revert to the year 1891. With the exception of a single benefit performance at the Crystal Palace in September 1889, when Sir Herbert (then Mr. Beerbohm) Tree appeared in the title-rôle, *King John* had not been placed on a London stage, since its production at the Princess's

Theatre in 1858, when Charles Kean appeared as "John" and Ellen Terry as "Arthur."

The O.U.D.S. production was enthusiastically received at the New Theatre. The critics were divided in their estimation of the efforts of the different actors and actresses, but a well-filled house, loud in its appreciation of the representation, bore testimony to the care bestowed by the characters and to the genius of some. Handsome dresses, historically accurate, tapestries and chain mail, generously lent by Sir Henry Irving, entirely new scenery designed by Mr. Clark and painted by Mr. E. B. Jones, all contributed towards its success. Irving kindly lent us dresses for "King John." I remember so well his impressing on me the advantage of massing *browns* together as a background for groups of armoured figures. It was an instance of one of those small artistic touches which lent such charm to the Lyceum productions.

Perceval Landon, who in his college days was great on heraldry, was of invaluable assistance in seeing that the shields bore their right devices, and the inside of the programme, designed by Holman Clark, contained the properly designed shields of the various characters.

One of the greatest attractions of the evening was the ladies' string band, under the skilful direction of the Countess of Radnor. This talented conductress, perhaps better known to the musical public as Vis-



PERCY LEE,
1897.



MISS DANIEL AND MR. LANGTON.



LORD SCURDALE AS CORYTHÆUS,
1897.

[To face p. 164.]

countess Folkestone, had often kindly come to my assistance when we rendered musical plays at Folkestone, and I prevailed upon her to come and give Oxford an opportunity of enjoying the performances of her famous orchestra. Her youngest son, too, undertook the character of "Prince Henry."

Next morning we naturally ordered all the London papers to see what they had to say about us. Some of the critics were very complimentary, others the reverse, or lukewarm. To quote one of many: "The scenery, costumes and groupings were really not very far behind Lyceum form. The central point of attraction was, of course, the wily monarch of Mr. Henry Irving, junior. There was a fine, courageous attempt at a piece of subtle character-drawing, but the means were not equal to the interest. Flashes there were which revealed a latent talent, some day, perhaps, to be developed and to extort universal admiration."

Of Holman Clark, who took the part of "Hubert," it was said, "He was built for melodrama. It's in his head, his heart, his hand. The finger of Fate points the way to the Adelphi or the New Olympic! Allowance being made for the position of George Street. 'Any drama by the river's brim, a melodrama is to him, and others are a bore.' He takes a Fernandez view of the character and plays it strong and well."

It might be noted that, of course, now no one is

likely to play so many parts, because the cast is very properly limited to undergraduate members in residence at the time. But (1) we were pioneers, and (2) Henry Irving was very anxious that Clark, Stuart and I should come and support him in *Stratford* and *John*, because of the length of the casts and the fact that the schools left him with but few competent performers available for two difficult plays.

The full cast was as follows—

KING JOHN	<i>H. B. Irving, New College.</i>
PRINCE HENRY (his son)	<i>Hon. S. Pleydell-Bouverie.</i>
ARTHUR (son to Geoffrey, elder brother to John)	<i>Miss Mabel Hoare.</i>
WILLIAM MARSHALL, EARL PEMBROKE	<i>P. Landon, Hertford.</i>
GEOFFREY FITZ-PETER, EARL OF ESSEX	<i>W. G. Pennyman, B.N.C.</i>
WILLIAM LONGSWORD, EARL OF SALISBURY	<i>H. Lyon, Trinity College.</i>
ROBERT BIGOT, EARL OF NORFOLK	<i>J. R. Williams, New College.</i>
HUBERT DE BURGH (Chamberlain to the King)	<i>E. H. Clark, New College.</i>
ROBERT FAULCONBRIDGE	<i>H. à C. Pigott, Christ Church.</i>
PHILIP FAULCONBRIDGE (bastard son of King Richard I)	<i>A. M. Mackinnon, Trinity College.</i>
SHERIFF OF NORTHAMPTON	<i>J. Mitchell, New College.</i>

PETER OF POMFRET (a Prophet)	.	.	.	<i>W. E. Lloyd, Christ Church.</i>
PHILIP, KING OF FRANCE	.	.	.	<i>W. H. Goshen, New College.</i>
LEWIS (the Dauphin)	.	.	.	<i>A. Lafontaine, Merton College.</i>
ARCHDUKE OF AUSTRIA	.	.	.	<i>H. C. M. Lambert, New College.</i>
CARDINAL PANDULPH	.	.	.	<i>S. H. Lechmere-Stuart, Magdalen College.</i>
MELUN (a French Lord)	.	.	.	<i>J. F. Anderson, B.N.C.</i>
CHATILLON (Ambassador)	.	.	.	<i>W. S. Holding, Christ Church.</i>
CITIZEN OF ANGIERS	.	.	.	<i>E. M. Bonns, New College.</i>
ENGLISH HERALD	.	.	.	<i>C. Schuster, New College.</i>
FRENCH HERALD	.	.	.	<i>E. Johnson, B.N.C.</i>
ATTENDANT ON HUBERT	.	.	.	<i>S. Wason, Christ Church.</i>
FIRST ENGLISH KNIGHT	.	.	.	<i>E. Marriott, Merton College.</i>
SECOND ENGLISH KNIGHT	.	.	.	<i>C. Archer, Oriel College.</i>
FIRST FRENCH KNIGHT	.	.	.	<i>F. W. Owen, B.N.C.</i>
ELINOR (widow of King Henry II)	.	.	.	<i>Miss Ffytche.</i>
CONSTANCE (mother of Arthur)	.	.	.	<i>Mrs. Charles Sim.</i>
BLANCH (daughter to Alphonso, King of Castile)	.	.	.	<i>Miss Dowson.</i>
LADIES	.	.	.	{ <i>Mrs. Morris.</i> <i>Miss Cockerell.</i>

Bishops, Monks, English Knights, French Knights, Austrian Knights, English Standard-bearer, French Standard-bearer, Austrian Standard-bearer, Crozier-bearer, Knight Templars, English Guards, Citizens of Angiers.

Although we attained smooth and successful performances, the first night had rather more than its usual share of *contretemps*. When the combined British and French forces, to the number of some sixty performers, were all on the stage, their only proper means of exit was by means of a drawbridge into the town. This drawbridge spanned the moat when lowered, and rested on a parapet, thus forming a step by which to pass over through the gate. It happened that, for purposes of rapid scenic change on the second occasion of its use, this parapet was to be removed by lines worked from the side. An over-zealous carpenter worked this during the first dark change, in consequence of which the whole army was imprisoned, and the drop curtains had to be let down prematurely, leaving the "First Citizen" kneeling with the keys of the town in front of the act drop (from which he had to exit kneeling, as the stage critic in Sheridan says).

"One hitch," writes Nugent, "occurred on the first night, which led to a story being told against myself. I had written a wedding march for the procession into the walls of Angiers; but the drawbridge stuck, and the music had stopped long before the last soldier had entered. Mackinnon was left alone on the stage, and the first words he uttered were, 'Mad world, mad kings, mad composition!'"

In another act, the arms of H. B. Irving, "King John," and W. H. Goschen, "King Philip," while

both were in chain armour, became in an inexplicable manner fettered to one another by the links of the chain. The apparent brotherly affection had to be maintained through the stormy quarrel scene, and they left the stage like Siamese twins.

In the third act, the bishops attendant on the cardinal, recruited from the ranks of distinguished 'Varsity athletes, were engaged in the very fascinating pursuit of pea-shooting, when the curtain rose and disclosed them. This occurred on the last night.

The "Cardinal" was excellently played by Lechmere-Stuart, who thus brought to a close his long association with the casts of the 'Varsity plays.

The very success which was attending the Society's efforts and the manner in which it was appealing to the youth of the University, naturally drew upon it the renewed dislike and distrust of those who thought the drama *qua* drama and not literature was "out of place at Oxford."

One morning at the Society's rooms the question ran, "Have you seen Chandler's letter?" If the answer was "No," then came, "Lucky man! You don't know how wicked you are!" If the answer was "Yes," the rejoinder was, "Well, what do you think of it?"

One undergraduate averred that if his people saw the unspeakable Chandler's letter, they would each write him separately imploring him not to sacrifice

his career on the "false shrine of Thalia." For a week everybody in Oxford interested in theatricals talked about Chandler and his letter in the *Oxford Magazine*. Chandler was a tutor and Vice-Principal of Brasenose and select preacher to the University that year. He is now Bishop of Bloemfontein, and may or may not now hold the views he expressed twenty years ago. But his letter was a stout blow at acting at Oxford, and the fact that the O.U.D.S. was not materially injured by it is a proof of the strength and durability of its armour. As this famous letter represents the views of all those who from time immemorial have been opposed to acting at Oxford, I think it, as well as the replies it evoked, well deserves a place in these pages.

"SIR," it ran, "until recently intellectual study was regarded as, at any rate, a minor and optional object of an academical career. But its survival in even this modest condition is now coming to be looked upon as an anachronism and an anomaly. The Oxford University Dramatic Society is absorbing the scanty hours which had not already been occupied by athletic exercises and philanthropic and literary societies. The University is being transformed into a third-rate histrionic company, in which the pass-man figures as a 'Super,' and the honour-man aims at qualifying hereafter as a lesser light of a provincial stage. No objection on the ground of principle can, of course, be entertained, for prin-

principles have long ago been cast to the winds; and the O.U.D.S. owed its existence to the patronage of the Senior Proctor and Vice-Chancellors of the day. But, looking at results, we may be justified in asking whether the game is worth the candle. As to the merit of the acting I cannot speak from personal observation, and I have never attended any of the plays and never propose to do so. But I have no hesitation in declaring, both on *a priori* and *a posteriori* grounds, that it is inferior. *A priori*, it may be asserted that the performances *cannot* be good; the time at the disposal of the actor is too short, and their inexperience too great, to admit of a genuine success. And *a posteriori*, I am informed by trustworthy authorities (by people, that is, who are neither actors nor the female relatives of actors), that in matter of fact they *are not* good, in the sense in which men ordinarily count goodness. Considered as amateur theatricals they are no doubt creditable; but is the great sacrifice of time and expenditure of trouble justified in order to win this qualified admiration which Dr. Johnson accorded to the dancing bear? Yours, etc."

Mr. Chandler's letter was replied to by Mr. H. St. John Raikes, a member of the sister University, who took up the cudgels on behalf of the O.U.D.S. In a letter to the Editor of the *Oxford Magazine*, Mr. Raikes wrote—

"SIR,—A judgment founded on *ex parte* state-

ments cannot safely be relied upon, even when such statements are supported by evidence.

“Mr. Chandler, who is apparently unacquainted with this dictum, will not, I think, find many people to agree with the views which he recently imparted to your readers on the subject of the O.U.D.S. And for this reason: His judgment, if I may so call it, is unsupported by evidence, and is, moreover, based partly on mere assertion, and partly on the *ex parte* statements of others. Briefly, he has arrived at the conclusion that the acting of the members of the O.U.D.S. is bad, and that, in consequence, it is advisable that their annual performance should be discontinued. This, I take it, is the gist of his letter; for the suggestion that the University is being transformed into a ‘third-rate histrionic company’ may be dismissed as a piece of elegant *badinage*, while the question as to whether ‘the game is worth the candle’ is surely interesting, mainly, to the players themselves.

“But to return to the question of the acting. If it is really bad, it will in due course cease to attract an audience. This will, naturally, put an end to the Society’s existence. Therefore, supposing Mr. Chandler’s judgment to be correct, it is unnecessary to have recourse to overt measures to destroy that which is already on the verge of collapsing.

“But is Mr. Chandler’s judgment correct? Is the acting really so very inferior? This is more or



F. LASCELLES AND MISS LEWIS.
1897.



A. N. TAYLER, PERCY LEFF.
1897.
[To face p. 172.]

less a matter of opinion. Personally, in spite of the natural prejudice usually attributed to a member of the sister University, I must frankly say that, on my departure from Oxford on Saturday, the 7th of February, I carried away a very high opinion of the capabilities of the O.U.D.S.

“I am in a position, too, to say that the views of certain managers and professional actors, who attended the recent rendering of *King John*, differ considerably from those of Mr. Chandler’s ‘trustworthy authorities.’ Indeed, one of those present has invited the O.U.D.S. to repeat their performance at a *matinée* at his own theatre.

“And now one question to the writer of the letter signed ‘Καιρός.’ Only one, and that is to ask the humorous combiner of ‘μουσική’ and ‘γυμναστική’ (a covert allusion to Mr. Chandler’s ‘dancing bear,’ apparently), what is his justification for quoting as ‘the verdict of the press’ three extracts from one article, a semi-humorous one, too, by the way. If he will devote a ‘short interval’ to answering this query, I shall be much obliged.

“In conclusion, I beg to submit that no valid reason for sweeping away the O.U.D.S. has as yet been adduced. If either of these two second-hand critics, to whose letters I have referred, had shown that its existence was harmful to the community, it would have been another matter. But this they have not attempted to do, finding it an easier task,

apparently, to condemn acting which they have never seen."

There was a decided touch of humour about another correspondent—an undergraduate's *volte-face*. Like the proverbial lady letter-writer he reserved his real opinion for his postscript.

"SIR," he began, "I have read with great interest Mr. Chandler's crushing criticism on the O.U.D.S. in your last number. I entirely agree with him. My only objection is that he does not carry reform far enough. Take my own case," and so forth.

* * * * *

"P.S.—And yet, when I think of the masterly rendering by 'Hubert' and the 'Bastard' of the scene over the body of Arthur (surely, when we consider the past acts of the one and the character of the other as sketched in the play, one of the sublimest heights of pathos to which Shakespeare ever attained), I am inclined to believe that the O.U.D.S. is doing good work after all."¹

¹ *The Oxford Magazine*, Feb. 18, 1891.

CHAPTER X

“Oh, what is all this talk of Torpids, boy?
Is footer not more futile than of yore?
Doth sprinting over furrows yield thee joy?
Is hockey an unmitigated bore?
Then don the saucy *chiton*, pull the fleshings o’er your
knees,
And pretend that you’re AN ACTOR acting Aristophanes!”

George Street Ballads, 1892.

IN 1892 the Society, while resolving again to produce a Greek play, decided to embark in comedy rather than tragedy.

Euripides should be exchanged for Aristophanes—the sock instead of the buskin. At the same time, a leaf was taken from the book of Westminster School; Aristophanes should have a modern application. How could this be effected? Not by interpolations in the text, although there were doubtless many Freshmen who were prepared to perform this feat with sufficient cleverness. But the presence on the committee of the O.U.D.S. of three senior members of the University—Mr. D. G. Hogarth of Magdalen, Mr. A. E. Haigh of Corpus and Mr. R. W. Macan of University—forbade any such

escapade. It was still possible by means of the "business" and "properties," and above all by its music, for *The Frogs* to be brought up to date, to bear a palpable reference to *fin de siècle* Oxford. Aristophanes wrote his play to satirize the Athens of Pericles. "My view is," remarked one of the histrionic enthusiasts in committee, "that Aristophanes was a good fellow—a witty dog. He would have been delighted to see the instrument which he forged for Athens used to tickle the sides of Oxford."

Very lucky were the promoters in securing the services of Dr. Hubert Parry, who had previously written the music for a production of *The Birds* at Cambridge. "He now," says Philip Carr, later one of the Society's secretaries, "revelled in the complicated score which he composed for *The Frogs*, in every form of topical allusion and *jeu d'esprit*. A full orchestra was engaged, and no attempt was made to recall in any way an atmosphere of old music. The Boulanger March was pressed into the service side by side with reminiscences of grand opera and with well-known English airs, to enforce modern applications of the points of the play. As might be expected, the result was to make the general idea of the satire of Aristophanes far more comprehensible to the majority of the audience than it could otherwise have been; and whatever fault the scholar could find with the extravagance



J. F. KERSHAW, WARRIE AND HON. A. M. HENLEY.
1898.



LORD SUIRDALE AND J. H. HASTINGS (Magd.).
1897.

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of the composer's method, he could certainly not deny its brilliance. It is not too much to say, therefore, that Dr. Parry's music was a great success and caused the production to be in the highest degree popular. As to the other features, the Greek scholars on the committee saw to it that the scenery, properties and costumes were such as Aristophanes himself was familiar with, but the whole spirit was modern. An attempt was made to give a realistic presentment of ancient Greek life by means of modern stage pictures, rather than to illustrate the comedy by following approximately the conventions under which it was written."

"The best acting," remarks my friend, the Critical Don, "was undoubtedly displayed by 'Herakles' and the νεκρός. The weird laugh with which the latter throws himself back on to his bier with the remark ἀναβιώην νυν πάλιν—wrongly translated 'I'd best be alive again at that rate'—was really inimitable. Mr. Furse was made for the part of 'Herakles,' and filled it admirably, though perhaps some pieces of by-play were perhaps superfluous. It was, for instance, a little unnecessary to seize 'Dionysus's' garment at the word γυναικῶν in the account of the θίασοι εὐδαίμονες. 'Xanthias' found a worthy exponent in the person of Mr. Lyon, whose acting was especially good during the brief space in which he takes his master's place. The rendering of 'Dionysus' probably gave rise to more

discussion than any other feature of the play. *Quot homines tot sententiæ*. Each individual has his own rendering of any part. Aristophanes probably did not conceive him as slim and girlish, but as a glorious young god in the exuberance of youthful beauty, with flowing locks; he might be represented with a languid, luxurious air when not in action, and should certainly be clothed in flowing garments and crowned with garlands, but no Greek could have imagined him trotting across the stage on tiptoe. Nevertheless, Helbert displayed dramatic talent in working out his conception of the part consistently."

In his rendering of the part of "Euripides," Ponsonby was a decided success; his delivery of the prayer to *αἰθὴρ ἐμὸν Βόσκημα* was excellent. One famous Grecian asked, "Are Messrs. Hogarth and Godley aware that *καλῶς*, two or three lines before that passage, means 'No, thank you,' and not, 'Well, I will'?" The part of "Æschylus" was creditably filled by Mr. Talbot, who made good use of his chief opportunities, the famous *λακίθιον, ἀπώλεσεν* and the Euripidean *arietta*. Mr. Bonns' part was one which appealed directly to the critical sense of an Oxford audience, and their reception of his acting while "Dionysus," like the Balliol Freshman, was "hearing instructions with feelings mixed," showed how well he developed its capabilities. The introduction of the "boy frog" by

“Charon” as he speaks the words Βατράχων κύκνων *υάλιστα* was a singular and not wholly justifiable interpolation. Finally, a meed of praise is due to the “King of Hades” and the “donkey,” both of whom did their duty at the beginning and the end of the play respectively. The attendants were perhaps a little lacking in stage deportment.

The chorus, and especially its coryphæus, sang with admirable precision and spirit. Nevertheless, declared one don, “It would have been quite in keeping with the general spirit of the play as acted to introduce skirt-dancing and the other attractions of the ballet *fin de siècle*. On the other hand, without aspiring to archæological exactitude, it would have been possible to train the chorus to perform a series of graceful evolutions, such as have more than once been seen on the neo-Hellenic stage. It must be admitted that neither principle was carried through with consistency.”

Notwithstanding, the play was a thorough success, as the numbers and enthusiasm of the audience amply proved. To those who could lay aside all thoughts of archæology it was even valuable towards the understanding of Aristophanic humour, which burst through again and again, even where overlaid with local and temporal conceptions. To some it suggested that Greek tragedy, unless the very greatest, is not so well adapted to the apprecia-

tion of the modern audience as the comedy of *Aristophanes*. Here is the cast of

“THE FROGS.”

1892.

DIONYSUS	L. H. Helbert, <i>Oriel College.</i>
XANTHIAS	H. F. Lyon, <i>Trinity College.</i>
HERAKLES	M. B. Furse, <i>Trinity College.</i>
A CORPSE	A. A. Ponsonby, <i>Balliol College.</i>
CHARON	E. M. Boms, <i>New College.</i>
PLUTO	C. S. Crossman, <i>New College.</i>
ÆACUS	R. E. Olivier, <i>Christ Church.</i>
ÆSCHYLUS	J. E. Talbot, <i>Magdalen College.</i>
EURIPIDES	A. A. Ponsonby, <i>Balliol College.</i>
SOPHOCLES	H. J. Rose, <i>Balliol College.</i>
CORYPHÆUS	H. A. Tapsfield, <i>Magdalen College.</i>

The Frogs perhaps hardly contained so many opportunities for the composer as *The Birds*, but the most was made of the opportunities that offered. No attempt was made to reproduce anything like “ancient music”—a task which from its very nature can never produce a satisfactory result; the score was throughout entirely modern in character, and, though written for a very small orchestra, was full



C. B. FRY AS PRINCE OF MOROCCO.
1895.



A. N. TAYLER.
1897.



H. M. WOODWARD.



P. COMYNS CARR.
1897.
[To face p. 180.]

of charming and artistic touches. As is only fitting in a play so full of allusions, the music was also allusive, and often, as has been said, with the happiest and most genuinely Aristophanic effects. In particular, one may mention the quotations from Meyerbeer and Beethoven, which herald "Euripides" and "Æschylus" respectively, and the ingenious perversions of passages from classical and modern Italian opera in the "solos" of the two poets. Outside such allusions, one of the best things in the score, from the "comic" point of view, was the chorus of Frogs, which, with its irritating refrain, was singularly effective in the situation. The Παράδοξος was also a very clever piece of writing; but in the other choruses, though they are by no means without points of interest, Dr. Parry was perhaps hardly so successful. It only remains to add that chorus and orchestra were alike excellent, and did full justice to the composer's picturesque score.

Apropos of *The Frogs* I must give an amusing skit written by an undergraduate and printed in the *Oxford Magazine*. It was entitled—

"AT 'THE FROGS'"

Lady in the stalls. Only five minutes between the scenes, what a shame! I shan't see half the people. Who *was* that very professional gentleman in the striking coat? The man that came before the curtain then?

Brother. Don't know, I'm sure—suppose it was Dorrill. Inspired confidence, didn't he?

Undergraduates. What is Dionysus carrying?

O, that will be the *thymell* they made such a row about.

I thought they weren't going to have one. But the Professor made them, you know; they always do at Cambridge.

Good old Xanthias.

Senior Fellow. It's monstrous; Dionysus ought to be an inebriate Philistine, a plump little Falstaff or Tartaria. I don't like your *fin de siècle* refinements.

Junior Fellow. My dear Vice-President, you must keep up with the progress of modern criticism! Archæological research and the higher education of women have revolutionized scholarship. If you *won't* take in the *Gelehrte Anzeiger*, you might at least read Verrall's *Bacchæ*.

