

**www.e-rara.ch**

**Memorabilia Cantabrigiae, or, an account of the different colleges in  
Cambridge**

**Wilson, Joseph**

**London, 1803**

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich**

Shelf Mark: Rar 6536

Persistent Link: <https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-25928>

Christ's college.

---

**www.e-rara.ch**

Die Plattform e-rara.ch macht die in Schweizer Bibliotheken vorhandenen Drucke online verfügbar. Das Spektrum reicht von Büchern über Karten bis zu illustrierten Materialien – von den Anfängen des Buchdrucks bis ins 20. Jahrhundert.

e-rara.ch provides online access to rare books available in Swiss libraries. The holdings extend from books and maps to illustrated material – from the beginnings of printing to the 20th century.

e-rara.ch met en ligne des reproductions numériques d'imprimés conservés dans les bibliothèques de Suisse. L'éventail va des livres aux documents iconographiques en passant par les cartes – des débuts de l'imprimerie jusqu'au 20e siècle.

e-rara.ch mette a disposizione in rete le edizioni antiche conservate nelle biblioteche svizzere. La collezione comprende libri, carte geografiche e materiale illustrato che risalgono agli inizi della tipografia fino ad arrivare al XX secolo.

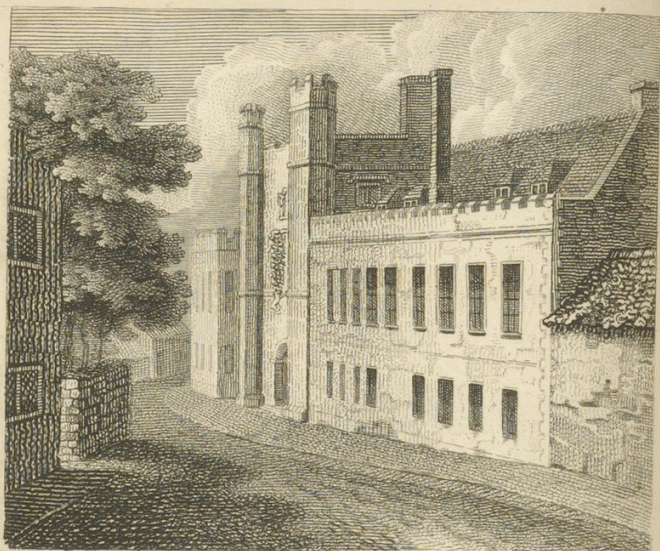
---

**Nutzungsbedingungen** Dieses Digitalisat kann kostenfrei heruntergeladen werden. Die Lizenzierungsart und die Nutzungsbedingungen sind individuell zu jedem Dokument in den Titelinformationen angegeben. Für weitere Informationen siehe auch [Link]

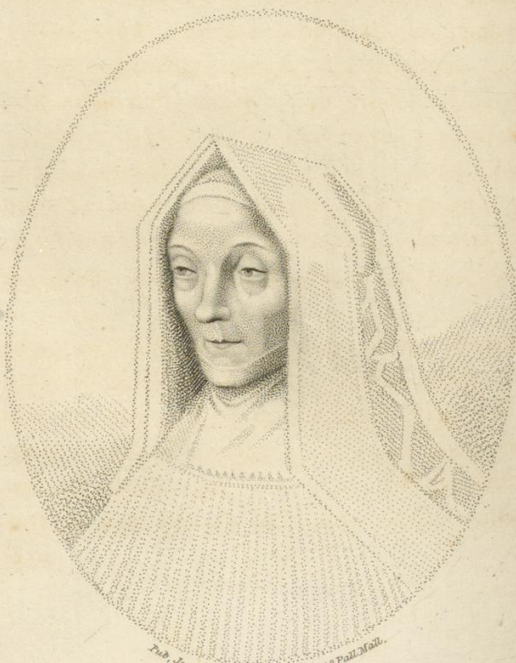
**Terms of Use** This digital copy can be downloaded free of charge. The type of licensing and the terms of use are indicated in the title information for each document individually. For further information please refer to the terms of use on [Link]

