

CHRIST'S HOSPITAL, FROM MAITLAND'S HISTORY OF LONDON (1756)

THE HISTORY OF CHRIST'S HOSPITAL, LONDON.

Read to the Society at Bishopsgate Institute, March 3rd, 1913.

BY

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THIS Society met at Christ's Hospital, Newgate Street, in April, 1900, and the proceedings are reported in our "Transactions," Vol. I, New Series, Part IV. I will therefore refrain from repeating anything then said by the Rev. (now Canon) E. H. Pearce about the history of the Hospital, or by Mr. Dynes Ellis with regard to the collection of silver plate. Time will prevent my saying anything about the Hospital's large Pension Charities for the Blind and others, and I can only briefly refer to the Hertford and Horsham Schools.

My purpose, then, is to give, with the aid of the lantern—

- (a) Some scenes from the history of the Hospital;
- (b) A tour round the London buildings as they stood in 1902;
- (c) Views of a few of the Hertford buildings; and the names of a few distinguished "Blues."

HISTORY.

In a report of 1866 the Commissioners for inquiring into certain charities say: "Some consideration seems to be justly due to the past history of so remarkable a School, and to the attachment which it has inspired in the hearts of so many of its scholars. Christ's Hospital is a thing without parallel in the country and *sui generis*."

It is a grand relic of the mediæval spirit—a monument of the profuse munificence of that spirit, and of that constant stream of individual beneficence which is so often found to flow around institutions of that character. It has kept up its main features, its traditions, its antique ceremonies, almost unchanged, for a period of upwards of three centuries. It has a long and goodly list of worthies.”

Early in 1552 Bishop Ridley preached before the youthful King Edward VI at Westminster, and so impressed him by his appeal on behalf of the poor that, at the conclusion of the service, the King sent for and thanked him for his exhortation. After expressing willingness to undertake the task suggested, the King desired Ridley's advice as to procedure. The Bishop was completely taken aback, but, after a pause, replied that it would be well “to practise with the Citie of London, because the number of the poore there are very great, and the citizens are many and also wise.” He suggested that the King should write to the Lord Mayor, and promised that he for one would earnestly travail in the matter. Edward wrote the letter, and commanded the Bishop not only to deliver it himself, but to secure the Mayor's services and desire him to report.

The Bishop was overjoyed; the letter was delivered the same evening to the Lord Mayor, Sir Richard Dobbs, who proved his wisdom and zeal by inviting Ridley, two Aldermen and six Commoners to dine and confer with him the following day. A Committee was formed and plans made for dealing with the whole of the poverty of London. To this end it was agreed—

(1) That the house of the Grey Friars Monastery

(dissolved in 1538) be a hospital for fatherless and other poor children, where they should have meat, drink, clothes, lodging, and learning; and that infants be cared for in the country.

(2) That the lame and aged be conveyed to St. Thomas' Hospital—recently purchased by the City.

(3) That all the “ydell and lustie roges,” men and women alike, be taken to some house and compelled to labour.

(4) That all the lazars be removed from the streets and provided with pensions.

(5) That all the decayed poor citizens be also granted pensions according to their need.

(A further proposal to purchase Finsbury Court, without London Wall, “to keep children in a fresh aire in the tyme of sicknes,” fell through, probably owing to lack of funds.)

Through the Aldermen and the Wardens of the City Companies, a complete census was taken of the London poor. It appeared that (out of a population of, say, 120,000) there were—

“Of ffatherles children	300
Of sore and sicke persons	260
Of poore men overburdened w th . there children	350
Of aged persons	400
Of decayed householders	650
Of ydell vagabondes	200
	—
	2,160”
	—

To provide the necessary funds a subscription list was opened, headed by the Lord Mayor and members

of the Committee, who (like the Governors through the succeeding centuries) gave freely and generously. A grant was received from the Corporation, and appeals in the Churches, Wards, etc., of the City met with such success that the repair of the Grey Friars and St. Thomas' began on July 26th and was completed by October 6th, 1552. On the latter date the Governors met to choose officers and masters.

