

TRANSLATION OF THE LATIN SPEECH.

1883.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

None of those who have addressed you in previous years have had to fulfil a more trying duty than that which has devolved upon me—the duty, I mean, of giving expression to that common feeling of loss under which we are met here to-day. We miss from your body him who was the Nestor of its counsels, and the staunch upholder of our interests—one whom we regarded less as a patron to be respected than as a father deserving of our love. And indeed he was entitled to peculiar reverence within these walls, for munificent as he was to all, to none had he been a greater benefactor than to ourselves. Nor would I dwell upon his liberality alone, well-nigh royal as it was; my tribute is due no less to the singular dignity and sweetness of his character. Last year, you may remember, he was the attentive auditor of our Speeches. To-day there is no heart but mourns his absence. But though

By many a good man wept, he died,

By none wept trulier

than by ourselves; yet, surely, his was no untimely death; for though he had lived to extreme old age, not only was his bodily vigour undecayed, but so green was he in mind and heart that even his four score years and six could not deter him from mingling in our youthful gaieties.

But not to dwell longer upon a saddening theme, I must now congratulate you, my Lords and Gentlemen, and ourselves likewise, on the accession to your body of a dignitary of the Church, himself a diligent cultivator of the Muses, who has proved in the clearest possible manner how kindly disposed he is towards the School, by offering prizes for the encouragement of our Mathematics.

To come nearer home, I will ask you to join me in offering our good wishes to the Headmaster, who, finding the cares of government more than a single pair of shoulders could sustain, has consulted for his own interest and ours, by taking to himself a wife.

From the staff of Masters we have lost one who has actually found it in his heart to exchange these cloistered greeneries for the smoke and din of a London law-court. May he never be so pestered with briefs as to bid farewell for good to his favourite pastime and his playmate pupils. Another Master has been appointed in his room, of equal learning, and, if I mistake not, of equal geniality. A third, whom we enticed to our service from Clifton, to meet an emergency, finds that he is to be retained as a hostage for the good faith of our ancient foe.

And now, should you ask what first-class honours we have achieved during the past twelve months, I am afraid that I have fewer names to mention than you might expect from the growth of our numbers. Some excuse for this may perhaps be found in the fact that few of us this year were of an age to try for Scholarships: still, one of us has gained an Exhibition at Oxford. Of old Shirburnians, Francis Lys has been elected to a Scholarship in the same University. Verney Lovett must be congratulated upon obtaining the tenth place in the competition for the Indian Civil Service: and, above all, we must felicitate Alfred Whitehead, in whom the Alma Mater, that suckled him on the elements of geometry, is proud to recognize to-day a second Euclid!

A word as to our new buildings. If anyone has been surprised to find the postern of our School Room almost blocked up with bricks and mortar, let me inform him that the foundations of new Class Rooms are already laid, which are designed to meet the growing educational needs of the School.

In conclusion, my Lords and Gentlemen, I pray that if I have uttered anything amiss, you will set it down to my youth rather than to any want of respect, and that you will listen to our Speeches with the same kind attention that you always accord to them.