**Conditions d'utilisation** Ce document numérique peut être téléchargé gratuitement. Son statut juridique et ses conditions d'utilisation sont précisés dans sa notice détaillée. Pour de plus amples informations, voir [Link]

**Condizioni di utilizzo** Questo documento può essere scaricato gratuitamente. Il tipo di licenza e le condizioni di utilizzo sono indicate nella notizia bibliografica del singolo documento. Per ulteriori informazioni vedi anche [Link]



CHRISTS COLLEGE



*Pub. June 7, 1800, by Edw. Harding 98, Pall Mall.*

MARGARET COUNTESS of RICHMOND

## Christ's College.

---

THIS College is situate north of Emanuel, opposite to St. Andrew's Church; and has one grand Court, about 138 feet long, and 120 broad, formed by the Chapel, Master's-Lodge, Hall, and apartments for the Students. It is cased with stone, and fashed in a handsome manner. There is likewise an uniform pile of stone building, next the garden and the field, about 150 feet in length; from which there is a fine view of the adjacent country.

The Chapel, including the Ante-Chapel, is about eighty-four feet long, twenty-seven broad, and thirty high; floored with marble, well adorned and finished, and has an organ-gallery on the north side of it.

There is a handsome monument of white marble near the altar, erected to the memory of Sir Thomas Finch, Embassador in Turkey, and Sir John Baines, who had their education in this College; travelled together, and were remarkable for their friendship, which continued till the end of their lives.

lives. Sir Joshua dying in Turkey, his body was brought over and interred here, anno 1682; and his friend Sir Thomas, who did not long survive him, was buried in the same vault.

The Hall is a handsome room, forty-five feet long, twenty-seven broad, and thirty high. The Fellows' Garden is well laid out and pleasant, there being both open and shady walks, beautiful alcoves, a bowling-green, and an excellent summer-house; behind which is a cold-bath, surrounded with a little wilderness.

This College was founded in 1505, 21st Henry VII. by MARGARET, Countess of Richmond and Derby, the learned and pious mother of Henry the Seventh, and sole heiress of John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, grandson of John of Gaunt.

Mr. Walpole justly observes, that she employed herself in acts of more real devotion and goodness, than generally attends so much superstition; a stronger proof of which cannot be given, than the method she adopted to determine the choice of a husband. She was solicited in marriage by the great Duke of Suffolk, for his son; and, at the same time, by his master, King Henry VI. for his half-brother, Edmund, Earl of Richmond.

“ On so nice a point,” says Mr. Walpole, “ the good young lady advised with an elderly gentlewoman; who thinking it too great a decision to take upon herself, recommended her to St. Nicholas,

“ cholas, who, whipping on some episcopal robes,  
 “ appeared to her, and declared in favour of Ed-  
 “ mund.”

Henry the Seventh was the sole fruit of this marriage, his father dying when he was but fifteen weeks old. The Countess, however, sought consolation in two other husbands, by neither of whom she had children. From her funeral Sermon, preached by her Confessor, Bishop Fisher, who, says Ballard, knew the very secrets of her soul, we learn, “ that she possessed *almost* all things that were commendable in a woman, either in mind or body.” She understood French perfectly, and had some knowledge of the Latin. She was devout even to austerities, having shifts and girdles of hair; and, if in health, never failed to wear one or other certain days in every week; so that she declared to her Confessor, her skin was often pierced therewith. In humility she was romantic; and would often say, that if the Princes of Christendom would combine and march against the common enemy, the Turks, she would most willingly attend them, and be their laundress in the camp.

She was profuse in the encouragement of learning; and, towards the latter end of her third marriage, singularly chaste, having then obtained a licence from her husband for that purpose, upon which she took the vow of celibacy. “ A boon,” says Mr. Walpole, “ as seldom, I believe, requested  
 Q 3 “ of

“ of a third husband, as easily granted.” Her life, from the turbulence of the times, must have been the subject of infinite uneasiness, which she is said to have supported with great fortitude.

