

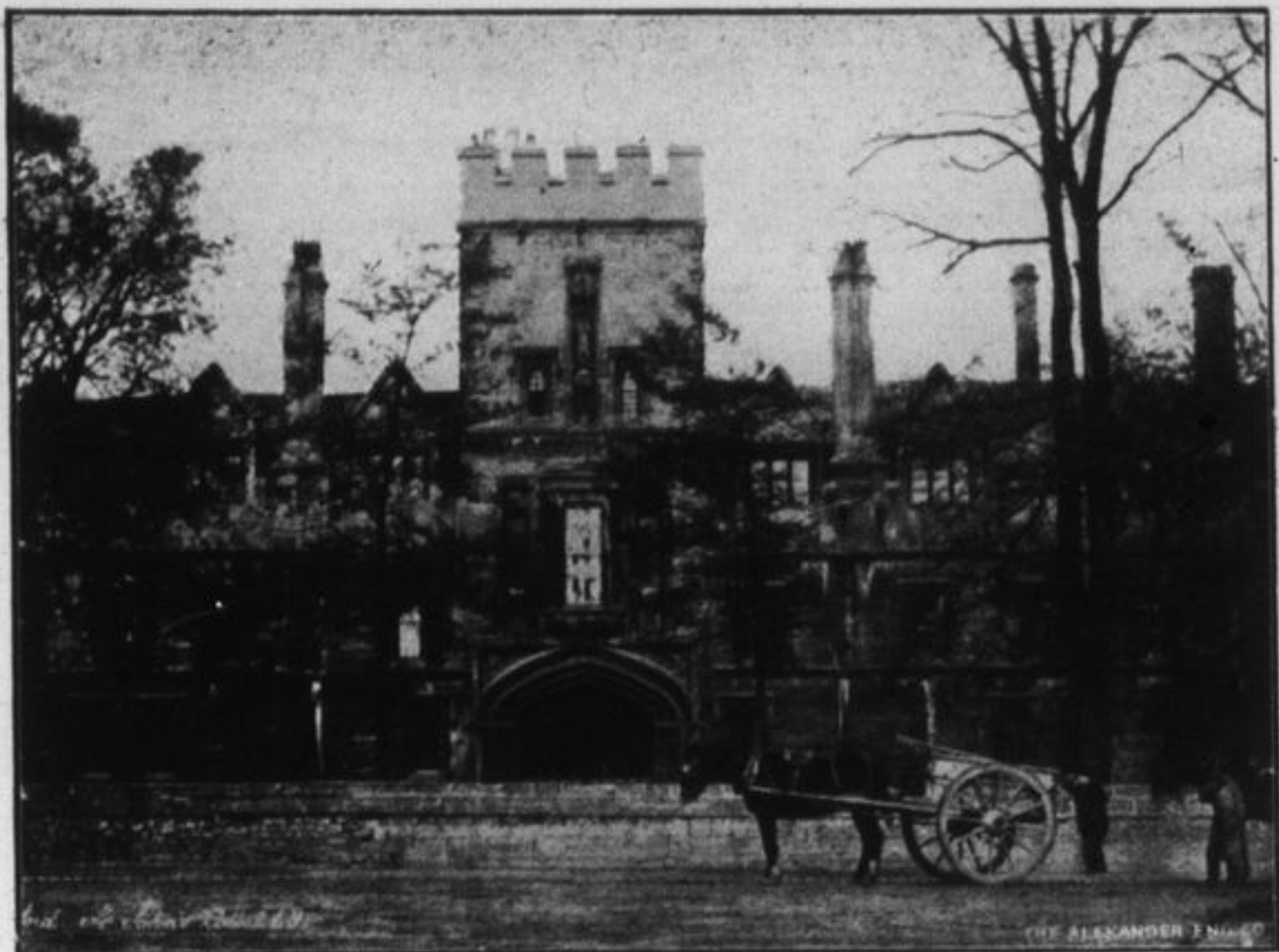
The Mother of College Cities.

