

House of Lords, known as the Wars of the Roses. When an intellectual uprising like the Renaissance dawned upon a bewildered and blood-stained Europe, Cambridge at least was not unprepared. The new learning, the Greek language, the humanities, were made welcome—through the influence of the Lady Margaret, mother of Henry VIII., she who healed the Wars of the Roses, reconciled nations, and founded colleges. Perhaps she was the greatest Englishwoman that ever lived. Though sufficiently a child of the Middle Ages to desire 'to wash the clothes of the Crusaders for the pity of God,' she was responsible for introducing the language of Homer and Plato into English life.

In all her far-sighted schemes she was helped and advised by John Fisher, whose career covers the gulf between what is past and present in the University of which he was Chancellor.

He had held the perilous position of Confessor to Queen Catherine of Arragon. Long before Rome or England had suspicion of the coming divorce, he had known, under the seal, all the fears of the Queen and the determination of the King. It was John Fisher who strengthened the Queen to maintain her rights. A grim struggle was fought in secret betwixt King and Bishop for possession of the Queen's will. Fisher prevailed, and the King promised him his doom. Fisher had long foreknown the part he would play, and he kept a picture of the Baptist's head on his altar. The crisis followed the King's appeal to the Universities on the subject of his divorce. The learned of both Universities of Oxford and Cambridge met repeatedly, but with the usual courage of professorial bodies they decided that the marriage was null and void, provided that it could be shown that the Queen was married to somebody else!

John Fisher was made of sterner stuff. Alone of the English hierarchy he protested against divorce and Royal Supremacy, and was accordingly imprisoned in the Tower and condemned to death for high treason. Then, and not till then, Rome spake in the dramatic fashion that is her wont. The Pope sent the condemned traitor, as he lay in his dungeon, a Cardinal's hat, which gave the Bluff King occasion to remark that as the Pope had sent him a hat he would not leave the Pope a head to put it on. A few days later Fisher was led out to execution. He was an old man well past eighty, but death had no terrors for him, he had stood so long between the living and the dead. He dressed himself, as he said jestingly, for his wedding-day, a merry allusion which could hardly have been lost on Anne Boleyn or Archbishop Cranmer, who both had nuptials in prospect. He came to the scaffold, this martyr for Papal Rome, carrying in his hand the New Testament; and as he halted amid the weeping crowd, he prayed that in his agony some message might be given to him from that Book which he had done so much to exalt in his University. He opened it at a venture, and read—This is life Eternal; then he turned over the page for ever. His head was hacked from his body and spiked upon London Bridge, whence it was later thrown into the river; for the beauty and ruddiness of the countenance began to attract popular devotion. The body was wrapped in a blood-stained shroud and cast into one grave with Sir Thomas More, in the little convict chapel of St. Peter-in-Chains. So did the King, who deprived him of wearing his red hat, provide him unwittingly, unconsciously, with robes of such sanguine splendor as few are privileged to carry into the presence of Him Who is Creator of both King and Cardinal. So in the fulness of time

Came Cambridge by Her Patron Saint.

He represents the ideal University type, the scholar, the theologian, the patron of the new learning, the defender of the old Faith, gentle with the poor, unflinching to the proud, founder of colleges, adviser of Queens, called from the hermitage of a student to redeem the craven episcopacy of England by his blood. It was said that only two persons out of heaven had no fear of Henry VIII. and dared give back his glance. One was the devil who had possession of the King's conscience, and the other was John Fisher, who kept the conscience of the Queen!

So, in a dark whirlwind of lust and hatred and cowardice, streaked here and there with the redeeming

glow of martyrdom, the older England passed away and another took her place. It was more than a coincidence that upon the very day that Shakespeare died, a famous name was entered upon the books at Cambridge—the name of Oliver Cromwell—that the embodiment of the newer and sterner England came to the surface even as the singer of the merrier and the holier England passed away. That merry England, for which this at least may be said, that while it lasted, the poor man who would work for his education received it, while Holy Church kept the rich man busy building Gothic cathedrals or slicing the heads of the Saracen. All of which is now reversed; for it is the rich who go up to the Universities, and the poor who build our cathedrals with their pennies, and in default of our chivalry fight our wars.

But the era of change had begun in earnest. The house of the Franciscans was turned over to such studies as enabled it to foster the Seraphic Soul of the afore-mentioned Oliver, next to Henry VIII. himself the most generous disposer of other people's property the Universities had ever seen; while the house of the Dominicans became a seminary of hymn-singers, mystics, Puritans of the fervid narrowness that eventually produced John Harvard, not the least illustrious link between two continents.

But there is a question which visitors seldom weary of asking, but which others are weary of answering, owing to the number of right answers. What is the essential difference between Oxford and Cambridge? All Oxford and Cambridge men are agreed in considering that one of the two is the superior University, but there is a slight disagreement as to which. As to the subtler differences between the two, it remains a divine truth that Cambridge men are generally Aristotelians and Oxford men Platonists; that Oxford is more medieval, Cambridge more up-to-date; that Oxford, from her romantic disposition, has been aptly called the home of lost causes, while Cambridge, from her scientific bias, can be equally well termed the home of discovered causes. As regards the

Types That the Universities Have Produced—

It is a well-known fact that inventors and discoverers of mechanical appliances seldom, if ever, hail from the academy; likewise that soldiers and sailors are rarely university men, whether it is that soldiers seldom care to wage battles among books, or sailors are loth to set sail to the winds of controversy. Likewise, great artists in music or painting do not hail from either, such types being born and not educated. Masters of Arts there are to be found in plenty, but, to split a tenuous hair, never a Master of Art.

The types which have sprung from Oxford and Cambridge may be divided into the politicians, the poets, the preachers, and the players—not, alas! of music, but of all manners of sport. On one point the fame of Cambridge remains distinct and peculiar. The entire stock of English poets have passed through her courts—Chaucer, Milton, Spenser, Gray, Wordsworth, Byron, and Tennyson. Oxford, it must be admitted, produced a solitary poet in Shelley, whom she was careful to expel in budding youth for publishing an atheistic tract. She has since done penance by building a domed chapel to his memory, but the tract is not generally shown to visitors.

Oxford, on the other hand, can claim a great and glorious succession of men of religion in Grossetete, Wolsey, Wesley, Manning, Keble, and Newman. Above all, it was her fortune alone among northern Universities to provide an occupant of the Papal Chair in the person of Alexander the Fifth, though Cambridge men in envy insist that it was the sixth of the name.

Oxford is only a crooked winding street surmounted by a mist of domes and bells, but saint and hero, scholar and sinner, have trodden it and loved it more than all the broadways of the world, and preferred it even to that street in Damascus which is called straight.

Cambridge is Only an Ecclesiastical Hamlet
planted on a ditch of fenland, but all the poets of

R. V. C. Harris

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