Senior Fellow (crusty). If our scholarly young prigs would read more Aristophanes and less about him, their criticisms would be better worth hearing.

Chaperon. The author is a Fellow of Magdalen, is he not? I wonder if he is in the house. Poor young man! How anxious he must feel, entrusting his play to these wild undergraduates to act!

Chaperoned (in chorus). But surely, Aunt Jane, he must be dead. It says on the programme that

The Frogs was first produced in 405 B.C. This is only a revival.

Chaperon. Dear me, yes! But what costumes! I thought the Greeks were such a refined people!

Science Man. Great Scott! I believe they've borrowed my "subject" from the lab., and he's rather out of condition by this time. Blazes!! he's getting up!

Medical Man. Awfully good! But his feet ought to be whiter.

Torpid Critic. Reminds one of the ancient mariners at the end of a course, doesn't it?

Second Ditto. Glad we haven't got that old fiend to coach us! Blowhard's bad enough!

Science Man. I'd like to know where they cross frogs with dachshunds. They might have got a tip from Jerry to keep them anatomical.

Epigraphical Friend. Or who is responsible for the *upsilon*?

Boy in the Gallery. Don't cher see? the tram's jist a goin' off!

Stage-Manager (behind the curtain). Now, all together! and if you forget the words, sing *τύπτω*.

Young Lady. Is *The Frogs* the same as *The Clouds*, Uncle Tom?

Old Gentleman. No, my dear.

Young Lady. But what is the difference between Æschylus and Euripides?

Old Gentleman (doubtfully). Oh! they were both

poets, and—er—*one* used to write always in the same metre.

Undergraduates in the Dress Circle. Increases one's respect for one's Tutor, doesn't it, to see him wedged in in the Pit and reading the English side of the crib?

There's a Reader and a Professor doing the same, not to mention an ex-President of the O.U.B.C. I suppose they have to construe the English!

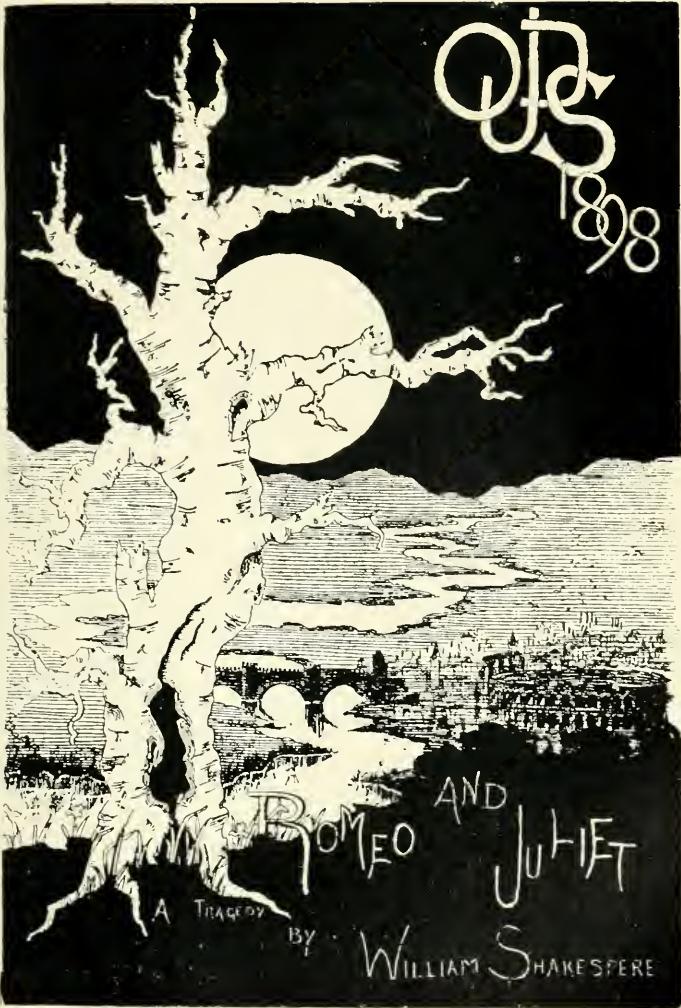
Picking holes in the translation, most likely.

Hullo! d'you see Rumbler in the Chorus? That fat Johnny with the beard.

His Tutor. Did he say ἀπώλετο?

A Voice on the Stair. Well, I never thought there was anything so good in Greek. Why, it might almost have been Gilbert and Sullivan!

“Helbert,” writes Mr. Philip Carr, “added to his laurels as ‘Dionysus’ the distinction of making the most amusing ‘gag’ of the last performance, always an occasion with the O.U.D.S. for speeches (long and short remarks), witty and dull; and bouquets (humorous and sentimental). An admirer on this occasion had thrown to ‘Dionysus’ a bunch, which was obviously intended as a token of admiration for the ‘donkey’ which stood patiently by his side. ‘Dionysus’ picked it up and, bowing gracefully,—history does not relate whether he was



PROGRAMME COVER.
By H. J. Badely, Trinity.

(To face p. 184.)

inspired or had previously paid for the vegetables—said simply *χάριτες*. This brilliant *repartee* put a suitable ending to one of the most successful productions of the O.U.D.S. It was a week gratefully remembered by many; and by none was it so treasured as by the barbers of Oxford. For the design of the Greek costume, and the determination of the committee to discard the use of what, it is said, are technically known as fleshings, had resulted in placing some of these gentlemen in a position of affluence almost sufficient to retire from business.”

As some wag said, “Although we had made a success of it, it was—altogether—a close shave.”

Another year wrought many changes in the characters of our next production at Oxford; the Bar, the Church, and in some cases the Stage having claimed some of our best performers. It was then the aim of the O.U.D.S. to put on the boards classics, either Greek or Shakespearian, the performance of which should instruct as well as amuse both audience and actors. Moreover, the tradition of the Society limited its choice to those plays which had not been produced, at any rate in London, for many years. This policy, necessitating original work on the part of the actor, had a decided advantage over the slavish copy of another’s rendering, however great the artist.

This, it must be admitted, is the ideal function

of a University histrionic Society, and after producing in turn *Henry IV* (Part I), *Twelfth Night*, the *Alcestis*, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Julius Cæsar*, *Strafford*, *King John*, and *The Frogs*, the Society considered the claims of Tennyson's *Harold* and one of the lesser-known Shakespearian dramas. It was finally decided to produce *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. There was little chance of the play scoring a popular success. It is certain that no one of Shakespeare's plays can ever be properly understood until seen on the boards; and if it had not been for the O.U.D.S. there is little doubt that most Oxford men of that period would have gone down to their graves without even witnessing *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

The Two Gentlemen of Verona gave me ample scope, and a considerable amount of time was given to the staging and arranging of costumes and groups. During the summer of the year before, I spent some time both in Venice and Verona selecting a suitable framework for this play and *The Merchant of Venice*, which were in contemplation, and both of which, at some little distance of time, I had the pleasure of seeing realized. Holman Clark being the scenic artist, we both threw ourselves into the Middle Ages, and a mediæval Italy was the result. The curtain rose on the busy market-place in fair Verona, with stalls piled high with vegetables and fruit, peasant women plying their trade, citizens

chattering over their purchases, children playing about at their games, and chasing each other about in a most real and artistic manner. The scene still seems to live vividly in my memory, and as the groups break up and disperse the two gentlemen enter from "Valentine's" house, and the play begins. This effect of a busy, active, ever-moving market-place as a background for the long scenes between "Valentine" and "Proteus," between the latter and "Speed," and between "Proteus" and "Antonio" gives the whole of Act I, the fifth scene of Act III, an animation which was lacking in former productions. In the latter scene, a hall in the palace at Milan is represented during a banquet, and perpetual movement of arriving guests, of courtiers, guards and serving-men, form ever-changing, picturesque groups—while the "Duke" sits apart on a dais and listens to the perfidious counsels of the false "Proteus." To anticipate a little I may say this scene evoked such enthusiasm from the audience that it was necessary to raise the curtain again at the close of the scene, while the next picture of the exterior of the beautiful old grey-stone palace in the moonlight and the final forest scene—wild and rough and suggestive of the outlaws who inhabit it—showed how well the theatre artists, Mr. Clark and Mr. Jones, had executed the very spirit of the scenes and made them live.

A word as to the play we had chosen. The good

lady who objected to *Hamlet* as being "so full of quotations," would have found little fault with *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*; from start to finish it strikes unfamiliarly on the ear. There is no chance for declamation; the plot lacks interest; and it is left very much to the Fools to "carry off" the play. Whenever that is the case in a Shakespearian drama its production is a hazardous experiment, for some of Shakespeare's comic dialogue appeals little to modern audiences. Strange as it may appear, his quips are less akin to the humorous sense of to-day than those of Aristophanes. How often on the Shakespearian stage have we seen the comedian struggling to render humorous lines of whose humour he is not very sure himself!

"There is very little," writes my Critical Don, "in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* to set off against the obscurities and archaisms which it shares with all Shakespeare's works; and almost nothing to really take hold of an audience. The actor has little chance; and it is more than doubtful whether, even with the most lavish accessories known to the modern manager, this play could be kept on the professional boards at all.

"To take the Fools first, on whom much depended: Ponsonby, though not too well suited by the querulous humour of 'Launce,' still managed to make the part every now and again excruciatingly funny, largely helped by Crab, whose



W. G. CHANCELLOR.
1898.



H. M. M. WOODWARD.
1898.



L. E. BERMAN.
1898.



E. K. TALBOT.
1898.

[To face p. 188.]



intense appreciation of the applause of the audience fairly brought down the house again and again. Ponsonby will find his opportunity in high comedy rather than low. Bonnin as 'Speed' improved steadily as the play went on; his quiet comicality grew on the audience, and his intentional absurdity combined with the more fortuitous humour of the outlaws to 'carry off' the first forest scene triumphantly. Whitaker's 'Valentine' was admirably sustained throughout; elocution, action, presence were all quite good, and with more help from 'Proteus' he would have saved more of the play than he did. It is, however, only fair to add that the 'Proteus' was subsequently forced by ill-health to give up the part. Mr. Furse, who gallantly stepped into the breach, added yet another item to the account which is owed him by the Society. He had to study his part in the shortest possible space of time, and yet showed no signs of uncertainty. Good minor parts were those played by Mr. Bailey and Mr. Mugliston: neither could have been much improved upon.

"As for the ladies: we had come to depend upon Mrs. Sim, and she was here as good as ever, although it required courage to play her *rôle*. 'Silvia' is not much of a part after all, but Mrs. Herbert Morris made the most of it: she was graceful in movement and clear in enunciation, and, hitting charmingly the right mean between nature and art, brightened up every scene in which she appeared."

Paul Rubens made his first appearance for the O.U.D.S. in the character of the "Duke of Milan."

I must not forget to mention Mr. Rowland's melodious rendering of the famous serenade to "Silvia," which still night by night scored the most instantaneous success. The small but picked orchestra, which Mr. F. C. Woods conducted with much spirit, was a long way above the ordinary theatre band; but the audience, not having its attention specially directed to it, as in *The Frogs*, gave it less recognition than it deserved.

"THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA."

NEW THEATRE,

February 2, 1893.

DUKE OF MILAN (father to Silvia)	A. J. N. Brooke, <i>Christ Church.</i>
VALENTINE } (the two Gentlemen)	H. T. Whitaker, <i>Christ Church.</i> A. H. Browne, <i>Balliol College.</i>
PROTEUS }	
ANTONIO (father to Proteus)	C. Bailey, <i>Balliol College.</i>
THURIO (a foolish rival to Valentine)	T. A. Vans Best, <i>Magdalen College.</i>
EGLAMOUR (agent for Silvia in her escape)	C. A. Peacock, <i>St. Edmund's Hall.</i>
SPEED (servant to Valentine)	A. Bonnin, <i>Trinity College.</i>
LAUNCE (servant to Proteus)	A. A. Ponsonby, <i>Balliol College.</i>
PANTHINO (servant to Antonio)	A. Ellis, <i>Trinity College.</i>

HOST (where Julia lodges)	<i>F. N. Mugliston, Trinity College.</i>
FIRST OUTLAW	<i>B. A. Hall, Christ Church.</i>
SECOND OUTLAW	<i>A. Borthwick, Balliol College.</i>
THIRD OUTLAW	<i>G. W. Dawson, Trinity College.</i>
JULIA (beloved of Proteus)	<i>Mrs. Charles Sim.</i>
SILVIA (beloved of Valentine)	<i>Mrs. Herbert Morris.</i>
LUCETTA (waiting - woman to Julia)	<i>Miss Farmer.</i>

The "A. Borthwick" of the foregoing cast only partly disclosed the identity of a young man of signal promise, the Hon. Oliver Borthwick, only son of Lord Glenesk, whose untimely death at the threshold of a distinguished career is fresh in the public memory. It was one of the humours of the piece that on the second night, when he had recited the lines—

“Know then that some of us are gentlemen
Such as the fury of ungoverned youth
Thrust from the company of awful men :
Myself was from Verona banished
For practising to steal away a lady,
An heir and near allied unto a duke ”

a voice in the pit called out, “ For shame, Oliver ! ”

CHAPTER XI

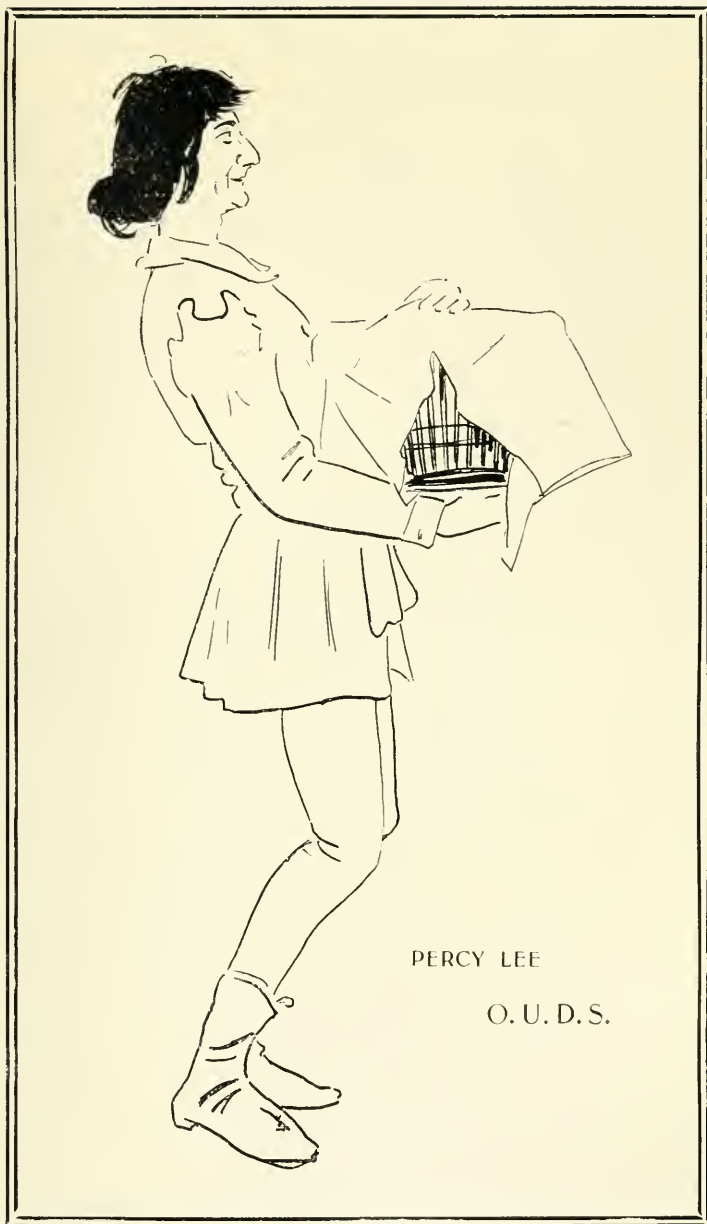
“Come, gentle Freshman, leave thy dismal toil,
Thy Plato and trigonometric sum;
And if thou must consume the midnight oil,
Go, burn it on yon gay proscenium.”

George Street Ballads.

IN *The Tempest*, chosen for the following year's representation, there was a play of general all-round excellence. Moreover, it was a powerful incentive to great effort, to attempt to show an Oxford audience the difference between a general knowledge of a plot, and a discriminating appreciation of its individual beauties of scene and atmosphere.

How many days I had to spend in the coaching and drilling of the small boys who appeared as the “strange shapes,” as “certain nymphs and reapers,” or as “the divers spirits in the shape of dogs”! Every one knows the difficulties to be overcome by instilling into the ordinary small boy a uniform grace or sprightliness. The instructing of such youths requires infinite patience and toil; but in this performance I was more than rewarded for my pains by the storm of laughter and applause which greeted the entrance and followed the exit of these “strange shapes” every night.

I have always held that suggestion is more satis-



PERCY LEE

O. U. D. S.

PERCY LEE (Oriol).
A Sketch by E. S. Valentine.
1899.

(To face p. 192.)



factory than realism, unless it happens that realism can be so presented as in the case of the wonderful shipwreck which Sir H. Beerbohm Tree has since given his London audience at His Majesty's. But the Oxford stage is not His Majesty's, and accordingly I had to content myself with having the shipwreck take place on the rocks just out of sight of the audience, and immediately below the place where "Miranda" is standing.

The play contains several scenes and two characters which would at any time test the skill of the cleverest of professional actors—"Ariel" and "Caliban." We succeeded marvellously well in overcoming such obstacles, and in providing a representation which many thought the best of the Oxford Shakespearian reproductions.

This time we were very fortunate in the ladies. Miss Bruckshaw as a stage singer surpassed all expectations, all the songs being charmingly given, and her "Where the bee sucks" won increased applause every night. There was, too, a refreshing vigour and spirit about her rendering of the part. Miss Cockerell was an attractive "Miranda," and appeared to most advantage in the scenes with "Ferdinand"; she had not, however, sufficient control over her voice to make herself consistently audible, except when she was quite in the front of the stage; in this respect, however, there was a very marked improvement on the later nights. Miss Dorothea

Baird spoke and looked well as "Iris," and Miss Farmer as "Juno" sang excellently in her duet with "Ceres."

"Talbot," writes my Critical Don, who witnessed this production, "made a gentlemanly 'Prospero,' a quiet rendering of a by no means easy character. His acting at times tended to monotony, and in many ways recalled his 'Æschylus' in *The Frogs*; he would have been better had he 'let himself go' a little more, as he did, *e. g.* in the famous 'cloud-capped towers' and 'ye elves' apostrophes. Considering the short notice at which he undertook the part, he was astonishingly accurate in his knowledge of the words, and after the first night had little or no need for the assistance of the prompter. Bonnin's 'Caliban' was very creditable; to lend any sort of dignity to a part which requires so repulsive a get-up and carriage and such repulsive sentiments is no light task, and Mr. Bonnin did well in avoiding any suggestion of the ludicrous. Peacock, as the lover 'Ferdinand,' looked handsome, and was not without vigour, though inclined to speak too quickly and to drop his voice at the end of the sentence. The 'Trinculo' of Mr. Ellis had good points, more especially his easy bearing on the stage and his command of facial expression. 'Stephano' (Mr. Playfair) was distinctly good; it is, we admit, a not difficult low comedy part, assisted by a preternaturally red nose and a capacious bottle, but for

all that we fancy Shakespeare would not have been dissatisfied with the drunken butler. The 'Gonzalo' of Mr. Croker-King had promise in it."

No little part of our success was due to Mr. F. C. Woods's music; it was always tuneful and effective, and was well rendered by a very capable orchestra. So much did his charming *Miranda motif* take possession of the hearers, that on the occasion of his toast being given at the supper after the last performance, all present hummed the tune instead of the stereotyped "musical honours."

The scenery was good throughout, and the lime-light effects, which were more elaborate than is usual at such performances, added much to the picturesqueness of several scenes. The tableau lights were controlled from the back of the auditorium, and added much to the mystery of the effects. The first scene was a large circular cloth which, by a transparent arrangement, at "Prospero's" words, "Lie there, my art," changed from a dark, stormy sky to a brilliant summer sea. "Ariel" sang her song from a twig which swayed on the top of a high cliff overhanging the sea. Mr. Oppenheimer's quaintly designed programme is here reproduced.

"THE TEMPEST."

January 31, 1894.

ALONSO	T. A. Vans Best.
SEBASTIAN	G. E. Souper.
PROSPERO	J. E. Talbot.

ANTONIO	F. N. Mugliston.
FERDINAND	C. A. Peacock.
GONZALO	C. H. Croker-King.
ADRIAN	A. D. Erskine.
FRANCISCO	E. R. Bramwell.
A LORD	R. A. Johnson.
CALIBAN	A. Bonnin.
TRINCULO	A. Ellis.
STEPHANO	N. R. Playfair.
BOATSWAIN	A. N. Tayler.
MASTER OF THE SHIP	R. P. Lewis.
MIRANDA	Miss Una Cockerell.
ARIEL	Miss Una Bruckshaw.
JUNO	Miss Farmer.
IRIS	Miss D. Baird.

Regarding the name of Miss Dorothea Baird in the cast, *Trilby* had not then been published, so we knew nothing about the original of Du Maurier's heroine. But her beauty and freshness won all hearts, and there was one in that audience—he no longer an undergraduate—who may then and there have resolved to win hers. This was Harry Irving, a student at the Middle Temple, who came up to witness the performance. The lady is now, and has long been, Mrs. H. B. Irving.

In 1895 the whirligig of Time once more brought round *The Merchant of Venice*. The undergraduates who had taken part in the 1883 performance were now, many of them, "potent, grave and reverend seniors," who came up to Oxford to watch the efforts of the new generation of exponents, who a dozen years before were just out of pinafores, with curiosity and interest.



PERCY LEE AND J. HARRISON.
1899.



F. STEVENS (LASCELLES) AND H. C. B. UNDERDOWN.
[To face p. 196.]



The representation of the play was given under trying conditions, colds and influenza laying low some of the members of the cast at the last moment. But Harold Snagge, the secretary, was indefatigable in the work he put into it. Indeed, I was so much tied by my political work as a private secretary about this time that, with the exception of my planning of the stage business and grouping of characters and the scene plot, most of the work of production fell on his shoulders and those of his brother, a promising young artist, whose premature death is greatly to be deplored.

“THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.”

1895.