Kingston Can Look Up To Oxford With Interest.

Oxford as a seat of learning dates from Alfred the Great. Some writers credit it even earlier. But the original town was obliterated at the Danish Conquest. Modern Oxford goes back only to William the Conqueror. The monasteries founded about that time were practically the beginning of the present colleges. Oxford is monastic. Even the town plan is cruciform—four wide streets lead out toward the points of the compass from the central place called "Carfax," a corruption of "Quatre voies," "Four ways." Oxford and Cambridge differ from Harvard and Yale. The United States universities are homogeneous. The English universities are heterogeneous. The American universities are made up of a president and faculty ruling several thousands

twelfth century monastic days. But the college is famous, not more for its beauty than for its grand choir. Ranking among the first three in England, it is worthy of the great master who, as organist and leader, made it in great part, Sir John Stainer. Passing up "High," on the left, one sees the weather-beaten buildings of University college, said to be the oldest institution in Oxford. It has on its alumni roll few greater than Percy Bysshe Shelley, in whose honor, after they had expelled him in disgrace, they raised a beautiful memorial, one of the sights of Oxford.

On the right, back from High street are the grand old buildings and luxuriant gardens of New college. It is in every way one of the



St. John's College.

of students on defined lines. The English universities are made up of scores of colleges, each with a distinct foundation and differing radically in customs and rules. A student from Oxford is apt to say that he is an Oriol, a Merton, or a Magdalen man rather than an Oxford man.

Some one has said that only two cities in Europe have souls, London and Oxford. The latter has an "atmosphere." Truly, it is a place one cannot forget—so full of relics that the spirits of the departed seem to hover around. We forget the depressing and relaxing climate; we look about and see a wide valley, hemmed in by hills such as England alone has, and a peaceful stream winding its way, white around, hidden in part by ancient elms and girt with spacious lawns and meadows, lies the cluster of buildings called "the university." No other word than "cluster" seems to express the idea. Though the twenty colleges of Oxford are independent of one another, and could go on as usual (save for the intercollegiate lectures) if they were miles apart, they nestle so closely together that it is hard to tell which is which.

There are exceptions—Magdalen in the southeast corner of the town, Worcester in the northwest, stand almost by themselves, but it takes care to distinguish Jesus, Lincoln, and Exeter, with Brasenose near by, and a still worse puzzle is the cluster around Merton street and Bear lane, comprising Merton, Oriol, Corpus Christi and part of Christ church. These two groups lie respectively on the north and south sides of the "High" (street), which experts declare to be unbeaten in Europe for architectural beauty. At its foot is Magdalen, with fine cloisters and majestic tower, while in front is Magdalen bridge. The old bridge was torn down in 1776, and one built of solid stone. It spans the little Cherwell which is a branch of the Thames, joining it half a mile below. On fine days in May and June this river, when thronged with punts and canoes, presents a fine sight. The willows overhanging from the old city wall are seen, with the large dining hall, and the great "sepia" window in the chapel, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, depicting the judgment day, and leaving an impression in one's mind that lives.

At Magdalen the gardens are extensive, including the famous "water walks of Addison" and a grove of elms of sixty acres. "Here, within a stone's throw of the High street, deer graze peacefully and the cawing rooks build their nests in the tree-tops, unmindful of man's presence." One of the four open-air pulpits still in existence is on a corner of the wall of Magdalen, and just across the quad, is the old "Grammar Hall," a relic of

first in the Varsity, alike in study and sport. The visitor is impressed with portions of the old street, where Crammer was ennobled before being led to his martyrdom, where Amy Robsart was buried, and where sermons to the undergraduates are preached on Sunday evenings; behind the Radcliffe Camera, which contains part of the Bodleian library, and just behind this again the so-called Divinity schools, containing the main body of the great Bodleian, whose chambers repay hours of careful seeing. Then we come into Broad street, where, in front of "Balliol," the casual passerby would miss a small cross of stone embedded in the macadam on the street, around the corner is St. Giles' and here behold a beautiful monument, which tells the tale—the "Martyrs Memorial," commemorating the courage and faith of the three reformers, Ridley, Latimer and Crammer. And there is Balliol, the great reading college, made famous by many but by none more than the great Jewett—the college of Matthew Arnold and Alfred Milner, the college which has furnished more heads of colleges for Oxford than all the others put together.