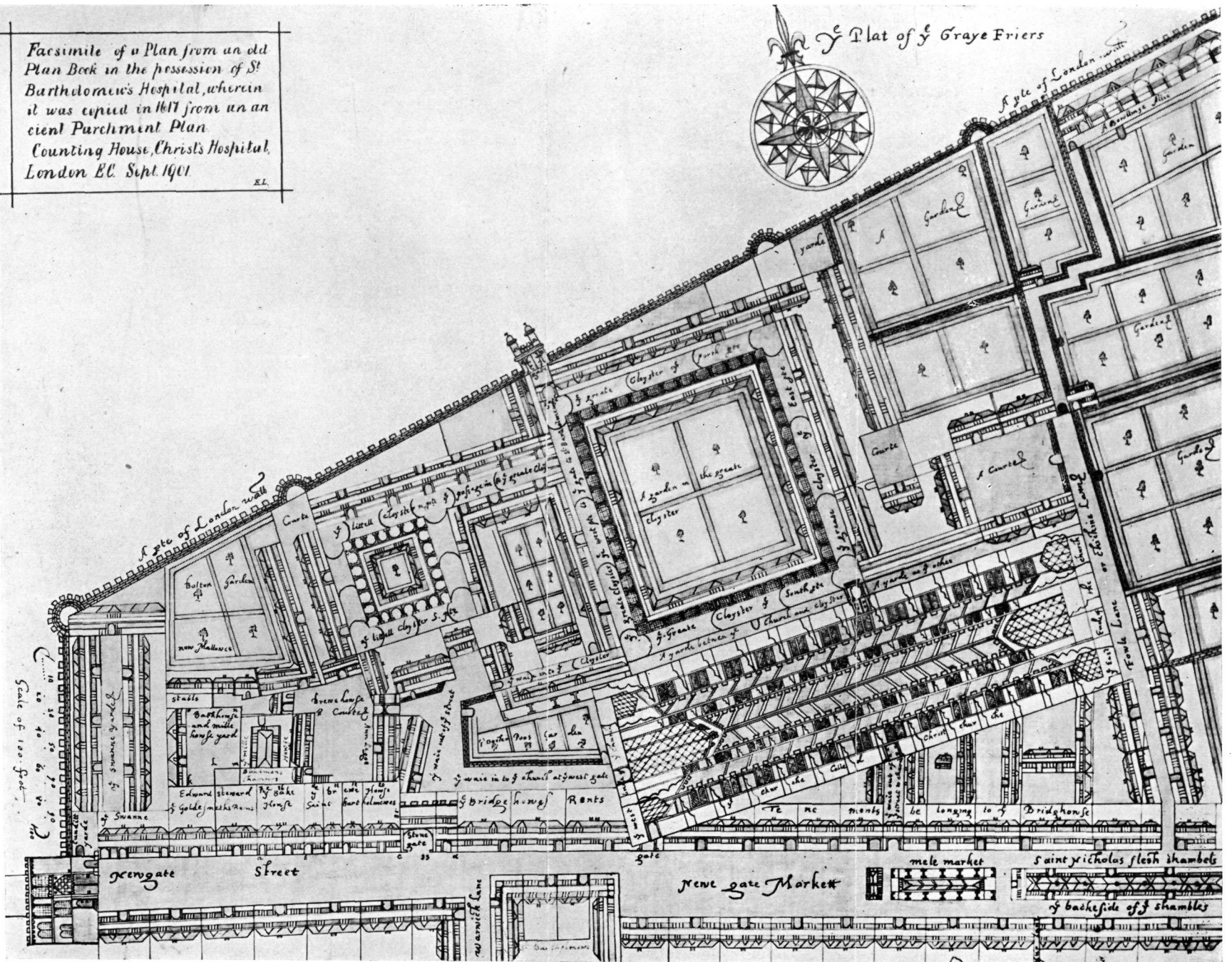
The first Treasurer of Christ's Hospital was Richard Grafton, the chronicler, King's printer, member of Parliament for the City, and Treasurer of St. Bartholomew's Hospital. There is little doubt that his was the master-mind that guided the hospitals through their early difficulties.

