

**Oxford**

**By**

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***Free*editorial** 

## Oxford

For beauty and for romance the first place among all the cities of the United Kingdom must be given to Oxford. There is but one other — Edinburgh — which can lay any serious claim to rival her. Gazing upon Scotland's capital from Arthur's Seat, and dreaming visions of Scotland's wondrous past, it might seem as though the beauty and romance of the scene could not well be surpassed. But there is a certain solemnity, almost amounting to sadness, in both these aspects of the Northern capital which is altogether absent from the sparkling beauty of the city on the Isis, and from the genius of the place.

The impression that Oxford makes upon those who, familiar with her from early years, have learnt to know and love her in later life is remarkable. Teeming with much that is ancient, she appears the embodiment of youth and beauty. Exquisite in line, sparkling with light and colour, she seems ever bright and young, while her sons fall into decay and perish. "Alma Mater!" they cry, and love her for her loveliness, till their dim eyes can look on her no more.

And this is for the reason that the true loveliness of Oxford cannot be learnt at once. As her charms have grown from age to age, so their real appreciation is gradual. Not that she cannot catch the eye of one who sees her for the first time, and, smiling, hold him captive. This she can do now and then; but even so her new lover has yet to learn her preciousness.

It is worth while to try to understand what are the charms that have grown with her growth. There was a day when in herself Oxford was unlovely to behold, and when romance had not begun to cling to her like some beautiful diaphanous robe. It is possible to imagine a low-lying cluster of wooden houses forming narrow streets, and occupying the land between the Cherwell and the Isis, nearly a thousand years ago. In those days no doubt it was reckoned a town of some importance, but, with the possible exception of the minster of St. Frideswide, there was nothing to relieve its squalid appearance.

After the Norman Conquest, when most of the houses in the town had been destroyed, there began to be a certain severe dignity rising up with the building of the forts and the castle by Robert D'Oily, who came over with King William. The fine and massive tower, with a swiftly flowing branch of the Isis at its very feet, forming a natural moat, still stands as the single relic of D'Oily's castle, and the first in point of age of the existing charms of Oxford. Standing, as it does, inextricably mixed up with breweries and the county jail, it must feel itself in a forlorn position, and slighted by those who give it a mere glance on their way from the station to view colleges, old indeed, but, in the opinion of the ancient tower, things of mushroom growth! And yet, close by stands something older even than the tower. Inside the castle walls was an immense mound, and there it stands to this day. No one rightly knows its age, and, except for the romance which hangs about anything, the origin of which is lost in the mists of ages, it adds but little to the charm of Oxford.

Another grand old tower is said to have been the work of Robert D'Oily, viz. that of St. Michael's Church in Cornmarket Street. Besides being part of a church, this was also one of the watch towers on the city walls. It is well worth looking at, for it has the further interest of having adjoined the north gate into the city, over which were certain chambers forming the Bocardo Prison, which remained in use until comparatively modern times.

The severity which marked the outward appearance of the city during the first few centuries after the Norman Conquest gradually disappeared, to make way for the brighter and more exquisite beauty of later days. Thus, in the fifteenth century, the massive walls and watch towers still dominated the place. From close to Magdalen College they ran by the edge of New College gardens (where the most perfect remains are still to be seen), and then turned to go along the city ditch (now Broad Street), and so to St. Michael's in "the Corn", and away down to the castle tower near St. Thomas's. Nowadays these severe lines have practically disappeared. Oxford has laid aside the armour which once she had in self-defence to wear, and has clothed herself in lovelier garb.

One by one the objects upon which we feast our eyes to-day sprang up, and more and more beautiful became the view of Oxford. Mr. Andrew Lang in his charming book tells us that at the end of the thirteenth century "the beautiful tower of Merton was still almost fresh, and the spires of St. Mary's, of old All Saints, of St. Frideswide, and the strong tower of New College on the city wall, were the most prominent features in a bird's-eye view of the town." To these must be added (as has been mentioned) the walls and watch towers, which must have lent a certain grimness to the whole.

Two hundred years later Oxford's most beautiful tower came into being, on the site of what had been the ancient Hospital of St. John, and had been given about the year 1560 by King Henry VI to William Patten, in order that he might there establish the college of St. Mary Magdalen.

Magdalen Tower, rising 150 feet in exquisite proportion, and standing just where the Cherwell is spanned by the well-known bridge, is in the opinion of many the fairest sight in Oxford. The way in which it springs from a pile of embattlements, and the grace of its pose and form, claim for it more than a word of admiration for its share in the adornment of Oxford.

So far the view of the town was dependent for beauty upon its spires and towers. To-day it would be allowed by all that a great deal has been added to this beauty by the domes, which have brought their dignity and rounded lines to the general scenic effect.

It was not till two centuries had passed from the creation of Magdalen Tower that the central gateway into Christ Church was surmounted by the well-known Tom Tower, erected by Sir Christopher Wren to hold "Great Tom", a mighty bell which once belonged to Osney Abbey. This was the first of the domes to rear its head. But it was not long left solitary. Seventy years afterwards the great dome of the Radcliffe Camera rose up in the space between All Souls and Brasenose colleges, and was thenceforth the first object to take the eye of one who looks on Oxford lying glorious in her meadows.

And so we come to one aspect of the place. For him who wants to look upon her as a whole, to realize at once that he is drawing near to one who is all beautiful, everything depends upon the manner of his approach.

It is probably true that the people of a hundred years ago had the best of it. In very early days, when men rode on pack horses or were drawn thither in wains, or tramped through marshy tracts and by evil roads, their eyes were apt to be fixed upon the ground lest they or the horse they rode should put foot in a hole. Then, too, the view they obtained was not at first so beautiful as it has since become.

To-day the disadvantages are greater still. Far the larger number of people approach Oxford by train, and although on drawing near the city from the south a sight is obtained of towers and spires, it is by no means a happy point of view; and the visitor is probably engaged in getting his bag out of the rack and collecting his papers and umbrella, when he might be obtaining a first impression, though a poor one, of Oxford. Should he be more fortunate, and approach by motor car, again he loses much. A vision, perhaps, for a moment, as he tops some rising ground, and then, before he has had time to gasp his admiration, he finds himself bounded on either side by the unlovely villas of a suburb.

No, the coaching days were the best for those who wanted to see what Oxford looked like as a whole. From the top of the London coach, as Headington Hill was reached, there must have been on a summer morning a minute or two of ecstasy for those who first caught sight of the glittering city at their feet. Not quite so fair a view, but beautiful enough, was theirs who came by way of Cumnor from the Berkshire Downs; but the coach top was the place, from whichever side the traveller came.

