

## CHAPTER XIII

### PRINCE LEOPOLD—RUSKIN—DEATH OF MRS. ACLAND—HOME LIFE IN BROAD STREET

1872-1878

IN November, 1872, Prince Leopold came up to Oxford, and was placed, like his eldest brother before him, under the medical care of Dr. Acland. It was a task of grave responsibility, for His Royal Highness had been from his birth an invalid whose health excluded him from the sports and recreations of boyhood. How manfully and nobly he contended with these physical disadvantages, how diligently he strove to follow his father's example in the encouragement of every form of culture, is known to all. His death at the early age of thirty-one closed a career of no ordinary promise, and by it the country was deprived of the most accomplished of its princes.

During his residence, which extended, with breaks, over a period of nearly four years, Prince Leopold lived at Wykeham House near St. Giles's, with Mr. (now Sir R. H.) Collins, whose pupil he had been for some time past. As far as his health would allow he entered into the life of the place and attended with assiduity the lectures of the Professors, and occasionally he was permitted to take part in public functions under close restrictions and precautions against exposure or over-fatigue. These years, it may well be believed, were among the happiest of his too short life. 'I am looking forward,' he once wrote to Dr. Acland, 'with the *greatest*

*pleasure* to my return to Oxford this day week; I wish there were no vacations, for myself at least!' Like all who were brought into contact with the Prince, Acland had been attracted by his lovable and unselfish disposition, and he had recognized what great opportunities for influencing the public mind were in the grasp of this delicate student. Every encouragement and assistance in his power were placed at the Prince's disposal, and in the theatre and laboratories of the Museum he was able to give his Royal pupil some insight into the new world which modern science was opening out before the eyes of the learner.

But it was a terribly anxious time. In the summer term of 1874 the Prince had a bad illness, and for weeks was kept a prisoner to the house. In a letter written as soon as he was able to be removed to Windsor he expressed in touching terms his love for 'dear Oxford,' and his gratitude for 'the great and unceasing care' of his physician. Sir Robert Collins, between whom and Dr. Acland there had sprung up a warm mutual friendship, wrote at the same time: 'I don't know what we should have done without you at Oxford the whole time the Prince has been there, but especially have I reason to be grateful to you for all you have done during the last two months.'

There were worse things to come. In December, 1875, on the Prince's return to Osborne for Christmas, symptoms of typhoid, a disease so fatal to his family, declared themselves, and for some weeks he was in a very critical state. The cause of his illness was found in the drainage at Wykeham House<sup>1</sup>, but this unlucky

<sup>1</sup> When Acland made the preliminary inspection of Wykeham House—which had been taken for the Prince on his suggestion—he would not allow the drains to be connected with the main drainage of the town, knowing only too well the susceptibility of the members of the Royal Family to typhoid. During the Prince's absence for the Long Vacation the connexion was effected without Acland's knowledge or authority, and to this he always attributed the Prince's malady.

occurrence was not allowed to put an end to the residence in Oxford, which had come to be one of the bright spots in a life which had so much to cloud it. Prince Leopold returned to the University and did not finally 'go down' till the end of 1876. Nor did his formal departure from Oxford sever his connexion with the place. He had been, on Acland's initiative, invited to become one of the Radcliffe Trustees, an offer which he gladly accepted. In this capacity he came down in June, 1877, to the opening of the new children's wards at the Radcliffe Infirmary. This children's hospital was the gift of Mrs. Combe, and it fell to the lot of the Prince to move a vote of thanks to the Chairman and Treasurer. For the purpose a statement had been prepared by the Committee in illustration of the changes which thirty years had brought to pass in an institution which, when Acland's connexion with it first began, was irreconcilably behind even the limited ideas of those days. The services of Sir Douglas Galton and Sir Robert Rawlinson in the sanitary improvement of the Infirmary were acknowledged by name, but there could have been few present that day who were ignorant as to the part played by the untiring zeal and the knowledge and experience of the Regius Professor of Medicine.

Among the lectures which the Prince had attended with most enjoyment was the remarkable course which Ruskin delivered as Slade Professor of Fine Arts. For some years there had been a strong desire on the part of his friends and admirers to utilize at Oxford the great gifts which he was lavishing elsewhere with somewhat reckless profusion. Ruskin himself was nothing loth, and he seized with something like avidity upon the proposal made by Acland and others to bring him in for the vacant Professorship of Poetry. The project fell through, to Ruskin's disappointment, and it was then suggested that he might like to be appointed one of the Curators of the University Art Galleries.

His acceptance of the offer, which would have necessitated the resignation either of Dean Liddell or Acland—for there was no vacancy—was not couched in very promising terms:

*September 23, 1867.*

MY DEAR ACLAND,

Not in despair, nor in sick sloth, but in a deep, though stern hope, and in reserve of what strength is in me, I refuse to talk about art. The English nation is fast, and with furious acceleration, becoming a mob to whom it will be impossible to talk about *anything*. Read the last seven verses of yesterday's first lesson. They are literally and in every syllable true of England, and the weapons with which such evil may be stayed before 'the end thereof' are not camel's hair pencils. Camel's hair raiment might do something.

You have 'no idea of folded hands, while there is hope of safety.' Nor I; but if the *Tyne* had gone off into deep water with a leak gaining on her, you would not have called the carpenters to paint her sides. Nevertheless, we will keep our cabins tidy to the last (though, by the way, if you and Richmond had not had your heads full of Raphael chalk scratches and Roman plaster patches, and had worked with wider sight, you might have had the Peter Martyr in the National Gallery here instead of in Hades) and, if you are tired of that curatorship and think that I can be of any use, I will do the best I can. But in no phrase of politeness I tell you that you are fitter for the place than I, and, working with your old friend the Dean, and entering into the fruit of your efforts for many years, you had much better stay as you are, if you are not weary.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. RUSKIN.

Liddell may well be pardoned in writing:

MY DEAR A.

Are you positively certain that Ruskin would like to be Curator of the Galleries? Have you it in writing? And can his inclination or wish in August be depended upon in November?

B b

This scheme also came to nothing, but in 1869 under the will of the late Mr. Felix Slade a Professorship of Fine Art was founded and endowed, and by general consent Ruskin was designated as the first occupant of the chair. The Rev. George Butler, then head master of Liverpool School, who had been asked to stand, wrote to Acland in the following strain:

Verily I think Oxford must be hard put to it to look to me to supply such a need. Surely Ruskin or Charles Newton or H. Hunt would be better representatives of Art than I could hope to be. You are likely to know, and I therefore ask you frankly. Ruskin seems to me of all men most pointed out, *monstratus fatis*, for it, if he will only undertake the labour. But when I saw him in the winter, he told me he had resolved to give up talking and writing and use his hands in preserving from oblivion some of the noble frescoes of Tintoret, &c., which are falling into decay and perishing by other causes. I had some talk at Easter with Richmond, and he agreed with me that Ruskin ought to be urged to stand, and there is no one who could put it before him more forcibly than you.