In November, 1552, 280 children (of both sexes) were received into Christ's Hospital; 100 infants were sent "to nurse" in the country; 260 persons were admitted to St. Thomas', and pensions were granted to 600 decayed householders. The idle and lusty rogues were still unprovided for. The King, who had been kept informed as to progress, was petitioned for his Palace of Bridewell in April, 1553, and granted it for a House of Correction. By indenture of covenants signed by the King, June 12th, 1553, the Savoy lands—then valued at £450 a year—were assigned to the three Hospitals, and they were empowered to acquire lands to the value of "4,000 marks by the year" (as inscribed in the King's own handwriting) in addition. The Charter of incorporation was sealed June 26th, and conferred great powers on the Governors.

The original site of Christ's Hospital (so designated most appropriately from "Christ Church," the name

Facsimile of a Plan from an old
 Plan Book in the possession of St
 Bartholomew's Hospital, wherein
 it was copied in 1671 from an an-
 cient Parchment Plan.
 Counting House, Christ's Hospital,
 London E.C. Sept. 1901

E.L.



PLAN OF THE GREYFRIARS MONASTERY, NEWGATE STREET. COPIED FROM AN ORIGINAL OF C. 15TH CENTURY.

conferred on the Grey Friars Church by Henry VIII's Charter) covered about two and a half acres. It had been occupied by the Franciscans for three centuries. Their beautiful Gothic buildings were grouped round Great and Little Cloisters, as the plan (opposite) shows; among London Churches, theirs (300 feet long) was second only in size to St. Paul's Cathedral. Over the north side of the Great Cloister stood the Library erected by Richard Whittington in 1429, which had to be demolished about 1832. Grafton's Printing House, where the Great Bible was printed in 1539, occupied the Little Cloister. He resided in a mansion-house adjoining, holding his premises partly by grant from Henry VIII and partly as tenant, at £9 13s. 4d. a year.

The origin of the boys' costume is unknown. It was first worn when they attended the Spital Sermons at Easter, 1553. That it was peculiar is proved by John Howes' MS. of 1587, wherein he says that he "would have all boys above seven years of age to have doublets, breeches, and short coats, according to the custom of the time, the better to set forth the children, for apparel shapeth and manners maketh, and the eye must be pleased, always observing and keeping your colours of watchet and blue." Bands have replaced the deep collar; caps were discontinued some sixty years ago, and the yellow petticoats in 1865.

The girls were formerly clad in white coifs or peaks, blue dresses, white or green aprons, and yellow stockings. This was completely changed in 1876.

The children's fare in early days was not sumptuous. The first account for provisions shows that £3 6s. 8d. was paid for beere, 55s. for butyer, 7s. 7½d. for beof,

10s. 3½d. for mutton, and only 1d. for mylke. (In a return of 1680 it is stated that they have beer "at all meals without stint." Milk and water was substituted at breakfast in 1824, and beer vanished from the dietary on the medical officer's recommendation about twenty years ago.) A baker who fired for Sheriff compounded by supplying the bread. Needless to say, the present dietary is excellent and varied.

The curriculum was similar to that of grammar schools of the period, and included classics and singing. In 1566 John Prestman was preferred to Cambridge with a "pension" of twelvecence weekly. A long array of distinguished scholars has followed him to Cambridge or Oxford.

The girls' "learning" was long restricted to reading and sewing. They made the linen for themselves, and for the boys and the infants.

William Camden and George Peele—son of the Hospital's clerk—were among the early private pupils. On Thursdays the children had six hours' schooling; on other days, eight hours.