And yet there is something better still. I would have, could I arrange it for my friend, a more gradual approach yet. I would take him off the converging roads while yet Oxford was unseen. I would lead him in the early morning of a summer day—it must ever be summer—away where the river washes the feet of the old town of Abingdon, and thence by pleasant paths through Sunningwell we would ascend Boar's Hill. There on a grassy spot, a hanging wood partly revealed below us, we would lie face

downwards on the turf and gaze on Oxford lying far below – the Oxford Turner saw – Oxford in fairy wreaths of light-blue haze, which as they part, now here now there, reveal her sparkling beauty. There is no other place so fit to see her first; no day too long to gaze on her from here, and mark fresh beauties as the shadows change. Here we would lie and marvel at the scene, then let the dreams of days gone by – the days that wove the long romance of Oxford – enthrall us till we hardly know whether time is or was.

Away there to the east and south the river shines. Now in the heat of summer well within its reedy banks, but often spreading itself in flood-time far and wide. So those two Franciscans find it. They draw near to Oxford, but when a mile or two from Abingdon are checked by many waters, and take refuge in a house in a wood belonging to the monastery of that place. Nearly seven hundred years ago! And yet they come into the dream as if it all had happened yesterday, and they were still to set on foot the labours of their order in the low wooden slums of St. Ebbe's, and still to train such men as Duns Scotus and Roger Bacon.

And the scene changes as the eye follows the river to the city walls. There is a mellower sunshine on the plain, and autumn mists hang lightly over tower and spire. What is that slender blue column which rises above the centre of the town and melts into the hazy air? Surely it is the smoke of the pyre on which the martyrs have but now perished! Ridley and Latimer – for months they have been face to face with death. Their figures move through the streets. From Bocardo, the town prison, they are led to separate confinement in other parts of the city. Now to St. Mary's Church, now to the Divinity School are they taken to be examined – a miserable farce – by those who seek to curry favour with a bloody queen. At last the end. Was it this morning that the sheriff's officers came to lead Ridley from the mayor's house, where he had passed a peaceful night, and risen to write a letter on behalf of certain tenants of his in London, that justice might be done them when he died? There he goes in close custody, dressed in his bishop's gown and tippet, with a velvet scull cap on his head. Behind him comes Latimer, an old, old man in threadbare gown and leathern girdle, keeping up as well as he can with the rest. They pass along what is now called Cornmarket

Street, and under the Bocardo gateway, where is St. Michael's Church, and as they get close beneath the prison each casts a look upwards if he should see Archbishop Cranmer at the window.

So they go on a few yards more till the city ditch is reached, which now is Broad Street. There are the crowd, the faggots, and the stake. No time is lost. Cheerfully they two embrace and strip themselves for death. The chains secure them to the posts. The bags of gunpowder are hung around their necks. They loudly commend their souls to God. Soon comes release to the aged Latimer. The flames have leapt up to the powder, and in a moment his sufferings are done. Not so merciful is the end of his brother martyr. Slowly, with shocking agony, his lower limbs are burnt away, and not till he has suffered the extremity of pain does he at last join Latimer in Paradise. That little slender column of blue smoke! So was the dream provoked, and the pathetic tragedy of 1555 has passed before our eyes to-day.

The summer sun shines out, a gentle air blows off the mists, and from afar the road to Woodstock is all lively with a gallant company. Mary is dead. The University have sent a deputation to meet Elizabeth the Queen at Godstow. No longer a prisoner at Woodstock, she rides gaily into Oxford. At the northern gate she is welcomed by the mayor, and the city bestows its gifts of plate and money. For days her scholarly mind is entertained with public disputations, relieved at intervals by theatrical shows. It is all brilliant and light-hearted; a weight has been taken from the country.

Then comes a vision of such times as Oxford has never seen before or since. The city is in turmoil. The whole countryside is alive with troops. There is civil war. The University is for the King, the townsmen (had they their way) are Roundheads to a man. Citizens in scant numbers, scholars in profusion, are working at the trenches to fortify the place. What with these trenches across from the Cherwell past Wadham and St John's and so by St Giles' Church, to the Isis on the north, and from Folly Bridge, through Christ Church meadows and Merton gardens (where the remains can still be seen) to Magdalen on the south, and with the numerous rivers and conduits which form so many natural moats on west and east, the city soon

becomes impregnable. To-day such puny efforts would be ludicrous, but in those times of cannon balls which could scarcely pierce a two-inch board, they more than suffice, did he for whom the work was done but have a better heart.

In Christ Church and in New College quads there is a sound of drums and tramping feet as the bands of pikemen and halberdiers furnished by the students are busily at drill. Magdalen Bridge is fortified. On the great tower hard by stones have been heaped to hurl upon a passing enemy, but are destined to be never used.

Now there is a fresh stir. The bands of armed students march through all the streets, finally parade the High, and disband at the Divinity School—a demonstration to impress the townsmen and encourage the royal guests.

Side by side with all this warlike preparation, and mingled with the martial ring of steel and discipline of troops, Oxford presents an aspect of frivolity unequalled except by an Eights' Week of to-day. The Queen has her Court at Merton, and the city is full of ladies of high degree. Their flounces and their furbelows are everywhere, and daily they congregate in Christ Church meadows and Trinity Grove, to hold revels displeasing to the Heads of Houses, who fear for the youth in their charge, and a mockery to their own hearts, which are anxious enough. Their dresses may be fine, but they themselves are lodged in garrets, and they miss the dainty fare to which they are accustomed. And all the while the wit and learning of the University knows little diminution. It takes, perhaps, a lighter and more courtly tone, as it strives to amuse and gratify the unwonted throng it entertains. War, women, wit—all stirred together in one seat of learning! Surely never was such a medley known!

Then from each point of vantage within our view on that hillside—nay, from the very spot on which we lie and dream—there are continual movements of the troops. The King brings his cavalry right here, within a mile or two of Abingdon, waiting to do battle with Essex should he advance from Reading. Brown leads the Roundheads now to Wolvercote, now to Shotover, and anon to Abingdon. Down there by Sandford Ferry Essex takes his troops across the river, skirts the city to the eastwards and



makes his camp at Islip for a while, then on across Cherwell and so to Bletchington and Woodstock, blockading all approaches on the north. Now one sees glitter of steel and gleam of pennon to the west, as Waller is beat back at Newbridge on the Isis, above Eynsham. Scarcely has this scene flitted through the brain, than from far away eastwards, hard by Chinnor, there seems to come a shouting and a noise of horses at the gallop, as Rupert bursts upon the enemy's convoy, and drives them into the Chiltern Hills, himself returning with his prisoners and spoils by way of Chalgrove, when again comes sound of battle, and he in his turn is for a moment held at bay by Roundheads' "insolence". No matter which way we turn our eyes, each bit of rising ground, each bridge across a stream gives birth to some imagining of skirmish or of ambushade in that long civil war that waged round Oxford.

One dream more. Naseby has been fought and lost. Fairfax is at the gates of Oxford, where Charles has once again sought shelter. The city might have resisted long, but his heart has failed him. It is three o'clock on an April morning, and dark. A little company of three—a gentleman, a scholar, and a servant—ride out of the city over Magdalen Bridge. The servant is the King. So comes the beginning of the end, and Oxford has no more visions of the ill-fated Charles.

