Hodde-dom, both of which were published in the following year.

In the library at Westminster School is a small portion of a form which bears, in upright letters, the name I. DRYDEN, believed to have been cut by the boy-poet with a penknife: it is kept cased in glass, and is ornamented with gold and diamonds. There was also within the present century to be seen the poet's name written upon the wall of a room in the Manor House, Chiswick, which was frequently resorted to by Busby and his pupils. Dryden came up as a Westminster scholar to Trinity College, Cambridge, May 11, 1650. Of his career at College, almost the only notice in the archives is dated July 19, 1652: "put out of Commons for a fortnight at least,' confined to the walls, and sentenced to read a confession of his crime at the fellows' table during dinner-time—this offence being disobedience to the vice-master, and "contumacy in taking the punishment inflicted by him." He took his degree of Bachelor of Arts, and was made Master of Arts, but never became a Fellow of the College: and he always entertained feelings of aversion for Cambridge, which he did not hesitate to avow in the Prologues he wrote many years afterwards for delivery at Oxford. Dryden has left these interesting memorials of his early studies:—

"For my own part, who must confess it to my shame, that I never read anything but for pleasure, history has always been the most delightful entertainment of my life."—*Life of Plutarch*, 1683.

"I had read Polybius in English, with the pleasure of a boy, before I was ten years of age."—*Character of Polybius*, 1692.

Hence Dryden is concluded to have spent more time over Thucydides, Tacitus, and the rest of the Greek and Roman historians, than he gave up to the poets, ancient or modern. He cultivated slowly the poetical faculty; he was nearly thirty years of age before he published his poem on the death of Cromwell; and his early productions followed each other at long intervals. His *Essay on Dramatic Poesy*, elegantly written, is the earliest regular work of the kind in the language, and contains the manly avowal—the first after the Restoration—of the supremacy of Shakspeare. Dryden's language, like his thoughts, is truly English: his verse flows with natural freedom and magnificence; his satire is keen and trenchant; and the style of his prose is easy, natural, and graceful. He was made Poet-Laureate, but deprived of his office by the Revolution. "The prose of Dryden," says Sir Walter Scott, "may rank with the best in the English language. It is no less of his own formation than his versification; is equally spirited and equally harmonious."

CXI.

SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN AT WESTMINSTER AND OXFORD.

Thousands of the indwellers of the capital which Sir Christopher Wren has adorned with no fewer than forty public buildings, are, probably, unacquainted with the extent and variety of the abilities and acquirements of this great architect and excellent man. Seldom has the promise of youth been so well redeemed as in Wren. He was born in 1632, at East Knoyle, in Wiltshire, of which parish his father was then rector. He was a small and weakly child, whose rearing required much care. He was educated at home by his father and a private tutor, until he was placed under the special care of Dr. Busby, at Westminster School, having at the same time Dr Holder as a mathematical tutor. Aubrey describes young Wren as "a youth of prodigious inventive wit," of whom Holder "was as tender as if he had been his own child, who gave him his first introduction into Geometry and Arithmetic; and when he was a young scholar at the University of Oxford, was a very necessary and kind friend." The first-fruits of young Wren's inventive faculty was put forth in 1645, in his thirteenth year, by the production of a new astronomical instrument, which he dedicated to his father, with a dutiful Latin address, and eighteen hexameter verses. This invention was followed up by an exercise in physics, on the origin of rivers, and by the invention of a pneumatic engine, and a peculiar instrument in gnomomes. His mind ripened early into maturity and strength; he loved the classics; but mathematics and astronomy were from the first his favourite pursuits.

In his fourteenth year, Wren was admitted as a gentlemen-commoner at Wadham College, Oxford, where, by his acquirements and inventions he gained the friendship of Dr. Wilkins, Seth Ward (Bishop of Salisbury,) Hooke, whom he assisted in his *Micrographia*, and other eminent scientific men, whose meetings laid the foundation of the Royal Society. In his fifteenth year, he translated Oughtred's Geometrical Dialling into Latin; and about this time he made a reflecting dial for the ceiling of a room, embellished with figures representing astronomy and geometry, with their attributes, tastefully drawn with a pen. He next took out a patent for an instrument to write with two pens at the same time; and he invented a weather-clock, and an instrument wherewith to write in the dark.