SHYLOCK	<i>Bonnin, Trinity College.</i>
ANTONIO	<i>Philip Carr, Brasenose College.</i>
BASSANIO	<i>Croker - King, Lincoln College.</i>
GRATIANO	<i>A. Ellis, Trinity College.</i>
TUBAL	<i>A. N. Tayler, University College.</i>
OLD GOBBO	<i>P. Lee.</i>
THE DUKE	<i>P. A. Rubens, University College.</i>
PRINCE OF MOROCCO	<i>C. B. Fry, Wadham College.</i>
SOLANIO	<i>A. D. Erskine.</i>
SALARINO	<i>E. R. Bramwell.</i>
LORENZO	<i>G. E. Souper, Keble College.</i>
PORTIA	<i>Bass.</i>
NERISSA	<i>Terry-Lewis.</i>
JESSICA	<i>Perceval-Clark.</i>

Incidental music by Rev. F. W. Bussell, of Brasenose.

Bonnin, of Trinity, gave a conscientious rendering of the part of "Shylock." Philip Carr (Brasenose) played "Antonio" gravely and naturally; A. Ellis played "Gratiano" with admirable spirit, and gave a decidedly fine piece of acting. C. B. Fry (the world-famous cricketer) was excellent as the "Prince of Morocco." Miss Bass was perfectly natural as "Portia," and received great applause for her rendering of the trial scene. Miss Terry-Lewis and Miss Perceval-Clark were both excellent in their respective parts.

The songs introduced into the play were entrusted to Pemberton.

In connection with his participation in the foregoing, Fry writes me, "I was persuaded to impersonate the 'Prince of Morocco' in *The Merchant of Venice*.

"I do not think I was much of an actor, but I believe I distinguished myself by the style and emphasis with which I remarked—

"'Oh, Hell—what have we here?'

"On the second night a considerable company of my friends turned up to hear me do this, and they got ready to cheer and laugh, but I was aware of their intentions, and began the speech without the 'Oh, Hell,' and scored."

Now I have no wish to dispute Mr. Fry's version of this incident, but I am bound to add that other

authorities present on the occasion distinctly aver that the famous "Oh, Hell," given with truly profane vigour, was a feature of every performance. But as to Fry's scoring, there is no doubt whatever; and, indeed, I may add that he has been "scoring" in one way or another ever since.

There is an amusing story told of an old lady not unremotely connected with the letting of lodgings who went to the New Theatre to witness the play, and although sitting in the front row of the pit, had some difficulty in seeing what was going on on the stage. A very courteous undergraduate beside her took pity on her plight and drew his binoculars from his pocket. "Won't you have a glass, ma'am?" he said. The old lady seemed both surprised and pleased. Glancing to right and left, she hastily slipped a cotton pocket-handkerchief over the instrument and placed it in her lap. A moment later she raised it guardedly to her lips. A flush overspread her aged features and she turned to the young man, "Oo are you gettin' at?" she murmured reproachfully. "W'y, there ain't a blessed drop in it!"

And speaking of *The Merchant of Venice*, I remember once hearing of a Shakespearian company touring in Ireland. They reached Ennis, where there was a good theatre, and were told that the people were likely to turn out in large numbers as no show had been along for some time. So *The Merchant of Venice* was put on. The house was

empty. The next night they put on *Hamlet*, and there was a fair attendance. When they came to investigate the reason they found that the inhabitants thought the first-named was a local play, and they didn't much care for the Celtic revival. They thought it was "The Merchant of Ennis."

I cannot forbear in this place from mentioning an admirable little performance of *Alice in Wonderland*, which took place in June 1895, and was personally superintended by the author, Professor Dodgson (Lewis Carroll), a well-known Oxford don. The scenes were admirably arranged by Mrs. Dowson (Miss Rosina Filippi), who was also responsible for the excellence of the stage-management. Miss Rachel Daniel made a charmingly winsome "Alice." Mr. Playfair and Mr. Rubens, as "Tweedledum" and "Tweedledee," and subsequently as the "Mad Hatter" and the "March Hare," were very droll, and Viscount Suirdale, as the "White King" and "Humpty-Dumpty," and Mr. Tayler as the "Caterpillar," both played cleverly. Miss Ruth Daniel gave quite a brilliant little performance as the "Dormouse." Mrs. Huntingford and Miss Fletcher were admirable as the "Red and White Queens," and Miss Rowdon made a good "Duchess." Miss Playfair displayed genuine humour as the "Cook." There was, indeed, a quaint charm about the performance which exactly suited the dainty fantasy of the story.

During the rehearsals in Worcester College



A. ECKERSLEY,
1899.



E. R. MACKINTOSH AND E. K. TALEOT,
1899.



LAYTON,
1900.



B. FORSYTH,
1902.

[To face p. 200.]



Gardens, Dodgson occasionally used to look in, but being a shy man he never allowed himself to come forward; all we ever saw of him was a sly face peeping out from behind a tree and smiling.

A word here might be given to the pastoral plays, which were then, and I believe still are, quite a feature of the O.U.D.S. performers during the Long Vacation. I think the first was the one which I started in 1889 at Copped Hall in Hertfordshire, when H. B. Irving, Holman Clark, Coningsby Disraeli, Temple Franks, and others distinguished themselves; and in the summer of this year we had quite a remarkable week, playing *Romeo and Juliet* and *Love's Labour's Lost* both at the Hon. Ralph Nevile's at Birling in Kent, and in the gardens of Cranmer's old palace at Maidstone, as well as the performance of *Strafford* at Oxford before alluded to, all in the same week. At Charterhouse and other places at this present date the O.U.D.S. pastorals, organized by Tennent, Gilliat, Greenly, are events which are highly appreciated.

On February 12, 1896, a very successful performance was given before a large audience of

"THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR."

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF	.	.	.	J. Hearn, Brasenose College.
FENTON	.	.	.	A. Waterfield, New College.
SHALLOW	.	.	.	P. A. Rubens, University College.

202 THE OXFORD AMATEURS

SLENDER	C. Croker-King, Lincoln College.
FORD	F. Stevens, Keble College.
PAGE	W. Law, Oriel College.
SIR HUGH EVANS	P. Lee, Oriel College.
DOCTOR CAIUS	W. M. Woodward, Keble College.
HOST OF THE GARTER INN	Viscount Suirdale, New College.
BARDOLPH	E. A. Belcher, Lincoln College.
PISTOL	L. E. Bernan, Balliol College.
NYM	H. C. Hamilton, Merton College.
ROBIN	E. Rosedale, Brasenose College.
SIMPLE	L. R. Oldershaw, Christ Church.
RUGBY	C. Pepys, Oriel College.
MISTRESS FORD	Miss Leila Carford.
MISTRESS PAGE	Mrs. H. W. Ruttly.
ANNE PAGE	Miss Lillian Braithwaite.
MISTRESS QUICKLY	Mrs. Copleston.

It is difficult for me to make any comparison between 1888 and 1896 in the performance of this play. "All the conditions of success were present," writes my Critical Don; "the orchestra was good and ably conducted, the music tuneful and carefully selected, the play very well mounted, and the artist may congratulate himself on the scenes he had painted; the dresses were, needless to say, accurate and effective, and, what counts for much more, the acting throughout—in major and minor parts alike—was up to a remarkably high level. Moreover, even

on the first night, the scenes were shifted with commendable speed, and there were no long waits between the acts.

“To speak of the ladies first, the ‘Merry Wives’ were very bright and natural, and throughout entered into the spirit of the play; the ‘Mrs. Page’ of Mrs. Ruddy was a very capable and consistent piece of acting, while Miss Carford gave an admirable spice of coquetry and gaiety to her ‘Mrs. Ford.’ Mrs. Copleston, no stranger to Oxford audiences, did well as ‘Mistress Quickly’; Miss Braithwaite as ‘Sweet Anne Page’ more than justified the epithet by the charm of her appearance and the modest dignity of her acting in the scene with ‘Slender.’ Among the male characters, the chief part and chief honours fell to Mr. Hearn’s ‘Falstaff.’ He is always at home on the stage, and speaks his words with admirable distinctness. The part of ‘Falstaff’ is by no means an easy one, and a young actor is therefore liable to err on the side of exaggeration; in this respect Hearn showed great self-restraint. Moreover, he had well grasped the shifting moods of the knight, and suggested to our minds a thing which almost all Shakespearian students must feel as true—a certain element of pathos in his fallen fortunes. ‘Falstaff’s’ chuckle of self-satisfaction at the thought of his future conquests was excellent, while in the ‘buck-basket’ scene, in which there is always a danger of comedy degenerating into mere farce, Mr. Hearn kept himself very creditably within bounds.

Altogether, the part was well conceived and well acted."

Croker-King (whose nascent resemblance to Sir Henry Irving was insisted on by his friends) might have been better suited with a part other than that of "Slender"; his interpretation of the character was clever and well sustained. His knowledge of stage-craft stood him in good stead, and like "Falstaff" he was always at his ease and knew where he was.

Rubens, in the opinion of my captious friend, was painstaking as "Shallow," but gave a rather colourless reading of the part, and his tendency to speak into his beard rendered his words somewhat inaudible. As "Ford," Stevens did well and gave considerable promise; in one or two scenes he was distinctly good; his faults were perhaps a tendency to Irvingesque tragedy and a habit of dropping his voice at the end of the sentence. Law did his best with the not very prominent character of "Page." That most excellent of amateur players, Percy Lee as "Sir Hugh Evans" was amusing and made several good points, though his accent was hardly Welsh. Woodward as "Doctor Caius" was good, while Viscount Suirdale made a well-liking and hospitable host. Of the three followers of "Falstaff," we thought "Bardolph" the best, and his get-up was admirable; "Pistol" and "Nym" acted with plenty of go. Waterfield looked well as the



H. M. TENNENT AND MISS GARDINER.

1899



H. M. TENNENT, E. R. MACKINTOSH AND MISS BRAITHWAITE.

1900.

[*To face p. 204.*]



lover "Fenton." "Simple" and "Rugby" had small parts, but gave evidence of a capacity for something greater.

The scenery painted by Mr. Jones was good in many respects; the opening scene was especially liked, while the last (Windsor Park), with the quaint and effective dance of the fairies round the tree, formed a pretty scene.

This time the play was produced under the direction of Mr. Foss, of Ben Greet's Company, assisted by Philip Carr, of Brasenose. This began the former's long connection with the O.U.D.S. The costumes were lent by Mr. Beerbohm Tree, while the music was selected from Sir Arthur Sullivan, Mr. Woods and Mr. Bussell, as written for the previous performances.

When Philip Comyns Carr (he has since dropped the Comyns) became secretary, the Society had certainly got hold of an acting enthusiast. As the son of a dramatist, and having been nurtured in the atmosphere of the stage, as well as knowing numerous poets and painters of distinction and possessing abundant physical energy, he was bound to adopt a forward policy.

Of another active member of this period, Paul Rubens, W. J. Morris writes, "The mention of 'Musical Comedy' fittingly recalls that mercurial and mirth-moving genius, Paul Rubens. He certainly never gave any indication of being appreciably

moved in a Shakespearian direction, albeit he played the part which I have so often represented with Bouchier, of the 'Duke' in *The Merchant of Venice*. But during the whole of his Oxford career of uninterrupted cheeriness (the only 'waits' therein being those of the 'Schools'), he may be said to have literally bubbled over with musical enthusiasm. He would sit down at any moment to improvise at the piano with extraordinary rapidity, so that he was, as a consequence, eagerly secured for every smoking concert in the 'Varsity. Indeed, I never gave one of my sketches at these genial functions without finding the music in the skilful hands of my irrepressible friend.

"Paul Rubens's family wished him to eat his dinners at the Inner Temple, and ultimately to get 'called,' doubtless picturing him through their fervid imagination as facing a jury in the years to come with all the triumphant confidence of a Rufus Isaacs!

"Wisely, however, as events have proved, Paul said 'Good-bye to the Bar and its moaning,' electing to face the music and the verdict of the Stage.

"Whenever I hear his haunting melodies and lilt-ing refrains, I am reminded of 'the merriest man, within the limits of becoming mirth, I ever met withal.' Indeed, even now I cannot look at his one-time rooms at University without realizing that acutely pathetic sense of loss which Tennyson im-

plies in that one line—so full of meaning to us here
—‘Another name was on the door.’”

It was this pleasant genius that one Oxford bard
causes to sing—

“I was strolling one day down the Corn, you know,
Looking languid and devil-may-care
(For an actor-musician should always be seen
With a listless and nonchalant air);
And as I passed a certain street,
Said a New College voice to me :
‘Oh come to the O.U.D.S., old man,
And appear as *The Duke* for me :
To the poor old O.U.D.S., old man,
And appear as the *Duke of V.*’”

CHAPTER XII

“O, wherefore art *thou*, Romeo? (she said)
And not some shapely Cowley trooper?
Has genial F——s gone off his head
That you should not be made a super?
Construe the Bard as per your lights
But do *not* venture into tights!”

Oriel Ditties, 1866.

I HAVE always been amused by Sir Frank Burmand's account of his interview with the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge to demand his permission for a play “not Latin—not Shakespeare,” but by—Maddison Morton.

Something of the same sort is said to have occurred in 1897—the year of the Diamond Jubilee—when the Oxford amateurs, far less audacious, desired to produce the *Comus* of Milton.

“Well, sir, and which of the plays of Shakespeare is your Society to produce this year?” was the breezy opening.

“If you please, sir, we thought of giving Shakespeare a rest this year.”

“Ah, really? Euripides, Æschylus, Aristophanes, eh? Which?”

“Aristophanes, sir.”



P. LEE AND MISS DANIEL.

1900.



P. LEE AND LAYTON.

1900.

[To face p. 505.]

“Ah, Aristophanes. *The Knights*? Well, the experiment is worth making. How can I help you?”

“Why, sir, the fact is, we want your permission to produce the *Comus*.”

“Comus? Comus? What Comus? Not Milton’s *Comus*? Not the *Masque of Comus*?”

“If you please, sir.”

“But you said just now you are going to produce a play of Aristophanes! Am I or am I not correct? I hope, sir, you are not trifling with me, eh?”

“Oh, no, sir. But the—er—fact is, we thought of producing *two* plays this term.”

“TWO PLAYS! This is monstrous! This is against all precedent! And may I ask, sir, what has impelled you to contemplate the production of two plays instead of the single one that has hitherto sufficed?”

“Why, sir, the fact is—I mean you cannot be unaware that her Most Gracious Majesty——”

“Yes, yes.”

“I say, her Most Gracious Majesty—er—God bless her.”

Here there was a vigorous interruption.

“Come, come, Mr. Carter, or whatever your name is, you surely haven’t the hardihood to come here and tell me that the Queen is mixed up in this deplorable business! You surely do not mean to

insinuate that her Majesty has conveyed any message concerning——”

“Oh, no, sir. I was only going to say that this being the year of the Queen’s Jubilee we thought that—er—two plays would signalate—I mean, celebrate—so auspicious——”

“Fiddlesticks, sir! However, I have nothing to do with the question of the number of plays you produce. You come to me for my permission to enact *Comus*. Milton is, of course, a great name in literature, if his views, as a man, were decidedly Radical. But I must remind you that when, in my distinguished predecessor’s time you were given the freedom to indulge in these histrionic exhibitions, your English repertory was strictly limited to the plays of Shakespeare.¹ *Comus* is not, *on your own admission*, one of those plays. Good-afternoon.”

Of course, after that there was to be no rest for the Bard of Avon, and the O.U.D.S. had to hold a solemn conclave and decide which of his immortal productions they would next attack. [The choice fell upon *The Taming of the Shrew*.

¹ “This limitation—to Shakespeare and Greek plays”—observes W. J. Morris, “was rigidly insisted on by Vice-Chancellor Jowett. At first to not a few beside myself this edict seemed severely narrow, but I have for many years past realized its wisdom and efficacy. I *did* venture to ask the Master of Balliol for an occasional exception to his rule, in the shape of one of Sheridan’s plays, but he replied, ‘There is only *one* Classic—Shakespeare—keep to a Classic.’”

“Philip Carr’s bold policy,” writes Morris, “has never since been adopted. He produced two plays in the same year, certain evenings being devoted to the *Shrew*, and the remaining ones to the vagaries of *The Knights* of Aristophanes.

“The experiment, however, was hardly a success, though the acting of Woodward, Frank Stevens and Lord Donoughmore stood out prominently with that of Carr himself.”

Five years had elapsed since the last Greek play had been seen on the boards of the New Theatre. As the time drew near many of those who wished the O.U.D.S. well grew anxious. Their expectations were mingled with some apprehension. For though they had got Dr. F. W. Bussell of Brasenose to write the music and had good scenery and capital acting talent, yet it was rumoured—

“The accents of the Greek
Left something, dear, to seek.”

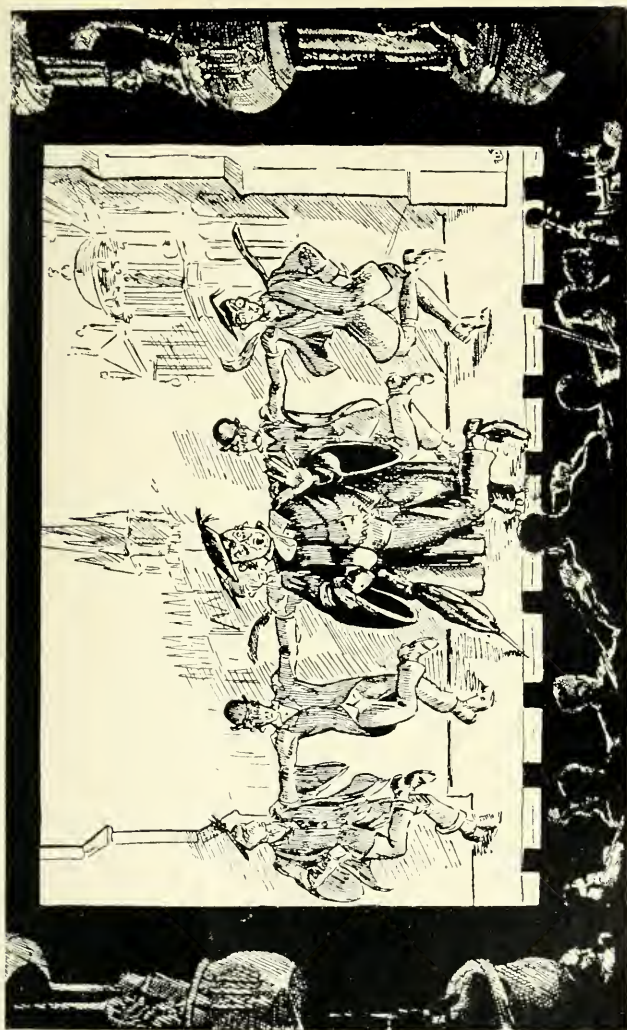
And in truth, when the time came, when they could not deny the merit of the production, the dons attacked it on that score. To be sure *The Knights* is not particularly adapted for modern performance, being compounded of a ha’porth of action to an intolerable deal of politics. But Mr. Bailey, who prepared the acting edition, made the most of it.

Taking it altogether the production of *The Knights* was a bold experiment. The scenery,

painted by Mr. E. R. Jones, was most vivid. Lady Norah Hely-Hutchinson achieved a tasteful design for the programme, and Mr. A. Waterfield's Hellenic fancy was given full play in the book of the words.

"We must, however," wrote a don in the *Oxford Magazine*, "enter one protest. If the O.U.D.S. desire to present a Greek play, might they not choose their performers with some regard to their knowledge of the language? They might reply that the goodness of their acting was the primary consideration. Then why do they not select actors for their Greek play who can speak Greek, even if they cannot understand it? In this case they have not done so.

"The pronunciation of the Greek was often intolerable. We pass over such a flagrant case as 'Cleon's' *κόβαλος*, though it was a mistake which no one with any ear for rhythm ought to have made, and his mangling of the celebrated parody of the *Alcestis*. But we took the trouble to compile some statistics of the many mistakes which happened to strike our ears. They amounted in all to 131, an average of one mistake in about every five lines all through. 'Cleon' was the greatest offender and 'Demus' the least. We venture to think that this should not happen in a production by a University society." In spite of this castigation, the play went with considerable vigour, and the most was made of the incidents.



From "The Varsity."

AMATEUR THEATRICALS AT THE SHELDONIAN THEATRE.

[To face p. 212.]



The performance of H. M. M. Woodward (Keble) as the "Sausage-seller" was far the best feature of the production. His first entry was perfect, his expression most comical, and he never over-acted—in striking contrast to some of the other performers. Particularly admired was his narration of the scene in the *βουλή* at the beginning of Act II. "Demus" (L. R. F. Oldershaw, Ch. Ch.) spoke his lines very clearly, and on the whole was satisfactory. Paul Rubens (University) played "Cleon" with great spirit. "Mr. Rubens' 'Cleon,'" I find written in the chronicle of my Critical Don, "would not have had a chance against the placid 'Sausage-seller' at all. His shouting and his monotonous gesture could not be expected to prevail. His immediate collapse at the first attack of "the Knights" was quite wrong. If he had blacked the leader's eye and kicked a few of the hobby-horses off their two legs, he would have been acting in character. As it was, his contest with 'Agoracritus' during the rest of the play lost its point."

As to the other characters, "Nicias" (A. N. Tayler, University) and "Demosthenes" (F. Stevens Lascelles, Keble) brought out amusingly the real nature of the two parts. The lines allotted to each are exactly suited to what we know of them from other sources, although some doubt was expressed whether the real "Demosthenes," for instance, would

have been intoxicated after two very small cups. Was Highland whisky known to the ancients?

The chorus sang and acted well, though too boisterous at the beginning and very imperfect in their words, and their leader (Lord Suirdale, New College) was creditable. The make-up of the chorus was good, and the hobby-horses made a deep impression on the equine authorities present.

Mr. Bussell's music was largely composed of an ingenious *pasticcio* of popular songs. Many of these came in very happily; for instance, "The Lost Chord," "The Vicar of Bray" and "Rule, Britannia" in the Parabasis.

Here is the cast, for use, I trust, by the future biographers of the great men who took part therein—

"THE KNIGHTS" OF ARISTOPHANES.

February 24, 1897.

DEMUS (an old man, the type of the Athenian people)	} L. R. F. Oldershaw, Christ Church.
NICIAS	} (his slaves) { A. N. Tayler, University College.
DEMOSTHENES . . . . .		} F. Stevens, Keble Col- lege.
CLEON (his latest and favourite slave)	} P. A. Rubens, Univer- sity College.
THE SAUSAGE-SELLER (Cleon's rival, whose real name is Agora- critus)	} H. M. M. Woodward, Keble College.

CHORUS OF KNIGHTS.

CORYPHÆUS *Viscount Suirdale, New College.*

E. R. Bourne (Christ Church), H. R. Bramley (St. John's),
 M. B. Clissold (Oriel), R. H. Couchman (Worcester),
 R. M. Curwen (Wadham), C. Edgington (Magdalen),
 H. L. Etherington-Smith (University), L. W. Green-
 street (Worcester), H. D. Hughes (Magdalen), M. W.
 Hughes (Hertford), A. W. Lawrence (New College),
 R. M. Rees (Magdalen), J. J. Turner (Magdalen), H. B.
 Underdown (Balliol).