Thus dreaming an hour or two has passed away, and she still lies there before us unexplored—beckoning us to her with every charm that delights the eye and kindles boundless expectation. Let us, then, draw closer and get a nearer view. Old as she is, she invites an inspection as close as we will. The ravages of time do not in her case mar the loveliness which each year seems to renew and to increase. Most people are conscious of the fact that in looking back upon their past lives, especially upon the days of their childhood, it is the sunshine that abides with them and not the shadow. In all the memories, let us say, of a garden in which we played as children, the days are hot and bright, the flowers always blooming.

So it is with Oxford. Heaven knows the place is often enough shrouded in cold, wet mist: for weeks together the streets are muddy beyond all other streets: at the beginning of each term (save that one by courtesy called

"summer") the chemists' shops are (or used to be) filled with rows of bottles of quinine, to enable the poor undergraduate to struggle against a depressing climate. But who remembers all these things in after years? The man of fifty hears Oxford mentioned, and there comes back to him at once a place where old grey buildings throw shadows across shaven lawns; where the young green of the chestnut makes a brilliant splash of colour above the college garden wall; where cool bright waters wind beneath ancient willows, and it is good to bask in flannels in a punt. In fact it is the few days of real summer—the two or three in each "summer" term—that he remembers in accordance with memory's happy scheme, in which it is the fittest that survive.

It is in summer, then, that we draw near to feast our eyes more intimately on Oxford's charms. Not first of all upon those which she hides away within her outer cloak of beauty, but upon the garment which she borrows from Dame Nature, and wears with such inimitable grace. Meadows, gardens, rivers, trees: these are the materials of which the robe is woven, and to each belong at least some names that have become famous beyond the boundaries of Oxford.

Who has not heard of Port Meadow—the town's meadow, as the name infers? Low it lies on the river bank to the north-west of the town. For hundreds of years—since the time, indeed, of the Domesday Book—it has belonged to the freemen of Oxford, and to-day may still be seen their flocks of geese, white patterned on a ground of green, with here and there a horse with tired feet ending his days where grass is soft and plentiful. The Isis, the Upper River as here it is commonly called, has a special beauty as it flows along the edge of Port Meadow, for above it hang the Witham woods, and on its edge is the little hamlet of Binsey, giving a touch of human interest and rural picturesqueness to the scene. It is worth while to row or sail against the stream until the whole of the meadow is passed by, for then comes Godstow, where Fair Rosamond found refuge, and where she was at last laid to rest. It must in all honesty be confessed that to the average undergraduate the place was reckoned desirable, not so much on account of the historical interest just mentioned, as because, after a long

pull up the river on a summer afternoon, it was possible to obtain at the little inn upon the river bank what was euphemistically called "eel tea", a meal which, as a matter of fact, consisted of stewed eels washed down by unlimited libations of cider-cup!

Far smaller in extent, but even more famous, is the tree-girt space called Christ Church Meadow, lying between that college and the river. Port Meadow may be said to be a wide bright outskirts of the natural robe of Oxford: Christ Church Meadow, with its Broad Walk and its mighty trees, is like a fold about her feet deep-trimmed and bordered with a silver braid. It is here that on Show Sunday, in Commemoration Week, in June, those who hold high places in the University, with favoured guests, and some few undergraduates, pace up and down, or used to pace in days gone by; for it belongs to a more modern pen to say whether the old custom still obtains, or whether it has passed away with other things of ceremony, such as (to compare small things with great) the custom of forty years ago, in pursuance of which an undergraduate would now and then array himself in his most brilliant attire and saunter up and down the High. Does the old street feel slighted, one wonders, at the fact that it is "done" no more?

Close by the meadow the college barges line the banks of the Isis, and then come other meadows on either side—meadows nameless and undignified by pageantry, but sacred to Oxford's special flower, the fritillary, and stretching away to where Iffley stands, with its memories of J.H. Newman, and where the old mill, beloved of painters, was burnt down a few years ago.

One other meadow there is, smaller than either of those already mentioned, and less beautiful in itself, though highly favoured in its immediate surroundings. It stands within the grounds of Magdalen College, and is bordered on either side by the divided waters of the Cherwell, before they pass beneath Magdalen Bridge. Around this meadow is a shady path beneath an avenue of trees, and it is this path that attracts attention to the meadow; for it is said that it was here that Addison loved to pace up and down, as in the early years of the eighteenth century he thought out his essays for the Tatler or Spectator.

The rivers of Oxford – the Isis and the Cherwell – are so much part of her meadow loveliness, that the one seems almost to include the others. Where the meadows are the fairest, there the rivers gleam and sparkle in the summer sun of memory. The Isis, stately stream, proud of the great oarsmen she has taught, and of historic boats that she has borne; the Cherwell, winding, secretive, alluring, willow-girt, whispering of men and maidens, and of the dream days of ambitious youth. Each river has its bridge. The mightier stream, as is most fitting, spanned where for centuries the road has passed from Oxford into Berkshire; the little Cherwell, to make up for any loss in navigable importance, crossed near Magdalen Tower by the lovely bridge which was built over the two branches of the stream more than two hundred years ago.

The meadows and the rivers bring to mind the trees. What and where would be the loveliness of Oxford without her trees? Some have already been mentioned – the stately elms of the Broad Walk, and the old gnarled willows along the Cherwell's banks. But there are others, needing perhaps a little looking for, but none the less an integral part of Oxford's beauty when once found. One of these, the great cedar in the Fellows' garden at Wadham, was wrecked in a gale not so very long ago, and many who had been familiar with its dark-green foliage contrasting with the soft grey of the chapel walls, feel almost as though they had lost a friend.

Then just across the road there are the limes of Trinity, pollarded every seven years to form the roof of an avenue, a most retired spot, but counting for much with those who love green leaves and dappled shade.

Of the trees of Oxford pages might be written. They are everywhere, though not everywhere in prominence. Often enough it is just the peep, the suggestion of hidden beauty, that is seen as we pass from one college to another and a green bough overtops the wall. Lovers of Venice know how delightful is the same thing here and there along a side canal, where a treetop is reflected with a crumbling wall in the still water below. In Oxford these overhanging boughs have no reflections, but the patch of purple shadow on the pavement is often as valuable to the picture. Talking of Venice brings to mind a bit of Oxford that must often remind the

wayfarer to and from the railway of the Italian city. Not far from the old castle tower that has been already mentioned, a branch of the river flows in a lovely curve, and has upon one side weather-stained old brick walls, and on the other a causeway upon which stand ancient gabled houses. These buildings and the causeway reflect in the grey-green water of the river, and when the posts that edge the latter are taken into account, and a figure or two lounging by the rails are repeated in the reflections, the whole scene is not a little reminiscent of Venice in a quiet scheme of colour.