The Countess died in the sixty-ninth year of her age, and was buried in Henry the Seventh’s Chapel; where an altar-tomb, with a statue of brass, was erected to her memory. Round the monument is a Latin inscription, written by Erasmus; for which he was paid twenty shillings by the University of Cambridge.

The College was founded on the scite of a Monastery, called God’s House, opposite to St. Andrew’s Church; and a Master, twelve Fellows, and forty-seven Scholars (in all sixty), were appointed; to which King Edward VI. added another Fellowship out of the impropriation of Bourne, which he gave to the College, as well as the revenues of Bromwell Abbey.

Henry VI. being the Founder of the Monastery called God’s House, he is commemorated as a Co-Founder. Sir Thomas Finch, and Sir John Baines, founded two Scholarships and two Fellowships. Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, Sir Walter Mildmay, Dr. Patinson, Nicholas Culverwell, Thomas Langton, Mr. Wentworth, Sir Robert Isham, and Richard Carr, were also considerable Benefactors.

BISHOPS AND EMINENT MEN.

HUGH LATIMER, Bishop of Worcester. At the age of fourteen, Latimer was sent to Christ's College, where he took his degrees; at which time he was a zealous Papist, and was honoured with the office of Keeper of the Cross to the University. At thirty, he became a Protestant, and one of the twelve licensed Preachers from Cambridge; on which occasion he promulgated his opinions with great freedom.

He was not long after summoned before Cardinal Wolsey, on a charge of Heresy; and obliged to subscribe certain articles of faith, which he certainly did not believe.

In 1531, having resumed his invectives against Popery, he was again summoned, and again obliged to subscribe. In 1535, through the influence of Ann Boleyn, to whom he was Chaplain, Henry promoted him to the Bishopric of Worcester; but in 1539, rather than subscribe to the six articles, he resigned his mitre, and retired into the country. A short time after, on being charged with speaking against the articles, he was committed to the Tower, where he continued till the death of Henry the Eighth.

Edward VI. did not restore Latimer to his Bishopric,

shopric, although he preached several times before him, and continued to discharge his clerical functions with unremitting zeal and resolution. Upon the accession of the sanguinary Mary, he was doomed to destruction, being, with Cranmer and Ridley, confined to the Tower.

On their removal to Oxford, that they might dispute with the learned men of both Universities, Latimer declined the discussion on account of his great age and infirmities, but delivered his opinion in writing. Refusing, however, to subscribe the Popish creed, he was condemned for Heresy, and, together with Bishop Ridley, burnt alive. He behaved with uncommon fortitude on the occasion, and died a real Martyr to the Reformation.

Latimer was learned, virtuous, and brave: a remarkable instance of the last quality is adduced by Fox, who says, that instead of the usual New Year's gift of gold, &c. he presented Henry the Eighth with a New Testament, inclosed in a napkin, with this motto:—*Fornicatores et adulteros judicabit Deus.*

NICHOLAS HEATH, Archbishop of York, 1555, 2d Mary.

CUTHBERT SCOT, Bishop of Chester, 1556, 4th Mary.

WILLIAM HUGHS, Bishop of St. Asaph, 1573, 16th Elizabeth.

WIL-

WILLIAM CHADDERTON, Bishop of Lincoln,  
1595, 37th Elizabeth.

ANTHONY WATSON, Bishop of Chichester,  
1596, 38th Elizabeth.

VALENTINE CAREY, Bishop of Exeter, 1621.

Dr. JOHNSON, Archdeacon of Dublin.

BRUTE BABINGTON, Bishop of Londonderry,  
in Ireland.

GEORGE DOWNHAM, Bishop of London-  
derry.

WILLIAM CHAPEL, Bishop of Offory.