The Taming of the Shrew was a very good performance. The play provides two splendid parts and a number of minor parts of unusual importance. The scenery was appropriate, and the dresses, lent by Sir Henry Irving, effective. The distribution of the parts seems to have been made, as it was not in *The Knight*, with full regard to capabilities.

Philip Carr produced the play, assisted by Mainwaring, and acted the part of "Petruccio" with fiery impetuosity and assertion of will. "His make-up," says my C. D., "was not perhaps quite in keeping with the character. He should not have appeared in such shabby clothes to start with, and his wedding-garment was disfigured by a quantity of straw, which made him look like a masculine Ophelia or Iolanthe. But he carried himself throughout with all the requisite force, and was never at a loss. Any traces of over-acting which he displayed are excused by the nature of the part and of the play.

"Miss Maria Morris as the 'Shrew' was even

more praiseworthy. We hope we shall be excused for saying that she looked the part to the life, if we hasten to add that at the end of the play she acted the obedient wife to perfection. Her by-play throughout was forcible, though not overdone, and her fits of violence were well contrived. Most beautiful of all was her delivery of her final speech of submission, though, as mere males, we find the sentiments of it intolerable, and can only rank it with Schumann's *Frauenliebe*.

“The scenes between the pair were played with great force. Miss Mabel Terry Lewis has improved immensely since we last saw her here, and gave a charming rendering of ‘Bianca.’ Her scene with ‘Lucentio’ (F. Stevens, Keble), and ‘Hortensio’ (P. Lee, Oriel) was particularly successful. The two last characters bore themselves with grace throughout, and were in notable contrast to most O.U.D.S. lovers. ‘Tranio’ (H. C. B. Underdown, Balliol) did not make enough of the servant turned master; he was too well-behaved in both capacities to be effective. A. N. Tayler (University), L. R. F. Oldershaw (Ch. Ch.) and Æ. R. Mackintosh (Oriel) played the low-comedy parts as ‘Gremio,’ ‘Biondello’ and ‘Grumio’ very well. ‘Gremio’ made himself more impossible as a suitor than he need have, and so rendered the compact between himself and the attractive ‘Hortensio’ ridiculous. ‘Grumio’ was played quite as a Shakespearian clown (with apple) should be. ‘Baptista’ (W. G.



LOORD TIVERTON AS LAUNCE.
1902.



LOORD TIVERTON AND R. K. COX.



R. K. COX.

1902. [*Vo face p. 216.*]



Wickham, University) was too mild; in fact he was almost pathetic; but he spoke out well, and we rather liked him. In the induction, Lord Suirdale, New College [now Lord Donoughmore], was quite funny as 'Sly,' though he forgot that, when he woke, he was supposed to be no longer intoxicated. The 'Huntsmen' carried him off with as much grace as the obvious difficulty of the task allowed."

The music, with the exception of a pleasing minuet in Act V, was again by Mr. Bussell. It consisted of the overture to *The Knights*, and the greater part of the music to *The Merchant of Venice*.

"THE TAMING OF THE SHREW."

1897.

Induction—

A LORD	B. S. Phillips, Keble College.
CHRISTOPHER SLY (a Tinker)	Viscount Suirdale, New College.
HOST	G. J. Sandys, Pembroke College.
PAGE	B. T. Holland, Christ Church College.
HUNTSMAN	E. Penton, New College.

The Play—

BAPTISTA	W. G. Wickham, University College.
VINCENTIO	C. H. Hoare, New College.
LUCENTIO	F. Stevens, Keble College.
PETRUCHIO	P. Comyns Carr, Non-Coll.

GREMIO	.	.	.	.	.	<i>A. N. Tayler, University College.</i>
HORTENSIO	.	.	.	.	.	<i>P. Lee, Oriel College.</i>
TRANIO	.	.	.	.	.	<i>H. C. B. Underdown, Balliol College.</i>
BIONDELLO	.	.	.	.	.	<i>L. R. F. Oldershaw, Christ Church College.</i>
GRUMIO	.	.	.	.	.	<i>Æ. R. Mackintosh, Oriel College.</i>
TAILOR	.	.	.	.	.	<i>J. H. Hastings, Magdalen College.</i>
KATHARINA	.	.	.	.	.	<i>Miss Marian Morris.</i>
BIANCA	.	.	.	.	.	<i>Miss Mabel Terry Lewis.</i>
WIDOW	.	.	.	.	.	<i>Miss Campbell.</i>

Once again were the dresses lent by Sir Henry Irving. The music was by Mr. Bussell, Brasenose, except the dance in Act V. The latter, by Mr. Rubens, University, was a very graceful performance and was encored.

“One of the most precious of my O.U.D.S. memories,” writes A. N. Tayler, “relates to the preparations for the performance of *The Taming of the Shrew* in 1897. I was then not only Chancellor of the Society’s Exchequer, but was entrusted by the confiding members with any of the odd jobs which the exigencies of the occasion demanded. One of these was to travel to London and pick out the costumes required for the production.

“Now, the late Sir Henry Irving, whose interest in Oxford amateurs was constantly shown, had kindly offered to lend us these dresses, and accordingly I duly presented myself at the stage-door of

the Lyceum Theatre. I was ushered into the presence of the great man, who was then made up to resemble a Napoleon of Titanic proportions.

“‘Oxford,’ I murmured.

“‘Eh, what?’ he exclaimed, staring at me absently. ‘What about Oxford?’

“For a moment I felt as if the whole honour and credit of the University, from the Chancellor downwards, rested on my humble shoulders, instead of an insignificant coterie of undergraduates with histrionic propensities. But I pulled myself together and reminded Napoleon of his promise, and was duly authorized by him to take what I wanted from the Lyceum wardrobe. I got these finally packed into four baskets, and then the question arose, How was I to get them to Paddington? It was suggested that I should take them in a four-wheeler, but when they were piled up on the pavement my pride shrunk from sitting amongst what was obviously four baskets of dirty linen. Besides, when they were got into the cab, there was no room for me. A crowd—the inevitable crowd—collected and stung me with facetious remarks. The suggestion that I was paying my annual visit to my washerwoman was accepted, of course, as an explanation of my presence there in the heart of the London traffic with four ponderous baskets. It was proposed that the difficulty might be solved if I were to get inside one of the baskets. I indignantly repudiated the idea

‘Put the cabby in, then, and drive yourself!’ fared no better. Another waggish individual, inspired by Dan Leno, suggested my engaging two cabs, putting two baskets in each and ‘running between.’ The result was I did engage two cabs, seating myself in one, the baskets in the other, and at length took the train to Oxford with my precious cargo. But I was not going to run the gauntlet of Oxford in the day-time. As I deposited the baskets in the cloak-room and the attendant demanded sixpence apiece for them, I could not deny myself the pleasure of explaining their contents. I feared that he, too, might fancy they were dirty linen. I therefore mentioned, with a fine, careless dignity, that they held theatrical costumes. His face altered. ‘Oh, theatrical?’ he said. ‘Why didn’t you say so? That’ll be fourpence the lot.’ With that he handed me eight coppers, while I, with pride humbled and with a mien far from ‘theatrical, stole out of the station and got back to my college.

“I have only to add that I did not personally convoy those four disreputable baskets either to the theatre or back to London.”

On February 16, 1898, *Romeo and Juliet* was presented to a numerous and appreciative audience. Its success, however, was somewhat marred by various ludicrous hitches in the raising and lowering of the scenes.

Nevertheless this, the fourteenth annual produc-



A. P. BOISSIER AND A. L. FORBES.

1903.



R. E. PEMBERTON AND MISS MASON.

[To face p. 220.



tion of the Society, was particularly meritorious for its leading parts.

“Romeo” was played by Mr. Stevens (Keble) with considerable pathos and melancholy, and Miss Lilian Collen, as “Juliet,” displayed an intensity and refinement corresponding and harmonizing with her lover’s moods. The balcony scene was particularly effective. Mr. Woodward, as “Mercutio,” was good, and had an excellent foil in Mr. Berman (“Tybalt”). “Friar Lawrence” and “Friar John” were somewhat too lusty athletes for their surroundings. The “Nurse” of Miss Fletcher was an excellent bit of acting.

A touch of novelty was given to the play by the addition of the prologue to both Acts I and II. The stage-management of Mr. Roland Carse was excellent; a prominent feature being the life and realism infused into the stage crowds by a large number of undergraduate supers.

As a sample of the kind of hypercriticism to which the actors of the O.U.D.S. are locally subjected, I offer the following—

“‘Romeo’ knows where he is on the stage (and therein is superior to most amateur actors), and can throw considerable passion into his love-making, and (herein superior to many professional actors of the part) has both youth and good looks on his side. He has, however, one or two mannerisms, both of pronunciation and gesture, which are at times a little

trying, and walks across the stage as if he suffered from weak knees. His success in the duels must have been a surprise to himself, as, until the *coup de grâce*, he seemed mainly intent on spiking his adversary's right toes.

“ ‘Lady Capulet’ was rather too youthfully made up to suggest that she was the mother of ‘Juliet.’ She wept cheerfully ! ”

Of Woodward's death the critic remarked, “ Nothing in life became him like the leaving of it. ‘Tybalt’ played with rather forced vehemence, and his make-up—especially the moustache—suggested the melodrama. ‘Friar Lawrence’ improved somewhat towards the later performances, but though occasionally sympathetic his actions and tone of voice were painfully monotonous. ‘Capulet’ lost his temper with vehemence and success. ‘Ben-volio’ was weak, and ‘Paris’ stiff.”

The scenery was distinctly effective, and, though there were hitches at the earlier performances, was well worked. The “ Street in Verona,” “ Capulet's garden ” and the “ Balcony ” scene (with its ingenious view of the distance) were all excellent. Considerable care had obviously been taken with the dresses, although “ Juliet ” was rather too magnificently arrayed for her years. Oldershaw must have worked most indefatigably over the production, as it was only in the last week that he had the assistance of Mr. Roland Carse as stage-manager.



SIMPSON AND POWELL.



LORD SUIRDALE
(EARL OF DONOUGHMORE).



F. STEVENS.

[To face p. 222.]



There was a most realistic fight in the first act. The dust rose in truly Homeric manner, and a vigorous wrestling-bout followed in the most approved "catch-as-you-can" style.

"A special meed of praise," remarks my Critical Don, "should be given to the ladies and gentlemen who so kindly gave their services in the orchestra. They came for the most part at great personal inconvenience. The space allotted to them, which for financial reasons could not this year be enlarged, rendered their position very uncomfortable. The various items of the music had also, owing to the length of the play, to be much curtailed, and in great measure spoiled. So far as I have seen, no mention of these facts has appeared in any of the papers which have noticed the performance."

"ROMEO AND JULIET."

February 17, 1898.

CHORUS	<i>W. G. Wickham, University College.</i>
ESCALIUS	<i>A. S. Ward, Balliol College.</i>
PARIS	<i>W. G. Chancellor, Oriel College.</i>
MONTAGUE	<i>J. C. Radcliffe, Exeter College.</i>
CAPULET	<i>E. C. Vigors, Christ Church College.</i>
UNCLE TO CAPULET	<i>A. Eckersley, St. John's College.</i>

ROMEO	<i>Frank Stevens, Keble College.</i>
MERCUTIO	<i>H. M. M. Woodward, Keble College.</i>
BENVOLIO	<i>B. Limpus, Keble College.</i>
TYBALT	<i>L. E. Berman, Balliol College.</i>
FRIAR LAWRENCE	<i>J. H. Hastings, Magdalen College.</i>
FRIAR JOHN	<i>M. B. Clissold, Oriol College.</i>
BALTHASAR	<i>F. T. Sandys, Pembroke College.</i>
SAMPSON	<i>R. T. Lee, Oriol College.</i>
GREGORY	<i>E. K. Talbot, Christ Church College.</i>
FIRST SERVANT	<i>C. O. Jubb, Oriol College.</i>
PETER	<i>Æ. R. Mackintosh, Oriol College.</i>
ABRAHAM	<i>C. O. P. Gibson, Christ Church College.</i>
AN APOTHECARY	<i>M. N. Gwyer, Christ Church College.</i>
PAGE TO PARIS	<i>C. S. Ascherson, Merton College.</i>
FIRST CITIZEN	<i>C. P. Nickalls, New College.</i>
FIRST WATCH	<i>D. O. Malcolm, New College.</i>
SECOND WATCH	<i>A. J. Hedgeland, New College.</i>
THIRD WATCH	<i>N. Shelley, Keble College.</i>
LADY MONTAGUE	<i>Miss M. Macdonald.</i>
LADY CAPULET	<i>Miss Blanche Daly Cocking.</i>
JULIET	<i>Miss Lilian Collen.</i>
NURSE	<i>Miss Margaret Fletcher.</i>



E. KENWORTHY-BROWNE AND E. M. C. MACKENZIE.

1902.



M. N. HOGG AND A. P. BOISSIER.

1903.

[To face p. 224.]

A London critic, who paid a visit to *Romeo and Juliet*, wrote to the *Oxford Magazine*—

“The critic of the *Magazine* having written, I am sure, with due seriousness of the very admirable performance of *Romeo and Juliet*, as given by the O.U.D.S., the portrayal of its humours fitly falls to another hand. Nor do we feel that we are disparaging the representation as a whole when we say that its humours were, at moments, its most salient feature. In the first place we would note the tendency of the actors to express their emotions by excessive noise. They stamped their feet on the bare boards of the stage till the theatre rang again. ‘Romeo,’ with a courage that was beyond praise, flung himself upon the floor on his face with a crash that hardly consorted with the dignity of tragedy. The little accident with the scenery on the first night need not be referred to. It might happen to any one, as the saying goes. But the dance in the first act, which took place in a cloud of dust, raised by the busy feet of the dancers, was an error in stage-management. As the dance proceeded the dust grew denser, until it screened the performers from the house as by a curtain. On the humours of ‘Friar Lawrence,’ with his total inability to speak blank verse, and of poor ‘Paris,’ who never appeared to know what to do with his hands and feet, or why he was on the stage at all, it would be unkind to dwell, but the ‘Apothecary’ was surely an unneces-

sarily ludicrous figure, while the 'Prince,' both in Act I, when his portly presence strove vainly to quell the martial ardour of Montagues and Capulets, and in Act V, when he wrestled vainly with the complicated situation created by the restoration of the Shakespearian ending of the play, irresistibly provoked a spirit of levity in the audience. If it be the function of the theatre to evoke laughter and tears, the performance of *Romeo and Juliet* must be held to have ably fulfilled that function."

In *Romeo and Juliet* the scenery, as has been previously remarked, played some very erratic pranks, and instead of the moonlight Balcony scene, Romeo found himself in the foreground of "the blasted heath" (in *Macbeth*), it taking the stage-manager an unconscionable time to set things right.

"This stage-manager," says Morris, "had a peculiar and, I take it, fairly expressive habit, when anything went wrong at rehearsal—not by any means an uncommon occurrence—of taking off his hat, dashing it on the floor and vigorously stamping on it!

"How better, then, could we display appreciation than by presenting him—as we did on the last night (traditionally dedicated to genial 'ragging')—with a positive shop-load of 'bowlers' of every conceivable size, to the amazement of the audience, ignorant of the appropriateness of these timely gifts!"

One member of this cast was famous at Oxford

as a dramatic enthusiast. He declared his intention of becoming, not professional actor, as his people wouldn't stand that, but a promoter of theatrical enterprises. The story ran that he had once cornered a don and said to him—

“In my opinion, sir, the drama is too much of a luxury. Take *Hamlet*. You admit, I suppose, that *Hamlet* is the greatest play ever written?”

“Yes,” replied the don, “I dare say it is.”

“Very well. When I have taken my degree I propose to place *Hamlet* within reach of the masses of England. ‘*Hamlet* for the million,’ is my motto. With a proper capital we could bring *Hamlet* to the door of the very poorest. Here is a population of forty millions—how many have ever seen *Hamlet*? Half a million—not more. Of these, each has perhaps seen it twice. Twice! Shakespeare’s masterpiece—twice! I propose that they should see it at least once a week, and not half a million, but ten millions—or say eight—of theatre-goers. There you have it, five hundred theatres each holding two thousand people, five hundred ‘*Hamlets*,’ five hundred ‘*Ophelias*,’ five hundred ‘*Pol——*’”

But the don had fled. The vision was too much for him, and he became thereafter an uncompromising opponent of the drama at Oxford. It is interesting to learn that this enthusiast for the drama is now the quiet, steady-going vicar of a parish in Yorkshire.

CHAPTER XIII

“A Christ Church man awoke his friend,
Asleeping in the Bodleian,
Why waste your time on musty lore
O up and be a godly 'un!
Dost know that days are flying? Three
At least have flitted by since we
Founded a new society?”

Oriel Ditties.

AT the end of the Michaelmas Term a scout bore a message to his master—something he had heard on the “’ighest authority,” that Mr. Woodward of Keble, “’im as made such a ’it, sir, as ‘Mercutio’ at the theatre last spring, is going to be plucked.” The rumour created much consternation amongst Woodward’s friends, and there was much industry shown in sifting it carefully to the bottom, with the result that it was indubitably proved that a slight orthoepic error had been committed and that Woodward was neither going to be “plucked” nor “ploughed,” but that in the forthcoming production of the O.U.D.S., the *Midsummer Night’s Dream* of the “divine Williams,” he was going to be “Puck”—quite a different thing.

On February 8, 1899, the curtain went up on what proved to be a most creditable production,



J. T. PHILLIPS. M. N. HOGG.
(Queen's.) (I'all.)
1903.



C. WERE. B. FORSYTH.
(Ch. Ch.) (Ch. Ch.)
1903.



R. G. WAVELL.
1904.



J. GILLIAT.
1904. [To face p. 228.]



although the staging was perhaps not up to the former standard.

Woodward, as "Puck," departed from the usual custom of wearing wings, etc., and appeared as the shrewd, elfish Robin Goodfellow of our childhood's days. This idea was eminently satisfactory, and was particularly effective in the third act.

K. R. Barnes made a handsome and dignified "Oberon," but rather spoilt his performance by showing a lack of variety in his facial expression and gesture. Talbot gave an unequal display as "Bottom." He was very successful while wearing his ass's head, which, by the way, possessed a row of singularly convincing teeth. Miss Una Cockerell was a great success as "Titania."

W. Rooke-Ley took the part of "Theseus" at only a couple of days' notice, but succeeded in doing justice to his theme.

The full cast was as follows—

"A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM."

THESEUS	<i>W. Rooke-Ley.</i>
EGEUS	<i>E. C. Vigors.</i>
LYSANDER	<i>S. A. Gillon, New College.</i>
DEMETRIUS	<i>H. M. Tennent, Wadham College.</i>
PHILOSTRATE	<i>J. Beringer.</i>
QUINCE	<i>Æ. R. Mackintosh, Oriol College.</i>
SNUG	<i>G. L. Hoare.</i>
BOTTOM	<i>E. K. Talbot, Christ Church.</i>

FLUTE	R. T. Lee, <i>Oriel College.</i>
SNOUT	J. Harrison.
STARVELING	A. Eckersley.
HIPPOLYTA	Miss Gertrude Squire.
HERMIA	Miss Aimee De Bourgh.
HELENA	Mrs. R. R. Gardner.
OBERON	K. R. Barnes, <i>Christ Church.</i>
TITANIA	Miss Una Cockerell.
PUCK	H. M. M. Woodward, <i>Keble College.</i>
A FAIRY	Miss C. Rosedale.

Mendelssohn's music was given by a special London orchestra.

On February 21, 1900, the Society produced *Twelfth Night* at the New Theatre. The same play had been given fourteen years before, when Arthur Bouchier was "Olivia's fool," Holman Clark "Malvolio," and Miss Arnold "Maria." That cast then was a strong one for an amateur society.

"TWELFTH NIGHT."

ORSINO	D. W. E. Domville, <i>Queen's College.</i>
SEBASTIAN	B. L. de Fontaine, <i>Keble College.</i>
ANTONIO	E. C. Vigors, <i>Christ Church College.</i>
A SEA CAPTAIN	R. P. Marshall, <i>Keble College.</i>
VALENTINE	G. S. Hoare, <i>New College.</i>
CURIO	C. E. Manning, <i>New College.</i>

SIR TOBY BELCH	<i>C. A. G. Mackintosh, Merton College.</i>
SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK	<i>H. M. Tennent, Wad- ham College.</i>
MALVOLIO	<i>G. P. Langton, New College.</i>
FABIAN	<i>J. C. Radcliffe, Exeter College.</i>
FESTE	<i>R. T. Lee, Oriel College.</i>
A PRIEST	<i>S. P. T. Prideaux, Trinity College.</i>
FIRST OFFICER	<i>R. P. Marshall, Keble College.</i>
SECOND OFFICER	<i>R. H. Montgomery, Merton College.</i>
OLIVIA	<i>Miss Rachel Daniel.</i>
MARIA	<i>Miss Jessie Ferrar.</i>
VIOLA	<i>Miss Lilian Braithwaite.</i>

The first impulse of the spectator was to embark on a comparison of their efforts with those of the Society in 1886, when the New Theatre was opened with the same play.

“The play,” writes my Critical Don, “moved somewhat slowly at first, and, in spite of the efforts of ‘Sir Toby’ and ‘Sir Andrew,’ the entrance of ‘Olivia’ marks the point at which the action becomes continuous, and the events begin to arrest the attention. ‘Olivia’ was particularly good in this scene, and ‘Malvolio’ created a very favourable impression, while the end of the scene between ‘Viola’ and ‘Olivia’ showed both these ladies at their best.

“In Act II the scene between the two knights and ‘Feste’ was very bright and spirited, and ‘Maria’ rendered invaluable assistance, her mischievous vivacity being most capitally depicted. The famous garden scene was disappointing; ‘Malvolio’ again was in himself excellent, but the ‘asides’ of ‘Sir Toby’ and ‘Sir Andrew,’ especially the latter, were far too aggressive, for no one has ever suggested that ‘Malvolio’ was stone-deaf.

“The stage ‘aside’ has always an element of the ridiculous, but here ‘Malvolio’ paused abruptly, and went on as abruptly, as soon as the comments of the three watchers were well finished. These remarks are verbally of no importance, and they are only inserted in order to emphasize the absurdity of ‘Malvolio’s’ position—and it would be better for the latter not to stop talking at all, than to act as though he had concluded a compact of mutual toleration with the trio behind the ‘box-tree.’

“The ensuing scene, in Act III, where ‘Malvolio’ appears ‘cross-gartered and in yellow stockings,’ was very amusing, and the fight with which it concludes was admirably worked out, both ‘Viola’ and ‘Sir Andrew’ showing their valour in a most entertaining fashion.