But this has nothing to do with Oxford's trees. Before turning our thoughts to any of her other beauties, that noble chestnut tree must be remembered which stands in Exeter garden, and, surmounting the wall, shades some of the Brasenose College rooms. In one of these lived Bishop Heber, and the tree on which he looked from his window has ever since been called by his name.

It is but natural that such thoughts as these should bring to mind the Oxford gardens, which some have thought the very choicest jewels that she wears. And indeed there is an indescribable charm in these old college gardens, with their trees and their herbaceous borders, their lawns and their high old walls—a charm which must, one fancies, have grown gradually, so that it depends for its existence not so much upon the actual beauty of each spot, as upon the spirit and associations that differentiate them from all other gardens. Not that they have not beauty of a most enchanting kind. St. John's, New College, Worcester—to name the three that occur most readily—possess gardens of special loveliness, and the two former of great size, that of St. John's being five acres in extent. It is to this that one should find one's way to see the most fascinating garden of all. The front of the buildings, with the beautiful library windows, suggests some lovely old manor house, and as one looks back across the lawns and through the trees the effect is not only dignified, as is that of so many college gardens, but is full of the peace and quiet beauty of one of England's stately homes.

Not a little has the modern revival of gardening, which has brought back the old herbaceous border, added to the charm of college gardens. It has

been said with truth that the secret of a garden's beauty lies mainly in its background. How true this is! Flowers may blaze with colour in an open field – and who has not marvelled as he passes in the train the seed-ground of some great horticulturist? – but seen thus they have but little charm. In a college garden a border filled with delphiniums and madonna lilies is backed by sombre yews, while the thick foliage of elm or chestnut quiets harmoniously the farther distance. See how the spires of blue – now declaring themselves for Oxford, now for Cambridge – are twice as vivid for the contrast, and how the lilies shine against the deep dark green, like fairest maidens round some black panelled hall! Or see again the monthly roses, blushing at intervals along an old grey wall: how tenderly are their hues enhanced by contrast with the time-stained stones! Such are a part of the fascination of Oxford gardens.

Quite unlike these, yet having an attraction of their own which many miss, are the Botanical Gardens hard by Magdalen Bridge. Their situation on the brink of the River Cherwell, and almost under the shadow of Magdalen Tower, is what probably appeals most strongly to the ordinary observer, while those who merely pass the gardens by will delight in the gateway, the work of Inigo Jones, with its statues of Charles I and II. Formal these gardens are of necessity, but there hangs about them a certain feeling of antiquity. They somehow seem to take their place among their old-world surroundings; and fitly so, for they are the oldest gardens of their kind in the country, having been originated by the Earl of Danby as an assistance to the study of medicine, nearly three hundred years ago.

Across the way, at Magdalen College, exists a pleasure ground which cannot rightly be included among Oxford's gardens, though it is certainly one of her best-known natural adornments. This is the deer park adjoining the New Buildings. It is almost worth while in the summer vacation to loiter near the narrow passage leading from the cloisters, to witness the start of surprise and to hear the sight-seers' remarks, as they suddenly come out from the dusk and impressive gloom into a blaze of sunlight, with gay new buildings bright with window-boxes straight before them, and a little herd of dappled deer feeding in the sunshine and the shadow of

the park. Hundreds of years seem to roll away: the very locality appears to change: the visitor could scarcely look more astonished if he were suddenly transported from the Coliseum to the gardens of the Tuileries! No wonder a tourist once remarked, as he issued from the cloisters: "I guess, sir, I've riz from the dead!"

It is tempting on this summer day to linger where grass is green and trees throw grateful shade; and indeed it would seem that few of all the many pens that have set down Oxford's charms have given their due to these her natural delights. But there is much that crowds into the mind and urgently complains lest there be not space enough to do them honour. What of her streets? Perhaps no other city in England—some say in the world—can boast of streets of equal beauty.

From Magdalen gate the High Street begins its curve—a true line of beauty. Its variety of architecture and mixture of old with new might suggest (to those who have only read and never seen) an inharmonious whole. But somehow this is not so. The severe front of University neither kills nor is killed by the seventeenth-century work, with eighteenth-century cupola and statue of George II's consort, just across the way. The old-world shops and gabled houses contrast with the modern buildings, which contain the new Examination Schools, or show where some college or other has forced its way into the High. They contrast, and do not spoil the picture. Indeed it will be a cause of much lamentation, if more of these old houses of the citizens of Oxford should be thrust away, and the character of the street be changed to one long series of college buildings, losing in colour, in variety, and in antiquity, and especially in the story that it still tells of University and city interdependent, and seeking each the other's good. It is the glorious Church of St. Mary the Virgin that seems to bind all the varying charms of the street together. Standing near the centre of the High, it dominates the whole. The stately thirteenth-century tower with its massive buttresses is surmounted by "a splendid pyramidal group of turrets, pinnacles, and windows", from which the spire shoots upwards. To a trained eye this spire is a continual marvel, when seen from a short distance away, on account of the transparency of colour which for some

unexplained reason it presents. A silver grey hardly describes it; but light clothes it with a diaphanous glory, now warm now cool in colour, and always lovely. Facing the street is an ornate Italian porch with twisted pillars, erected in 1637. Above the entrance is the famous statue of the Virgin and Child which gave such offence to the Puritans.

What stories the place could tell! It was here that John Wycliffe thundered against the Romanism of his day. It was here that Cranmer recanted his recantation, and promised that the hand that wrote it should be the first to suffer at the stake. Hither, too, were laid to rest the remains of Amy Robsart, brought after death from Cumnor. Space will not allow of any recital of the famous names of those who have occupied the University pulpit herein. But memories crowd into the mind as the rather dreary interior of the Church is pictured. Here some thirty-six or seven years ago an undergraduate went, full of expectation, to hear Dr. Pusey preach. The crowd was great, and he had to stand, while for an hour and a half or so the great man poured out a learned disquisition against the Jews! Here too, about the same time, the youthful members of the University flocked to hear Burgon's evening sermons—quaint and original as the man himself—in one of which, after describing the episode of Balaam and the ass, he threw up his hands and cried, "To think that that type of brutality should speak with the voice of a man—it delighteth me hugely!"

One of the beauties of the streets of Oxford is that they mostly have something admirable at either end. Thus the picture of the High Street is finished at one end with Magdalen Tower and Bridge, and at the other with Carfax Church, or rather, nowadays, with all that is left—a very ancient tower—of the City Church which stood upon the site of a building so old that coins of the date of Athelstan were found beneath its pavement.

Then see how Broad Street, as it narrows again towards the east, gives a fine view of the Sheldonian Theatre, where many who have helped to make their country's history, have been honoured by the granting of degrees, and of the Clarendon Building with its lofty pillared porch, where once the University Press was housed. Or look at that superb approach to Oxford from the north, a boulevard of great breadth and dignity. From St.



Giles' Church, at which the road from Woodstock and from Banbury converge, how fine is the prospect ending as it does in the tall trees, before the dignified front of St. John's College, and the tower of St. Mary Magdalen's Church.