JOHN SHARP, Archbishop of York, 1691, 3d  
William and Mary. It was through the influence  
of this Prelate, and the Duchefs of Somerfet, with  
Queen Anne, that Dean Swift was prevented from  
having a Bifhopric; they having represented to  
her on their knees, for upwards of an hour, the  
irreligious tendency of the *Tale of a Tub!*

Swift has accordingly taken care not to forget  
him: in the poem upon himself, he fays:

York is from Lambeth sent to shew the Queen,  
A dang'rous treatise writ against the spleen;  
Which by the ityle, the manner, and the drift,  
'Tis thought could be the work of none but Swift;  
Poor York! the harmless tool of other's hate,  
He sues for pardon, and repents too late.

The last line was occasioned by the Archbishop's  
having

having sent a message to Swift, that he was sorry for what he had done, and desired his pardon. He found, however, that Swift neither forgave nor forgot. Resentment stuck to him like sand.

FREDERICK CORNWALLIS, Bishop of Litchfield and Coventry, 1749, 22d Geo. II.; translated to Canterbury, 1768, 8th Geo. III.

EDMUND LAW, Bishop of Carlisle, 1769, 10th Geo. III. The learned translator of Dr. King's Origin of Evil, and author of many other excellent works.

BEILBY PORTEUS, Bishop of Chester, 1776, 17th Geo. III. and the present excellent Bishop of London; to which See he was translated in 1788.

JOHN LAW, son of the Bishop of Carlisle; successively Bishop of Killala, Clonfert, and Elphin, in Ireland. Geo. III.

NICHOLAS GRIMALD, a Poet of considerable rank in his time; and, according to Mr. Hayley\*, the first writer of blank verse. He was born in the year 1519, and educated in Christ's; but in the year 1542, removed to Oxford. In 1547, on the foundation of Henry the Eighth's College, he was admitted a Senior, or Theologist; about which time he read a public lecture in the large refectory of that house. He was also Chaplain to Bishop Latimer; but, to avoid persecution, complied with the religion.

\* Life of Cowper.

of Queen Mary. He was in great esteem about the 15th of Elizabeth. Ridley gives him the character of a man of much eloquence, both in English and Latin.

He was the author of several poems, among the Earl of Surrey's "*Songs and Sonnets.*" His "*Archipropheta, sive Johannes Baptistæ Tragædia,*" was first printed in 1548. The titles of several other dramatic pieces, poems, translations, &c. will be found in Bale and Tanner.

GABRIEL HARVEY, was born about 1545, of a good family, nearly related to Sir Thomas Smith, and was educated at Christ's, where he took both his degrees of Arts. He was afterwards Proctor of the University. Having applied himself to the study of the Civil Law, in 1585, he took his degree in that faculty, and practised as an Advocate in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, at London.

Towards the latter part of his life, he began to study Astrology, and finally turned Almanac-maker; in which capacity he was severely and not undeservedly ridiculed by Thomas Nash and Robert Green.

He died in the year 1630, aged eighty-five.

Wood says, he was esteemed an ingenious man and an excellent scholar. Spenser, the Poet, was his intimate friend; from whom we learn, that he was highly esteemed by the all-accomplished Sir Philip Sidney and Mr. Dyer.

As to his poetical talents, Mr. Upton is of opinion,

nion, that his poem, prefixed to the Fairy Queen, and signed Hobbinol, would, if he had written nothing else, have rendered him immortal.

JOHN MAJOR, a scholastic Divine and Historian of the sixteenth century. After studying some time in Christ Church, he went to Paris, and increased his stock of learning in the College of St. Barbe, under the famous John Boulac. From thence he removed to that of Montacute, where he began the study of Divinity under the celebrated Standouk. In 1505, he was created D.D. at the College of Navarre, and in 1519 returned to Scotland.

He taught theology for several years in the University of St. Andrew; but at length, being disgusted with the quarrels of his countrymen, he went back to Paris, and resumed his lectures in the College of Montacute, where he had several pupils, who afterwards became men of great eminence. Returning once more to Scotland in 1530, he became Professor of Theology at St. Andrew's, and afterwards Provost. Du Pin says, that "of all the Divines who had written on the works of the master of the sentences, Major was the most learned and comprehensive." Launoy, and other French writers, have given him the same character. His History of Scotland, though written with boldness, is in a barbarous style, and often fabulous.