In Queen Mary's reign unsuccessful attempts were made to reinstate the Friars, and the passing of the Poor Law jeopardised the existence of the whole foundation. The regulation of Blackwell Hall—the only market in London for woollen cloths—was committed to the charge of the Governors by the Corporation in 1557, and the profits of Hallage were considerable. Their revenues were further increased by the control of all carts (or cars) used in the City, the number of which was restricted to 420. But the Charter estates had been transferred to St. Thomas', and the

HISTORY OF CHRIST'S HOSPITAL.

CORRIGENDA.

- P. 500, line 6, for "fired" read "fined."
P. 501, ,, 23, ,, "William Clayton" read "Robert Clayton."
P. 507, ,, 4, ,, "George Shaw" read "John Shaw."
P. 509, ,, 11, ,, "Charles Prichard" read "Henry William
Pitcher.'

W. L.

Insert at p. 500]

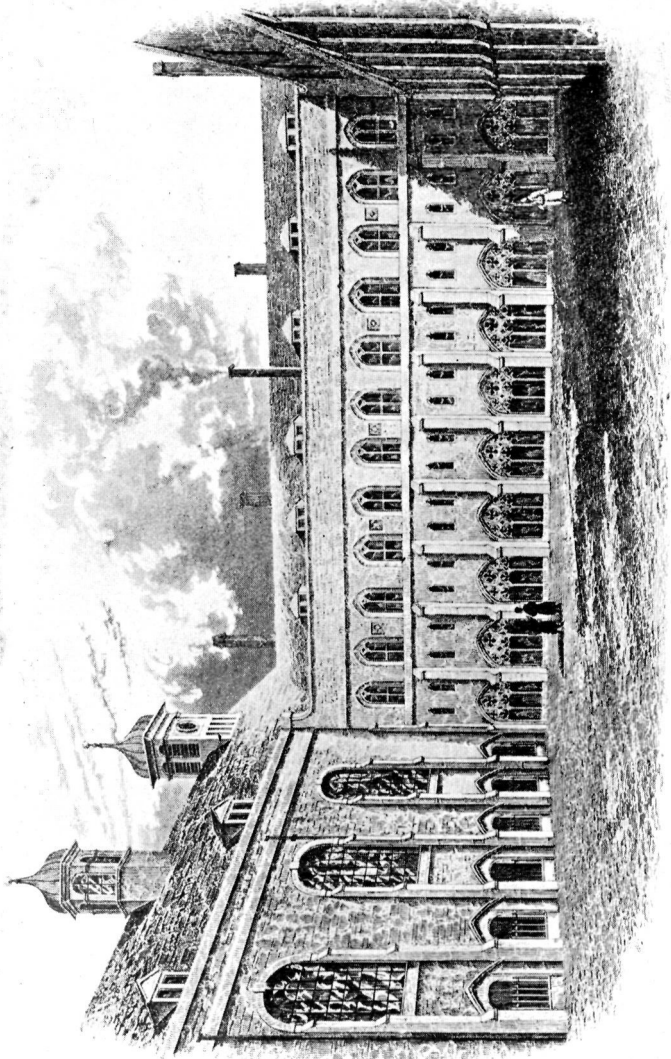
collections in the City, which had produced about £3,000 a year, dwindled away. Although the Governors repeatedly lent or gave money out of their own pockets, the Hospital could not have survived but for those generous benefactors who were subsequently known as "Donation Governors." They gave not only money, but leases, houses and lands, some for general, others for specific purposes, such as the admission of children from certain parishes, or of their kin. Thus the Hospital continued, but on a broader and altered basis, and not restricted to children of freemen of London.

We must hasten on. The Great Plague of 1665 passed lightly over the Hospital. Not so the Fire. Most of the school buildings, as well as Christ Church, were consumed. So were many houses on the rents of which the Hospital so largely depended. The children were removed without casualty to Islington, where they remained for a week; 82 were then accommodated amid the ruins, 56 were sent to Hertford, and 62 to Ware. School did not reassemble for fourteen months. The books and records were, happily, saved. There were, however, no funds for rebuilding. Individual Governors—Sir William Clayton, Erasmus Smith, Sir John Moore, Thomas Firmin, and others—undertook and carried out the restoration under the superintendence of one of their number, Sir Christopher Wren.