The streets of Oxford! What scenes have been enacted there! Kings and queens have paced them between cheering crowds; town and gown have surged and struggled up and down their length, till from the highest point at Carfax the water was turned on from Nicholson's old conduit just to cool their ardour. Now and again a hush has fallen on all the city, and from St. Mary's booms a minute-bell. Shops are half-closed and flags half-masted. Then through the silent streets winds a black-robed procession, half a mile in length, and one of Oxford's best-known sons is carried to his rest. Or, maybe, all is bright with pleasure-seeking crowds and ladies decked in all their bravery, and just a glimpse is caught of scarlet and of black, with gleam of silver mace, as the Vice-Chancellor's procession goes to give degrees. Or, just once more, a line of Oxford cabs—who does not know the Oxford cab?—each with unlicensed number of undergraduate fares, goes to the sound of rattle and of song to speed the departure from his Alma Mater's arms of one who has outstepped the limits of her patience.

So it goes on: a varying scene of dignity and ribaldry, taking each other's place from time to time. But most often through all the years the streets are filled with those who, day by day, come in from all the country round, bringing their produce, seeking what they lack, and all oblivious of the learned life of Oxford.

But there are so many people, to whom the human interest in the fairest city counts for more than all the rest, that it is time to wander among the quadrangles, the halls, the chapels, and the other ancient fabrics that speak of the university life of Oxford. As we pass in through many a massive gateway, tread many a stone-paved path, climb many an old oak stair worn by the feet of many generations, it is strange if no strand of sentiment puts us in touch with some of those who have passed that way before.

And first to Merton, oldest of university colleges. It is almost sad to write the words, for it is hard not to feel a pang of regret that the charming old

tale, once indeed confirmed by the Court of King's Bench itself, that King Alfred founded University College in the High Street years before any other was suggested, is a myth. The men of "Univ" have at least the consolation that the tradition has existed, and if, in spite of hard facts, they cling to the romance, there will be few to blame them. It was Walter de Merton, Chancellor of England and Bishop of Rochester, who invented colleges as we know them, and, by founding that one which is known by his name, did, in 1265, set the model for all future collegiate establishments. Mr. Eric Parker in "Oxford and Cambridge" truly says, "Walter de Merton founded more than Merton College. His idea of a community of students working together in a common building towards a common end, inspired by the same influence and guided by the same traditions, was the first and the true idea of all colleges founded since."

The momentous step taken by this great Bishop in thus founding an institution on these lines for the study of Theology, is remarkable as illustrating the spirit of revolt from the absorption by monks and friars of all existing educational affairs. The College was strictly limited to secular clerks, who were "sent down" if they chose to join any of the regular Orders. The subsequent religious history of the College has had curious vicissitudes. Wycliff was a Fellow, and Merton stood by him in the face of the rest of Oxford. Then came a wave of Romanism; and in the reign of Mary she could count on Merton to provide fanatics in her cause. A Fellow of Merton presided over the burning of Ridley and Latimer, and the Vice-Chancellor who preached on the occasion was also a Merton man. In the middle of the seventeenth century all this was changed, and no grimmer Puritans were found in Oxford than the men of Merton. It seems as though the founder's spirit of religious freedom has from time to time cropped up, with an independence and hardihood worthy of his name.

But it was not all at once in 1265 that the College sprang into existence. At first Walter de Merton housed the students in lodgings in what is now called Merton Street, building a hall and kitchen to provide for their sustenance. Then followed the chapel with its grand tower, and lastly the buildings for the students. As one stands in the quaint little Mob Quad (the

origin of which name has apparently been lost) it is good to realize that this is the first collegiate quadrangle known. How far the thought takes us back! How near to the fountainhead of much that has grown familiar—so familiar that few people, and no undergraduates, trouble their heads about it! It is just there: like the river, and the trees, and the sky it exists, but why or how it came into existence matters nothing to them. Take for example the office of Dean. In every college there is a Dean, to whom is committed the order and discipline of the place. Should there be a bonfire in the quad, it is he who comes out and frantically attempts to put it out. Should an unlucky undergraduate oversleep himself more often in the week than college rules allow, it is the Dean who sends for him and gates him, that is to say, confines him within the college gates after sunset or thereabouts. The Dean is looked upon as an "institution", not wholly delightful but still a necessary bit of Oxford life; but very few undergraduates are aware that one must go back to the times of Walter de Merton to find out how he came into being. The life of a student in the first college was planned to be lived in great simplicity. His fare was to be of the plainest, and he was not to talk at dinner. He was never to be noisy. The rules, indeed, went so far as to say that, if he wanted to talk at any time, he must talk in Latin. It may be supposed that human nature was much the same in the thirteenth century as in the twentieth, and such a life must have proved difficult to some. In order to enforce the rules one student in every ten was made a kind of "præfect", with disciplinary power over the others. Hence the "decanus", and lo! the first of all the Deans!

Merton had not existed for much more than a century when it became possessed through the magnificence of Rede, Bishop of Chichester, of its wonderful library, so that not only has it the oldest quadrangle, but also the oldest mediæval library in the kingdom. There is not a room in Oxford so impressive with a sense of antiquity. Its lancet windows, its rough desks sticking out from the bookcases, the chains which thwart the project of the book-thief, all help to obliterate the ages; though the decorations of the ceiling, and the stained-glass windows, tell of the desire of later centuries to soften the original sternness of the room. It is here that one must wait quietly as dusk begins to fall, if one would see faint forms of those of

whom Merton boasts as her noblest sons. To all of them is this old room familiar, and to none more so than to Henry Savile, lover of books and warden of the College just three hundred years ago. He it was who induced Merton to give prompt and generous aid to that other Fellow of the College, Sir Thomas Bodley, when founding the great library that bears his name. Surely the spirits of these two men at least must haunt the place!

And he who wrote of Oxford's sons—Anthony Wood—is he too never here? And Patteson and Creighton of these later days, bishops who gave their lives, the one upon a savage shore, the other to the endless toil of the great diocese of London. Do they not pass along, and people with their memory the shadowy recesses of this ancient place?