JOHN LELAND, the great English Antiquarian, after receiving the early part of his education at St.

Paul's

Paul's School, of which the grammarian Lillye was then Master, removed to Christ's College, Cambridge. Greek being little taught in this country, he removed to Paris to study that language \*.

On his return to England, having taken orders, he was appointed by Henry VIII. one of his Chaplains; and, in 1533, King's Antiquary, an office created and dying with him, and never since re-established. His commission empowered him to search for ancient writings in all the libraries of Colleges, Abbies, Priors, &c. within his Majesty's dominions.

He soon afterwards set out on his travels in search of antiquities, which employed him six years; during which time he visited every part of England, where monuments of antiquity were likely to be found. On the conclusion of his tours, he devoted six years more of his time to digesting and preparing his materials for publication.

In 1547, poor Leland was at first seized with a deep melancholy, which was shortly followed by a total deprivation of reason. In this dreadful state he remained till 1552, when death happily came to his release.

He was a man of great learning, an universal linguist, an excellent Latin Poet, and a most inde-

\* *Cave a Græcis, ne fias hereticus*, was a common maxim. Such profane learning was thought prejudicial to Christianity.

fatigable and skilful Antiquarian. On his death, King Edward gave all his papers to Sir John Cheeke, who, on being obliged to leave the kingdom, gave four folio volumes of Collections to Humphry Purefoy, Esq. which were presented by his son to William Burton, author of the History of Leicestershire. Eight volumes of the Itinerary were also in Burton's possession; and, in 1632, deposited by him in the Bodleian Library. The greater part of his other manuscripts are in the Cotton Library, and have been of the greatest use to our subsequent Antiquarians.

Sir PHILIP SIDNEY, the eldest son of Sir Henry Sidney, and Mary, the daughter of John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, was born in the year 1554, at Penshurst, in Kent.

Camden\*, in his Kent, speaking of Penshurst, and of the Sidney family, says:

“ But Sir Philip Sidney is not to be omitted without an unpardonable crime (the great glory of his family, the great hopes of mankind, the most lively pattern of virtue, and the darling of the learned world); who hotly engaging the enemy at Zutphen, lost his life bravely. This is that Sidney whom Providence seems to have sent into the world, to give the present age a specimen of the ancients. Rest then in peace, O Sidney!

\* Britannia in Kent. Ed. 1695, p. 191.

“ we will not celebrate your memory with tears,  
“ but admiration! Whatever we loved in you (as  
“ the best of authors \* speaks of that best governor  
“ of Britain), whatever we admired in you, still  
“ continues, and will continue in the memory of  
“ men, the revolutions of ages, and the annals of  
“ time. Many are the inglorious and ignoble bu-  
“ ried in oblivion, but Sidney shall live to the end  
“ of time! For as the Grecian Poet has it—

“ Virtue itself's beyond the reach of Fate.”

Sir Philip Sidney was born in November, 1554, during the reign of Philip and Mary. His early and wonderful proficiency in every branch of classical and modern literature, induced his father, the renowned Sir Henry Sidney (after a short time spent at Christ's College), to send him on his travels, at an age generally immature, being only twelve years old; and, from that moment, his public life may be said to have commenced.

One of his biographers and constant companions, Grevile Lord Brooke, indeed, says of him, even at this period †—

“ That though he lived with him, and knew him  
“ from a child, that he never found him other than  
“ a man.”

\* Tacit. de Agric.

† Lord Brooke's Life, p. 6, 7, and 8.

And:—"Notwithstanding his youth, yet that he  
 "gained reverence among the chief learned men on  
 "the Continent."