Ruskin's *nolo episcopari* was overcome, and on August 10, 1867, he was chosen unanimously. The electors were Liddell, Acland, and the late Canon Rawlinson (then Professor of Ancient History) as Curators of the University Galleries; Bodley's Librarian, the Rev. H. O. Coxe; the President of the Royal Academy, Sir Francis Grant; the President of University College, London, Mr. Grote the historian; and Mr. Fisher, one of the executors of the will. The inaugural lecture was delivered in February, 1870. I have no wish to tell a thrice-told tale, and a goodly proportion of those who sat under the Professor still survive. The lectures were an epoch in many lives and their sound has gone out into many lands. The seed found good and fruitful soil in many an unsuspected and unpromising quarter, and the immediate sensation created by them was without precedent in Oxford. Long before the appointed hour the Lecture-room in the Taylorian was

crowded to suffocation, and it needed all Acland's strength and persistency to force his way to the table and beg the audience to adjourn with the Lecturer to the Sheldonian Theatre. Nor was the excitement a passing feature: the attendance scarcely seemed to wane or diminish, and Ruskin grew to resent, avowedly at any rate, the presence of the throngs of ladies. He had come, he always insisted, to spread the light among the members of the University, and its beams were caught by the bright toilets and luxuriant head-dresses of his fair auditors.

During his first two years of office Ruskin lived as Acland's guest in Broad Street whenever he was in Oxford. Afterwards he went into rooms at Corpus, which had done credit to itself by electing him to an Honorary Fellowship. Of his intention to bring real teaching within the reach of the undergraduates he gave practical proof by a munificent gift of £5,000 to endow a Master of Drawing, and his generosity in the gift and loan of his art treasures knew no bounds. The circumstances attending the gift to the Drawing School are characteristic. Ruskin was ill at Matlock when the affairs of the projected School of Art were still unsettled, and Acland had gone there to see him. The two had much talk on the subject, and one day Ruskin, who was weak and suffering, and confined to his bed, suddenly drew out a cheque for £5,000 from under his pillow and said, 'There, Henry, that's to endow the Master.' Acland was naturally inclined to demur at such an unconventional transaction, but his patient's health forbade excitement or argument, and the cheque was taken and invested in the name of the Trustees.

The incident connected with Ruskin's lectures which made most noise at the time, and is now scarcely remembered, was the amateur road-making experiment at Hincksey. In connexion with this new departure in applied philosophy, ridicule, of a somewhat clumsy order, was only to be expected. But an ill-natured attack in a

London paper excited Acland's indignation and drew from him a letter to the *Times*.

SIR,

OXFORD, May 19, 1874.

An Oxford correspondent has addressed to one of your evening contemporaries an attack on the Undergraduates who have been induced by Mr. Ruskin to take to 'digging at Hincksey.' Will you allow a few lines' space to another Oxford correspondent who feels sure that neither Mr. Ruskin, who is now in Italy, nor the students who get their daily exercise at Hincksey will notice the sneers. Surely in an age of Liberty and of Philanthropy, well-meaning men might be allowed to mend the muddy approaches of some humble dwellings of the poor without being held up to the public as persons meet only for the neighbouring Asylum. Is it so, that the principles on which Mr. Ruskin and these youths are acting are insane?

Mr. Ruskin, a man of no narrow sympathies, has known Oxford for forty years. He is as interested in the greatness of the educated youth of England as he is in the well-doing of the poor. He is loved by both. To the high-spirited youth of Oxford he has said, 'Will, then, none of you out of your abundance, the abundance of your strength and of your leisure, do anything for the poor? The poor ye have always with you. Drain a single cottage; repair a single village by-way; make good a single garden wall; make pleasant with flowers one widow's plot, and your muscles will be more strong and your hearts more light than had all your leisure hours been spent in costly games, or yet more hurtful amusements.' Is he wrong? Are the hearty kindly men who obeyed him wrong? Are they likely to be worse Englishmen for their pleasant love of a respected teacher, and their cheery, almost playful help to agricultural labourers? Will society be worse that a body of steady students with a kindly enthusiasm left their wonted games to lessen the sadness of the world and make more bright some English cottage homes? To say nothing of the good of humane and hearty occupation to the men themselves, are we sure that some men such as these when wisely directed will not be among the best safeguards in the heaving restless social fabric of modern life?

Is Mr. Ruskin impractical in thus harmlessly evoking the sympathies and energies of the unspoiled minds about him?

Your obedient servant,

HENRY W. ACLAND.

That this letter was in accord with the general sentiment was shown by a poem which appeared a fortnight later in *Punch*, and from which the following stanzas may be quoted:

Acland writes to defend John Ruskin,  
 Who an undergraduate team hath made,  
 For once, from May-term morn to dusk, in  
 Hincksey soil to set working spade.  
 So very Utopian! so Quixotic!  
 Such is the euphemistic phrase,  
 Equivalent to idiotic,  
 For Athletes guided to useful ways.

Pity we have for the man who thinks he  
 Proves Ruskin fool for work like this.  
 Why shouldn't young Oxford lend hands to Hincksey,  
 Though Doctrinaires may take it amiss?  
 Careless wholly of critic's menace,  
 Scholars of Ruskin, to him be true,  
 The truth he has writ in the Stones of Venice  
 May be taught by the Stones of Hincksey too.

Ruskin's term of office expired in 1873, but he was re-elected, and again in 1876. At the close of the third triennial period, in 1879, he resigned; indeed the state of his health for more than a year past had rendered the discharge of his duties impossible. And while his friend lay under the dark shadow of a distressing illness, Acland himself was passing through a time of sorest sorrow.