But the largest college in the university is Christ Church. Its massive tower looms up as, recrossing the High street, you pass down St. Aldate's. The "Great Quadrangle," much the largest in Oxford; the magnificent mediaeval dining hall, a veritable art gallery in itself; the cathedral, one of the finest of Norman remains, are the most striking features. At St. John's college, a side of the first quadrangle represents all that is left of the original buildings of St. Bernard's college, founded in 1437. The beautiful garden front was due to Archbishop Laud, whose ghost is said to haunt the library and quadrangle. The college possesses the notes made by the famous churchman during his trial, his skull-cap and the staff upon which he supported himself as he walked to the scaffold. Of its founder, a merchant tailor, Sir Thomas White, is told a quaint story of how he chose the site for the college. Three trunks of an elm tree growing from one root were to him the sign for location, as they fitted in with a dream vouchsafed as an inspiration. In the library of St. John's is preserved a rich store of ecclesiastical vestments, the gift of Archbishop Laud. The gardens, laid out as late as 1750, are the most beautiful of all the beautiful college gardens in Oxford; the herbaceous borders are famous, and the tameness of the birds which inhabit the shrubberies is captivating.

No one who goes to Oxford should neglect St. Mary's the Virgin church, approached from High street by the beautiful porch, with those twisted columns, added by Archbishop

Laud's chaplain, Dr. Owen, in 1637. The church, tradition says, was originally built in the reign of Alfred the Great. It is two-storied, not beautiful in interior, but full of intensely interesting relics. In the choir Crammer was tried in September, 1555, and under the curious wooden pulpit he made the famous "recantation of his recantation." Here Amy Robsart was given a public funeral by the university and laid to rest in the choir, when the vicar-chancellor, who gave the sermon, lost the favor of Leicester by speaking of the "poore layde" as having been "pitifully murdered." Only three years before Newman became vicar, in 1828, a curious relic of olden days was done away with. On St. Scholastica's Day the Mayor and Corporation of Oxford were at one time compelled to go forward and make restitution for the massacre which took place on that day in 1354. In very early times they arrived with ropes around their necks; later on they had only to make a propitiatory offering, and finally the record of the squabble between collegians and townsmen was abolished, much to the relief of all concerned.

The chapel at Keble college does not inspire one with admiration, but it is noticeable for gorgeous colored mosaics. The college bears the stamp of modern origin and ecclesiastical teaching. In the library are valuable manuscripts connected with the great and pious man whose name it bears. It is one of the most democratic of the colleges, and the payment of £82 per annum enables the student to reckon to a penny the expense. Instead of having only one meal in the hall, all meals are served there, and the rooms of the students are arranged along corridors running through the buildings, not upon separate staircases. This memorial college is almost an unsatisfying tribute. John Keble was a saint—a poet of elevated and sanctified genius; a preacher, teacher, and leader of singular sweetness and modesty, without loss of austere strength or strictness of principle. He went in and out among the poor as well as the rich. His loyalty to the church was intense. All her friends shared his affections.

The Bodleian library was founded by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, built between 1444 and 1480, restored by Sir Thomas Bodley about 1610. Near by are the beautiful Radcliffe Camera, erected in 1749 to contain the books given by Dr. Radcliffe, but now used as a reading room for the Bodleian; the Clarendon, built from the proceeds of Clarendon's "History of the Great Rebellion," and at first

graceful spire 180 feet high. St. Martin's church, tradition says, was demolished in 1896 to open the crossing of the four streets, but the ancient tower was preserved. All Saints' church is a fine example of the classic Queen Anne style. The Church of St. Peter-in-the-East is very ancient and contains Saxon as well as Norman features. Then there are the churches of St. Algate, St. Giles, St. Thomas and St. Barnabas, besides six new parish edifices, and the places of worship of other communions.