In 1654, Evelyn visited Oxford, and went to All-Souls, where he says, "I saw that miracle of a youth, Christopher Wren." He ranked high in his knowledge of anatomical science; he made the drawings for Dr. Wilkins's Treatise on the Brain; and he was the originator of the physiological experiment of injecting various liquors into the veins of living animals. In 1653, he was elected a Fellow of All-Souls; and by the time that he had attained his twenty-fourth year, his name had gone over Europe, and he was considered as one of that band of eminent men whose discoveries were raising the fame of English science. In 1657, he was appointed Professor of Astronomy at Gresham College; three years later, Savilian Professor at Oxford; and received the degree of D C. L. in 1661. It was after delivering his lecture on Astronomy at Gresham College, on Nov. 28, 1660, that the foundation of the Royal Society was discussed; and its archives bear the amplest testimony to his knowledge and industry, as exhibited in his commentaries on almost every subject connected with science and art. His inventions and discoveries alone are said to amount to fifty-three.

Wren's scientific reputation probably led to his being, in 1661, appointed assistant to Sir John Denham, the Surveyor-General; and in 1663, he was commissioned to survey and report upon St. Paul's Cathedral, with a view to its restoration, or rather, the rebuilding of the body of the fabric. The Great Fire decided the long-debated question whether there should be a new cathedral. He was the worst paid architect of whom we have any record: his salary as architect of St. Paul's was only 200*l.* a year; his pay for rebuilding the churches in the city was only 100*l.* a year; and it is related that on his completion of the beautiful church of St. Stephen, Walbrook, the parishioners presented his wife with 20 guineas!

With all these architectural pursuits, Wren found time to preside at the Royal Society, and take part in experiments: many great men have shed lustre upon its chair; few to a greater degree than Sir Christopher Wren.

CXII.

NEWTON AT GRANTHAM AND CAMBRIDGE.

The childhood and education of that master-mind which, by the establishment of the theory of Gravitation, "immortalized his name, and perpetuated the intellectual glory of his country," next demand our attention. Isaac Newton was born in 1642, in the manor-house of Woolsthorpe, close to the village of Colsterworth, about six miles south of Grantham, in Lincolnshire. He was a posthumous child, and was of such a diminutive size when born, that he might have been put into a quart mug. At the usual age he was sent to two small day-schools at Skillington and Stoke, two hamlets near Woolsthorpe, and here he was taught reading, writing, and arithmetic. At the age of twelve he was sent to the grammar-school at Grantham. According to his own confession, Newton was extremely inattentive to his studies, and stood very low in the school. When he was last in the lowermost form but one, the boy above him, as they were going to school, kicked him on the stomach; Newton subsequently challenged the boy to fight, the combat took place in the churchyard, and Newton was the victor; his antagonist still stood above him in the form, until, after many a severe struggle, Newton not only gained the individual victory, but rose to the highest place in the school.

Newton had not long been at school before he exhibited a taste for mechanical inventions. With the aid of little saws, hammers, hatchets, and other tools, during his play-hours, he constructed models of known machines and amusing contrivances; as a windmill, a water-clock, and a carriage, to be moved by the person who sat in it; and by watching the workmen in erecting a windmill near Grantham, Newton acquired such knowledge of its mechanism, that he completed a large working model of it, which was frequently placed upon the top of the house in which Newton lived at Grantham, and was put in motion by the action of the wind upon its sails. Although Newton was at this time a "sober, silent, and thinking lad," who never took part in the games of his schoolfellows, but employed all his leisure hours in "knocking and hammering in his lodging-room," yet he occasionally taught the boys to "play philosophically." He introduced the flying of paper kites, and is said to have investigated their best forms and proportions, as well as the number and position of the points to which the string should be attached. He constructed also lanterns of "crimpled paper," in which he placed a candle, to light him to school in the dark winter mornings; and in dark nights he tied