

nues still on the continent, but was subverted in England by the Tutorial, arising from the College influence.

Colleges were founded in Paris and Oxford as well as elsewhere, soon after the Universities, but their object was different. The function of the University was educational—that of the College alimentary. The College supported, while the University instructed.

It must be remembered that anciently students were poorer as a class than in modern days. We know that in Oxford a very serious riot occurred in the reign of Henri III, in which a cook, who hung boiling water on a student importuning him for alms, was slain immediately by a fellow student. The actual poverty was made the more sensible by the multitudes gathering together. In Paris there are said to have been as many as 15,000 or 20,000 at one time. We can conceive these numbers not very much exaggerated, if we reflect that not even books were to be had then except at the Universities. At Paris, and the many other imitators of it, the booksellers were considered University officers and sworn to obey its rules. We have a curious trace of the connection in our own language. These book-sellers, or rather book-lenders, for their chief business consisted in lending out books to be copied, were accustomed to sell writing materials for this purpose. They were called stationarii, (from *Statio*, low Latin for a stall or shop,) hence, our words Stationer, and Stationery.

To lessen the evils arising from poverty and overcrowding,—some benevolent men endowed colleges, in which lodging and aids to their maintenance were given to poor students. The partakers of these benefits were incorporated, and called "sosi" or fellows from their sharing in the grant.

These fellows or fellows and scholars, as they were sometimes called, elected one of their body to manage their household. He was called Principal, Provost, President or Master. To aid them in their studies, they often found it advisable to procure the assistance of a private tutor, and they naturally selected a senior member of their own, when qualified. Other students, not members of the College, were allowed, when desirous, to have the advantage of the tutor's aid for the professor's lectures, on payment of a share of the expense. In this manner arose the subordination of members existing in the Colleges at the present day. The tutorial lectures originally subsidiary to the professorial, by slow degrees took their place, after the heads of Colleges had, from various causes, obtained the government of the Universities, ousting the masters and doctors.

The lecturer then proceeded to give an account of the present constitution of the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and Dublin, expressing his regret that time prevented him from giving more details with regard to these, or the Queen's University, and that of London.

In the course of the lecture, a suggestion was thrown out that it was desirable to change the present name, University of McGill College, (which does not occur in the Charter) into that of University of Montreal, for many reasons—among others,—to prevent the confusion of the University with the College—the present title ignores the power of affiliation—there are now two Colleges in the University, one in Richmond, the other in Montreal—the liberality of the citizens of Montreal in endowing it, ought to be commemorated as well as the munificence of James McGill; he only required in his will that the first College should be called by his name.—*Montreal Gazette*.

School days of Eminent Men in Great-Britain.

By JOHN TIMBS, F. S. A.

(Continued from our last.)

CXXIX.

GOWPER AT WESTMINSTER.

William Cowper, "the most popular poet of his generation, and the best of English letter-writers," was the son of Dr. John Cowper, rector of Great Berkhamstead, Herts, and was born at the parsonage-house, in 1731. In his sixth year he lost his mother, of whom he always retained the most affectionate recollection; the deprivation of her tenderness laid the seeds of these infirmities which afterwards afflicted his manhood. In the year of his mother's death, he was, as he himself describes it, "taken from the nursery, and from the immediate care of a most indulgent mother," and sent out of his father's house to a considerable school kept by a Dr. Pitman, at Market-street. Here for two years he suffered

much from ill-treatment by his rough companions: his sensibility and delicate health were the objects of their cruelty and ridicule; and one boy so relentlessly persecuted him that he was expelled, and Cowper was removed from the school. Cowper retained in late years a painful recollection of the terror with which this boy inspired him. "His savage treatment of me," he says, "impressed such a dread of his figure on my mind, that I well remember being afraid to lift my eyes upon him higher than his knees; and that I knew him better by his shoe-buckle than by any other part of his dress." To the brutality of this boy's character, and the general impression left upon Cowper's mind by the tyranny he had undergone at Dr. Pitman's, may be traced Cowper's prejudice against the whole system of public education, so forcibly expressed in his poem called *Tirocinium*; or, *a Review of Schools*.

About this time Cowper was attacked with an inflammation in the eyes, and was placed in the house of an oculist, where he remained two years, and was but imperfectly cured.

At the end of this time, at the age of ten, he was removed to Westminster School. The sudden change from the isolation of the oculist's house to the activity of a large public school, and the collision with its variety of characters and tempers, helped to feed and foster the moods of dejection to which Cowper was subject. His constitutional despondency was deepened by his sense of solitude in being surrounded by strangers; and thus, thrown in upon himself, he took refuge in brooding over his spiritual condition. This tendency had first manifested itself at Dr. Pitman's school, and next at Westminster. Passing one evening through St. Margaret's churchyard, he saw a light glimmering at a distance from the lantern of a gravedigger, who, as Cowper approached, threw up a skull that struck him on the leg. "This little accident," he observes, "was an alarm to my conscience; for the event may be remembered among the best religious documents I received at Westminster." He sought hope in religious consolations, and then hopelessly abandoned them; and he was struck with lowness of spirits, and intimations of a consumptive habit, which the watchful sympathies of home might possibly have averted or subdued.

Nevertheless, Cowper appears to have been sufficiently strong and healthy to excel at cricket and football; and he persevered so successfully in his studies, that he stood in high favour with the master for his scholarship. Looking back many years afterwards on this part of his life, he only regretted the lack of his religious instruction. Latin and Greek, he complains, were all that he acquired. The duty of the schoolboy absorbed every other, with the single exception of the periodical preparations for confirmation, to which we find this interesting testimony in his Letters:

"That I may do justice to the place of my education, I must relate one mark of religious discipline, which, in my time, was observed at Westminster; I mean the pains which Dr. Nichols took to prepare us for confirmation. The old man acquitted himself of this duty like one who had a deep sense of its importance; and I believe most of us were struck by his manner, and affected by his exhortations."

Cowper translated twenty of Vinny Bourne's poems into English, and his allusions to his old favourite usher of the fifth form at Westminster are frequent. (1)

"I remember (says Cowper) seeing the Duke of Richmond set fire to Vinny's greasy locks, and box his ears to put it out again." And again, writing to Mr. Rose, Cowper says: "I shall have great pleasure in taking now and then a peep at my old friend, Vincent Bourne; the neatest of all men in his versification, though, when I was under his ushership at Westminster, the most slovenly in his person. He was so inattentive to his boys, and so indifferent whether they brought good or bad exercises, or none at all, that he seemed determined, as he was the best, so he should be the last, Latin poet of the Westminster line; a plot, which I believe he exercised very successfully; for I have not

(1) Vincent or Vinny Bourne, the elegant Latin poet, and usher of Westminster School, where he was educated, died in 1747. Cowper has left also this feeling tribute to his old tutor:—

"I love the memory of Vinny Bourne. I think him a better Latin poet than Tibullus, Propertius, Ausonius, or any of the writers in his way, except Ovid, and not all inferior to him. . . . It is not common to meet with an author who can make you smile, and yet at nobody's expense; who is always entertaining, and yet always harmless; and who, though always elegant, and classical in a degree not always found even in the classics themselves, charms more by the simplicity and playfulness of his ideas than by the neatness and purity of his verse: yet such was poor Vinny."

Vinny's Latin translations of the ballads of "Tweedside," "William and Margaret," and Rowe's "Despairing beside a Clear Stream," in sweetness of numbers and elegant expressions equal the originals, and are considered scarcely inferior to anything in Ovid or Tibullus.