“In Act IV ‘Feste’ has his great opportunity, and he proved very laughable, though possibly a less nasal voice would have suited ‘Sir Topaz’ better; in his last speech, at the end of Act V, he



HERMON HODGE.

1905.

[To face p. 232.]



C. H. ARSHOLD AND FABIAN.

1904.



W. T. CURWEN.

1904.



was quite excellent, and his mimicry of 'Malvolio' could hardly have been bettered.

"Miss Lilian Braithwaite, in the all-important part of 'Viola,' was very good indeed. Her exits were particularly well conceived, and the way in which she constantly suggested her true sex was admirable. Miss Jessie Ferrar ('Maria') was delightfully brisk and lively, and she was never at a loss with her effective gestures and appropriate by-play. Miss Daniel may be warmly congratulated on her *début* as 'Olivia.' In her opening scene she showed great promise, and her scenes with 'Viola' were among the brightest features in the play."

Domville (Queen's), as "Orsino," was quite one of the most successful members of the cast; his enunciation was clear and his bearing dignified. B. L. de Fontaine (Keble) had a difficult part in "Sebastian," but he worked hard, and if he was not more like his sister the fault could hardly be laid at his door. "Antonio" had a vigorous exponent in E. C. Vigers (Ch. Ch.), who was, however, guilty of an unpardonable anachronism in his dress. In "Sir Toby Belch" Mackintosh (Merton) had a part which very largely plays itself, but he was suitably jovial and hearty, and his appearance offered the desired contrast to "Sir Andrew Aguecheek" (H. M. Tenent, Wadham). The latter's acting and by-play were excellent, but his voice was somewhat exaggerated. J. C. Radcliffe (Exeter), as "Fabian,"

showed considerable skill and finish; his "asides" in the garden scene were not obtrusive, and he knew what to do while not speaking—a point in which amateurs frequently fail. Langton's "Malvolio" had no need to fear comparisons with Clark's performance in 1886. It was truly an excellent *début*. He infused a dignity and self-respect into his mid-summer madness in a way that threw an attractive grace about the part. Lee, then secretary of the Society, made a vivacious and sprightly "Fool." His rendering of the songs "Come away, Death," to Whinfield's music, and "When that I was and a little Tiny Boy" was particularly good. "Sir Toby Belch" and "Sir Andrew Aguecheek" were both good, but the latter, in his anxiety to attain the best falsetto possible, rendered some of his words unintelligible. The ladies were all good in their respective parts.

The play was excellently staged by Mr. G. R. Foss. The acting was good throughout; the "business" was exceptionally well carried out; and the elocution free from staginess. Again the costumes were lent by Sir Henry Irving, and the "Garden Scene" by Mr. George Alexander. The orchestra was conducted by Lord Herschell of Magdalen.

When we started the O.U.D.S. we contemplated always playing in the Summer Term, but it was at the request of the authorities that it was put back to Lent. In 1901 the performance again took place in

May, when *Much Ado About Nothing* was successfully produced. The cast of the play was as follows—

“MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.”

DON PEDRO (Prince of Aragon) .	R. D. Slater, University College.
DON JOHN (his bastard brother) .	B. Forsyth, Christ Church.
CLAUDIO (a young lord of Florence)	C. R. Maude, Brasenose College.
BENEDICK (a young lord of Padua)	H. M. Tennent, Wadham College.
LEONATO (governor of Messina) .	E. K. Browne, New College.
ANTONIO (his brother)	J. Beringer, St. John's College.
BALTHAZAR (attendant on Don Pedro)	W. T. Ivimey, Magdalen College.
BORACHIO } (followers of Don	N. C. Green-Wilkinson, Magdalen College.
CONRADE } John)		T. J. Mendl, University College.
DOGBERRY } (two officers)	G. P. Langton, New College.
VERGES } . . . . .		L. C.-Williams, New College.
FRIAR FRANCIS	A. T. Loyd, Hertford College.
A SEXTON	R. F. Williams, Wadham College.
MESSENGER	C. S. Stephenson, Magdalen College.
FIRST WATCH	C. R. I. Nicholl, Magdalen College.
SECOND WATCH	E. N. Trappes-Lomax, Brasenose College.
HERO (daughter to Leonato) .	Miss May Martyn.

BEATRICE (niece to Leonato)	.	<i>Miss Janet Alexander.</i>
MARGARET } (gentlewomen attend-	{	<i>Miss Player Isaacs.</i>
URSULA } ing on Hero)	{	<i>Miss Elfrida Clement.</i>
		<i>Attendants, Gentlewomen, etc.</i>

Many "Benedicks" have I seen, and I am bound to say most excellent was that of H. M. Tennent. He appeared to much advantage in the scenes with "Beatrice," and was still better in his scenes with "Claudio." "In a part," remarks my Critical Don, "where a rapid interchange of raillery and wit is necessary, he only once approached the lower level of burlesque. His only faults were an inclination to speak too fast, and a somewhat jerky manner." Mr. Kenworthy-Browne as "Leonato" was dignified, and his performance was one of the successes of the evening. "Claudio," in Charles Maude's hands, was described by another critic as "quite inscrutable." I found it full of distinction. "Don John"—a part created as a contrast to the joyousness of the time—was played successfully by B. Forsyth.

A fine character-study did G. P. Langton make of "Dogberry." His performance was considered even better than his "Malvolio" of the year before by those who saw both. Green-Wilkinson as "Borachio" was very good. He introduced some cleverly-thought-out by-play into the part; while his confession to "Don Pedro" and his service of his master were capital.

Miss May Martyn gave a very pretty performance as "Hero." The garden scene is one that is calcu-

lated to test the capability of any actress; and from this ordeal "Hero" emerged a heroine.

Lucky enough was the O.U.D.S. in securing the services of Miss Janet Alexander. Her performance was really flawless throughout, and from her first entrance to her final exit she commanded admiration and applause. Again was Mr. G. R. Foss stage-manager, and the performance under his guidance went without a hitch.

The Two Gentlemen of Verona was again produced February 5, 1902, under the direction of Mr. Foss.

"THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA."

PROTEUS	Kenworthy-Browne, New College.
LAUNCE	Lord Tiverton, New College.
SPEED	Mr. Cox, Hertford College.
VALENTINE	J. Gilliat, University College.
DUKE	E. M. C. Mackenzie, Magdalen College.
THURIO	Forsyth, Christ Church.
PANTHINO	J. D. Craig, Hertford College.
HOST	A. R. Liddle, Oriel College.
ANTONIO }	{ A. P. Boissier, Balliol College.
EGLAMOUR }	
JULIA	Miss Helen Macgregor.
LUCETTA	Miss May Congleton.
SILVIA	Miss Elfrida Clements.
URSULA	Miss Hope Grey.

The performance was not in any way above the average, but was well received by a friendly audience. Kenworthy-Browne showed a happy versatility as "Proteus." The element of farce was provided by Lord Tiverton, in the part of "Launce," appearing at intervals leading a dog of almost excessive intelligence and self-possession. The "Duke" (E. Mackenzie) was the usual type of elderly stage prince, as presented by a young man. He, however, varied his performance by an excessive outburst of physical violence against "Valentine"; which was, for a "Prince," somewhat undignified. Forsyth was good as the silly, blustering, superfine gallant; and the minor characters were all well placed. This year the music was conducted by Mr. Monck, Magdalen, the incidental music being by Lord Herschell.

So successful did the experiment in 1901 prove of holding their annual performance in Eights' Week that the O.U.D.S. decided to repeat it in 1903. *The Merchant of Venice* was staged, and to such purpose that the Society added still further to their triumphs. The following was the cast—

"THE MERCHANT OF VENICE."

DUKE OF VENICE	} (suitors to Portia)	{	A. R. Liddle, <i>Oriel College.</i>
PRINCE OF MOROCCO			R. A. Broadley, <i>Hertford College.</i>
PRINCE OF ARAGON			J. G. Matthew, <i>Wadham College.</i>

ANTONIO (a merchant of Venice)	.	J. L. Phillips, Queen's College.		
BASSANIO (his friend)	.	Lord Tiverton, New College.		
GRATIANO	} (friends to Antonio and Bassanio)	} E. C. Mackenzie, Magdalen College.		
SALARINO			} B. W. Wahl, Balliol College.	
SALANIO				} M. N. Hogg, Balliol College.
SALERIO					} A. R. Liddle, Oriel College.
LORENZO (in love with Jessica)	.	R. G. Wavell, Magdalen College.		
SHYLOCK (a rich Jew)	.	B. Forsyth, Christ Church.		
TUBAL (a Jew, his friend)	.	C. Were, Christ Church.		
LAUNCELOT GOBBO (a clown, servant to Shylock)	.	A. P. Boissier, Balliol College.		
OLD GOBBO (father to Launcelot)	.	A. L. Forbes, Christ Church.		
LEONARDO (servant to Bassanio)	.	Sir J. Simpson, Balliol College.		
CLERK OF THE COURT	.	H. J. Field, Balliol College.		
BALTHAZAR	} (servants to Portia)	} A. B. Dale, New College.		
STEPHANO			} H. C. Pirie-Gordon, Magdalen College.	
GAOLER	.	K. Mackenzie, Balliol College.		
PORTIA (a rich Heiress)	.	Miss M. Godfrey Turner.		
NERISSA (her waiting-maid)	.	Miss Dora McIntosh.		
JESSICA (daughter to Shylock)	.	Miss Dorothy Scott.		

Magnificoes, Servants, etc.

Amongst the members of the foregoing cast the palm was generally awarded to B. Forsyth, who gave a remarkable rendering of "Shylock." Force

and real feeling marked his portrayal, which was excellent throughout. Good, too, was the "Antonio" of Mr. Phillips, who played with quiet and impressive dignity. At the last moment Charles Maude was taken ill, and Lord Tiverton took "Bassanio" in his place at the briefest notice. His rendering was very successful on the whole. A good representation of the Elizabethan clown was furnished by A. P. Boissier, who never over-acted. The "Old Gobbo" of Forbes was played according to the O.U.D.S. tradition of old men. Mackenzie as "Gratiano" was lively and vigorous. The minor parts were all in good hands.

As You Like It, was presented on February 10, 1904. The audience was small for a first night, and, though there were no conspicuous failures, the performance was not above the O.U.D.S. standard.

The only hitch in the proceedings that occurred was when the ardent but foolish lover, "Silvius," could not be found, and wandering voices in the back-woods of Arden could be heard murmuring his name with some impatience and vigour. Apart from this, accidents and omissions were few and far between.

The acting attained a high level all round, and the enunciation was good; though, in the opinion of at least one auditor, "Oliver" and the "First Lord" once tried to see which could tell his story fastest.

Perhaps the best piece of acting was the work of



J. F. GILLIAT.



G. RENTOUL.



C. MAUDE.
1904.



R. H. HOTHAM.
(Magd.)

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Boissier (Balliol), who took the part of "Touchstone." His performance was full of fun and grace, and showed a genuine appreciation of the text. The "Jacques" of J. Gilliat (University) was an intelligent piece of characterization; and Charles Maude (B.N.C.) (a brother of Mr. Cyril Maude) was also a success as "Orlando." The rest of the cast was as follows—

AMIENS	<i>Stone, Christ Church.</i>
CHARLES	<i>C. H. Pirie - Gordon, Magdalen College.</i>
DUKE SENIOR	<i>Hogg, Balliol College.</i>
CORIN	<i>Curwen, Magdalen Col- lege.</i>
WILLIAM	<i>C. H. Arnhold, Brase- nose College.</i>
ROSALIND	<i>Miss Hoffman.</i>
CELIA	<i>Miss Daniel.</i>

In the chequered history of amateur theatrical projects at Oxford the episode of the Olympians is not the least amusing. The driving-power of this enterprise seems to have been furnished by Mr. G. S. C. Rentoul of Christ Church, where, amongst Oxford colleges, the dramatic tradition most strongly persists. One day certain undergraduates received a circular letter asking them to meet with a view to founding a new club.

It was later announced that the modest object of the Olympian Dramatic Club was to meet at intervals in members' rooms during term time and there hold short informal entertainments. This was in

February 1904. The club actually founded a journal called *The Olympian*, of which only two numbers appeared, but those two numbers, it must be admitted, added much to the gaiety of the University. One issue contained a long poem entitled, "The Squire and the Sileger," a couple of verses running thus—

"The Squire and the Sileger
Were sitting both indoors;
They wept like anything to see
The lack of good actors:
'If we could only found a club,'
They said, 'We'd soon *make scores!*'"

Another had this pleasing reference to the older society—

"If seven scouts with seven boys
Washed at the O.U.D.S. all night,
Do you suppose,' the Squire said,
'That they could get them white?'
'I doubt it,' said the Sileger,
'Their day has gone by—quite.'"

On March 13, 1905, the Olympians, while the O.U.D.S. was resting from its periodic struggle with the humours of Aristophanes, as related in the next chapter, enjoyed a red-letter day. Mr. Beerbohm Tree visited Oxford with his company on the invitation of the O.D.C., and gave a performance of *Hamlet* in the Town Hall, with Henry Nevill as the "King" and Miss Beatrice Robertson as "Ophelia," William Haviland the "Ghost," and the late Lionel Brough the "Grave-digger."

" 'This day,' sang the *Olympian*, ' this day'll be called the
 feast Olympian,
 And he who wanders far or stays at home
 Will stand a-tiptoe when this day is named
 And rouse him at the name "Olympian."
 He that shall live so long and see old age
 Will yearly on the vigil call his neighbours
 And say, "To-morrow is Olympian day,"
 And he'll remember with advantages
 What things we did that day. Then shall our names,
 Familiar in his mouth as household words—
 Rentoul the Pres., Southam and Beazley,
 Macrae and Brichta, Reader and Rathbone
 (Their flowing cups as well shall be remembered!)
 And gentlemen of Oxford now gone down
 Shall think themselves accursed they were not there,
 And hold their manhood cheap while any speak
 That 'mongst Olympian members e'er was numbered.' "

Hamlet was played without scenery before a background of mystic curtains. Nearly a hundred guests sat down to dinner at the Randolph Hotel in the evening, and everything bore a distinctly Shakespearian aspect. The *menu* was interspersed with apt quotations, the best of which referred to the *entrée* with the words, "What the devil hast thou brought there?" (*Henry V*, Part II). There were visitors of metropolitan fame, and their speeches belied not their reputation. Judge Rentoul made a speech which was at once humorous and patriotic, in proposing the "Houses of Parliament." Lord Denbigh replied to his toast for the Upper, and Sir Joseph Dimsdale for the Lower Chamber.

The President, G. S. C. Rentoul (Ch. Ch.), made

an amusing after-dinner speech when proposing "The Drama." "The Drama," he said, "began in the Garden of Eden, when then, as now, the chief centre of interest was a *Tree*. What an actor was King Solomon, who managed to persuade each of his thousand wives that she was his best girl!"

In the course of his speech Mr. Beerbohm Tree said he hoped that the Olympian Club would succeed in its domain as the O.U.D.S. had done in its, for the older Society had done great service to the Drama. He continued, "I hope that Shakespeare, who touched the loftiest height of the Drama, who lends splendour to the English language, who is the most modern because the most eternal of all dramatists, will have a place of honour in your history. The merit of Shakespeare is that he preserves the strength of the English language. Your Society will do good work if it teaches people to speak with that strength which Shakespearian English demands. The greatest curse of the age is what I term 'refrainment'—as distinguished from 'refinement'—and just as honour is greater than wit, just as instinct is greater than knowledge, just as intelligence is greater than intellect, so I think that native vigour is greater than cultivated refinement. And here I may say a word touching my presentation of *Hamlet* this afternoon. I may seem to have outraged all the traditions of His Majesty's Theatre, but for any shortcomings you must blame, not me,



C. W. MERCER. K. MACKENZIE. A. T. L. SCOTT.
1905.



J. C. LEDWARD.
1905.



W. T. CURWEN.
1906.

[To face p. 244.]

but Sir Edward Clarke, at whose suggestion I ventured upon this novel treatment. What I mean is that there could have been no compromise in this matter. I can sympathize myself with the two extremes—either with that simple treatment, which leaves the imagination free to furnish the stage with its trappings, or I can sympathize with that other treatment which gives to the spectator a picture so artistically complete that we do not dwell on the detail, but see it as a finished and satisfying whole. And as for such a play as *Hamlet*, it would be far better to read it only in the study, than to witness it amid the disturbing influences of a half-hearted attempt at stage illusion.” He also told a good story of how he wished to produce *The Ædipus Rex* in town. On the refusal of the Lord Chamberlain to grant him a licence, he replied that it was done at Oxford. “Oh, yes,” came the answer, “but that is in Greek, and no one understands it; you may produce it in Greek, Mr. Tree.” So much for our vaunted classical knowledge! Sir Edward Clarke lamented the fact that Oxford gave no training in elocution, and Mr. Comyns Carr made a humorous reference to “compulsory Greek and involuntary Latin.” Mr. Tree was afterwards presented with an illuminated address signed by members of the club.

The treasurer (Mr. E. G. Southam) announced that it was the intention of the club to offer a gold

medal every year for the best-written one-act play by a member.

The Olympian Club was doomed to an early death. Perhaps its very fervour hastened its untimely end. At all events, a few short terms later it quietly gave up the ghost. The O.U.D.S. in abiding by the famous laws promulgated by Dr. Jowett, virtually received a patent of monopoly for the amateur University drama in Oxford; and therefore for its welfare as a society, now of long tradition, it is not desirable that other societies should arise to hamper its work, so long as the O.U.D.S. keeps on the right lines.



SOME CHARACTERS IN A PLAY BY THE OXFORD CARDINAL DRAMATIC CLUB.

1905.

{To face p. 246.



CHAPTER XIV

“Hail, Amateurs! Hail, lovers of the Muse
Of Drama! Come your story we'll peruse;
Discern wherefore with such fervent heart
Unstirred by hope of gain you play your part.”

RUMOUR had it that the following dialogue took place in the “quad” of Brasenose.

“I hear the O.U.D.S., in addition to Shakespeare next term, are going to tackle another Greek play.”

“Dear me! Who's the victim?”

“Aristophanes.”

“Poor old Aristophanes. Does he deserve this?”

It is perhaps hardly necessary for me to point out that both the interlocutors were dons having scant sympathy with what they were pleased to call the “acting mania” at the University.

A poster was exhibited by one ingenious undergraduate, announcing—

THE
O.U.D.S.
INTEND TO PRODUCE THE
CLOUDS.

“Oh! you D.S., good luck, and may U.C.
Each C.O.L. come down with L.S.D.,
May young and O.L.D. frequent the show,
When new D.S. dons ancient C.L.O.”

This performance of *The Clouds* in 1905 marked a new step in the progress of the Society. Perhaps, it was remarked, some would look back with regret to the go-as-you-please merriment of *The Frogs* thirteen years before. Such rollicking fun could hardly have failed to be popular in Oxford, the openings for local colour were so obvious, particularly in the famous rowing episode on the Styx. A far harder play to produce is *The Clouds*, which was "adapted for performance by the Oxford University Dramatic Society" by Messrs. A. D. Godley and C. Bailey.

"While," observed the *Oxford Magazine*, "the histrionic energies of Oxford have been devoted chiefly to driving the coursers of the Sun against Apollo—in other words, competing with Mr. Irving and Mr. Tree (to say nothing of Mr. Benson) in Shakespearian representation, deviating only at rare intervals into Greek, Cambridge, wiser in its generation, has produced a regular series of Greek revivals, and has to its credit a record of five tragedies and three comedies in twenty-one years. But now that a new precedent has been set, it may be hoped that under the auspices of the distinguished Greek Play Committee, which has guided *The Clouds* this term to a conspicuous success, Oxford will vie with Cambridge in a regular and ordered series of Greek revivals."

This was the old hydra-head of 1887 cropping up again!



E. C. M. PHILLIPS AND I. E. SNELL.
1906.



G. RENTOUL AND MISS COLEMAN.
1906. [To face p. 248.]



The opportunities for topical effects are less obvious in *The Clouds*, but they are manifest all the same, and made many wonder it had not been tried before. The pale student, the bearded aspirant in Responsions, the sporting "blood" to whom lectures and examinations are alike anathema, lectures themselves, *viva voce* examination, ploughing—all these are to be found in *The Clouds*, and from first to last the play moves in an atmosphere of local and topical burlesque. This topical colouring Sir Hubert Parry intimately realized, and developed for all it is worth in his delightful music. Nevertheless, it is on record that the audiences were distinctly slow in taking up the topical points. Was it that the threatened abolition of "compulsory Greek" has cast its baleful shadow over the intellect of the University? and was it a sign of the times that the pit was noticeably very scantily filled?

"You may estimate your capacity for comic perception by being able to detect the ridicule of them you love without loving them less." At Oxford, if anywhere, the memory of Socrates is dear—all the dearer for the eccentricities of his personality. But Aristophanes' treatment of him in this play subjects the Meredithian doctrine to a somewhat heavy strain. It is plain enough that Aristophanes had not the remotest idea of the real character and aims of the man he set himself to burlesque. A caricature must have *some* points of contact with the original. The

radical weakness of *The Clouds* is that the caricature of Socrates has practically none. It is an imaginary portrait, drawn from those very Sophists whom Socrates is never tired of putting to the blush. In spite, however, of this inherent vice, the play gives us a comic figure drawn with firm lines by the supreme master of the art. It was the great merit of E. L. Scott's handling of the part that he reproduced this strong individuality. He gave due emphasis to the solemn and pretentious nonsense which Socrates is made to deliver.

Upon the shoulders of "Strepsiades" falls the chief burden of the play. Mercer bore it manfully, giving a thoughtful and consistent reading of the stupid old country gentleman, reduced to questionable shifts by his spendthrift son. His enunciation was clear and forcible. In conception and ingenuity his treatment of the part left little to be desired. "Aristophanes," remarks my Critical Don, "himself is perhaps to be held responsible for what, to modern ideas, seems an undue insistence upon the Corinthians of the bed-clothes. It was easy to overdo the scratching, and there was a tendency to this on the first night, which was wisely restrained in later performances."

"Phidippides," as played by Mackenzie, showed the finished actor. His movements were easy and natural, and there was a restraint about them which in the case of some of the other actors was wanting.