Now let us stroll on—'tis but a step—to Christ Church. Sometimes it seems as though this should take precedence of all other colleges. Its chapel is Oxford's Cathedral, its quadrangles are the finest, its founder was in some ways the most famous; and lastly (and of least account), if one who has tried the task of "seeing Oxford" in an afternoon is asked what he remembers best, it is ten to one that he will say "the staircase and its ceiling leading up to Christ Church Hall". And it is of extraordinarily impressive beauty. The fan groining of the roof, supported by just one slender column, which springs from the foot of the staircase, is of exquisite form and lightness. Then the wide, flat steps that turn at an acute angle, and then lead on straight to the entrance of the Hall, form a worthy approach to what has been described as the grandest of all mediæval halls in the kingdom, except only that at Westminster. Let us stand aside here for a moment and picture some of those who have ascended these stairs in days gone by. A fanfare of trumpets sounds, and Henry VIII goes up with ponderous step. Here too comes Queen Elizabeth, jesting in caustic fashion with her courtiers, as she sweeps along to witness a dramatic entertainment in the Hall. Of lesser folk there pass by Dr. Fell ("I do not like thee, Dr. Fell"), who finished the building of Tom Quad in 1665; and then a quiet studious-looking man, a fellow or senior student of the College, who has nothing in his appearance to call attention. But this is Burton, by some accounted a morose person, but by those who knew him intimately a

cheery and witty companion. Here, too, with slow and faltering step comes Pusey in extreme old age, and Liddon of ascetic mien. Hark to the laughter! It is Stubbs – historian Bishop – with witty saying falling from his lips. And there is Liddell, feared of the undergraduate, but splendid both in figure and in face. And many another shade would fancy depict taking the old familiar way: men of renown, but none, however royal his demeanour, however high his literary rank, none to compare with him, Wolsey the great Cardinal, the founder of the place.

It is worth while before we explore further to think for a few moments about this wonderful personality, one of the most remarkable of all Oxford's sons. At the very end of the fifteenth century he is discovered as a Junior Fellow of Magdalen, then as Dean of Divinity, and in the first years of the next century as Rector of Lymington. Rapidly climbing the ecclesiastical tree, he reappears as Cardinal Archbishop of York, and resumes his close connection with Oxford, in the guise of a great promoter of learning, paying the salaries of lecturers out of his own pocket and so on. But the position of a mere patron of education did not satisfy his ambition. He determined on founding a college which should eclipse even that of Wykeham – the already famous New College. He was a rich man, but the vast undertaking upon which he had set his heart could not be paid for out of the private purse of any living man. He was in high favour with the King, and persuaded him to allow him to plunder the monasteries, and devote the proceeds to the expenses of the great foundation which he called Cardinal's College. Besides several small religious houses, he, in 1522, obtained the surrender of the Priory of St. Frideswide in Oxford itself.

Wolsey was possessed of sufficient funds to make a beginning. Clearing away some portion of the old Church of St. Frideswide, he laid the foundation of what afterwards became Christ Church in the summer of 1525. The work went on apace, but in a very few years there came a serious check. Henry VIII had made up his mind to marry Ann Boleyn, and this particular matrimonial venture had a curious influence on the fortunes of the College. It came about in this way. To marry Ann, it was necessary for the King to get his marriage with Catherine dissolved. The Papacy declined

to grant the decree. The ultimate result of this was Henry's determination to free himself and his country from the power of Rome. This in its turn resulted in Wolsey's downfall. The work of building Cardinal's College ceased, and there was a great probability that the beginning already made would be demolished. The King, however, changed his mind, and in 1532 refounded and endowed it. It now received the name of King Henry VIII's College. This title it bore for some fourteen years, at the end of which the See of Oxford was removed from Olney Abbey to St Frideswide's, which had already become a part of the College. From that date the whole foundation, partly educational and partly ecclesiastical in character, became one institution, and was then and for ever after called Christ Church. It is an extraordinary story, and, mixed up as it is with the rise and fall of Cardinal Wolsey, lends a great amount of human interest to the inspection of the College.

There is nothing else at all like it in existence. Collegiate and ecclesiastical life are inextricably mixed up. There is a Dean: but instead of being an official appointed to keep order among the undergraduates, he is both Head of the College and Dean of the Cathedral. The great quadrangle is partly like the quad of another college, in containing certain sets of rooms in the occupation of undergraduates, and partly like a cathedral close, inasmuch as therein is the Deanery and the residences of an archdeacon and canons. The Cathedral itself is, though small, a dignified and beautiful building of true cathedral character. At the same time it is the College Chapel, and the undergraduates who daily attend its services are privileged to worship in a magnificent fane, but at the same time must lose that sense of what, for want of a better word, must be called the home-like charm which endears to so many their College Chapel. The scenes, too, that the quadrangles witness are curiously varied. Now there is a procession of divines wending their way to some diocesan function, with bishops and chaplains bringing up the rear, and anon a crowd of undergraduates, smarting beneath some fancied grievance, or merely celebrating some success upon the river, noisily express their wish to paint the college red.

But Christ Church is not the only unique college in Oxford. As there is no other to be found in any university so curiously combined with the cathedral and ecclesiastical dignitaries of a see, so is there no other, in this country at all events, that has preserved its original intention, as a college for Fellows only, as has All Souls. Here no noisy undergraduate is allowed to disturb the calm. There are, indeed, four Bible Clerks who are undergraduate members and reside within its walls, but their very name is enough to guarantee their unobtrusive respectability – if indeed they exist in the flesh at all, for it is said that none except the Fellows of the College have ever seen one! The foundation is rich both in money and in fine buildings. Taking no share in education within its own walls – having, that is to say, none of the usual routine of college lectures and so on – it has had to justify the retention of its wealth. This it has done to the full, for it provides a large part of the funds for the teaching of Law in the University, and greatly aids the study of Modern History. It also has shown itself most liberal in supplying the wherewithal for the ever-increasing needs of the Bodleian Library.

To most people All Souls is chiefly familiar for its entrance facing the High Street, with porch and tower of the founder's date (1437), and for its chapel and library. The chapel possesses in its reredos a work of art which is one of the chief goals of the sightseer in Oxford. It covers the entire east wall, and consists of an immense series of niches, in which are numberless statues, surrounding a crucifixion scene in the centre. Of its kind it is certainly the most beautiful thing in the whole University. It was robbed of its statues and walled up in the seventeenth century, but has been restored with wonderful success a quarter of a century ago. The Library, called after its donor, Sir Christopher Codrington, is singularly beautiful in decoration. It is 200 feet long, and contains every imaginable book necessary for the Student of Law. By permitting a very wide use of this room All Souls College gives one more evidence of its desire to further the general educational work of Oxford.

Within the walls of a place so redolent of Law it is not strange to find that Blackstone (he of the "Commentaries") had his rooms, but it is remarkable

to find how diverse are the professions which have been adorned by Fellows of All Souls. Statesmen one might expect, and it is not difficult to conjure up the form of the late Marquis of Salisbury, stooping over a volume of Constitutional Law in the Codrington Library. Easier, perhaps, to imagine him thus than in the garb of a Christian warrior, as he stands in one of the niches of the Chapel reredos. The Fellows of All Souls are supposed under their statutes to be splendide vestiti, and in this respect Lord Salisbury, who was probably never aware of what he wore, must have singularly fallen short of the standard. But even so he would seem a more natural personage to haunt the still quadrangles of the College than his antagonist, Mr. Gladstone, who was an honorary Fellow of the College, but whose impulsive, eager vivacity would harmonize ill with the spirit of the place.

To-day it seems almost strange to find that All Souls has recruited the ranks of great ecclesiastics, but so it is. From there came Archbishop Sheldon, Bishops Heber and Jeremy Taylor, and many other great divines. Even Architecture can claim a Fellowship of All Souls for one of its greatest masters, Sir Christopher Wren.