During his travels and residence abroad, he formed an intimate acquaintance with most of the personages then distinguished for learning and talents; of which the large collection of letters remaining at Penshurst, affords convincing proofs. His tutor was Professor Languet, whose epistles to Sir Philip have been so much admired. His manners and accomplishments were also so conspicuous, as to induce Charles the Ninth, King of France, to honour him with the employment of Gentleman of his Chamber.

After three years spent in the acquirement of every species of knowledge, which such connections and his own indefatigable exertions could obtain, he returned home, where the high reputation he had acquired on the Continent did not permit him to remain long unemployed; for it was a distinguishing feature in the glory of Queen Elizabeth's reign, that she had the wisdom to select and employ persons of the most eminent abilities, integrity, and honour.

Sir Philip had scarcely attained twenty-one, when he was sent to Rudolph, Emperor of Germany, to condole on the death of Maximilian the Second. This embassy had many secret objects, relating to the other German Princes. In letters to his father-in-law,

in-law, Secretary Walsingham, and his uncle, the famous Robert, Earl of Leicester, he describes, in a most masterly manner, his first audiences at the Imperial Court, and the political state of the Continent; and draws the characters of the whole Royal Family.

From this period, his life was one continued series of unremitting exertion in the public service.— In all the affairs of the Low Countries he had a most distinguished share, being Governor of Flushing, with the adjoining territory. And his uncle, the Earl of Leicester, was forced to acknowledge, that—

“ While his nephew lived, he held up his authority in the United Provinces; and that he soon found reason to withdraw himself from that burden then after his death \*.”

But although he shone in all the accomplishments of a martial age, and his name is renowned in the tournaments and battles of his country, it is not in the characters of statesman and warrior alone that this illustrious person demands our attention. In his time, we emerge from the twilight of learning to a period comparatively classical; and Sir Philip Sidney, whose birth was celebrated by one of the first poets † of his time, whose talents are illustrated

\* Life of Sir Philip Sidney, p. 35.

† Ben Jonson says:

frustrated by his own Muse, lamented for his unhappy and premature death, by the poetical effusions of a King\*, and celebrated by the dignified competition of the Universities, not only of his native but foreign countries, at the same time proved himself the generous patron of learned men, and the example of advancement in every branch of polite learning.

Francis the First had given a new air to literature, which a mixture of gallantry, and the introduction of ladies at his court along with the learned, highly encouraged. Our Henry the Eighth contributed also to give a romantic turn to composition; and Petrarch, "the Poet of the Fair," was naturally a pattern in the elegant and tender effusions of Sidney. The discovery of printing in 1440, had also diffused over Europe, in more copious streams, the fountain of the Muses; in which his mind, always insatiable after every species of useful knowledge, drank deeply.

Such is the short sketch of the biography of this memorable character, whose personal merits raised him within reach of a crown; and who was called for, by a competitor for the kingdom of Portugal, as a man, "Without whom all other aids would

That taller tree, which of a nut was set,

At his great birth, where all the Muses met.

\* James the First wrote an epitaph upon his death.

be nothing." In short, "Vir, haud facilè discernas, manuve aut consilio promptior."

His conduct and brave death were but the conclusions of a life of virtue, accomplishments, and humanity; and he hardly possessed a fault which did not flow from the nobleness of his nature. He had a solemn tincture of religion. In him the vehement friend, the bold injured enemy, the statesman, and the fine gentleman, were highly conspicuous. His private life seems to be stained by no vice, nor sullied by any meanness: all his sentiments were liberal and elevated. "Nil non laudandum, aut dixit, aut fecit, aut sensit."

In the collection of the Sidney State Papers, published by Mr. Collins, only nine letters of Sir Philip Sidney's (and those perfectly unimportant), are published; which has given rise to cavils as to his real merit in political affairs; of which one may say—"Spreta exolescunt; si irascere, agnita videntur."