True, the ever-Critical Don opined "the change wrought by the 'thinking shop' should have been more apparent. Neither outwardly nor inwardly did 'Phidippides' return an altered man. The 'pale cast of thought' was but faintly indicated on his countenance; and as to beating his father, one could have believed it of him from the first! What Aristophanes intends is clearly a change from mere folly and thoughtlessness to an unscrupulous and cynical negation of principle—from the ἀκρατής to the ἀκόλαστος. Apart from this fault of conception, Mackenzie played his part well, and some of his 'business' was capital, particularly the whirling of his whip to accentuate the reference to the reign of Δῖνος. The crux of the play from a dramatic point of view comes with the long-drawn duel between the Just and the Unjust Argument. To the Athenians it was perhaps otherwise. 'Strepsiades' cannot believe that it is Athens which is shown him on the map because he can see no law courts. By birth and habit the Athenian was a litigant, and Greek drama, tragedy and comedy alike, constantly digresses into verbal wrangling. The 'Unjust Argument' (Hermon-Hodge) was lively, and quite successful in giving the impression of the swaggering and gay deceiver. The facial expression and delivery were excellent. The two small parts of the 'Money-lenders' were admirably filled. Robertson as 'Pasias' gave a most intelligent and finished

rendering of his part; while Charles as 'Amynias' made good use of a well-modulated voice and an expressive play of feature."

As for the chorus, it was a great triumph. Attractive as was the rendering of the music by the members, even more attractive were their personal charms and their ladylike grace. So feminine was their appearance that the bass and tenor of their voices came with something of a shock to the auditor. It was like old Philothespian days. But for their voices they would never have betrayed their sex. They danced and moved nimbly and gracefully, and they were kept well in hand by Mr. T. C. Gibson as "Coryphæus," whose voice and delivery were admirable. The dresses were beautiful. The backcloth gave a fine view of the Acropolis from the south-east, which might have been copied from the frontispiece to Professor Ernest Gardner's *Athens*, although the clouds, "trailing slantwise through the glens," as described in vivid touches by Aristophanes himself, was not attempted.

My Critical Don is particularly strong on make-up, and one of Clarkson's severest critics. "The make-up," he writes, "was not quite successful in reproducing the curiously un-Greek features of Socrates so familiar in sculpture as well as in the pleasantries of his friends, and indeed of himself. The protruding eyes, enabling him, as he said, to see round the corner, are perhaps beyond the re-



C. W. MERCER,
1907.



TWO SOLDIERS,
1908.



E. C. M. PHILLIPS AS ANTONIO.

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sources of art; but it should have been possible to achieve a closer copy of the broad nose, set at so odd an angle to the forehead, to which reference is made in the word *βρενθύει*, a reference, by the way, which the 'Coryphæus' seemed to miss. Then, should not the 'Pupils' have been far more pale and cadaverous! The point of the comparison with the half-starved Spartan prisoners of war from Pylos was quite lost. Why, again, were the lower limbs of 'Strepsiades' and 'Socrates' so scantily draped? Should not the line of decorum in Greek drama be at least as high, or perhaps we should say as low, as in the Football Association? And is a garment reaching nowhere near the knee any more correct histrionically than it is sartorially?"

It was noted as a feature of the excellent stage-management that the properties in the first act were admirably contrived. The map was worthy of D. Grundy, Meno's Puzzle an inspiration, and the table of masculines and feminines a work of art. As to the music, if any one ever doubted that it could be adapted to the expression of humour, he ought to be sent to *The Clouds* (not, however, in an aeroplane) with confidence for conversion. Sir Hubert Parry had penned all in a vein of genial, not to say rollicking, merriment, and in sympathy with Aristophanic humour. Even the "man in the gallery" could appreciate the joke of introducing "We won't go home till morning," "Rule

Britannia," and "D'ye ken John Peel"; the Wagner themes may have been more elusive to the unlearned. It was worth coming a long way to see Parry himself heartily "enjoying his own orchestral witticisms and radiating humorous anticipation of the jokes a few bars in advance."

When at the end of the previous term it was announced that the Society had selected *Measure for Measure*, certain dwellers in suburban Oxford saw fit to adopt an absurd and unreasonable attitude and began writing letters to the local and even to the metropolitan press protesting against the choice. But the performance gave the lie emphatically to the detractors, and doubtless it showed that it was possible to present an acting edition of such a Shakespearian play as this in a manner showing its good and merry purpose, and not merely its questionable side.

"Possibly," observes my Captious Don, "the Society desired to make a daring protest against the—to them—ridiculous conventions which govern life in Oxford under the Parks System, and the Vice-Chancellor knew that he could rely on the good taste and tact of Mr. G. R. Foss. His confidence was not misplaced, for the acting version of the play is as seemly as the motive of the plot allows. The actors loyally seconded Mr. Foss's efforts."

The choice before Rentoul was whether to make "Angelo" a man who had for years concealed the

sensualist under a mask of Puritanism, or represent him as one whose acts had hitherto matched his professions. He chose the latter alternative, and thereby did much to exalt the character of the play. "In the great scene where 'Isabella' comes to beg for her brother's life Mr. Rentoul was able to present to us the tragedy of a soul for the first time facing overmastering temptation. His playing in that scene was worthy of his conception of the part, and Miss Hoffman ably seconded him. Both were dignified and strong. The rising tide of emotion in the minds of 'Isabella' and 'Angelo' was displayed in all its phases, and quite carried the audience away with it. It may be," continued the chronicler, "that Miss Hoffman screamed too soon and too loud when in the prison 'Isabella' found herself mistaken in her estimate of 'Claudio's' character, and Mr. Rentoul somewhat discounted the dramatic effect of his overthrow in the last act by showing too early his apprehension of it."

But there was only one opinion concerning the principal actor and actress, and that was that they had given two thoughtful and powerful pieces of emotional acting. As regards the rest of the cast, Miss Coleman as "Mariana" surprised the audience by the power with which her appeal was delivered in the last act.

Next to Rentoul, amongst the members of the Society Gartside most distinguished himself. His

"Elbow" was a most quaint and lovable character. Phillips (of Queen's) gave a picture of a drunkard, with no point exaggerated, and therefore not offensive. Very droll was his complete absorption in himself and his visions while the Duke delivers to him an exhortation to repent. His utter disregard of all that was being said to him was quite appropriate to the occasion. Gorell Barnes, as the "Duke of Sienna," boasted a commanding presence and a smooth voice. "It was obvious that all members of the cast had supported Mr. Foss by diligence at rehearsal and by copious study of their lines."

The attendance on the first night was well-nigh a record.

Some ingenious members of the audience thought they detected in the composer, Mr. Cox's notably square and rigid rhythm of the prelude (definitely entitled *Measure for Measure* in the programme) an elaborate *double entente*. If so, it showed the composer to be the possessor of a "subtly Elizabethan mind."

"What an outsider has to consider," wrote Mr. C. B. Gull, "in the case of acting Shakespeare by Oxford Amateurs, and especially such a play as *Measure for Measure*, is the impossibility for 'Varsity men to devote the whole or even a good quarter of their time to the mastery of the art of acting. There are demands of a scholastic, social and athletic nature to be considered. When these amateurs play they play to an audience which is



G. J. COLMER AND MISS ALEXANDER.
1908.



LORD CAMPDEN.
1907.



C. W. MERCER.
1908.

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extremely critical: to those who know them away from the glare of the footlights, on the football and cricket field, on the river, on the track, before their own fireside, or across the breakfast- and dinner-table. They are playing, it may be, to an audience which includes those who are very sure they could have done so very much better in this or that particular part, and whose criticism, thought or expressed, is likely to be frank to the verge of brutality, or polite with that politeness which is but the veneer of rudeness."

As a sample of the conversations overheard by undergraduates in the pit during the last night of an O.U.D.S. production, I may quote the following—

[SCENE: *The Pit of the New Theatre. A hot, steamy mist hangs over everything; a MONSTER LANDLADY is engaged in a fierce tussle with her hat: beside her sits a FAIR DAMSEL, who looks round and suddenly sees the struggles of the M. L.*]

F. D. Wy, *Missis* Wuggins! well I never! let me 'elp you, my dear.

M. L. Wy, it's Daisy, I declare—thank you, dear, it's that top pin as will *not* come out. Ah! that's it. [*A pause, during which the M. L. settles into her seat.*] Well, Daisy! fancy meetin' you 'ere. You are lookin' well, an' no mistake.

F. D. [*pleased*]. Do you think so, dear? [*Pause.*] I've come to see Mr. Frank, I 'ave—'im I told you

about—'e's actin', ye know; 'e's awfully good, I've 'eard say, *an'* so nat'ral.

M. L. Well, nat'ral's orl very well, an' I wouldn't mind if it stuck to that; but cummin' 'ome every night at midnight or past it, an' a keepin' me up ter let 'im in—I don't call that nat'ral, no that I do *not*.

F. D. Wy, Missis Wuggins, 'as one o' *your* gentlemen got a part?

M. L. Got a part? wy yes, 'e 'as, drat 'im! I don't 'old by play-actin' fer young fellers like 'im. Tawk about bad 'abits, wy, my dear, not one day for the last week an' more 'ave that young caution got out of 'is bed afore ar-past twelve, as I'm a livin' sinner—and the breakfast down there by the fire, spoilin' enough ter make you swear [*with a rustle of her skirt*]. Oh! I give it 'im, that I did; but, lor bless yer, 'tain't no good tawkin': they only laughs at yer—reg'lar stage-struck 'e is an' no mistake. Wy, wen I comes in to lay the lunch an' 'im still at 'is breakfast, I gets a bit irritated like; but before I can git a word out o' my mouth, 'e 'olds the dish out at me an' sez, "Madam," 'e sez, "the meat is over-done." "An' so it oughter be, if you gets over-sleepin'," I sez.

[*Meanwhile, the play has been proceeding; the M. L. suddenly realizes this and looks at the stage: she sees the object of her wrath.*]

M. L. [to *F. D.*] Look, dear, there 'e is, in the middle there, the young monkey—lor, tho', don't 'e

look rummy got up like that?—that's 'im, my dear, that ugly one, with the square face; O, 'e is a ugly man, that 'e is.

[MR. FRANK *appears*. *The FAIR DAMSEL gives a start.*]

F. D. Look, look! there 'e is, Missis Wuggins.

[MR. FRANK *walks across the stage.*]

F. D. Oh, Mr. Frank, don't go away, don't go away; *ain't* 'e nice-lookin', Missis Wuggins? an' that lovely dress do suit 'im right down to the ground.

[*She goes into ecstasies of delight; the M. L. nudges her without result.*]

M. L. [*in a hoarse whisper*]. *Do* keep quiet, Daisy, can't you; they're all lookin' round at you, silly. I'm ashamed of you, that I am.

[*Collapse of F. D.*]

I have mentioned the name of that world-renowned perruquier, Willy Clarkson—Sarah Bernhardt's Willy Clarkson. I cannot pretend to estimate the debt we all owe Clarkson. His difficulties with Oxford amateurs were as great as those of his father with the amateurs of Cambridge.

"I recollect," he writes me, "on one occasion something very comic occurring at a dress rehearsal (I think it was *King John*). I always used to go down myself in the old days with two assistants, and on one occasion I had one assistant with me who was rather green. I gave him instructions to take what we call some back pieces, with which I used to make

the hair look long (not a wig, but hair on elastic), down to the supers who put them on.

“I did not know at the time that his knowledge of back pieces was very limited, otherwise would have given him more definite instructions, and thought nothing more of it until I was nearly thrown into paroxysms of horror by seeing twelve supers (soldiers) march on the stage with the back pieces put on their faces as beards! The man had carefully filled in the cheeks with crêpe hair! They looked so ludicrous that everybody exploded, their military hair being cut short, to the skin almost, and these extremely long back pieces gave them the most weird appearance. They used very ‘strong’ language to my man, who had been using ‘strong’ spirit-gum on their faces, and their language grew much stronger when they had to have it taken off very quickly, and the back pieces properly adjusted.

“Another year I could not find my men at all; everybody was shouting to be made up—great excitement, of course! I was rushing about all over the place trying to find them, and after about an hour I discovered them in one room, where they had been detained, against their will, by a certain gentleman, who had locked the door and would not release them until they had swallowed two magnums of champagne. Of course you can imagine they were not fit for much during that evening. I remonstrated with the gentleman in question, who expressed his sorrow.”



MISS LEDWARD AND L. E. SNELL.

1907.



HON. J. RIDLEY AND J. C. LEDWARD.

1907.

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CHAPTER XV

“Why should not those who feel the aspiration
For Drama strive, within such limitation,
Not trifling but in earnest—(never was time
Well spent in trifling yet at work or pastime)—
To turn to use the talent that’s within them,
Look to the laurels and resolve to win them?”

REGINALD LUCAS (Trinity).

OXFORD does not stand still. Time, carrying the ancient 'Varsity in its train, may deal an occasional blow at its classic curriculum, but it has now only caresses for that drama it tried to stifle in its infancy. I often wonder if those three A's—Adderley, Adair and Astley—do not rub their eyes after thirty years to see how elaborate and important an institution acting at Oxford has become. I often, I confess, tremble at the audacity which seeks to rival the productions of the London stage.

Peter Short's "pleasant conceited Hystorie called the *Tayminge of a Shrowe*" seemed to enjoy considerable popularity before Shakespeare's comedy was printed in 1623. Of the performance of the latter at the Globe Theatre there is little record, and there do not seem to have been many presentations of the play until Mr. Asche revived it at the Adelphi

some five or six years ago. The O.U.D.S. were particularly fortunate in being able to obtain the original "Katharina" of that production, Miss Lily Brayton (Mrs. Oscar Asche).

The present version of the play kept to the original in all the principal points, even to the Induction, which was treated in truly Elizabethan style, Acts I and II of the comedy being given in a "room in a Lord's house." We were reminded that in Peter Short's version, from which Shakespeare's is remodelled, "Christopher Sly" occasionally makes his remarks throughout the whole performance, until he is finally carried back to the ale-house in a state of sleep. In Shakespeare we lose this most diverting character before the end of the first act. After the Poet had fairly launched him in the Induction, and given a tone to his subsequent demeanour during the play, the performer of the character was perhaps allowed to continue the dialogue as he listed. One may doubt, however, if this was permitted after Shakespeare's protest against "gagging," that "clowns should speak no more than was set down for them."

The following was the cast—

"TAMING OF THE SHREW."

February 6, 1907.

PETRUCHIO	G. Rentoul.
CHRISTOPHER SLY	J. E. Snell.
BAPTISTA	E. S. H. Corbett.



MISS ALEXANDER AND H. FLETCHER.

1908.



G. H. FARMER, M. E. HANSELL, H. FLETCHER,
J. C. LEDWARD, W. OLIPHANT, C. HOWARD-SMITH.
1908.

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VINCENTIO	<i>J. H. M. Greenly.</i>
LUCENTIO	<i>F. C. Rowe.</i>
GREMIO	<i>Graham Colmer.</i>
HORTENSIO	<i>F. C. Meyer.</i>
TRANIO	<i>L. Gartside.</i>
GRUMIO	<i>J. C. Ledward.</i>
SERVANTS TO PETRUCHIO	<i>Mr. G. N. Foster and Viscount Campden.</i>
KATHARINA	<i>Miss Lily Brayton.</i>
BIANCA	<i>Miss Agnes Brayton.</i>
WIDOW	<i>Miss Edith Hiles.</i>
HOSTESS	<i>Miss Margaret Ledward.</i>

Rentoul, happily recovered from his Olympianism, was available for the part of "Petruccio," which Philip Carr had filled in 1897. "Petruccio" does not make the same demands on his powers of emotional acting as did "Angelo" the previous year, yet it requires great physical exertion, and Rentoul came well out of the ordeal. He started at a high pressure, and never let the interest flag. The undercurrent of amusement and exquisite pleasure which the taming of the shrew affords him was cleverly displayed.

"Snell," writes the chronicler, "who took the part of 'Christopher Sly,' seemed to hit Shakespeare's conception of the part; he was not guilty of 'gagging'—to an audible extent at any rate—but he showed an intelligent interest in the proceedings until drowsiness overcame him and he was carried off at the end of the first act. So far we were thoroughly satisfied, but we were shocked at the end of the first act, and again at the beginning of the

fourth, to find songs interpolated from *Twelfth Night* and the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. It is difficult to see what induced those responsible for it to introduce these songs, unless it was a mistaken desire to cater for an Oxford audience by adhering as closely to musical comedy as possible."

L. Gartside, as "Tranio," was distinctly droll, proving himself to be an actor of intelligence and humour; his every word was audible and had a meaning. E. S. H. Corbett gave a good performance of the undignified "Baptista." F. C. Rowe gave an interesting performance as "Lucentio"; his wooing of "Bianca" over the Latin books was most diverting. Rowe sang the two songs, "Oh, Mistress Mine" and "Who is Sylvia?" All the other parts were well filled, especially J. H. M. Greenly as "Vincentio." Miss Brayton's, it is hardly necessary to add, was a most finished performance, although I still question the wisdom of importing a professional actress of such high standing into an Oxford amateur production.

The drama as interpreted by Oxford students should have a character of its own. It should be as they see it, and each one should render his part according to their own conception of it, and not be governed by professional tradition. In that way, and in that way only, the representations at the New Theatre would come to have a flavour of their own, which to taste many would travel for.

I must now hasten to the most recent annual productions at Oxford.

A Midsummer Night's Dream was again produced in 1908, with the following cast—

“A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.”

February 26, 1908.

FAIRIES.

OBERON	Graham Colmer, Christ Church.
TITANIA	Miss Janet Alexander.
PUCK	E. Hain, New College.
FIRST FAIRY	Miss E. Lomax.
SECOND FAIRY	Miss Chalker-Pearse.

MORTALS.

THESEUS	J. H. M. Greenly, Trinity College.
EGEUS	Hon. G. Charteris, Trinity College.
LYSANDER	T. W. Heale, Brasenose College.
DEMETRIUS	C. W. Mercer, University College.
PHILOSTRATE	P. P. Page, New College.
QUINCE	J. C. Ledward, New College.
BOTTOM	H. L. Fletcher, Christ Church.
FLUTE	H. G. Farmer, Brasenose College.
SNOUT	M. E. Hansell, Christ Church.
SNUG	C. Howard - Smith, Brasenose College.
STARVELING	J. N. Oliphant, Christ Church.
HIPPOLYTA	Miss Margaret Ledward.
HERMIA	Miss Elsie Goulding.
HELENA	Miss Pamela Gaythorne.

The only alterations made in the play were that the tedious wooing of "Demetrius" and "Lysander" was slightly compressed, and the adventures of "Bottom" and his comrades were brought rather more into prominence.

The best individual performance was that of Ledward as "Quince." He brought out fully the great comedy of his part, keeping the quiet note on to the end, even when his fellow-actors were reaching the farcical. Hain gave a splendid rendering of the part of "Puck," but marred the effect by a slight indistinctness of articulation in some places. H. L. Fletcher was excellent as "Bottom," his deep voice and great height being eminently suited for the part. The "Oberon" of Graham Colmer was also capital.

Miss Gaythorne gave a very finished piece of acting in the part of "Helena." Miss Janet Alexander made a pretty "Titania."

Mendelssohn's music was admirably rendered by the New Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Dr. H. Pullen. The scenery, painted by Mr. W. T. Hemsley, was really beautiful. Again the stage-manager was Mr. G. R. Foss.

I well remember that in 1892, when we of the O.U.D.S. were in the throes of one of the plays of Aristophanes, the tale was current of a lodging-house slavey excitedly demanding of her mistress permission to visit the theatre in order to see "them wonderful performing frogs." When the decision

C. H. PAWLING.

LORD CAMPDEN.



H. S. G. BUCKMASTER.
(New. Coll.)

E. G. BOTTAM.
(Ch. Ch.)

1907.

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J. N. GRAY.



I. E. SNEEL AND F. A. WILLIAMS.

1907.



seventeen years later to repeat that play was announced a 'Varsity bard—perhaps I should write a 'Varsity bard—announced it thus—

“A PÆAN.

“This year 'tis not to be! William, go to!
 Not ours the fragrant parlance of this land!
 This year all must applaud the jokes, they do
 Not understand!

This year the gallery, with ears agape—
 (No *Puck* a six-foot *Bottom* now derides!)—
 Will cold receive some lacerating jape
 At Euripides!

This year away with academic frowns!
 An *intellectual* horde the stalls shall fill.
 And criticize the Greek-Directoire gowns
 From S-m-r-l—.

All those who e'er the Classic Drama woo'd
 Will surely speed to Oxford from afar
 And leave delighted, having understood
 Καὶ ὄν and γὰρ.”

The cast was as follows—

“THE FROGS.”

CHARACTERS.

DIONYSUS	G. Howard, Christ Church.
XANTHIAS	E. A. De Stein, Magdalen College.
ÆSCHYLUS	G. M. Stevenson Reece, Balliol College.
EURIPIDES	E. S. H. Corbett, University College.
HERACLES	J. D. Casswell, Pembroke College.

PLUTO	Hon. J. N. Ridley, <i>Balliol College.</i>
CHARON	J. N. Oliphant, <i>Christ Church.</i>
ÆACUS	Hon. G. Charteris, <i>Trinity College.</i>
A CORPSE	W. P. Watt, <i>Balliol College.</i>
MAID TO PERSEPHONE	M. Knatchbull-Hugessen, <i>Balliol College.</i>
A LANDLADY	P. Guedella, <i>Balliol College.</i>
PLATHANE (servant to Landlady)	G. C. Faber, <i>Christ Church.</i>
A HIEROPHANT (Coryphæus)	F. H. Grisewood, <i>Magdalen College.</i>

MUTE PERSONS.

SOPHOCLES	Hon. P. A. Methuen, <i>New College.</i>
PERSEPHONE	Lord A. Leveson-Gower, <i>Balliol College.</i>
MINOS	C. E. Von Fleischl, <i>New College.</i>
RHADAMANTHUS	G. S. Hervey, <i>Trinity College.</i>
A DONKEY	R. L. Benson, <i>Balliol College, and Hon. E. C. Pery, New College.</i>

Scythians:—L. A. Frye (Hertford), S. N. Cronjé (Trinity), and E. N. L. Venn (University).

Mourners:—H. E. Seth-Smith (B.N.C.), C. H. Burne (B.N.C.), K. H. Ledward (University), G. J. Robin (University), and W. H. Brooke (University).

Slaves:—H. J. Fuller (New College), I. I. Rubinowitz (Queen's), and J. H. Leckie (University).

Chorus of the Initiated:—F. W. Andrews (Jesus), S. F.

Austin (St. John's), A. C. Boulton (Christ Church), D. R. Cross (Christ Church), W. Elliot (Worcester), R. A. Fitz-Gibbon (Christ Church), H. G. Garrod (New College), V. Hope (St. John's), F. V. Hughes (Keble), L. W. Hunter (New College), A. C. Huson (New College), N. T. Huxley (Balliol), H. G. Ley (Keble), H. G. Rogers (Non-Collegiate), G. W. A. Simpson (New College), J. A. Stainton (Christ Church), R. S. Thatcher (Worcester), and C. W. Towson (Non-Collegiate).