Little has been said during these chapters of Acland's family, the seven sons and the daughter who had been born to him; a high-spirited and merry party, but with

a share of their father's seriousness and with unmistakable signs of the Acland temperament. The boys had grown into young men and were beginning to make their way in the world. The eldest son, now Rear-Admiral Sir William Acland, had already given promise of a distinguished career; another son, the present Dr. Theodore Acland, was making a name for himself in his father's profession; there was one at Woolwich, and another eating dinners and keeping terms at the Temple. As time went on the occasions on which the whole family could be assembled together under the roof of the Broad Street home became fewer and fewer, but there is in existence a photograph of the 'Acland eight,' 'eased up' by the Christ Church meadows. It represents an old-fashioned racing-boat with the Doctor at stroke and his seven sons at the other thwarts; Mrs. Acland sits in the steersman's place, and a seat in the extreme stern has been contrived for Miss Acland.

The first definite break in the circle was made in November, 1876, when Herbert, the fourth son, left England for Ceylon with the intention of becoming a coffee-planter. A touching letter from his mother, placed at the bottom of his box to be read by him on the voyage, has been printed elsewhere<sup>1</sup>. In June of the following year when Oxford was at its brightest, and the festivities of the summer term were in full swing, his parents received the disquieting news that he was suffering from typhoid fever. Some weeks had necessarily elapsed since the date of the letter, and Dr. Acland telegraphed for particulars. The answer came back that his son was dead. What that blow must have been to the household no words can say. Herbert Acland had been an exceptionally attractive boy; at Charterhouse he was the idol of the school. 'There was not one of us,' I have heard it said, 'who would not

<sup>1</sup> *A Sketch of the Life and Character of Sarah Acland*, page 99.

...and it's... with... The boy and... to make... Rev... for... You... the... of... the... of...

The first... made... the... of... that... the... with...

...at... Dr. ... come back... had been... at Char-... out one of us...

... of ... page 94



*W. E. Miller*

MRS. HENRY ACLAND  
DRAWING BY W. E. MILLER, 1876

have gone across Europe to him if he had held up a finger.' And the thought of his death, almost alone, in the distant Indian island, came as an indescribable shock to his schoolfellows and friends. To Mrs. Acland it was a death warrant. 'When I heard the news,' says Mr. Charles Pearson, 'my first words were, "This will kill Mrs. Acland"; and the prediction, alas! came true.' 'Those who had ever seen her in her home,' adds the same writer, 'knew how the bands that united her to her husband and children were interwoven with the very heart-strings.' Some little time before this her health had shown signs of failing, and from the effect of her son's death she never rallied. All through the year that followed she grew worse, and in the summer of 1878 it became clear that there was no hope of recovery, but no one seems to have suspected how near was the end. She accompanied her husband and daughter on a visit to the shores of the Baltic, staying at Dusternbrook and Elsinore, and she bore the journey home without apparent ill-effect; but she took to her bed on September 14, and on October 25 she passed peacefully away.

'All through her illness,' writes her daughter, 'she was exactly like herself—bright, patient, uncomplaining, unwavering in her faith that all was ordered for the best.' On October 29, 1878, she was laid to rest in the Holywell Cemetery, carried to the grave by her six surviving sons. Of Acland's grief I cannot speak. 'The rest is silence'; and there are sorrows from which it is a profanation to draw the veil. Nor will I attempt to use words of my own about Mrs. Acland<sup>1</sup>. I will venture to print three of the countless letters in which those who had known her strove to impart comfort; the first, it will be noticed, was written before Dr. Pusey had realized the hopeless nature of the malady.

<sup>1</sup> A beautiful appreciation of Mrs. Acland's character from the pen of Dean Church, who knew her well, is to be found in the *Guardian* for November 6, 1878.

SOUTH HERMITAGE, ASCOT PRIORY, BRACKNELL.

September 23.

MY DEAR MISS ACLAND,

I am grieved to hear of your father's and your anxiety about your dear good mother. I trust that it may please God to dissipate your anxieties. She has indeed done a good work in the education of you all, in teaching you all to love God and guiding you on the way. She has done, too, much good in drawing some of our fleeting generations of young men to God and to good. The insensible influence of all who love God is far more than any which they are aware of; and especially of women. They know it not; God hides it from them and keeps it in store for them for the Great Day.

God bless and comfort you in your anxiety and comfort her too, as He will.

Yours affectionately,  
E. B. PUSEY.

To these words should, I think, be added an extract from a letter written by Dr. Pusey, some time later, to Acland himself.

Love will be everything: for God is love and he who has most capacity for love will be most enlarged to contain God. I suppose that this was the secret of your dear good wife's peace amid all that, in this place, especially, must have been so contrary to her early habits of simple faith. She must have been saddened to see young men drifting about hither and thither while she herself 'knew in Whom she had believed.' I wish now that I had known more of the inner workings of that mind of beautiful simple faith and love. But there was no reason why she should disclose them. She needed no aid, except what God habitually ministered to her in her daily round of devotion and faith and love.

(FROM LADY SALISBURY.)

HEMSTED PARK, STAPLEHURST.

MY DEAR DR. ACLAND,

Many thanks for the book. It will be very precious to me; I have read those verses<sup>1</sup> over and over again already.

<sup>1</sup> *The Choir Invisible*, by George Eliot, lines which Mrs. Acland

God bless you and comfort you, my dear old friend. Only those who knew her as I did, I may say, all my life, know how precious is the treasure laid up for you.

Yours affectionately,  
G. SALISBURY.

(FROM H. R. H. PRINCE LEOPOLD.)

PALAIS DE BRUXELLES, October 29, 1878.

MY DEAR DR. ACLAND,

I found your letter on my arrival here, last night, and I need not tell you what grief I felt at the contents of it. I have been travelling during the last month on the continent, and so had seen no notice of the terrible blow that you have received.

You know well how heartily and affectionately I sympathize with you in your sad bereavement. To know dear Mrs. Acland was to honour and reverence her, for her many acts of kindness, for the brightness she shed on her house, and for her constant sympathy with all those who suffered mentally as well as physically. I will write no more, I only wanted you to know how much you are in my thoughts at this sad time. I return to England the day after to-morrow and shall be at Buckingham Palace for some time.

With heartiest sympathy to your daughter,  
Believe me, dear Dr. Acland,  
Yours sincerely and affectionately,  
LEOPOLD.

It ought to be added that one of the earliest messages of sympathy to the bereaved husband came from the Prince of Wales, begging him to come and see him. That interview and the terms in which His Royal Highness spoke of her whom he had lost, left an ineffaceable impression on Acland's memory.

Mrs. Acland's death was to a certain extent the break up of the old life in Broad Street, though husband and children strove to maintain as far as possible the wise and tender traditions that hung around the home. It had committed to heart and repeated to her husband on her death-bed.



was still a centre of hospitality and of strenuous work; a place where the most interesting elements of Oxford and London society made a meeting-ground. Miss Acland was her father's right hand in keeping house and helping him to receive his guests; but it could never be quite the same, and before the scene finally shifts I think the following sketch of the household and its surroundings, with which I have been most kindly furnished by a member of the family, will be of interest not only in itself but as throwing a flood of light on much that has gone before.