But time presses. Oxford, all beautiful in her surroundings, great in her history, splendid in her buildings, unique in such foundations as have just been described, means so much more to most who have claimed her as their Alma Mater. They have had some inkling of all these things: especially perhaps they have imbibed, and made their lifelong possession, a sense of her natural charms: but no matter what their college may have been, no matter how little illustrious, historically or architecturally, it is round the college life, the rooms, the friendships, the homely details, that their loving memory hangs. It is there that first they knew what independence meant: there that the chairs and table were their very own: there that they could come and go almost as they liked: there that they first knew the delight of voluntary work.

How it all comes back! A freshman passes the Entrance Examination just well enough to get rooms in College—the last set vacant. They look out upon a wall at the back of the buildings; in themselves they are small and



dark, the bedroom a mere cupboard. But they are his own. He enters and finds a pot of marmalade and a tin of Bath Olivers on the table, put there by the forethought of his scout. He gets his boxes open: hangs up the school groups and the picture of his home: puts his books into the shelves—and has made his abode complete. He waits impatiently for the cap and gown he has ordered. The door flies open, and in rushes his special friend, who has preceded him from Marlborough. The old threads are picked up and knit together in a moment—and so the life begins. There is not much variety from day to day: chapel first thing, at which five attendances are required weekly, Sunday morning service (owing to its length) counting as two—then breakfast, seldom altogether alone. It is the most sociable meal of the day, which says much for the youth and health of the breakfasters! Should it be Sunday the undergraduate may hope (often in vain) to be asked to breakfast by some man in lodgings. Otherwise he will be condemned to feed either upon cold chicken—tasteless and a little dry—or upon gherkin pie, known only (by the mercy of Providence) to certain colleges in Oxford, and consisting of a dish of cold fat, interspersed with gherkins, and covered with lid of heavy pastry.

Afterwards, on week days, there are lectures, then a quick change to flannels and a hurried luncheon, and then in summertime the river or the cricket fields. Back again he comes to cold supper and long draughts of shandygaff in hall; then a pipe or two and a chat, and then (sometimes) a spell of reading before bed and sleep. But all this is nearly forty years ago:—a mere memory:—but yet it is things like these that first come to mind when Oxford's name is heard.

And then the scout! How many memories he brings! The college servants were a race apart with curious standards of their own. It is true they fattened on the undergraduate. Did not the cook of a certain college disdain to enter his son at the college for which he cooked, and send him to Christ Church? Did not each scout bear away all that was left upon his masters' tables in a vast basket, beneath the weight of which he could scarcely stagger home? Quite true, but all the same how would the freshman have fared had not his scout looked after him, seen that he did

what it behoved him to do, and kept him not seldom from some faux pas? A senior scout had often an almost fatherly regard for the men upon his staircase. One, who comes at once to mind, would stand and urge and argue long enough by the bedside of some lazy youth, for whom an interview with the Dean was imminent, persuading him to get up for Chapel, and the same man would take it seriously to heart if any of his particular gentlemen behaved in a manner which he considered unseemly. A good scout attached himself to his many masters and never forgot them. If any member of a college revisits his old haunts after years of absence, the one man who may be depended upon to give him a warm welcome is his old scout.

Of the tutors and fellows of the colleges, and their frequent kindness to the junior members of their college, this is not the place to expatiate. They are of course an intimate part of every man's college life, and around them many happy memories will generally dwell. The point that it is desired to emphasize is that, in looking back upon Oxford, it is these matters that have been briefly described – the details of the college and the college life – that are remembered with the greatest affection.

A Trinity man will tell you of the Grinling Gibbons carvings in the Chapel, but he thinks with greater tenderness of an old armchair in his rooms in the garden quad. A Corpus man will take a pride in belonging to a college that has always set before itself a high standard of learning, and is suitably possessed of a magnificent old library, but it is of his quaint old rooms in the little quiet quad that he dreams, when his thoughts go back again to Oxford.

The mention of Corpus brings to mind the fact, that this is almost the only college of those in the front rank to retain the charm of being small both in size and in numbers. All who have in their day belonged to a college of this kind will remember with pleasure the absence of "sets", and the possibility of knowing every other member of the college. Were Corpus to be revisited to-day by any of its distinguished members of the past, such as Lord Tenterden, John Taylor Coleridge, Dr. Arnold of Rugby, or John Keble, he would find far less change than in almost any other college in Oxford. Till

lately much the same might have been said of Oriel, where one is brought to a pause the moment the gate is passed by the sight of one of the most beautiful of all quadrangles, of which the chief adornment is the charming porch of the hall, with its canopy and wide flight of steps. But Oriel is no longer to rank as one of the moderate-sized colleges. Enriched by Mr. Rhodes it has pushed its way into the High Street, and a new quadrangle is beginning already to arise. The fame of the College has been great. It has sent out an extraordinarily large number of prominent Churchmen, and the place is also full of memories of such men as Sir Walter Raleigh, Gilbert White, Tom Hughes, and that great provost and scholar Dr. Monro. It must be hoped that its increase in size, and the publicity of its buildings, will not detract from the excellence of the College, though it must be allowed that, by joining the ranks of the larger colleges, it loses something of its individuality and charm.

Among those larger foundations Balliol is perhaps the best known, and in some ways the most remarkable. It has had a curious history. Founded almost at the same time as Merton, it is by its own members held to be the oldest of all the colleges. But alas! the front that it presents, though respectable enough, is quite modern, and cannot be included among the things that help to make Oxford lovely. Then, again, for hundreds of years it remained an obscure place with no pretensions of any kind. Since the Mastership of Dr. Jenkyn in comparatively recent times it has managed, by throwing open its scholarships, to attract the finest scholars from all over the country. It can now boast a world-wide reputation; for the Balliol scholarship is known by all to be the chief prize offered in the University.

Balliol has had many remarkable masters, but none more so than Dr. Benjamin Jowett, a man of such wide sympathies that he attracted to the College an extraordinary assortment of men. Not only were distinguished men of learning to be found there, but a good sprinkling of the scions of the noble houses of the country, while rooms were always found for men of every colour and nationality—Jews, Turks, infidels and heretics. As the men so the buildings present an extraordinary mixture. The Library and the old Dining Hall are of fifteenth-century work. The new Hall and the

principal front (already mentioned) are by Waterhouse – mid-Victorian; while, to crown all, the Chapel was erected by Butterfield, whose confidence in his own creations prevented him from being influenced by the great architectural beauties of Oxford, and caused him to have no hesitation in setting up buildings, so incongruous with the spirit of Oxford, as Balliol Chapel and Keble College. It is, then, for its mental, rather than its physical beauty, that Balliol claims attention. The inevitable mention of the College has taken up space, which might well have been bestowed upon the many lovely bits of ancient stonework that feast the eye in quiet corners and retired quadrangles, each going to form that inner beauty which Oxford wears within her robe of natural adornment.