Frogs :—Masters R. Armitage, A. Barker, J. Berthon, B. Carritt, G. Jacks, J. Maret, A. Preston, B. Pritchard, C. Pritchard, M. De Sélincourt, O. De Sélincourt, and I. Vinogradoff.

I should like Aristophanes to have seen Grise-wood's Coryphæus. Under his (Grise-wood's) leadership, the members of the chorus acquitted themselves with great credit. As Dionysus, G. Howard did very well indeed, although I notice that the *Times* critic comments upon a "slight Cockney accent in his attempts at humour." After all, a comedian must attempt to be funny, and the dialect of the East End of Athens being now irrecoverable, is not that of the East End of London a reasonable substitute?

Excellent, also, were Corbett and Reece in their respective parts (can Reece be a descendant of the old Balliol amateur?), the contest between the two being one of the most amusing items in the performance. E. C. Pery (Secretary O.U.D.S., New College) and R. L. Benson (Balliol) worked mirth-provoking marvels with the inevitable Donkey, "realizing"—

I quote one local critic—"with harmonious zest the functions of their respective halves." The same critic, speaking of the chorus, remarked that the Greek idea is "notoriously hard to portray on the modern stage, for the simple reason that our whole notion of drama renders the whole convention almost incomprehensible. Nevertheless, there is an archaic charm about the institution quite apart from the manifest literary charm and point of their recitals. The chorus in this production seems torn between two models—the cathedral choir and a ballet of Bacchantes. As a choir they would do credit to Westminster, but as a ballet they would barely satisfy the 'East Oxford.' Individual effort is not the proper note of choric movement. It contributes rather to an effect of a funereal hornpipe. The Frogs themselves (none too observant as zoologists), like good little boys, are seen and not heard; their music—like that of Mr. Tree as 'Svengali'—proceeds from the wings. It is in no spirit of cavilling or of objection that I draw attention to this device. I merely remark it because the device is so conspicuous."

The training of stage hands so that they will enter into the spirit of the piece is always a difficult task, but, as might be expected in the case of Oxford, a certain amount of culture had, so to speak, percolated through to the masses. The stage-carpenter had dimly heard of Aristophanes, and the lime-light

man knew of Æschylus as "a fellow what wrote plays long before Shakespeare was 'eard of." There was an edifying discussion amongst the builder's workmen at Balliol, apropos of Greece and the Greeks, which deserves to be recorded.

"I 'ear these college nobbs are 'avin' a play and pretendin' they're Greeks this year."

"Greeks? Why, I thought they was to be Frenchmen."

"That's only your bloomin' ignorance. The name of the play is *The Frogs*."

"Ah, I see."

"Greek frogs."

"I've 'eard o' Greek currants."

"I dessay. Anythin' to do with your inside. But classical education ain't much in your line, Bill."

"No, it ain't. But look 'ow long you been a-workin' about these 'ere Oxford colleges. (A pause.) I never 'ad much use for any Greeks I ever see."

"'Ark at the ignorance of the man! This 'ere play's about ancient Greece. The ancient Greeks were the finest people what ever lived. They 'ad more brains than all the other people put together. You ought to go and see that play, Bill. It 'ud be an eye-opener to you."

"I suppose they looked a good deal like us, didn't they, 'Energ?"

"Like us? Whatger mean 'like us'?"

"Well, I dessay they weren't all professors and

collegers. They 'ad to 'ave their bit o' bricklayin', plasterin', and w'at done, eh?"

"That's all you know about it. They lived in temples, my boy. Ah, it was a great day for stone-masons. They did everythink on a tip-top scale. And when you talk about us, and about your professors and undergraduates, look at the way them Greeks dressed; you go and see that play, Bill. Go and stand at the stage-door and see them Greeks hit off to the life. Oh, they were great! You don't have to 'ear them talk—and if you did you wouldn't understand it. You can see they must 'ave been a great people. Why, they didn't wear any trousers," etc.

To celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the O.U.D.S., *The Tempest* was chosen, with the following cast—

"THE TEMPEST."

ALONSO	J. E. S. Richter, Uni- versity College.
SEBASTIAN	G. W. A. Simpson, New College.
PROSPERO	W. Bridges - Adams, Worcester College.
ANTONIO	R. A. Powell, New College.
FERDINAND	R. B. Pemberton, Trinity College.
GONZALO	M. de la P. Garsia, Merton College.
ADRIAN	G. H. Alington, Mag- dalen College.



L. GARTSIDE AND C. G. S. FARMER.

1907.



J. H. M. GREENLY AND C. G. S. FARMER.

1907.

[To face p. 272.]



FRANCISCO	G. M. B. Portman, <i>New College.</i>
CALIBAN	C. Howard Smith, <i>Brasenose College.</i>
TRINCULO	R. S. Hooper, <i>Brasenose College.</i>
STEPHANO	J. A. Stainton, <i>Christ Church.</i>
BOATSWAIN	F. E. Hawkins, <i>University College.</i>
MIRANDA	Miss Noel Mackern.
ARIEL	Miss E. Lomax.
IRIS	Mrs. Bussell.
CERES	Miss Olive Boulton.
JUNO	Miss Dorothy Garratt.

It was a most artistic and interesting performance, and the "Ariel" and the "Caliban" were particularly good, but I fear the audiences were not as numerous as they should have been. And on this subject I observe that a writer in the 'Varsity suggests that one cause of the comparatively poor attendances is the fact that the O.U.D.S. performances always come off in the middle of "Togger" training, which presumably means the loss of some hundreds of potential theatre-goers. This, of course, raises the whole question of the most fit and proper time for the annual production to take place, and I am not sure the Society would not benefit by having this important question freely discussed and settled in a manner which would ensure the greatest advantage to both the acting and to the receipts.

I really do not feel as if I could acquit myself

of the task of recording the annals and the triumphs of several generations of Oxford Amateurs without something more than a casual mention of the present manager, the adviser, the guide in matters histrionic of the O.U.D.S.—Mr. G. R. Foss.

“Where,” writes Morris, “should we be without the guidance and teaching of Foss!” And, indeed, from my own personal observation, I cannot conceive any director more universally sympathetic, more eminently fitted to develop the material which the Society places at his command and to maintain so high a level of excellence in his productions.

“Upon the success of *The Merchant of Venice*,” wrote one critic in 1883, “largely depends the future of acting at Oxford. A new departure has been taken, a chance has come, and the chance must not be thrown away. The actors are working hard to do their share of the work: the undergraduates and others must do theirs by going to see them. Then, and then only, when asked of *The Merchant of Venice* at Oxford will they be able to ‘answer all things faithfully.’”

Well, more than a quarter of a century has elapsed since then. The Society has continued its course, doubtless with the varying fortunes which attend all human ventures; but enthusiasm, a clean record, and many instances of new talent have accompanied its onward path, and my visit to Oxford to see their production last year convinced me that the



J. H. M. GREENLY.



J. H. M. GREENLY.

1907.

NEW THEATRE, OXFORD.

By permission of the Vice-Chancellor and the Right Worshipful the Mayor

O. U. D. S.

SHAKESPEARE'S COMEDY

A Midsummer Night's Dream,

Commencing Wednesday, Feb. 26, 1908,

And on FEB. 27, 28, 29, MARCH 2 and 3, at 8 p.m.

MATINEES Saturday and Monday, FEB. 20 and March 2, at 2 p.m.

PRICES: Stalls, 7, 6; Dress Circle (Reserved) 6, (Unreserved) 5; Pit, 2, 6; Balcony, 1; Gallery, 6d.

Mendelssohn's Music will be performed by the New Symphony Orchestra, London,
under the direction of Dr. H. P. Allen

THE PLAY WILL BE PRODUCED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF MR G. R. FOSS
Scenery by W. T. HEMBLEY. Dresses by NATHAN. Wig by CLARSON.

SEATS MAY BE BOOKED ON AND AFTER MONDAY, FEB 17

PRESIDENT J. C. LEDWARD, University SECRETARY M. E. HANSELL, Ch. Ch. BUSINESS MANAGER H. G. FARMER, New Coll.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF "A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM."

1908.

[To face p. 275.

Society, under J. M. Greenly, of Trinity, the best type of President, with C. Bailey as Mentor, combines the merit of the old with the added freshness of the new. That its dramatic talent is not solely measured by its able exponents on the stage, those who visit Canterbury during the famous "week" and witness the efforts of Tassell, Harold Whitaker, Percy Lee, Ellis, and Rentoul, for the "Old Stagers," whose ranks are largely recruited from its best members, will readily admit. Scores of its old players have distinguished themselves in many and varied professions, and they should be proud of their representatives in the dramatic world; but it is not merely as a training-ground for the stage that the Society has justified its existence—far from it. The O.U.D.S. was originally founded as a social club: as such may it ever continue.

"It is quite true," wrote Adderley a quarter of a century ago, in a letter to the *Guardian*, "that these Oxford performances are above the average, but what a man does he had better do as well as he can, and Oxford does rightly aim at producing something above the ordinary Christmas Eve country-house theatricals. The expense, too, is well covered by the receipts.

"As to the unhealthiness of a theatrical connection, is not this a question which touches society generally rather than an Oxford dramatic club in particular? Is there not everywhere now a tendency

to pry into matters connected with the stage; and does the studious production of a play of Shakespeare really aggravate this tendency?

“I do most entirely object to a fortnight spent in studying Shakespeare being called a ‘fortnight’s idleness,’ even if it does involve a total suspension of other work. I know he would say we were not sent to Oxford to study Shakespeare. But were we sent there to row? Yet nobody would dream of calling the Putney practice of the ‘Varsity Eight a month’s idleness.

“It is quite true that the stage-manager has to give up more than a fortnight, perhaps a considerable portion of his time during two or three months, to the study of the play, but that is the fault of the authorities, who insist on nothing but Shakespeare being played at Oxford. Not that I consider even that time bestowed on learning the most difficult art of stage-management necessarily wasted. Were the Oxford actors allowed to play standard comedies, such as *The Rivals*, and *She Stoops to Conquer*, the whole production would take less time than getting up a commemoration ball, and would be very much more intellectual. Why do not people attack those sort of wickednesses—balls, bazaars, masonic *fêtes*, college ‘gaudies,’ and the like, which occupy just as much time in production, but do not in any way add to (perhaps they detract from) the brain power of those who manage them?”

As to the "most difficult art of stage-management," would it not be ideal if some day the O.U.D.S. could, to use a musical expression, train conductors as well as executants? Playfair, Snagge, Woodward, Tennant, Stevens have all subsequently exhibited a talent in this direction. And as on the river and in sports generally the coaches are almost invariably products of the 'Varsity itself, it would be a feather in their cap if the University Dramatic Society (as distinct from other amateurs) in its character of providing means of relaxation from more serious work, could do the same, even if their plays should not always reach the standard of professional companies.

On the general question of the influence of amateur theatricals upon an undergraduate's after-career, experience has shown that it exerts a most beneficial effect. It gives him courage and confidence in facing crowds; it improves his elocution and gives ease to his carriage and deportment. Old members of the O.U.D.S. who have become prominent in public life are all agreed upon this, and themselves strikingly illustrate its truth. Of the intellectual advantages, of the great impetus the O.U.D.S. has given to the study of Shakespeare at Oxford mention has already been made. It is too manifest to need insistence, and we elders who, as I have shown, brought these things after many vicissitudes to pass, only hope that the new men at

Oxford may help to carry on the O.U.D.S. to new triumphs in the future.

“And what of those who’ve played their part and seen
Death’s curtain fall; whose memory is green
As grows the grass upon their graves? I wis
We ask no kinder destiny than this :
To play each part assigned us with good will,
Not envious, but ambitious, striving still
To pluck from life its sweets, see all things fair,
Bind fast the ties of friendship, prompt to share
Prosperity with all, as prompt to give
Aid in adversity, and so to live
That on our tombs this epitaph may run,
Here lies the friend of all, the foe of none.”

APPENDIX

OXFORD UNIVERSITY DRAMATIC SOCIETY

RULES

I

THIS Society shall be called the "Oxford University Dramatic Society," and shall have for its object the furtherance of the Dramatic Art in Oxford.

II

All Members of the University shall be eligible for membership. The election of Members shall be vested in the Committee alone; the number of Resident Members not to exceed 120.

III

Each Candidate for admission must be proposed by one Member and seconded by two others, to all of whom he must be personally known. The Candidate's name and college, together with the names (in their own handwriting, or in that of the Secretary duly authorized), of the proposer and seconders, must be entered in the Book of Candidates, with the date of proposal.

IV

No one shall be eligible as a Candidate for admission till after his first Term's residence. The Committee, however, shall have power to make exception to this rule in the case of any one who is acting in the play.

V

The Entrance Fee shall be £2 10s., and the Terminal Subscription £1 10s. All subscriptions and entrance fees shall be paid into the London, County and Westminster Bank, Oxford, within a fortnight of the commencement of each Term. Any Member who shall have failed to pay his subscription within the first fortnight shall be fined 2s. 6d. for each succeeding week till the subscription and fines be paid, and if he have not paid by the end of the Term his name shall be struck off from the list of Members. Any Member whose name is struck off in this way may be re-elected to the Society on payment of all arrears and a second Entrance Fee.

VI

No newly-elected Member shall enter the Club House until he shall have paid the amount due from him on his admission.

VII

Members of the University who have already taken their degree, and gentlemen who are not members of the University, shall be eligible as Honorary Members or as Extra Members, but if Hon. Members use the Club Rooms for a period exceeding seven days per Term they must become Extra Members and pay the subscription. Extra Members shall be eligible for the office of Club Treasurer, but shall not vote at Committee or General Meetings except as Treasurer.

VIII

Members of the A.D.C., and of the Footlights Club, Cambridge, are *Honorary* Members of this Society, and *vice versâ*.



MISS LOMAN AND W. BRIDGES ADAMS.

1910.



G. J. COLMER, MISS A. BRAYTON AND MEYER.

1907.

[To face p. 281

IX

Any Member not in permanent residence may make use of the Club House without payment of subscription for three days in each Term, beyond which time he shall be liable for subscription of 4s. 6d. a week. The Secretary shall have power to introduce gentlemen, not resident in Oxford, as temporary Members for a period not exceeding seven days without subscription. This period may be extended at the discretion of the Committee.

X

The affairs of the Society shall be vested in two Committees: the Dramatic Committee and the Club Committee.

XI

The Dramatic Committee shall have control over all matters connected with the yearly performance of the Play, and also over the Smoking Concerts, and shall consist of the President, Secretary, Treasurer, Business Manager, and four other Members. The duty of the Business Manager shall be to assist in the management of the Play, subject to the wishes of the President and Secretary.

XII

The election of a new President, Secretary, Business Manager, and Dramatic Committee shall take place every year at a General Meeting after the performance of the Play; and they shall come into office at the beginning of the ensuing Term. They shall hold office for one year, and if any vacancy occurs they shall co-opt a new Member to make up their number. Ex-officers shall remain on the Committee *ex officio* as long as they are in residence. Any member of the Dramatic Committee who shall be absent from two successive meetings without an excuse which, in the opinion of the Committee, is satisfactory, shall cease to be a member of the Committee.

XIII

Those Members only who have taken part in the production of the Play shall be entitled to vote at the General Meeting for the election of the President, Secretary, and Dramatic Committee, or on any subject referred by the Dramatic Committee to a General Meeting.

XIV

No Member of the Society shall be eligible for the office of President who shall have taken his degree, but a degree shall be considered no barrier to the office of Secretary; and the degree of M.A. shall be considered essential to the office of Treasurer.

XV

The President shall take the chair at all meetings of the Society, or (in his absence) a Member of the Committee appointed by the said President to act as Chairman. In the event of the numbers being equal the Chairman shall have a casting vote.

XVI

The President, or (in the event of his absence) the Chairman duly appointed by him, shall be regarded as the interpreter of the rules of the Society at all meetings of the Society.

XVII

The books relating to the Club account shall be initialled weekly by the Treasurer, and those relating to the Dramatic account by the Secretary.

XVIII

Balance-sheets signed by the Treasurers and the President shall be posted on the notice board at the beginning of each Term. The Treasurer shall moreover make an annual statement of accounts at a General Meeting at the end of the Summer Term, and the Secretary at the end of the Easter Term.



MISS LEDWARD.

1908.



G. HOWARD-SMITH AND J. A. STAINTON.

1910.

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XIX

Nothing, with the exception of the daily supplies (not including wines, spirits or cigars), shall be ordered for the Club save on order forms specially supplied for the purpose and signed by the President and Treasurer.

XX

All the requirements of the Annual Performance shall be ordered in the same way; the order forms in this case being signed by the President and Secretary.

XXI

The Club Committee shall have control over all matters connected with the Club Rooms and over the election of Members, and shall consist of the Dramatic Committee and four other Members.

XXII

The general concerns of the Club shall be managed by the Club Committee. They shall also have power to appoint, remove, and suspend servants of the Society. They shall make all such regulations (not inconsistent with these General Rules) as they shall from time to time think necessary for the internal management and well-being of the Society; and all Regulations so made shall be binding upon all the Members of the Society unless set aside at a General Meeting.

XXIII

Vacancies in the Club Committee shall be filled up at a General Meeting, all Members of the Society being entitled to vote.

XXIV

Not more than two Members of the same College shall serve on the Committee.

XXV

The Club accounts shall be submitted terminally to a Chartered Accountant, and his balance-sheet shall be posted on the notice board at the commencement of each Term.

XXVI

Any unusual expenditure must be ratified by the Club Committee, if possible, before it has been made, or, if this is not possible, within a week. Otherwise the expense shall be borne by those responsible.

XXVII

All Officers and Members of the Committee shall be eligible for re-election.

XXVIII

An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society *may* be convened by the President *either* at the request of the Committee exercising their discretion in the convening of the said meeting, or on the petition of at least forty Resident Members of the Society duly *signifying in writing* their desire to the President for such Extraordinary General Meeting.

XXIX

In the event of such an Extraordinary Meeting of the Society being convened (whether by the Committee or by the aforesaid petition of forty Resident Members of the Society), notice of such Meeting shall be duly posted by the President in the Club Room at least seven days previously.

XXX

Fifteen Resident Members shall form a quorum at a General Meeting.

J. C. LEDWARD.



MR. ROBIN.

MR. BROOKE.

W. P. WATT.
1909.



E. S. H. CORBETT.
(Univ.)
1909.



W. P. WATT.
(Ball.)
1909.

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XXXI

No Rules affecting the Constitution of the Society shall be altered except by a two-thirds majority at a General Meeting. Notice of a motion thus affecting the Rules must be given not less than three days previous to the General Meeting.

XXXII

No motion or candidate for office shall be brought forward at a General Meeting, notice of which has not been given *in writing* to the President twenty-four hours previous to the holding of such meeting, in order that notice of the motion may be posted in the Club Rooms.

XXXIII

A *Book* shall be kept by the President, and minutes of *all* the meetings of the Society shall be duly entered therein by him.

XXXIV

The selection of a Play shall be vested in the Dramatic Committee (subject to the *veto* of the majority of the Resident Members of the Society), and the representation of the said Play shall take place annually at the Theatre in Hilary Term.

XXXV

The President shall be entrusted with the duty of casting the characters for the Play.

XXXVI

Nobody shall be cast for a speaking part in the Play who is not a Member of the Society.

XXXVII

No Member who has gone out of residence or who has finished his fifth year shall be cast for a speaking part in the Play, and the Society shall never perform as the O.U.D.S. out of Oxford.

XXXVIII

The President shall keep a book for the purpose of recording particulars of and criticism concerning the public representation of the Play.

XXXIX

If any Member be guilty of conduct, either in or out of Oxford, which is, in the opinion of the Committee, injurious to the character or interests of the Society, the President shall inform him that he be suspended until the Committee meets; and they shall have full power either to erase his name from the list of Members or to ask him to send in his resignation to the Committee.

XL

No Member whose name shall have been struck off the list of Members shall be afterwards admissible to the Club House as a visitor.

XLI

Any Member wishing to withdraw from the Society must signify his wish in writing to the Secretary within a fortnight from the beginning of the current Term, otherwise he shall be liable for his Terminal Subscription.

XLII

The Club House shall be open from 9 a.m. till 11.45 p.m. Any Member remaining in the Club after 12 p.m. shall be subject to a fine of 10s. for himself and any guests for each succeeding half-hour, except on the occasion of the yearly O.U.D.S. Supper.

XLIII

Members intending to dine in the Club House shall put down their names in the book provided for the purpose before 5 p.m. Members thus ordering dinner shall in the event of their not dining be liable to a charge of 2s. per head. Members who dine without putting down their names shall be charged 1s. in the bill, and the Committee will not consider any complaint with regard to the dinner in such cases.

XLIV

Members shall put down their names for breakfast before 9 p.m. on the previous evening.

XLV

Members ordering dinner for Sunday shall put down their names before 9 p.m. on Saturday.

XLVI

Members ordering supper shall put down their names before 8.30 p.m.

XLVII

The charges for meals shall be fixed at the discretion of the Club Committee.

XLVIII

Members buying wine (to be drunk outside the Club House) from the Club cellars may purchase it at cost price, when requiring not less than six bottles, otherwise they shall, together with a reasonable charge for portorage, pay the price charged in the Club wine list.

XLIX

Members bringing their own wine into the Club House shall pay corkage of 1s. on each bottle.

L

Members must pay ready money for everything ordered in the Club House. Any Member who fails to pay ready money shall be suspended after a given date, and his name, together with the amount owing, shall be posted in the Club Room until the whole be paid.

LI

No Member shall give any gratuity to the servants of the Society for attendance.

LII

Members' letters will be stamped by the Club up to 6*d.* a day. No letter will be stamped with more than a penny stamp.

LIII

No Member is on any account to bring a dog into the Club Room under a fine of 2*s.* 6*d.* Dogs may be tied up in the Hall.

LIV

No games of cards or chance shall be allowed in the Club House.

LV

No Member shall take away from the Club, under any pretence whatsoever, any newspaper, journal, notepaper, or other article, or make cuttings from the same.



H. J. FULLER. I. I. RUBENOWITZ. J. H. LECKIE.
 (New Coll.) (Queen's.)

1909.



P. GUEDALLA.

1909.



S. REECE.

1909.

[To face p. 288.]

LVI

Members may introduce friends to the Club House as visitors : but no resident member of the University may be introduced into any rooms except those especially reserved for guests.

LVII

Members shall write the names of any visitors whom they introduce to any meal in the book provided for the purpose.

LVIII

No ladies shall on any account be admitted to the Club House.

LIX

Members shall be liable for any damage which they or their guests may cause to the Society's property.

LX

Smoking Concerts shall be held in the Club Room at least twice in each Term.