'It is very difficult to think of the family life in Broad Street without one figure rising above all others—that of the devoted wife and mother around whom everything centred. She was a most remarkable woman in every way. Coming of a grave and serious stock, but herself having a deep vein of fun and humour, she was always ready to join in all that was going on, serious or gay. Musical, and with a fine contralto voice—well read<sup>1</sup>—trained by her eldest brother, Mr. William Cotton, in subjects very unusual for a woman of her day—she was a Greek and Latin scholar, knew French, German, and Italian, as well as a little Spanish, Dutch, and Norwegian. On one occasion in Norway she was mistaken for the Norwegian landlady, and to her great amusement accosted by some travellers in Norwegian.

'Calm, wise in judgement, industrious, and cultivated, she was a most fit companion for Dr. Acland with his restless energy, his nervous temperament, and his artistic nature. Unselfish and forgetful of herself to a degree that was almost harmful to those about her, the description which seems most nearly to portray her is the Sonetto out of Dante's *Vita Nuova*:

<sup>1</sup> It is remarkable that as far back as 1861 Mrs. Acland was an appreciator of Fitzgerald's *Omar Khayyam*. Dr. Stokes of Dublin procured for her in that year what he says was the last copy of it in the publisher's hands.

"Tanto gentile e tanto onesta pare  
La donna mia, quand' ella altrui saluta,  
Ch' ogni lingua divien tremando, muta,  
E gli occhi non l' ardiscon di guardare.  
Ella sen va, sentendosi laudare,  
Benignamente d' umiltà vestuta;  
E par, che sia una cosa venuta  
Di Cielo in terra, a miracol mostrare."

'The life in Broad Street was very simple. Breakfast at 8 o'clock, to which those who wished to talk to Dr. Acland often came uninvited, was always preceded by family prayers—no matter who was present. Dr. Acland would then see patients, or work with the assistants of the Radcliffe Library, who used to come to him until the Library opened. He went out at ten, either to the Radcliffe Infirmary or to consultations or to the Museum. In the early days of his practice he also saw patients at home from two to four, but when they became so numerous that he was unable to attend to them all in that time, he gave them the additional hour between one and two.

'If the patients had come in from the country, Dr. Acland would constantly bring them into the dining-room to partake of the simple midday meal<sup>1</sup> or dispatch them, for the same purpose, to the servants' hall, as the case might require, and he would even give away or share the dinner which Mrs. Acland used to put aside for him on a hot-water-plate when he was delayed or detained. Whilst he was seeing his patients, the old coachman, Whitlock—who drove him so many miles before the branch railway lines were as numerous as they are today—would sit in the servants' hall waiting for country

<sup>1</sup> Bishop King of Lincoln, speaking at an Oxford meeting, once narrated his first meeting with Mrs. Acland. He had gone to her husband, as an undergraduate, for some small ailment, and when the consultation was apparently over his physician said, 'There is one thing you must do instantly, you must come into the next room and dine with us.'

orders. In the summer, and sometimes in the winter, Mrs. Acland used to go these country journeys with him, sitting in some little wayside inn whilst he went to the patient's house, occupying herself with her book or work. In later days, when the children were at school or absent from Oxford, she would choose these occasions for writing long letters to them. The evening meal was in consequence of these long drives a very irregular one, and consisted of a sort of high tea. Dr. Acland used to be very fond of quoting a remark made to him by Sir Henry Thompson, to whom he had been recounting his way of life: "It strikes me that you never dine, you only feed."

'After supper he would often get up and go and sit at the harmonium and improvise. He had a great love and appreciation of music, but no sense of time, and he used to wander on over the keys, bringing in airs that he had learnt in Italy, Germany, and elsewhere, and occasionally singing in accompaniment. He would then come up to the drawing-room carrying an armful of books, and would sit and write letters, which he always used to throw on the floor for fear that they should be mislaid. Meanwhile there would be music, or Mrs. Acland would read aloud, and it rarely seemed to disturb him. Prayers at ten o'clock finished the day for the household, but Dr. Acland would often write on until just before twelve, when he would go down to the General Post Office with a number of letters, meeting many other professors and friends, bent on the same errand. He always brought up his fees to Mrs. Acland in the evening, and used to pour them into her lap, or if she was writing, place them in a little pile on her davenport by her side. All Sunday fees were given away, and placed in a separate bag with a cross upon it. Mrs. Acland not only kept all his accounts, but wrote his cheques, paid his bills, and managed his stables as well as his household. She chose schools for the children, and tutors and colleges for the sons

as they grew up, and attended to all the arrangements necessary for a large family without giving him any trouble beyond asking for his approval. He, on his side, never made any arrangement, however trivial, without consulting her.

'Life was in those days much simpler than now. Mrs. Acland often used to tell in later years that when they married they could count up all the wedding presents which they received on the fingers of their two hands. Professor Max Müller, when he first came to Oxford, in 1848, would often spend the evenings in Broad Street, and he used to describe how he would find Mrs. Acland with one candle, and a basket of mending by her side, sitting at work and waiting until her husband came in. The house was never regularly furnished throughout, but a piece of furniture bought, or a room made habitable, as circumstances required. In the same way alterations and improvements were constantly in progress, and Dr. Acland was never happier than when he had workmen about; for many years a carpenter named Slatter seemed to be always about the house, until he was turned out by Mrs. Acland—only to re-appear very shortly on another job. All the improvements were said to be made for Mrs. Acland's comfort or convenience, and she always accepted the compliment "because it made him happy."

'The days being thus extremely full and busy it was impossible for Dr. Acland to see very much of the children, except on those rare occasions when he would snatch a holiday in celebration of a birthday, and picnic in Wytham or take tea down the river. He used to row himself in a skiff whilst Mrs. Acland and the children went in a large and suitable boat. On one of these expeditions an undergraduate in a tub ran into him and upset his frail craft, and he had to swim ashore. It was a time when few if any of the professors would have thought of rowing themselves on the river.

'After the death of his brother Arthur Troyte one of the latter's daughters came to Broad Street.