But there are more secret treasures still. It is wonderful as one contemplates the walls, the towers, the domes, the battlements, the spires, that mark the position of this or that famous portion of the University city, to try to realize the wealth of treasure that is hidden there. The foreigner who comes in August and sits upon the steps of the Clarendon Building while he studies Baedeker from beneath the shadow of a tilted Panama, knows most about them. Most, that is to say, excepting always the knowledge of those to whose care they are entrusted. The ordinary English man or woman, unconnected with Oxford, has never heard of them. The undergraduate and the ordinary don has seen some part just now and then, when some enthusiastic guests have had to be taken round the sights.

And yet a book of many volumes might be written to tell of the things both rare and exquisite that Oxford hugs most close to her breast. He who cares to look may find them everywhere. There is not a college in all the University that does not possess something precious, either for its intrinsic beauty or for its historical interest. And it is not hard to find these treasures: they are gladly shown to all who care to see; though it might be thought, from the small general knowledge of their existence, that they are so jealously guarded as to make it next to impossible to gain access to them. In the Bodleian Library alone are countless objects of the greatest beauty and interest spread out beneath glass cases for all who will to see. Scores of illuminated manuscripts of all nations, and of such age that it is a

marvel to see the colours still so bright and pure: historical books and documents of the most fascinating description, such as the exercise books used by Edward VI and Elizabeth when children: the collection of relics of Oxford's greatest poet, Shelley,—his watch, some few autograph poems, and more than one portrayal of his refined and rather boyish face.

Speaking of portraits brings to mind the wealth of these that in the picture galleries, and in college halls and libraries, Oxford possesses. Not only does she prize them for their beauty—and how great that is can best be seen in Christ Church Hall, upon the walls of which the works of Gainsborough, Hogarth, Lely, Reynolds and other great painters hang—but from the story that they tell of the fame her sons have won, and of the love they bore her, in token of which they joyfully poured out their wealth that she might be more worthily adorned.

Of other pictures too Oxford has goodly store. Over two hundred thousand engraved portraits are in the Hope Collection, while water-colours by Turner, David Cox, and other masters are the gems of the Ashmolean collection. Keble College cherishes one famous picture. In the Liddon Memorial Chapel is hung Holman Hunt's "Light of the World".

How much the beauty of the interior of Oxford's ancient buildings is increased by the glowing colours of the light, that finds its way through stained-glass windows, it is hard to say. These windows are so numerous and so beautiful that it is difficult to imagine what many a chapel, hall, and library would be without them. They are of every date, from ancient fragments, such as may be seen in the windows of the Library at Trinity, to the great Sir Joshua Reynolds' window in New College Chapel, and the still later examples of Burne-Jones' art, which are among the chief beauties of the Cathedral; and they include such splendid instances of old Flemish art as may be found in Lincoln College Chapel.

Of carved work in wood and stone there is much that is precious, though many of the larger statues are not examples of the highest form of art. Still there are traceries and capitals of exquisite design to be found everywhere, and of statuary there is at least Onslow Ford's pathetic figure of the poet

Shelley to be seen at University College, beneath a dome which does its best to mar the whole effect.

Of wood carvings the most beautiful are Grinling Gibbons' work at Trinity and Queen's, and the most interesting the old oak altar at Wadham, brought there from Ilminster, the home of Nicholas and Dorothy Wadham, the founders of the College.

New College and Corpus each can boast the possession of their founder's pastoral staff, silver gilt, and in the former case both jewelled and enamelled; while Exeter and Magdalen prize among their chief treasures tapestry hangings of great beauty, the former designed by Burne-Jones, and executed by William Morris (both Hon. Fellows of the College), the latter of considerable antiquity, having been presented to the College by Prince Arthur, son of Henry VII. But so innumerable are the artistic delights hidden in every corner of Oxford that it is impossible to do more than thus suggest their existence.

And now, before it is quite time to turn away, we will out into the sunshine once again. There is one memory of Oxford to which expression has not yet been given. It is connected with the sparkle, the gladness, the sunshine of the place: it is the music of the sound of Oxford—the song, if you will, it always used to sing. To-day there is a difference. The rumble of the tramcar, the hoot of the motor, are heard in her streets, and since the era of much married fellows, the wail of the infant rises from the solid phalanx of perambulators on the pavement. But once upon a time—how long ago!—all through the summer day and summer night there was a kind of music in the air. The whisper of the wind that stirred the willows made soft accompaniment of the splash of paddle in the stream: the birds sang lustily amid the gentle rustle of the garden trees, and when the thrush retired to roost the nightingale took up the tale. The very footfall of the men hurrying to lecture was a pleasant sound, for then they needed not to punctuate their progress with the sharp tang of the bicycle bell. And best of all the bells made music morning and evening at the chapel hours. Not the despairing music of a peal, that falls and rises only to fall again, till nervous men are racked, but a cheerful note—just one—but different from each side; and,

amongst all, that one that each man knew to be his own and loved, and knows it still to-day and loves it still. It is true enough that other sounds, less musical, are heard by memory's ears. Sometimes the nightingale would take to flight, affronted that her note was drowned by "the shout of them that triumph, the song of them that feast", as the College kept high revel in honour of the Eight. Even now it is possible to hear the raucous yell of "Dra-ag", to summon those who lingered over luncheon and kept the char-à-banc from starting for the Cowley cricket grounds, and none who have once heard it can forget the roar mingled with the rattles, pistol shots and bells, that draws closer and even closer, as the Eights come racing to the Barges. Scarcely music, perhaps, but for all that a part of the song of Oxford life.

But in all the sweetest sounds that have till now gone up from earth to heaven Oxford has had its part. Not only have birds and meadows, trees and rippling streams made constant music to the God who made them, but the heart and voice of man have not unworthily joined in. What of Keble and Clough from Oriel, singing indeed a different strain, but singing for all that? What of Bishops Heber and Ken, from All Souls and from New? Of Robert Browning of Balliol, and Landor Trinity's chief poet? And lastly what of Shelley, recognized at last as singer of immortal verse? These and a host of lesser songsters, each with his several songs, joining with the glorious harmonies that have for so long been sent up from Magdalen, New College, and from that ancient fane where once St. Frideswide rested, make good the claim of Oxford as a city of sweet song.

There is no more to say — or rather there is no space in which to say it — and thoughts which have been revelling in Oxford's loveliness must be turned once more to the homelier duties from which they have for a while escaped, and he who writes must lay aside his pen all sorrowful that on such a theme he could no better write.

And he who reads? Surely someone will say "So this is Oxford! This is the chief of all our seats of learning, and no word of wise professors or of lecture halls!" Just so. It is not at the lectures men learn most. It is the spirit of the place, the friends they make, the living in an atmosphere so fair and

sweet, that counts for almost all. It must be that, wherever they may walk in after years, their share in what has been wrought so beautiful and hallowed by the life and work of noble men, will tend to guide their footsteps in the higher path.