THE CHRISTMAS MOTHER KISS.

In the peasant districts of Germany, and, in fact, eastward through the great Balkan ranges into many provinces of Russia, there is a pretty Christmas morning ceremonial connected with the mother of each home. The people who follow this custom live in districts where scores of customs, dating in origin far back of the birth of Christ, still prevail. Christmas in their mind is not so intimately associated with the birth of Christ as that it marks the turning of the sun back to spring and summer warmth.

The Christmas celebrations begin on December 21, the time of the longest night and shortest day of the year. They continue down to New Year's. Christmas morning is really the morning of Dec. 22, when the day begins to lengthen and the night to shorten. All the family are up by four o'clock that morning, when the "dead before the dawn" prevails. The ground is covered with snow. The air is keen and filled with frost crystals. The breakfast table is spread and it groans with everything good the village and the farm can provide. Extra candles, for which many a penny has been saved, are placed in every room.

The mother comes in to the table. She stands at her chair. Upon her head is some pretty, hand-worked ornament. A spotlessly white handkerchief is crossed at her throat. The father comes into the room and, advancing to her, kisses her, not on the lips, but on the forehead, just above and between the two eyes. The eldest child follows the father and kisses her as he did. Then come the other children, down to the youngest, perhaps a guest or two, and the servants. All gently kiss her. This is the Christmas mother kiss, and bread is not broken on that day in any family until it is given.

Now the origin of this custom has a direct connection with the rejoicing over the first sign of spring. In the peasant lore three



MAGDALEN FOUNDERS' TOWER AND CLOISTER.



MAGDALEN COLLEGE, TOWER AND BRIDGE.