A few years later the oversight and instruction of the children "at nurse" in the country were found to be unsatisfactory. In 1680 two houses and half an acre of land were purchased at Hertford as a school-house; in 1689 another three acres were acquired and dwellings for nurses and children (boys and girls) were erected by

subscription among the Governors. This site was gradually enlarged to about nine acres. Meanwhile, in 1685, another school-house and buildings were provided at Ware, but about 1761 this was closed and the boys transferred to Hertford, where room was made by sending the girls to London. This arrangement lasted only till 1779, when all the girls returned to Hertford. Of the original buildings there one ward, the Steward's house, and the Writing School only remain, the latter being now used as the school hall. The dining hall (erected about 1800) has been greatly improved. After the removal of the boys to Horsham in 1902, the wards and infirmary were rebuilt, and a Chapel, swimming-bath, and gymnasium added. The new buildings, for 280 girls, were opened in July, 1906, by the President, the Prince of Wales, who was accompanied by the Princess of Wales—now our gracious King and Queen.

To return to the Boys' School, a new departure was made. Richard Aldworth, a Governor, had devised £7,500 in the Funds to the Hospital, but this could not be recovered. Thanks, however, to Sir Robert Clayton and Samuel Pepys, who was a Governor as well as Secretary to the Admiralty, Charles II issued letters patent in 1673, founding a Royal Mathematical School, wherein forty boys should be maintained and taught mathematics and navigation to fit them to become officers in the Navy. For this purpose £7,000 was provided. By further letters patent of 1675, the King gave an annuity of £370 10s. for the binding forth of the scholars to sea service. Each was to wear a badge (silver plated) on his shoulder to distinguish him at



CHRIST'S HOSPITAL : THE OLD HALL, WHITTINGTON'S LIBRARY, AND THE CLOISTERS.
FROM THE HISTORY OF CHRIST'S HOSPITAL, BY REV. W. TROLLOPE (1834).



CHRIST'S HOSPITAL : SOUTH FRONT (BY WREN).

school as a "King's boy." The badge also served afterwards as a protection against the press-gang. Forty sons of officers, R.N., are still admitted on this foundation, although they are no longer compelled to go to sea.

Under date of March 10th, 1687, Evelyn writes:—

"I went this evening to see the order of the boys and children at Christ's Hospital. There were neere 800 boys and girls, so decently clad, cleanly lodg'd, so wholsomly fed, so admirably taught, some the mathematics, especially the 40 of the late King's foundation, that I was delighted to see the progresse some little youths of 13 and 14 had made. I saw them at supper, visited their dormitories, and much admir'd the order, æconomy, and excellent government of this most charitable seminary. . . . They sung a psalme before they sat down to supper in the greate hall to an organ which play'd all the time with such cheerful harmony that it seem'd to me a vision of angels. I came from the place with infinite satisfaction, having never seene a more noble, pious, and admirable Charity."

We pass on to the beginning of the nineteenth century. The old buildings were falling into decay, and the school was practically rebuilt at a cost of about £150,000—largely by subscription among the Governors—in the form it retained until, in accordance with a scheme of the Charity Commissioners, the boys were removed to Horsham in 1902.

TOUR OF THE LONDON BUILDINGS.

Let us now go round the School, premising that it covered about $5\frac{1}{2}$ acres, grouped round three playgrounds—"The Garden," "The Ditch," and "The Hall Play."

From Newgate Street we walk along Christ Church Passage (originally the ambulatory of the Grey Friars Church), with Wren's Church on our right and the churchyard—formerly the nave of the Church—on our left, and admire the elevation of Sir Robert Clayton's structure. Entering through the Lodge, we find ourselves in The Garden. On the south side is the old Cloister, the arches of which are the sole remaining portion of the Monastery. In this Cloister is a mural tablet thus inscribed:—

“ Here lyes a Benefactor.
Let no one move his bones.”