When I went to stay with your dear parents first in 1856 (she writes) I was just over twenty and fresh from an extremely quiet country life, and the sudden plunge into such a centre of learning and love of all forms of knowledge was in itself an inspiration. There was never a meal where the interest of the conversation did not turn on something deep—occasionally, of course, patriotic and philanthropic, but never trivial<sup>1</sup>. The whole of the life inside the home seems to me to have been a wonderful mixture of perfection and ease. I do not mean taking ease, but making easy, no fuss—no friction—whatever your mother saw was right to be done she did well, and he always approved and admired. The children were never in the way, never neglected, always considered, but never allowed to think themselves of importance.

'The children came down to breakfast and to early dinner, but were told that they were to be seen and not heard, and they were not allowed to ask for anything. This led to an amusing incident, when one day one of the little boys whose wants had during some interesting discussion been overlooked, pushed his empty plate into the middle of the table, exclaiming, "May I please have some salt?" The hospitable round table was often too small for all the party, and some of the children would be sent to a small table placed for them in the porch outside the dining-room window. All sorts of people used to drop in to luncheon, and were always made welcome, especially on the days when the Ewelme Trustees held their meetings in Broad Street. The house was rarely without some guest or other beneath its roof—the parents or friends of undergraduates who were ill in college—any one who needed help in any way—old Oxford men who wanted to come up for some college gaudy or meeting—all

<sup>1</sup> 'With all this interesting and varied talk,' adds another informant, 'there never was any gossip, no "society talk," no mention of cards or betting.'

knew that they were at liberty to ask for a bed. Sometimes Dr. Acland would invite some examiners to stay, and then forget all about it—but when they arrived they always found a welcome. At the time of the Medical Examinations all the examiners would be bidden to stay in the house—though when the number was doubled some beds had to be obtained in college or at an hotel. Often an undergraduate overworked before some examination or with some temporary or threatened illness was brought by Dr. Acland in his carriage to the house, and he would run upstairs and say, "Wifie, I have brought so-and-so—he is very unwell and needs your care"; and then he would be off again.

'Saturdays in term would constantly bring parents, brothers, or sisters, of undergraduates to stay until Monday, or old friends from London who were glad to get a day out of town. Mr. Ruskin when he was first made Slade Professor lived during several terms in the house as one of the family. He used to say that he could write unusually well there in his room, a quiet one at the back, as Mrs. Acland—"Mama" he called her—made him so extremely comfortable, and he had nothing to disturb him, for he could not waste his time looking out of the windows, since the outlook over the blank brick wall and the chimney-pots was the ugliest that he had ever seen.

'There were not only English visitors. There would sometimes be Americans, such as Dr. Billings, Deputy Surgeon General of the United States Army; Dr. Justin Winsor, Librarian of Harvard College; the Shattucks of Boston, and Dr. Gross of Philadelphia; and foreigners from many lands, some bent on business, some on pleasure. Occasionally also there came unusual guests from other countries—Oron-hya-tekha, the Mohawk chief with his mocassins and his feathers; Jacob Es-Shellaby the Samaritan, who arrived on Sunday and said that he had come to stay—which he

did. Then there was Mr. Masujima, the courteous Japanese gentleman who arranged a tea-party to show how they made tea in Japan; Mr. Vigfusson, the Icelandic scholar, with his quaint face and weird Sagas; Mr. Holmar, the leader of the Tyrolese singers, who, having come once with his party to sing to an invalid in the house, came afterwards to prayers and breakfast whenever the party was in Oxford, without invitation. These amongst many others sought and found a welcome.

'In the early days, whilst still Physician at the Radcliffe Infirmary, he would go accompanied by his wife and children for Morning Service to the Infirmary Chapel, where Mrs. Acland would play the harmonium. In the afternoon he went to the Cathedral, never omitting a long visit to Dr. Pusey in his rooms in Tom Quad<sup>1</sup>, and taking tea at the Deanery, where he was always welcome, and where he used to put on his surplice. He once told a German Professor who was going to the Cathedral with him that he considered this surplice, worn in right of his election to an Honorary Studentship, to be the highest honour that he had ever received. After Cathedral he would return to the Deanery until it was time to go home for high tea.

'Nephews who were up at College or the sons of any old friends, or perhaps some undergraduates who had been ill, would be told to come in when they liked, at eight o'clock on Sunday, to spend a "home evening," on the one condition, made by Mrs. Acland, that they did not dress, as that, she said, would make it like a party. Sometimes Dr. Acland would read something

<sup>1</sup> 'Your dear father's friendship,' wrote Mrs. Brine to Miss Acland, 'was one my father valued so specially. His visits on Sunday were quite looked forward to, they seemed to bring so much refreshment with them. You knew the keen interest my father took in all in which Dr. Acland took part, and it was with a bright smile that I have seen his dear face light up as the time drew near at which he thought he might come in for his chat—with the words "Oh, I suppose Acland will soon be here."'

that he thought likely to interest his hearers, and talk about it, or would, to the great delight of the younger ones present, get into a discussion with Miss Eleanor Smith<sup>1</sup>, who regularly spent her Sunday evenings for nearly forty years in Broad Street. On one occasion he was talking about a lately-published translation of the *Imitatio Christi* edited by Dr. Liddon, which he liked very much. He asked Miss Smith if she knew it. "No," she said. "I am surprised at that. Do you not read your Thomas à Kempis?" "Yes," replied she. "In what edition?" "I read it in Latin." "Oh," exclaimed Dr. Acland, "I am not up to that!" She looked at him severely over her spectacles, and said, "And, my dear Sir, may I ask what is the use of an University education?" On her death it was found that she had left him a small legacy—and her little Latin Thomas à Kempis.

'There was almost always during the course of the evening singing, and instrumental or concerted music, and if any one continued talking, Dr. Acland would point up to the text inscribed over the doorway into the little drawing-room, "Pour not out words where there is a Musician." The servants came up to prayers at ten, and a hymn was sung, accompanied by any instruments which had been used during the evening. Milk, seltzer-water and lemonade, with cake and biscuits, were placed in the little drawing-room, and the men left by eleven o'clock. That they appreciated these evenings was shown by the regularity with which many of them came during their residence in Oxford<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The sister of the brilliant Savilian Professor, H. J. S. Smith.

<sup>2</sup> 'Rien n'est sacré pour un sapeur,' and there were undergraduates who did not always spare the home of the Regius Professor. Returning late one night, the Doctor found a young gentleman, 'flown with insolence and wine,' pealing at his door-bell. The culprit fled, but Acland gave chase as far as the gate of Christ Church, through which he saw the fugitive disappear. He took his name from the porter, and the next morning being

'The candidates for medical degrees were always invited to breakfast, and as the numbers increased it often became a difficulty to know how to seat them. These breakfasts originated in the custom which, before the abolition of the tests, required the Regius Professor of Medicine to go through the Thirty-nine Articles with his candidates, a condition which Dr. Acland used to fulfil by reading them at prayers.