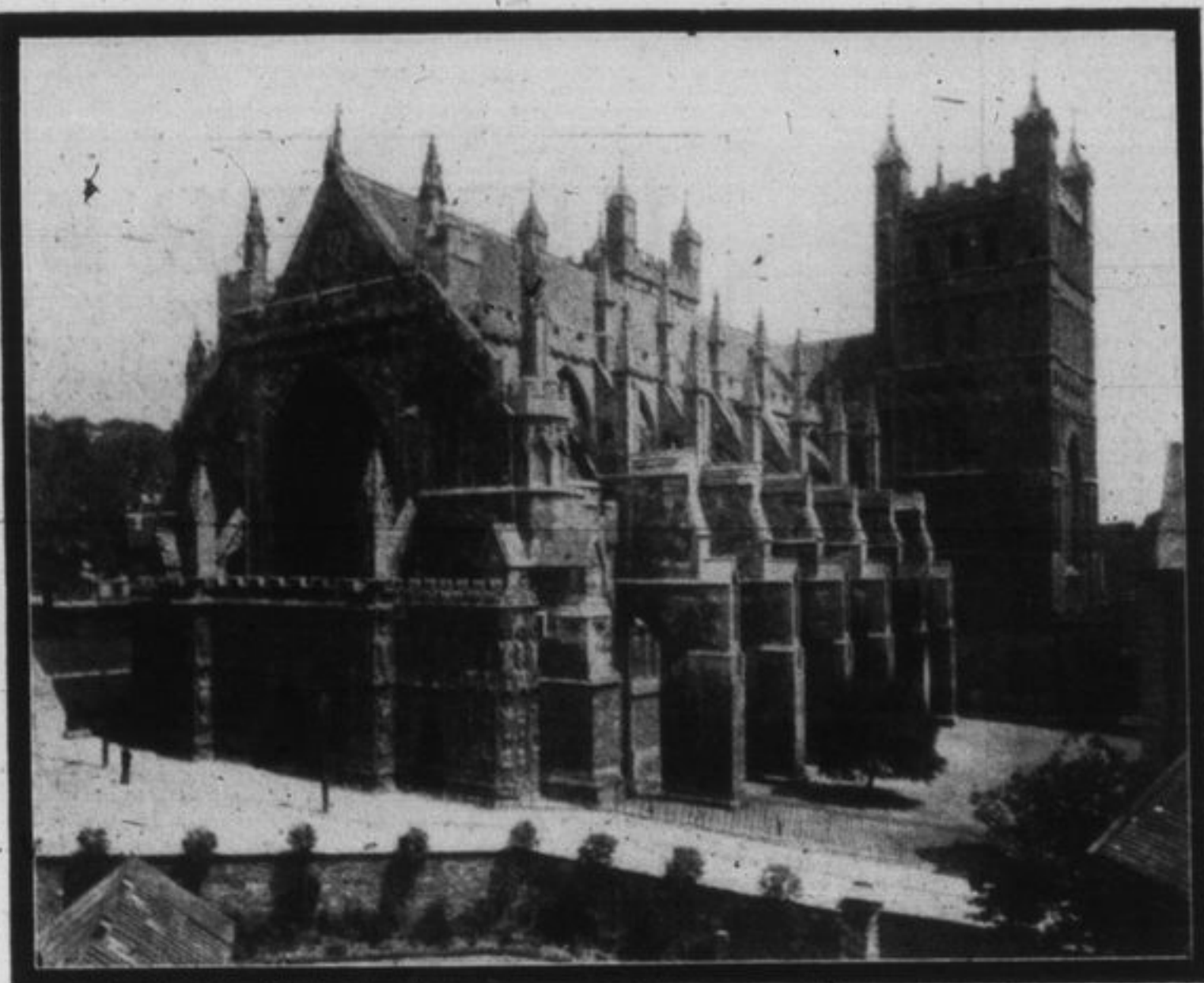
the home of the Clarendon Press; and the Sheldonian Theatre; the hall for public occasions, designed by Wren and presented by Archbishop Sheldon. The university also possesses the New Examination Schools, the Ashmolean buildings, Taylor Institution, The Galleries, Science Museum, Indian Institute, and Botanic Gardens. The gateway to the quadrangle at Christ's contains the famous bell, "Great Tom." The exquisite tower of Magdalen, the buildings of All Souls, the chapel and garden buildings of St. John's, the library of Corpus Christi, and the quadrangles of Corpus, Oriol, Wadham, Balliol and University are treasures in architecture, in which feature they have not always been successfully imitated in the modern buildings. Four colleges for women have been established—Somerville Hall, Lady Margaret Hall, St. Hugh's Hall and St. Hilda's. For non-conformists the imposing Mansfield college was founded in 1888, and a year later Manchester college, transferred from London, resumed in new quarters.

The bishopric of Oxford was constituted at the Reformation. Christ Church, the cathedral (also college chapel), originally belonged to the priory of St. Frideswide. It was built in the twelfth century and has graceful and dignified interior. The exterior is much hidden. St. Mary's church, near the centre of High street, has richly decorated tower, with

things are necessary to make a home happy; the sun's warmth to provide food, the mother's hand to guide the home life, the father's arm to protect from foes. Home and Christmas are indissolubly connected, hence the mother kiss comes with the advent of Christmas. The recognition of the father is later—at harvest time, when the year's hardest work is ended and the fruit of his labors are in the granary. His kiss of respect comes at that time, but the mother's is given on the greatest holy day of the year.

The favorite Christmas folk-song in the west country is the one that Amyas Leigh sings in "Westward Ho," and is known as the "Carol of the Cherry Tree." In Provence the fruit is an apple, and in Christian parts further east a fig-tree. But the story, in all essentials, is the same, and it relates how the Saviour commanded the trees to bend and feed Him, even before the Incarnation.

The life of the average newspaper reporter contains infinite variety. He goes from race-course to the pulpit-side, from the prize-ring to the pier, from the morgue to the opera; to-day recording the utterances of the statesman, to-morrow giving the last words of the man on the scaffold—ever painting scenes from life—ever writing the mottled history of a busy world.



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