No name, no date, as prescribed by will dated 1749. Yet James St. Amand, the benefactor, has taken care that he shall not be forgotten. An extract from the will is read at the first Court of the Governors annually, and the miniature portrait of his grandfather is shown to those present. The retention of a bequest of £8,000 stock is contingent on this observance. Above this Cloister is the Modern School, which was sometime the Girls' Ward.

On the north side is the New or Grecians' Cloister, occupying the site of Whittington's Library. The central arch has been removed to Horsham.

We enter a ward—one of sixteen, each accommodating fifty boys—and notice a settle at the foot of each bed, and the Grecian's Study perched up aloft. All boys except Grecians and monitors clean their own shoes and make their own beds.

The Library (originally instituted by Old Blue Governors) is well supplied with books, magazines,

etc. In the Museum is a valuable selection of minerals, presented by Professor Ruskin (a Governor); specimens of birds, butterflies, etc.; house money, besides platters and other wooden vessels formerly in use.

We now come to the Counting House Yard, the sanctum in which the residences of the Head Master, the Clerk, and others are situated, as well as the Counting House, where the administrative business of the Hospital is carried on. This was the first building erected after the Great Fire, and here are deposited the archives, the account books dating from 1552, and deeds far more ancient. Above is the Court-room, where the Governors meet frequently on school and estate matters, for the admission of children, elections to Benefices, the eleemosynary Charities, etc. The Walls are covered with portraits of the Founder and Benefactors. The Chairman's Gavel of ivory is dated 1584, and has the following inscription on a silver mount:—

This is the guifte of J. and S.,
Whose stoake and store as god doeth blesse
This Hospitall shall parte possess.

I. S. B.

Two dinners were held in this room annually—one in connection with the Summer Examinations, the other on 17th November (Queen Elizabeth's Accession), pursuant to the Will of Thomas Barnes. At these dinners were produced the Hospital's Plate, as well as on St. Matthew's Day, when in olden times a Court of all the Royal Hospitals met to elect Governors for the ensuing year.

Entering the Ditch playground we come to the Writ-

ing School with Grinling Gibbons' statue in stone of Sir John Moore, at whose cost the building was erected. Adjoining was the Warden's house with its vine and fig tree. From the Cloister under the Writing School we reach the Swimming Bath erected in 1870. Before this was opened the boys went to Peerless Pool, a large open-air Bath in St. Lukes.

On the North of the Ditch are the Grammar, Mathematical, Science and Drawing Schools, and Wards, with Statues of the Founder and Charles II. (This building has not been demolished, but remains in the occupation of St. Bartholomew's Hospital.)

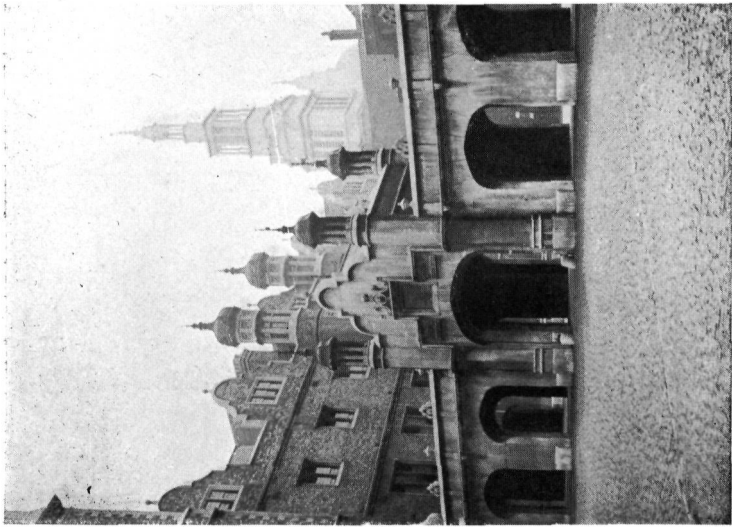
On the opposite side is the residence of the Treasurer, the Chief Executive Officer of the Hospital.