LXI

The President shall take the chair at the Smoking Concerts.

LXII

The President shall keep an interleaved copy of Rules, in which he shall enter such alterations and additions as shall be made from time to time.

LXIII

As the payment of the Entrance Fee and Subscription will entitle a Member to enjoy the benefits and privileges of the Society, so it is to be considered as implying his acquiescence in and submission to the Rules of the Society, to the restrictions which they enjoin, and to the penalties which they enact, and to such Rules and Regulations as shall be made from time to time by any General Meeting or by the Committee.

LXIV

A copy of the foregoing Rules shall be sent by the Secretary to each newly-elected Member of the Society. Copies may afterwards be obtained from the Secretary on payment of 1s.

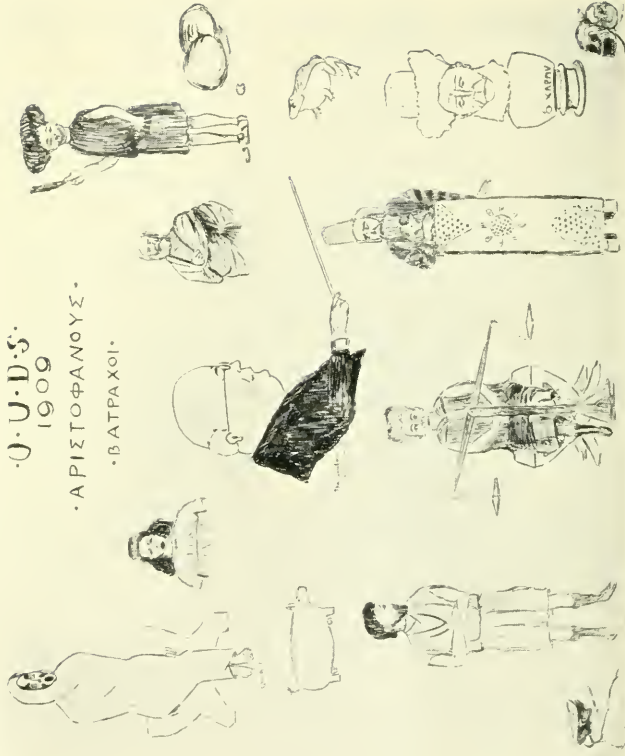
LXV

The President shall give notice of a General Meeting by means of a notice posted in the Club Room, at least a week before the intended date.

·Ο·Υ·Δ·Σ·
1909

·ΑΡΙΣΤΟΦΑΝΟΥΣ·

·ΒΑΤΡΑΧΟΙ·



CARICATURE OF "THE FROGS."
1909.

[To face p. 291.

LIST OF MEMBERS

(ARRANGED ACCORDING TO DATE OF MEMBERSHIP)

Those marked with an asterisk were Members of Committee.

HONORARY MEMBERS

Earl of Abingdon	Oscar Asche
Major Reynolds, D.S.O.	Sir Squire Bancroft
Dr. H. P. Allen, New College	F. R. Benson
Dr. C. H. Lloyd, Ch. Ch.	Martin Harvey
Sir L. Alma Tadema, R.A.	Cyril Maude
R. W. Macan, University	Henry Neville
Sir C. Hubert H. Parry, Exeter	G. R. Foss
F. C. Woods, Exeter	Otho Stuart
Alfred Parsons, R.I.	Lewis Waller
Rev. F. W. Bussell, Brasenose	Fred Terry
Dr. Varley Roberts	Herman Vezin
J. Forbes-Robertson	Edward Terry
J. Comyns Carr	Charles Hawtrey
Sir H. Beerbohm Tree	John Hare
G. Alexander	Sir Charles Wyndham
Lord Herschell	Edward Compton

EXTRA MEMBERS

*A. F. Theodosius, University	R. E. Olivier, M.A., Ch. Ch.
Major Reynolds, D.S.O.	C. B. Gull, M.A.
H. P. Symonds	
*Hon. J. Adderley, Ch. Ch.	*A. Bouchier, Trinity
P. L. Agnew, New College	E. Buckley, St. John's
*H. T. Arnall, Brasenose	H. C. Bush, Hertford
*A. G. G. Asher, Brasenose, <i>Pres.</i>	H. W. Cave, Balliol
C. W. Berry, Brasenose	A. R. Cobb, New College
Hon. A. Bligh, Ch. Ch.	Hon. G. Coleridge, Trinity
*W. E. Bolitho, Trinity	*W. L. Courtney, New College

- Hon. G. Curzon, All Souls'
 E. Harington, Ch. Ch.
 F. J. Humphreys, Brasenose
 *E. Mitchell Innes, Balliol
 *Lord Kenyon, Ch. Ch.
 *S. E. R. Lane, Brasenose, *Sec.*
 *C. G. Lang, Balliol
 *B. P. Lascelles, Magdalen
 *A. Mackinnon, Trinity
 *D. H. McLean, New College
 A. MacNeil, Trinity
 *L. Owen, New College, *Treas.*
 *H. V. Page, Wadham, *Treas.*
 R. H. Pemberton, New College
 R. H. Philipson, New College
 S. J. Portal, Ch. Ch.
 G. W. Ricketts, Oriel
 A. Rotheram, Balliol
 *W. H. Spottiswoode, Balliol
 N. E. Stainton, Ch. Ch.
 S. H. Lechmere Stuart, Magd.
 *T. C. Toler, Ch. Ch.
 J. H. Ware, Brasenose
 J. Fuller, Ch. Ch.
 C. Egerton Green, Balliol
 W. King Harman, Magdalen
 W. Lawson, Trinity
 H. H. Ludlow Bruges, St. John's
 W. H. Paine, Magdalen
 F. W. Pember, All Souls'
 Hon. C. H. S. Stanhope, New
 College
 E. M. Wigram, Oriel
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 W. J. Barry, Brasenose
 *E. H. Clark, New College
 *F. H. Jackson, Balliol, *Treas.*
 H. M. Tomlin, Balliol
 S. Westlake, Balliol
 *A. D. T. Carey, Ch. Ch., *Sec.*
 D. G. Hogarth, Magdalen
 *E. J. Mills, Ch. Ch.
 Duke of Newcastle, Magdalen
 D. J. Stone, Brasenose
 G. H. Aitken, Oriel
 C. F. Macpherson, Brasenose
 E. F. Trower, St. John's
 H. O. Whitby, Lincoln
 *W. J. Morris, Jesus, *Treas.*
 D. Fack-Beresford, Ch. Ch.
 J. H. Brain, Oriel
- H. Czarikow, Brasenose
 W. B. Davenport, Balliol
 H. A. Hood, Balliol
 F. T. Higgins, Ch. Ch.
 C. C. Lindsay, Wadham
 Lord A. Osborne, Balliol
 R. C. C. Preston, Ch. Ch.
 A. W. Watson, Balliol
 R. H. Balloch, New College
 C. Leveson-Gower, Balliol
 H. R. Parker, Brasenose
 H. E. Pember, Balliol
 G. E. Rhodes, Brasenose
 P. Coles, University
 Sir J. P. Dickson, Ch. Ch.
 *C. R. Disraeli, New College
 A. Drummond, Ch. Ch.
 Lord W. G. Lennox, Ch. Ch.
 J. A. MacLean, New College
 W. R. W. Peel, Balliol
 P. C. Smith, St. John's
 H. J. Hulse, Balliol
 H. T. Franks, Wadham
 R. N. Bingley, Exeter
 H. M. Forster, New College
 Douglas Ainslie, Exeter
 K. S. Anderson, New College
 Hon. L. Bathurst, New College
 *A. H. Grahame, Balliol, *Sec.*
 *Hon. J. Scott-Montagu, New
 College, *Sec.*
 *Hon. R. Scott-Montagu, New
 College
 *W. A. Phillips, St. John's
 *M. F. Davies, New College
 *Earl of Ancram, New College
 Hon. F. Boyle, New College
 C. Spottiswoode, Brasenose
 R. Peel, Balliol
 Hon. A. Capell, Balliol
 Hon. K. Bowes-Lyon, Ch. Ch.
 *H. J. Greenwood, Ch. Ch., *Treas.*
 C. Nugent, Ch. Ch., *Sec.*
 *E. F. Nugent, Ch. Ch.
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 V. Morier, Balliol
 J. A. R. Marriott, New College
 E. H. Alderson, Brasenose
 A. J. Tassell, New College
 R. C. Hunt, Merton
 Hon. D. H. Cairns, New Coll.

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 D. G. Little, Merton
 J. W. Gully, Balliol
 H. O. Beaumont, Balliol
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 *Lord Warkworth, Ch. Ch., *Sec.*
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 *A. Richards, St. John's
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 M. B. Clegg, New College
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 A. S. Cripps, Trinity
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 J. R. Davison, Ch. Ch.
 P. Dearmer, Ch. Ch.
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 H. B. Grotrian, Trinity
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 E. G. Hills, Balliol
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 H. M. Hordern, Ch. Ch.
 *W. M. Hornby, New College
 S. Johnson, Ch. Ch.
 H. B. Kitchin, Ch. Ch.
 H. C. M. Lambert, New College
 J. Le Mesurier, Ch. Ch.
 W. E. Loyd, Ch. Ch.
 *H. F. Lyon, Trinity
 J. P. H. Londsedale, New College
 H. Marshall, Trinity
 S. H. Meade, Trinity
 S. H. C. Moir, Exeter
 G. Nickalls, Magdalen
 R. E. Olivier, Ch. Ch.
 E. C. Oppenheim, Ch. Ch.
 H. J. Oppenheim, Ch. Ch.
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 T. B. Pease, New College
 W. G. Pennyman, Brasenose
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 K. Pulteny, Ch. Ch.
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 C. Schuster, New College
 H. Schwartze, Wadham
 P. J. Shaw, New College
 C. S. Stokoe, Trinity
 C. M. Style, New College
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 A. T. Turner, Trinity
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 *A. Ellis, Trinity, *Sec.*
 V. Francke, Trinity
 W. J. Giffard, Ch. Ch.
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 A. C. Havers, Trinity
 R. B. Hughes, Balliol
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 P. H. Landon, Hertford
 E. T. Marriott, Merton
 J. D. Martyn, Exeter

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 G. H. Meade, Trinity
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 A. Ponsonby, Balliol
 G. S. Pott, Magdalen
 H. J. Rofe, Balliol
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 C. Stocks, New College
 H. A. Tapsfield, Magdalen
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 H. P. Tellington, Balliol
 T. Vans Best, Magdalen
 M. R. Von Veith, Keble
 A. W. Wilson, Keble
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 C. R. S. Balfour, Trinity
 *A. B. Nutter, Brasenose, *Treas.*
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 *J. Hearn, Brasenose, *Sec.*
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 A. McMullen, Balliol
 C. Peacock, St. Edmund Hall
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 W. B. Stuart, Brasenose
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 *H. E. Snagge, New College, *Sec.*
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 *C. H. Croker-King, Lincoln
 H. K. Foster, Trinity
 J. F. Kershaw, Balliol
 *P. Comyns Carr, Brasenose, *Sec.*
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 *C. W. E. Cotton, University
 E. G. Micklem, New College
 *P. A. Rubens, University
 A. Waterfield, New College
 C. B. Fry, Wadham
 C. R. Austen-Leigh, Trinity
 A. Hutchinson, Worcester
 *P. Lee, Oriel
 C. J. Webb, Keble
 C. D. Hewitt, Magdalen
 H. Ellis, Merton
 H. C. Hamilton, Merton
 *F. Stevens, Keble
 *W. Law, Oriel
 *H. M. Woodward, Keble, *Treas.*
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 E. A. Belcher, Lincoln
 *L. E. Berman, Balliol, *Treas.*
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 *L. R. Oldershaw, Ch. Ch., *Sec.*
 C. Pepsy, Oriel
 J. H. Preston, Brasenose
 H. F. Chamberlayne, Brasenose
 C. E. Jenkins, Brasenose
 *H. R. D. Pechell, Brasenose
 E. T. Lyon, Brasenose
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 E. Penton, New College
 C. C. Eley, Brasenose
 *C. H. Hoare, New College
 W. G. Wickham, University
 J. H. Bellhouse, Oriel
 Synd. Ulec Meerza, Brasenose
 H. C. Woodman, Brasenose
 R. N. Fowler, Brasenose
 R. H. de Montmorency
 F. M. May, Brasenose
 W. R. K. Mainwaring, Ch. Ch.
 C. E. Crocker, Brasenose
 H. Belloc, Balliol
 P. J. Macdonell, Brasenose
 A. R. Robert, Ch. Ch.
 A. F. Mullins, Keble
 C. Toogood, Brasenose
 E. Arden, Brasenose
 H. I. Fisher, Keble
 G. J. Sandys, Pembroke
 G. H. Freeman, Ch. Ch.
 G. S. Quinton Jones, Keble
 B. Philips, Keble
 *W. G. Chancellor, Oriel, *Sec.*
 B. T. Holland, Ch. Ch.
 J. H. Hastings, Magdalen



SKETCHES AT "THE TEMPEST."

1910.

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- E. R. Bourne, Ch. Ch.
 J. H. Richardson, New College
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 A. H. Hedgeland, New College
 D. Meinertzhagen, New College
 J. A. Fowler, Ch. Ch.
 M. B. Clissold, Oriel
 W. H. Ferguson, Keble
 J. H. C. Evelyn, Ch. Ch.
 J. N. P. Wood, Ch. Ch.
 W. J. B. White, Ch. Ch.
 G. L. Greenshields, Oriel
 *E. A. Bierderman, University
 F. Fitzhugh, Ch. Ch.
 *A. E. R. Mackintosh, Oriel
 C. O. Jubb, Oriel
 H. C. B. Underdown, Balliol
 J. Taylor, Brasenose
 C. O. Crisp, University
 S. C. Probyn, Ch. Ch.
 E. H. Pelham, Balliol
 A. Eckersley, St. John's
 C. Mochell, C.C.C.
 B. Limpus, Keble
 C. Beckwith, Keble
 G. A. M. Docker, Oriel
 A. E. M. Glover, Oriel
 H. W. de Rougemont, University
 *C. P. Nickalls, New College
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 A. C. Medd, Balliol
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 *K. R. Barnes, Ch. Ch.
 J. W. Blunt, Magdalen
 E. G. Eardley Wilmot, Oriel
 W. Edgington, New College
 A. W. Swinburne, Oriel
 C. H. Lyall, Brasenose
 G. Hawes, Hertford
 J. H. Harrison, St. John's
 H. R. Nevill, Oriel
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 H. A. Davis, University
 H. L. Davis, Brasenose
 W. M. Beckwith, New College
 R. H. H. Keenlyside, Trinity
 *S. A. Gillon, New College
 C. O. P. Gibson, Ch. Ch.
 C. H. S. Shepherd-Cross,
 University
- J. C. Radcliffe, Exeter
 H. Gurney, Trinity
 B. D. Fisher, New College
 F. Russell Peel, Oriel
 C. S. Ascherson, Merton
 *R. T. Lee, Oriel
 C. E. Lane, Exeter
 *E. C. Vigors, Ch. Ch.
 *D. O. Malcolm, New College
 M. L. Gwyer, Ch. Ch.
 A. F. Murray-Graham, New
 College
 C. E. Johnston, New College
 D. W. Pollock, New College
 A. Shelley, Keble
 R. F. Herschell, Magdalen
 F. W. Robinson, Oriel
 D. R. T. Lloyd, Magdalen
 A. G. Sturt, Ch. Ch.
 H. Goldsmith, Magdalen
 L. J. Wray, Pembroke
 M. C. Sandys, New College
 N. O'Shaughnessy, St. John's
 A. de Forest, Ch. Ch.
 R. E. More, Ch. Ch.
 W. F. Fox, Ch. Ch.
 M. Nickalls, New College
 Hon. J. Trefusis, New College
 G. A. Strutt, Magdalen
 *G. Gathorne-Hardy, New College
 W. Athalstan Johnson, Trinity
 H. R. Mack, Ch. Ch.
 W. Rooke-Ley, Ch. Ch.
 N. W. Wingate-Saul, Ch. Ch.
 E. H. Brassey, New College
 *J. N. Williams, New College
 *E. L. Pape, Trinity
 Earl of Dalhousie, University
 T. B. Etherington-Smith, Oriel
 L. C. Chawner, New College
 *R. Bayley, New College
 C. M. Firth, Exeter
 T. M. Turnbull, Wadham
 A. Mavrogordato, Wadham
 E. Malone, Oriel
 W. M. Stuart, University
 R. C. Hill, University
 E. R. D. Munro, Balliol
 C. W. Farrer, Trinity
 G. H. B. Gibbs, Ch. Ch.
 J. Kennaway, Balliol

- G. O. C. Edwards, New College
 R. Sambourne, University
 H. Grisewood, Ch. Ch.
 E. A. Buchanan, Pembroke
 F. M. Hannay, Trinity
 W. Astor, New College
 Lord Berwick, Trinity
 G. Robarts, Magdalen
 J. Baxendale, Merton
 H. Jameson, Oriel
 L. Mendl, University
 C. Doughy, C.C.C.
 R. Huidekoper, Trinity
 B. R. Arkwright, Oriel
 N. B. Lindsay, Oriel
 F. J. Heywood, Ch. Ch.
 H. Alexander, C.C.C.
 J. Beringer, St. John's
 H. B. Money-Coutts, New College
 J. Aspinall, Ch. Ch.
 F. A. Iremonger, Keble
 G. L. Hoare, Ch. Ch.
 T. G. Rawstone, Magdalen
 P. Phipps, Balliol
 *H. M. Tennent, Wadham
 W. H. Dixon, Ch. Ch.
 H. C. Pilkington, Magdalen
 E. G. Hoare, Trinity
 R. H. Montgomery, Merton
 C. Collard, Ch. Ch.
 A. C. Graham, Ch. Ch.
 C. N. A. Graham, Hertford
 G. A. Mounsey, New College
 W. F. A. Rattigan, Magdalen
 P. P. Marshall, Keble
 F. J. W. Hunter, Merton
 C. M. Holford, New College
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 F. Marsham-Townshend, Ch. Ch.
 E. A. D. Collins, Ch. Ch.
 H. C. Pember, New College.
 E. Crawshay Williams, Trinity
 R. Verney, Ch. Ch.
 W. H. Whittaker, Magdalen
 T. Smith, Magdalen
 W. Chapman, Ch. Ch.
 S. A. W. Hannen, University
 Hon. N. Stourton, Ch. Ch.
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 C. T. Barton, Oriel
 A. N. Woddell Dudley, Oriel
 S. E. Cash, Oriel
 R. C. Clarke, Trinity
 D. D. S. Little, Exeter
 E. N. Trappes-Lomax, Brasenose
 E. Balston, Merton
 C. S. Hannay, Trinity
 L. W. Joyce, Merton
 C. N. Daniell, Oriel
 H. F. Yeatman, Oriel
 N. Hutchinson, Merton
 C. E. Manning, New College
 F. Henderson, Ch. Ch.
 A. R. Wilson, Wadham
 M. W. Pope, Merton
 C. Waley Cohen, Balliol
 G. S. Hoare, New College
 G. Smith, Ch. Ch.
 W. R. G. Bond, New College
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 C. R. L. Nickoll, Magdalen
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 A. A. Wilson, Trinity
 S. P. T. Prideaux, Trinity
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 H. W. Leigh Bennett, New
 College
 *G. P. Langton, New College
 C. R. Murray, University
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 J. H. Orr, Trinity
 J. G. Rendell, University
 Viscount Tiverton, New College
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 R. G. Leigh, Ch. Ch.
 O. W. Greene, Exeter
 F. A. Simmonds, Magdalen
 G. A. W. Booth, New College
 T. G. Stevenson, New College
 C. Truslove, Ch. Ch.
 H. McKenna, Ch. Ch.
 R. F. Amphlett, Oriel
 E. A. Benedict, Oriel
 L. Crawshay Williams, New
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1910.

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 E. F. Goodhart, Merton
 C. H. Wild, Oriel
 J. C. Matthew, Wadham
 R. F. Williams, Wadham
 J. Collyer Bristowe, Ch. Ch.
 E. B. Horluck, Ch. Ch.
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 Crown Prince of Siam, Ch. Ch.
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 Ch. Ch.
 R. W. Awdry, New College
 *B. Forsyth, Ch. Ch.
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 L. C. G. Booth, New College
 L. P. Penny, New College
 L. E. W. Egerton, Ch. Ch.
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 F. Shaw, Oriel
 A. H. Liddle, Oriel
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 H. R. Chapman, Exeter
 H. C. T. Blackwood, Oriel
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 D. Whittall, New College
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 Beher, Ch. Ch.
 L. A. Schwann, Merton
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 S. G. Overbury, Merton
 E. G. J. Moyna, New College
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 R. C. Scott, New College
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 J. C. Milburn, Lincoln
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 W. L. Chance, Trinity
 A. P. Forster, Trinity
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 C. D. H. Corbett, University
 *A. T. Loyd, Hertford
 J. N. Wickstid, Pembroke
 Viscount Lewisham, Ch. Ch.
 Count Fistalies, Queen's
 Count Esterhazy, Queen's
 H. E. W. Young, Trinity
 H. L. Samson, Magdalen
 P. Ralli, Balliol
 P. J. H. Close, Trinity
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 len
 *E. Kenworthy-Browne, New
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 A. P. Boissier, Balliol
 W. H. Durst, Keble
 W. B. Clarke, New College
 E. S. Monck, Magdalen
 E. G. Monier-Williams, Uni-
 versity
 G. A. H. Keenlyside, Trinity
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 O. A. von Grunelius, Magdalen
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 J. O. Fairlie, New College
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 C. H. Pirie-Gordon, Magdalen
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 W. Vernon Holt, Oriol
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 A. F. Pretty, Hertford
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 G. Bannatyne, New College
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 N. R. Hasluck, Trinity
 A. B. Dale, New College
 G. Schwann, Ch. Ch.
 Lord N. G. Crichton-Stuart,
 Ch. Ch.
 A. S. Carr, Trinity
 J. F. Ferguson, New College
 Earl Gifford, Ch. Ch.
 R. F. Hanbury, Ch. Ch.
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 R. Gorell-Barnes, Balliol
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 L. L. Skinner, Trinity
 A. Lambert, Trinity
 F. J. Bolton, Trinity
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 J. L. Wagget, Trinity
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 G. Bailward
 E. Southern, Ch. Ch.
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 H. C. Borgnis, Brasenose
 C. H. Peters, New College
 D. Finlay, Ch. Ch.

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 L. S. Montagu, New College
 H. S. Whitaker, Magdalen
 L. P. Stedall, Merton
 E. Bailey, Merton
 P. B. Foster, Hertford
 C. G. S. Farmer, New College
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