'With all this pressure upon him, and with health that was never robust, it was not to be wondered at that he would get overdone; and the tact with which Mrs. Acland made him rest, either by actual lying in bed or by change of thought and scene, was one of the triumphs of her perfect nature. Sometimes it would be by breakfast in bed, or not rising till midday, sometimes by sending him to Marsh Gibbon, to Mr. Parker's farm, for the night; or for two or three days to his beloved West Country; or even by train to Didcot to write his letters in the waiting-room<sup>1</sup>. Whatever she proposed, he would always try to do, and he was invariably the better for it. He never went on any of these excursions or for a long country journey without bringing her back something. Now it would be wild roses and brambles from the hedges;

Sunday, he called, on the way to the cathedral, at his rooms, which, oddly enough, were those which he had himself occupied as an undergraduate. The occupant was still in his bedroom, and the breakfast materials were set down by the fire. Acland gravely inserted one of his visiting-cards in the spout of the coffee-pot, and departed. I wish I could add that the undergraduate had possessed either the courage or the humour to make some amends.

On another occasion a handsome door-knocker was wrenched from the door in Broad Street. Years afterwards, when his eldest son was with his ship in the Piraeus, a young Russian came up and avowed himself as the author of the outrage. The knocker, he said, was at the bottom of the Cherwell, but he hoped to make reparation by sending another, the finest which could be obtained. The promise remains unfulfilled to this day.

<sup>1</sup> 'I know hardly any pleasure in life more keen,' he once wrote, 'than being left for two hours in a railway-station undisturbed.'

again baskets of fruit or eggs. Sometimes an old chair, table, or clock would appear a day or two later by carrier—once it was, to her dismay, an Alderney calf, which she found tethered in the garden—some offering, however slight, he always brought.

'The home life was so satisfying to him that it was difficult to persuade him to go into society, but once started no one ever enjoyed it more, and he was generally the last to leave his host's house. There was nothing that delighted him more than giving an evening party. The planning and arranging it was a source of real pleasure, and when the evening came, he always enjoyed it so thoroughly himself that his guests could not but enjoy it too. The memory of one party stands out very clearly. Mr. W. H. Smith was at the War Office, and was coming down to spend Sunday. Dr. Acland invited a large gathering to meet him. The first guests to be chosen were the principal Liberals and Radicals in Oxford, because, as he said, what was the use of asking the Conservatives, who could easily meet Mr. Smith any time? The night came, and all the Liberals were taken up to be introduced to the guest of the evening, who, with his host, was enjoying himself like a schoolboy out on a holiday.

'Dr. Acland was too restless to like a dinner-party—indeed in his own house he very rarely sat still right through any meal. He always found some excuse to get up and walk about. Now it would be to fetch a statuette of Hippocrates if a doctor were present; anon, if some strong Conservative were among the guests, he would place a bust or photograph of Mr. Gladstone on the table beside him; or he would want to look up some point in question, and go out, to return laden with an armful of books on the subject, which he would expect his questioner to read. He was always very sarcastic, as far as in him lay, when people were what he called "cock-sure" on any point,

and he would say that he had not sufficient knowledge or evidence to decide, but would write to So-and-So and make inquiries. When he was weary he would often amuse himself by altering the position of the pictures, kicking off his shoes and climbing up to unhang and rehang them; or he would move the position of all the busts after the family had gone to bed so that the next morning a complete change in the appearance of the house had taken place. He said it was as good as change of air. In his library he had many and most complete arrangements of a very methodical kind for sorting and keeping his many-sided correspondence and pamphlets, but they were never used, alas! and there was always a hunt for his papers, which were invariably lost or in the wrong pigeon-hole or box when they were wanted, in spite of all the best endeavours of his devoted secretary, James Ford.

'Dr. Acland's loyalty and devotion to the Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and indeed to all members of the Royal Family, was intense. He never, even in extreme old age, let the Queen's birthday pass without standing up to give the toast of "The Queen!" and his one expressed wish towards the end was that he might live to see "My Queen" once more.

'No account of the life in Broad Street would be complete without some mention of Dr. Acland's relations to his household. He had a wonderful power of attracting all those about him. The house was in every sense a home for them. He rarely parted with any servant if he could possibly help it<sup>1</sup>, and they were always his friends—feeling that they could go to him in their joys and their sorrows—sure of his sympathy. He would take infinite trouble to show or to explain to them anything which he thought would interest them—objects under the microscope, the beating of the heart

<sup>1</sup> He only had two coachmen during over fifty years, both well-known figures in Oxford.

in a dead fish, a cast of the brain, or facts illustrating incidents in the Bible. The assembling for morning or evening prayers would give him the opportunity of doing the latter, and many are the subjects on which he would address them. Sometimes it would be by showing them his sketches of the Seven Churches, at another it might be a description of General Gordon or an explanation of a contour map in his possession drawn by the General at Jerusalem, or facts about some other interesting person. The effect produced was not always what he intended: one maid, who had known the household for over forty years, on being asked if she understood what he had been telling them, replied, "I never thought of doing that!" and, being further questioned, she added, "I look across at the dear Doctor and I think to myself—You poor dear gentleman, how you are enjoying yourself!"

'In another instance the butler gave notice that either he or the page-boy must leave, as no one could tell how trying it was to work all day in the pantry with a boy who believed that the world was created in periods when he himself believed it was created in days! One page-boy, who after repeated warnings was told that he really must leave, was actually in the omnibus to go to the station, when he jumped out exclaiming, "If he don't know when he has got a good servant, I know when I have got a good master!" and he ran back into the house again.

'It was most pathetic to see the way in which Dr. Acland bore the overwhelming sorrow of his wife's death. His one thought was how to carry on her interests and her work. The home life, which had before circled round her, now centred in her memory—not in any morbid or despairing way, but in trying to carry out her intentions and her wishes. He always seemed to feel as if she were near to guide him, and to the very end of his life he rarely, if ever, undertook anything fresh without saying, "Do you think your

mother would have liked it?" or, "What would your mother have done?"

'How deep and lasting was the impression made by the home in Broad Street on those altogether unconnected with the family may be gathered from some notes made by Professor Victor Carus more than fifty years after he first entered it<sup>1</sup>.