We now arrive at the principal Playground, the "Hall Play," through the double iron gates of which many passers-by watched the games, football, hockey, etc., in progress on the asphalt, and admired the Great Hall. Before discussing the Hall, let us enter the Gymnasium, formerly the site of the Giltspur Street Compter (one of the Debtors' Prisons), acquired by exchange with the Corporation in 1858. This was situated without London Wall, one of the Bastions of which, since excavated by the Society of Antiquaries, is now happily preserved in the grounds of the new G.P.O. (*v.* "Transactions," New Series, Vol. 2, pt. III, p. 273). The Gymnasium was not only well furnished with apparatus and used for drill and Fives, but it served as the Grecians' playground. In former days, the annual Athletic Sports were also held there. The whole course was visible to all the spectators, but there were 13 laps to the mile.

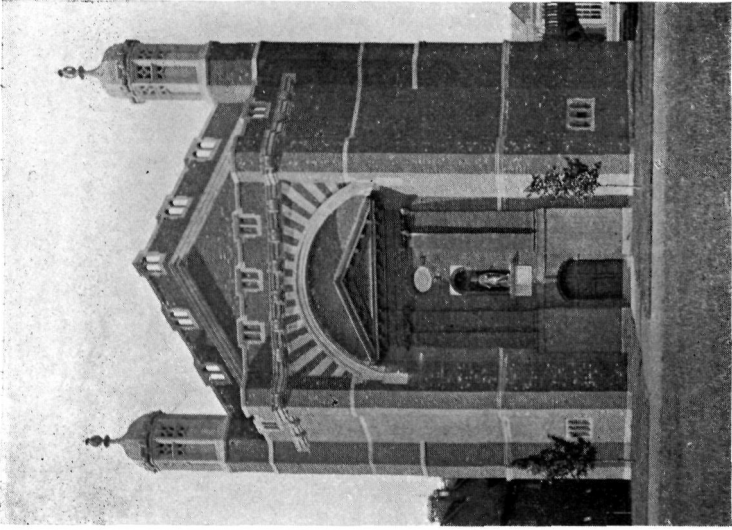
The foundation stone of the Great Hall was laid in 1825 by H.R.H. the Duke of York, on behalf of King



CHRIST'S HOSPITAL : WRITING SCHOOL, WARDEN'S HOUSE, ETC.



CHRIST'S HOSPITAL : THE NEW CLOISTERS.



CHRIST'S HOSPITAL : OLD GATEWAY NOW ATTACHED TO "BIG SCHOOL" AT HORSHAM.

George IV.; the building was completed at a cost of £61,000, and opened in 1829. It was constructed of Portland stone over a granite cloister. The Architect was Mr. George Shaw. The Hall (187 by $51\frac{1}{2}$ by $46\frac{1}{2}$) was for many years the largest room in London without pillars, save Westminster Hall. At the East end was the Organ Gallery; at the West end a Gallery to which the public were admitted on Sundays. Below were raised seats used at the Public Suppers, etc. On the South side were lofty stained-glass windows, and on the North were hung Verrio's great Picture and several portraits.

The whole School sat down to meals in the Hall. For dinner they paraded in the Playground and marched up to the strains of the Band. Here on Sunday evenings Service was conducted; and here the great School functions were held—the Public Suppers in Lent, Speech-day in Summer, and the Concert at Christmas.

The Public Suppers were held for more than two Centuries, and may have existed from the foundation of the School. A large company assembled to see the boys sup and "bow round" (to the Chairman), and to hear them sing, etc. The President generally took the Chair at one of these functions each Season, the Lord Mayor at another, and the Treasurer at the rest. Thanks to the good offices of H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge (President 1854-1904) they were frequently graced by the presence of Royal Visitors. Thus, in 1845 Queen Victoria graciously attended with the Prince Consort, and in 1875 His late Majesty King Edward VII., then Prince of Wales, with the Princess of Wales and the young Princes, honoured the School by being present.