His Sonnets seem to be the effusions of a neglected and despairing lover to an obdurate mistress; and the melancholy strain of complaint pervading the whole, appears peculiarly adapted to the pensive, thoughtless genius of the Poet. The versification, though frequently fettered by the epigrammatic quaintness characteristic of the age, yet possesses many beauties in artless description and fanciful allusion; and although some puerile conceits are discernible, they are, upon the whole, more free from that fault, than the generality of poetical productions

tions at this period. It is well known that Sir Philip Sidney completed a new version of the Psalms, which he dedicated and presented to his sister, the Countess of Pembroke, and which are still at Wilton-House.

In 1580, a quarrel happened between Sir Philip Sidney and the Earl of Oxford, in a tennis-court; and a duel would probably have ensued, if the Queen had not interfered. Sidney was, however, disgusted, retired from Court, and amused himself with writing his *Arcadia*. In 1581, we find him foremost in the jousts and tournaments which were celebrated for the entertainment of the Duke of Anjou, then in England; whom he accompanied, with several of the first nobility, to Antwerp. In 1583, the Prince Palatine being installed Knight of the Garter, Sidney was appointed to possess the stall in his name; and received, on that occasion, the honour of Knighthood.

In 1585, he projected an expedition to America, in conjunction with Sir Francis Drake; but when he was at Plymouth ready to sail, he received an express from the Queen, brought by a Peer of the realm, commanding him to return to Court.

He was shortly afterwards made Governor of Flushing, and General of the Horse, under his uncle, the Earl of Leicester, then commander-in-chief in the Low Countries. He was here eminently conspicuous; and he probably would have been elected

electd King of Poland, having been put in nomination for that purpose, if the Queen had not refused to interfere, declaring she could not lose the best jewel of her crown.

On the 22d of September, 1586, in a luckless hour, the gallant Sidney was sent out with a party, to intercept a convoy marching towards Zutphen. The morning being hazy, they fell into an ambuscade. Sir Philip fought with the most desperate bravery; but just as he was mounting a second horse, his first having been killed under him, he received a shot in the thigh, which broke the bone to pieces.

His conduct on the field to a wounded soldier, who was wistfully eying some water in a helmet, which Sir Philip was about to drink \*, perfectly accords with his general character.

He was carried to Arnheim, where he lingered eleven days; and so perfectly resigned to his fate, that a few hours before his death, he had the favourite air of *La Cuisse rompue*, which he had set to music, played to him. Thus fell the amiable, the virtuous, the accomplished, the brave Sir Philip Sidney, in the 32d year of his age; a polite scholar, the patron of learning and genius, and the object of universal panegyric.

\* Sir Philip called out—"Take it, friend, thy necessities are greater than mine."

William,

William, Prince of Orange, desired Sir Fulke Greville to tell the Queen, that she had in Sidney one of the ripest and greatest counsellors at that time in Europe. Henry the Fourth, of France, treated him as an equal in nature, and a person fit for friendship with a King. His uncle, the Earl of Leicester, after extolling the behaviour of his officers, speaks of his Sidney in these words:

“ Albeyt, I must say, it was too much los for  
 “ me; for this young manne was my greatest com-  
 “ fort, next her Majesty, of all the world; and if  
 “ I could buy his lief with all I have, to my sherte,  
 “ I would give yt.”

The great Walsingham confessed that, “ Sidney  
 “ overshot him in his own bow.” The States of  
 Zealand petitioned the Queen to have the honour  
 of burying him at their own cost. The people of  
 England put on general mourning, and the writers  
 of the age vied with each other who should praise him  
 most. If all this be insufficient to establish the cha-  
 racter of a great, a very great man, there is no  
 faith in history; and yet Lord Orford’s love of sin-  
 gularity, which prompted his attempt to brighten  
 one of the blackest characters in our annals, has  
 led him wantonly to throw a dark shade over the  
 spotless fame of Sir Philip Sidney.

Sir Philip Sidney’s body was brought to England,  
 and buried with great pomp in St. Paul’s Cathedral,  
 at the Queen’s expence.—His *Arcadia* has passed  
 through

through fourteen editions, and been translated into French, Italian, and Dutch.