"Beginning to write a few lines on Sir Henry's 'home life,' I am afraid of becoming too personal in my narrative. Dr. Acland had asked me to be his assistant in the Christ Church Museum, a position which I entered upon in September, 1849. Our intercourse was naturally in the first term rather formal, and on an official footing. But his kindness, and the sympathy with which Mrs. Acland bade me welcome to Oxford, made the house in Broad Street, after a very short time, a second home to me. The last three months of my staying in Oxford (from December, 1850, to April, 1851) Dr. Acland had asked me to give up my rooms in Park Place, and to live in his house, so that I not only became a member of his household, but was treated as an old friend, nay, as one of the family. My recollections of that wonderful time are of the happiest of all my life. The whole home life in the house was an ideal one, it was pervaded by the spirit of kindness, charity, and tender regard and love for every one belonging to it, or coming into contact with it.

"When Dr. Acland came home from his medical visits, he was cheerful and hearty. Whenever he was in anxiety over one or other of his patients, or from medical or economic reasons, Mrs. Acland knew how to comfort him and to cheer him up. Very often he came into the drawing-room to write his letters there. At meal-times he was the loveliest host and master of the family. In the absence of guests our conversation was chiefly on the Museum, Mrs. Acland following with the most lively interest the progress of our work. But there was scarcely any question of general importance, religious, social, scientific, philosophical, or political which was not touched, and sometimes entered upon seriously. In

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 148, *supra*.

the last months we worked very often in the Museum<sup>1</sup> after dinner, sometimes till late in the night, when Mrs. Acland would come to join us there and give us tea. These were delightful hours, as the genial and happy natures of Dr. and Mrs. Acland manifested themselves in the most felicitous way."

To the pen of the same member of the family I am indebted for the following short description of the home which sheltered Henry Acland for fifty-five years, and in which all his children grew up.

The old house in Broad Street was in its way unique. It consisted of three houses which had been at some former time joined together. Two of these faced the street, and had lath-and-plaster fronts; the third, at the back, was of much older date, and its walls were over three feet thick.

It was Dr. Acland's amusement and delight to improve this curious old place until he turned it into a veritable museum, though it always remained what Mrs. Acland used to call it, a rabbit-warren. Entering from Broad Street you came into a narrow hall with a Devonshire settle made of walnut from the Holnicote Estate, and with panelling as a dado on the walls all made at his old home. This panelling continued down the long passage which led to the dining-room and libraries, and the doors of the dining-room were also of walnut, and made in the same shops. Indeed everything that Dr. Acland could bring from the old home to the new was brought; he always remained at heart a Devonshire man. Out of this narrow hall opened a small room, used as a waiting-room for patients, or for those many people who came on all sorts of errands to the house. The walls of this room were completely covered, chiefly with engravings from portraits, and showed the catholicity of his interests and friendships. Chevalier de Bunsen, John Ruskin, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Dufferin, Lord Salisbury, Sir Bartle Frere, 'Ben' Harrison, W. H. Smith, Bishop Jacobson, Professor Max Müller, Mr. William Froude, Bishop Selwyn of New Zealand and Lichfield, and many others hanging near together; and on one wall were the engravings of Queen Victoria, the

<sup>1</sup> The old anatomical Museum at Christ Church.

Prince Consort, and their children, given to him by Her Majesty.

Out of this little room opened his small consulting-room or study, furnished in the same characteristic manner. Passing down the long passage you came to the first library, designed by Mr. Woodward. As time went on books accumulated everywhere on every sort of subject, down the passage and up the walls, till at last it was all so full that it was a matter of some difficulty to get in or out at all. Beyond this room was another, built originally as an inner sanctum for himself and his wife. When he asked Mrs. Acland what O'Shea the Irishman should carve on the stone mantelpiece of the first library, she at once quoted Wordsworth's lines to the Skylark :

'Type of the wise who soar but never roam,  
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home.'

And as time went on and they grew older, a final shelf came up from the old home and was fixed in the north library with these words carved on it, 'Rest and be thankful.' In every corner not covered with books hung pictures, photographs and curios. The stairs to the drawing-room were narrow and steep, but could not be improved owing to the presence of a massive chimney-stack ; by Dr. Acland's ingenuity, however, they were made less dark by means of reflectors. At the top of them stood a cast of Alexander Munro's beautiful figure of Undine stepping on to a water-lily. The drawing-room was a low room with a huge beam running down it. Bookcases stood between each window, and there was a long low one across the end, the newest books on every sort of subject being on the octagonal table near the centre. The walls were so covered with pictures that the paper was barely visible. Here hung Millais's famous picture of Mr. John Ruskin, given to Dr. Acland after the death of the latter's mother, also two sketches of Rossetti's, 'The Gathering of the Herbs' and 'The Eating of the Passover,' a small Turner, the Acropolis at Athens, and many other pictures, by George Richmond and his son, and by less distinguished artists, including many by Dr. Acland himself of varied scenes in many countries. This room was the centre

