

with the exception of about twenty near the door have been taken down to make room for the theatre. A partition has been raised to divide it from the rest of the Dormitory, at the top of which runs a plank about a foot wide, where the town-boys stand, and do the clapping—and hot work it is, I can tell you! Beneath the "gods," as it is called, comes the "strangers' gallery;" then, sloping down to the floor, the "Seniors' pit." The centre of the floor of the house is the place of honour, and there sit the masters and notable guests (all tickets are complimentary), while to the left is the "Masters' pit," and to the right, places for the ladies, and on the same side close to the stage the "Old Westminsters'" place. The stage, though small, is very brilliantly lighted, having more lights in proportion to its size, as the old chap who managed them used to tell us, than Drury Lane.

In the meantime, the Juniors and Second Elections have been disposed of—some in nooks and crannies under the "Seniors' pit," some behind the stage, some in the *Sanatorium*.

There are three representations of the Play. The first is little more than a dress-rehearsal, and has only the Prologue. The second and third are grand nights, when the Epilogue, written by some illustrious old Westminister, or occasionally by one of the masters, is put on the stage. After the two first nights we have oyster suppers, after the third a "grand spread."

College is in a state of excitement on the eve of the third night. "Lecture!" "Lecture!" "Lecture!" sounds from all quarters. Seniors and Third Elections calling for hot water and a dozen other things at the same time. Hard work it is "Light-the-fire" and "watch" of that day with the four large kettles that never will get hot, much less boil! Many are the threats of punishment, but Juniors and even Second-Elections lend a hand and the preparation is soon over in safety.

Now all are ready. Second Elections and Juniors in brand-new "College waicoots" and caps and gowns, immaculate shirt-fronts and spotless white ties and gloves. Third Elections and Seniors arrived at the dignity of tails. There are the "Ladies' Men"—"the most *au fait* at that sort of thing, you know" of all the men in College. Yet they blush as they offer their arms to conduct the fair ones to their places. Most of the ladies are provided with

"Bohn's publications, so useful
To the student of Latin and Greek."

so that they may comprehend some of the "points" of the Play.

The audience is coming in, and if you are a Junior and happen to be stationed at the door, not knowing the vast body of "Old Westminsters" you may make a mistake as I did, and say, "Ticket, sir?" to one of them. An indignant rebuke is shot at you from the eyes of the Superior, being, not without some pity in it for your sad ignorance, as he says "Ticket! Old Westminister, sir!" and you feel as if you had committed an unpardonable crime!

If, however, you should happen to have no station, and consequently nothing much to do, you may enjoy yourself extremely, especially if you are on sufficiently good terms with the chief "ladies" to come in for some ices and wafers.

"Big Ben" tolls eight, and shortly after the town-boys from the "gods" descend the Head Master entering from the Under-Master's house with his party. Immediately they clap, and the band plays "See the Conquering Hero." All being seated and the music over, a faint tinkle from the prompter's bell brings before the curtain the Captain, clad in the old Academic garb—knee-breeches, black silk stockings, buckled shoes, &c. He delivers the Prologue; not Terence's own, but one written for the occasion. It contains the Obituary, Westminister's Honours, and reference to improvements made or necessary. The Captain retires, the bell tinkles, up goes the curtain, and you see before you a street at Athens, with the Acropolis in the distance; on one side the house of Chremes, on the other that of Demiphio. Daous appears with his bag of money for Geta, and the Play (*The Phormio*) commences.

It is not necessary to give a full sketch of the plot for the readers of the GAZETTE. Two young men, Antiphio and Phaedria, become involved in difficulties; the former with a Lemnian (Phanium), whom he marries, the latter with a music girl, for whom Dorio, the "Ieno," wants thirty minae. They employ Gelta, the slave of Demiphio, Antiphio's father, and Phormio, a parasite indebted to the young men in the way of good living, to smooth down matters and get the thirty mine out of the old gentleman. The chief character of the play is Phormio, a favorable specimen of his class. He possesses unlimited "cheek," for what does he say in answer to Geta's fears about his success:—

Ph. Factum est periculum: jam pelam visa est via.
Quot me censes homines jam deverberasse usque ad necem,
Hospites, tum civis? quo magis novi, tanto serpius.
Celsolan, en unquam injuriam aulisti mihi scriptam dicam

But he is amiable and apparently grateful to his friends. Witness his words when he hears of the discovery that Chremes is Phanium's father:—

Ph. bene, ita me Di ment, factum: gaudes
Tantum fortunam de improvviso esse his datam.

Chremes and Demiphio have an amusing scene with Nansistrata, in which Chremes has to impart by hints to Demiphio, who is curiously thick-headed for the occasion, his discovery that Antiphio's wife is his own daughter. In the last scene but one the characters of the two brothers are admirably brought out—Demiphio willing to risk anything to save his money; Chremes, to save his reputation with his wife, afraid of that state of affairs which Phormio describes in the last scene, when he says:

Habet haec ei quod dum vivat usque ad aurem oggannat.

There are passages, too, which apply to our own time as well as to that of Terence. Is not Dorio's maxim the rule of modern society?

Mei lege utar ut potior sit qui prior abledum est.

Look at the clever scene where Demiphio consults the three advocates. Cratmiris gives one opinion, Hegio an opposite one; then

Cr. Ego amplius delibendum censeo;
Res magna est. Ut. Numquid nos via? *Dr.* Facistis probe;

and as they retire,

Incertior sum multo quam dudum.

Not a few can make the same remark after consulting present-day lawyers!

Perhaps, from a strong moral standpoint, plays in which young men plot with slaves and parasites against their fathers as do Phaedria and Antiphio, with success, are not all that could be desired. In the *Phormio*, however, there is compensation. Who but can rejoice that a wicked old bigamist like Chremes gets punished? Who regrets that avaricious Demiphio loses his thirty minae?

After the Play comes the Epilogue. Then the curtain falls; the caps go round; the audience depart; and the Queen's Scholars with some cries of "Lecture!" "Hot water!" &c.: for moustaches must be got off, and paint and powder washed away, before the actors are ready to attack the good things provided for them below stairs. As I said, after the third representation comes a "grand spread." At the head of the table sits the Captain, at its foot a Monitor. By the Captain are the "Old Westminsters," and the rest seat themselves anywhere. The edibles disappear, the champagne sparkles in the long, old-fashioned glasses, but does not remain there long. Supper over and honour due done to the Queen and Royal Family, the Captain calls for the "Floreat." The waiter brings the large silver tankard—a present to the School from Warren Hastings, its handles formed of massy silver elephants' heads with curling trunks,—filled with some not unpleasant brew. The Captain rises, speaks a few words, and as he lifts the cup to his lips, while the man on his right gets up his feet, repeats the formula "FLOREAT WESTMONASTERIENSIS!" And so it goes down the table, across from man to man, and each echoes the word, not only with his lips but in his heart, "FLOREAT!"

"Floreat!" indeed, may be the prayer of its Alumni for the grand old School that can trace its origin to the time of Edward the Confessor, and whose walls are covered with illustrious names, some of them the names of perhaps as great men as any that England ever had!

Let me pass over the songs and the retiring to bed, mentioning only an incident that occurred upon one occasion. The Under Master enters the Dormitory, the scholars stand in a line against the "houses," the Monitor of the week calls the names. Each answers "Sum" to his name. It comes to the turn of a Second-Election, who confidently answers "Sum" but shortly is *not!* For, in a moment of weakness, he confidently leans back against