Supper ended, visitors were admitted to the Wards

and other parts of the building. One of the principal attractions—especially to ladies—was the Great Kitchen (below the Hall), 69 feet long by 33 feet broad, the lofty roof of which was supported by monolithic granite columns. The ovens were capable of baking joints for the whole School, a huge “steamer” cooked the potatoes, another the greens, while gas “hot-plates” enabled fish, bacon, etc. to be ready for breakfast. From the Kitchen and Scullery, the viands and table utensils were carried into Hall by boys whose duty (or “trade”) it was.

Self-help is one of the characteristics of Christ's Hospital training, a most valuable asset in after life whether a boy goes to the Colonies or remains in England. So boys lay the cloths, distribute the provisions, and clear away.

Behind the Hall stood the Infirmary, and close to it the residence of the Medical Officer.

The love of the boys for their old School is proverbial. As Charles Lamb wrote: “In affectionate recollection of the place where he was bred up, in hearty recognition of old Schoolfellows met with again after the lapse of years or in foreign countries, the Christ's Hospital boy yields to none; I might almost say he goes beyond most other boys. . . . The C.H. boy's friends at School are commonly his intimates through life.”

This is as true now as in Lamb's days, and is evidenced in concrete form by the Old Boys Societies: the Amicable Society of Blues, re-constituted in 1775; the Benevolent Society of Blues, founded 1824, with an income now amounting to about £1,500 a year; the C.H. Club; the C.H. Association (or Mission); the Masonic

Lodge; the Old Blues Football and Swimming Clubs; the Guild; and the Founder's Day Dinner. The Old Girls too have a flourishing Association, and are most generous supporters of the Benevolent Society and the Mission.

The following are a few selections from a long list of distinguished Blues:—

Army: John Colborne, First Lord Seaton (Field Marshal); Sir Pierre Cavagnari.

Navy: Admiral Spratt, F.R.S.

V.C.: Lieutenant Charles Prichard.

Church: Bishop Middleton (First Bishop of Calcutta); Bishop Courtney.

Law: Sir Hy. Sumner Maine; Sir Henry Ludlow.

Medicine: Dr. Edmund A. Parkes; Sir Stephen Mackenzie.

Science: Sir Henry Cole; Sir Alfred Greenhill.

Literature: Charles Lamb; Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

Lord Mayors of London: Sir John Pound, Bart.; Sir Walter Vaughan Morgan, Bart.

Heads of Colleges: Dr. Searle, Master of Pembroke College, Cambridge; Sir Harry Reichel, Principal of the University College of N. Wales.

Head Masters: Dr. Haig Brown, of Charterhouse; Canon Bell, of Marlborough.

Sport: Rowland Hill, President of Rugby Football Union; Rev. A. N. Cooper, "The Walking Parson."

Millionaire: Richard Thornton.

For upwards of three and a half centuries the Hospital, through its Governors and Benefactors, has

conferred priceless benefits on its alumni, and has trained them to be God-fearing, loyal, patriotic and useful citizens. *Floreat ut floruit honore sempiterno.*

I will conclude in the words of the time-honoured Christ's Hospital toast:

"The Religious, Royal, and Ancient Foundation of Christ's Hospital; may those prosper who love it, and may God increase their number."

(Those who would learn more of the Hospital are referred to the delightful "Annals of Christ's Hospital," written by Canon E. H. Pearce, himself a Grecian, Exhibitioner, sometime an Assistant Master, and now a Donation Governor, Almoner, and Chairman of the Committee of Education.)

NOTE.

The plan of the Greyfriars Monastery inserted at p. 498 is reproduced from a copy at Christ's Hospital office of a plan in the possession of St. Bartholomew's Hospital. This last is recorded to have been copied in 1617 from "an ancient parchment plan," which may safely be dated as at least 100 years earlier. For the reproduction of this valuable and interesting plan we are indebted to the courtesy of the authorities of St. Bartholomew's Hospital and of Christ's Hospital.—EDITOR.