JOHN MILTON, the greatest Poet of this or any other nation, finished his education in this College; where it is, I fear, too clearly ascertained, that he was the last who underwent the degrading punishment of flagellation\*.

This sublime and wonderful genius, oppressed by poverty, blindness, and old age, was yet equal to a subject, which carried him beyond the bounds of the Creation, and acquired him a fame, before which all earthly grandeur fades. Yet for this eternal monument of the genius of our country, he received only the trifling sum of fifteen pounds!

The age of Charles the Second was, indeed, as destitute of all ideas of taste, as of those of virtue; and the idle author of a madrigal, or a song, was more regarded than the greatest ornament of literature. Milton's juvenile productions would alone have immortalized him. The personification in his *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, is striking; and his *Comus* is the best masque the world has ever seen. There was something peculiar in his genius, which ennobled and purified whatever came within his grasp. Even sensuality is with him divested of all its grossness; and his description of the marriage-

\* See p. 106.

bed, is superior to any thing which ever fell from the pen of any other man.

Milton was Latin Secretary to Cromwell, which language he wrote and spoke with uncommon facility and elegance; and his letters are to this day esteemed the completest models for his successors in office.

All Milton's biographers have asserted, that he never absconded during the prosecution against him, after the Restoration. There is, however, in the British Museum, the original proclamation, which was issued on that occasion; in which it is distinctly stated, that great search had been made for him; that he had left his usual place of abode, and was secreted.

A most singular attempt was made, about sixty years ago, by one Lauder, a clergyman, to fix on this renowned poet the imputation of gross plagiarism; upon a principle, which would tear the wreath of original merit from the brow of every votary of the Muses, who has written since the days of Homer. Lauder asserted, that Milton had merely translated from several Latin Poets, the most admired passages in his works; and to establish this strange proposition, he interpolated, in several Latin authors, forged sentences, which he quoted. This fraud was, however, soon detected, by the sagacity and critical acumen of Dr. Douglas, the present learned

learned Bishop of Salisbury. Lauder, upon this discovery, wrote a long apologetical letter to Dr. Birch (now in the British Museum), in which he excuses himself, that, as Milton had, under threats, compelled the printer of King Charles's *Eikon Basilike* to insert a prayer, which notoriously was not the King's composition, in order to encourage the belief that no part of the book was written by that unfortunate monarch, he thought it equally just to serve Milton the same trick; and had accordingly, for that purpose, fabricated the sentences in question.

Even supposing Lauder's assertion to have been well founded, it must be admitted that Milton had vastly improved upon all predecessors; and to detract from his merit, upon the ground of the same thoughts have been used by another, would justify the exclamation of the splenetic author; who, after writing a book, and finding what he had said had been long done before, exclaimed—*Percant, qui ante nos nostra dixerunt*; and would establish the expressions of Terence—*Nullum est jam dictum quod non sit dictum prius*.

It appears from a letter of Bishop Law to Dr. Birch, that the Paradise Lost (the original MS. of which, with other poems, is preserved in the library of this College), was originally sketched as a tra-

gedy, and afterwards turned into its present state\*.

Dr. Covel, Dr. Hall, the author of Bishop Fisher's Life, Anthony Gilby, Arthur Hilderthaw, John Downham, Robert Hill, Edward Topfel, Thomas Drax, Richard Barnard, Nathaniel Shute, William Watley, Henry Scudder, Dr. Cudworth, Sir Robert Raymond, lord-chief-justice, Nicholas Saunderson, the famous mathematician, Laurence Echard, the historian, and Dr. Joseph Mede, a learned divine, but too much addicted to astrology, were also of this College.

The present Society consists of a Master, fifteen Fellows, and fifty-four Scholars; the total number is about 110. Visitors, the Vice-Chancellor and two senior Doctors.

\* It is worthy of remark, that Grimbald, the first writer of English *blank verse*, and Milton, the greatest in that path, were both educated at the same College.

