

that paper on the streets of Bristol would be an occupation far more seeming for a boy of his age.

From the time Chatterton was able to read, his musings on the sculptured figures with quaint inscriptions which met his eye in St. Mary Redcliff Church acquired greater sway over his ardent imagination. They first awakened in his mind that love for a past age which afterwards became so marked a characteristic of his literary career. Later on in the muniment room of that church he found in some age-rusted chests, neglected parchments covered with the dust of centuries, which inspired his design of reviving the antiquated lore of that munificent age when William Craynge occupied Bristol's civic chair, and Henry VI. and Edward IV. successively reigned as Kings.

At the age of eight, he became a pupil of Colton Hospital, which he attended for about six years. Only the elementary branches of a common school education were taught in this charity school. To a prodigy like Chatterton, eagerly ambitious to take pre-eminence of others, it was a great disappointment to realize, as he did before long, that the education imparted in this school was so meagre, that, according to his own complaints, he could have learned more at home by self-study. He was, from the earliest, self-confident and disdainful of conditions more adapted to less gifted mortals. To the credit of Colton School, it may be stated, however, that cramming was an unknown art there and that it was not an entirely Godless school, like so many of our boasted modern institutions of learning, whose aims never rise higher than the narrow horizon of this world. That Chatterton failed to profit perseveringly to the end by the little religious instruction which he received in this school may only teach many that disregard for religion is a danger against which the English Church Catechism is an insufficient safeguard.

Colton School was also linked with historical associations, some or all of which must have left their lasting influences upon a mind so susceptible of impressions as that of Thomas Chatterton. Its site was once occupied by a monastery whose walls were wont to echo the mellow voices in prayer and psalms of the Carmelite order of Friars, when the outside world was wrapped in the silence of night. The patter of the monks' feet, once heard through its dimlit corridors, fitting counts for the hour-glass of charity and prayer, unselfish industry, heavenly patience, and heroic sacrifice, ceased when the hostile influences of the Reformation had emptied its cells and converted St. Mary Redcliff into an Anglican temple. On the site once occupied by the monastery