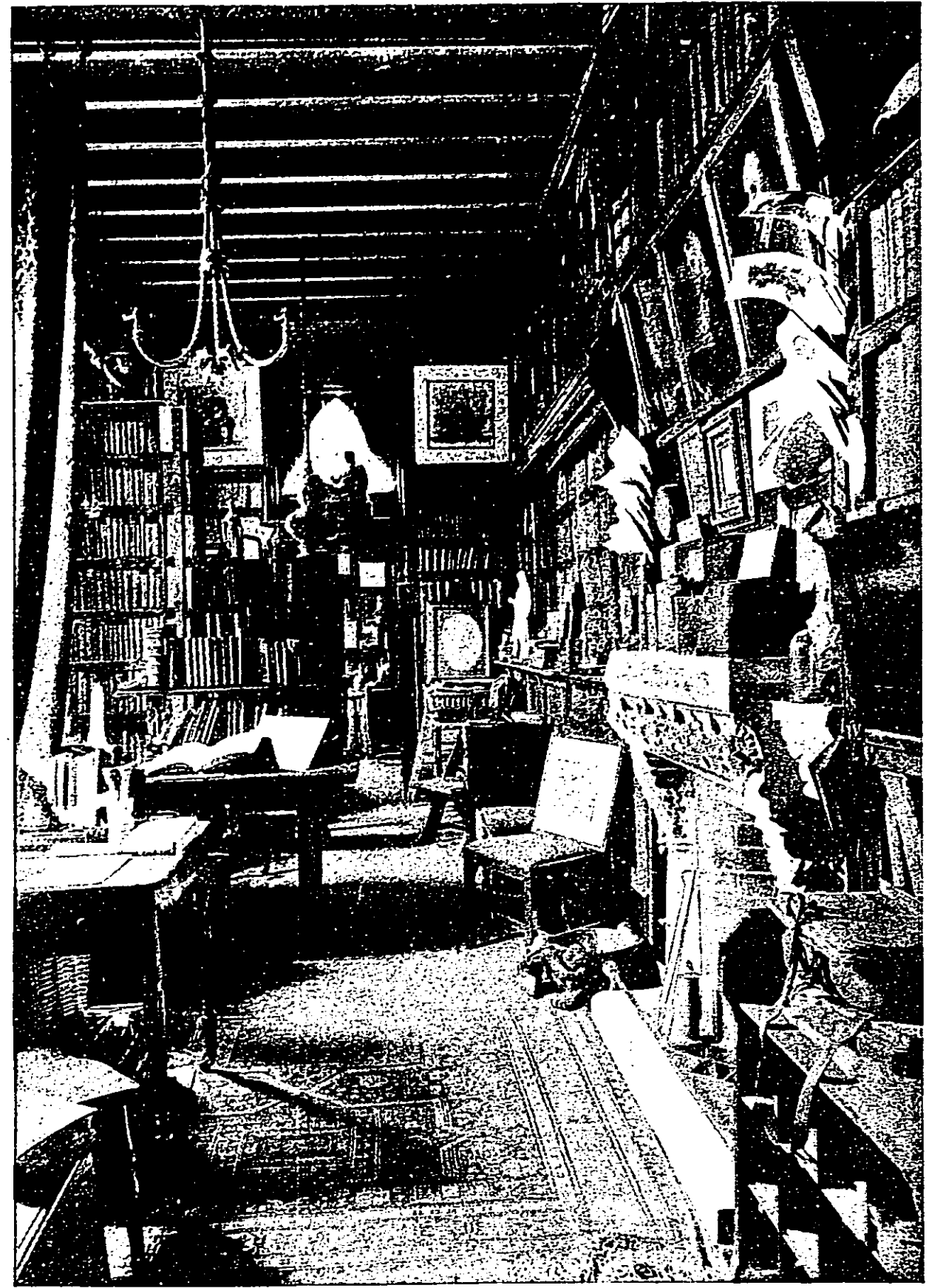


Henry Acland's library was a room of great beauty and interest. It was situated in Broad Street, Oxford, and was one of the most beautiful libraries in England. The room was filled with books and was a place of great learning and research. Acland was a great scholar and a great teacher, and his library was a place where many of his students came to study and to learn. The library was a place of great beauty and interest, and it was a place where many of his students came to study and to learn.

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HENRY ACLAND'S LIBRARY, BROAD STREET, OXFORD

of the family life; when Dr. Acland was at home he was rarely, unless actually occupied in seeing patients or on business, far away from Mrs. Acland's side.

I have left to the last the dining-room and the garden, into which the former looked; it was in the oldest part of the house, with very thick walls and quaint appearance. On either side of a stone ogival arch cut through the wall was painted in the pre-Raffaelite days, in red letters, the old college 'grace,' for before and after meat—*Benedictus Benedicat: Benedicto Benedicatur*. Dr. Acland had at the end of the room arranged a top light for sculpture, and here hung two casts, one of the Holy Family by Michael Angelo, the other of the Nikē Apteros; and in the centre was a bust of Dante.

The garden ran back as far as Trinity Garden-wall, and Dr. Acland's originality and ingenuity were constantly exercised in making it as unlike a square bit of town garden as possible. At the four corners of the little fountain stood four pillars, removed from the Tower of the Five Orders at the Bodleian at the time of its restoration. The garden was constantly used in a fine summer as a second drawing-room, with a man-of-war's awning overhead to keep off sun and shower, and on fine hot nights Dr. Acland delighted in having his simple dinner, or his coffee, out there, and he would sit and chat until long after dark.

There was a strong feeling in Oxford that it was not fitting that such a character as Mrs. Acland's should be preserved only in the memories and during the lives of those who had known her personally. A meeting was held at which it was resolved to raise a memorial to her, which should take some form of practical usefulness; and it was agreed that a great want in Oxford would be met by founding in her name an Institution for nurses. The sum required was nearer four thousand pounds than three, but in the course of a few months the total had been raised. The subscriptions came in from all quarters, from members of the Royal Family and the two Archbishops,

down to anonymous subscribers of half a crown and five shillings. No time was lost in getting to work: a district nurse was in the field within a few weeks of the first inception of the project, and in the following Autumn Term, a year after Mrs. Acland's death, a meeting was held to announce that the 'Sarah Acland Institution for Nurses' was in full working order. A house had been taken at 37 Wellington Square, and placed under the supervision of Mrs. Rutherford Smith, and a district nurse was already visiting and treating the sick in their own homes.

The 'Sarah Acland Home' is now one of the most flourishing and most valued institutions in Oxford. So great is its usefulness, so indispensable do its nurses seem, that one marvels how the town or the University had existed without it. Dr. Acland had had some terrible experiences both in the cholera days and in his general practice. He had known what it was to spend half the night looking for some one to sit up with an undergraduate in delirium, and he had had daily evidence of the misery suffered by rich and poor alike in the absence of trained nursing. The memorial to his wife could have assumed no form more acceptable to him.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE 'LOST MEDICAL SCHOOL'—SIR BARTLE FRERE—VISIT TO AMERICA—PUSEY AND NEWMAN—THE VIVISECTION DEBATES

1878-1884.

IN the Long Vacation of 1879 Dr. Acland, accompanied by his son Theodore, paid a second visit to the United States. He was in need of a change, for, apart from his private sorrows, he had been passing through a time of much worry and annoyance. In 1877 the second University Commission had begun its sittings under the Chairmanship of Lord Selborne. The Regius Professor of Medicine was an important witness both as to the scientific studies of Oxford and the facilities afforded there for medical training. With regard to the former point he bore testimony to the great progress which had followed the establishment of the Museum, and the general encouragement afforded to Natural Science by the University and College authorities, but he insisted that the existing number of Professors on the Scientific side was inadequate, and that the distribution of subjects among them needed reform. He was strengthened in his demand for an increase in the teachers and plant by the recently published Report of the Commissioners on Scientific and Technical Education. They admitted that the University of Oxford had in recent times acted with great liberality to Natural Science, and they gave unstinted praise to the existing arrangements of the Museum. But they added that these, 'in extent of appliances and in completeness of range even for purely educational purposes,