

pages, by an Abbot of Graßschaffen, filled with chronogrammatic hexameters and pentameters on various subjects and events between the years 1749 and 1764. Among those which Mr. Hilton quotes are paraphrases of the Athanasian Creed in chronograms for the year 1749, of some of the Psalms (1759), and sentences from the *Imitatio Christi* (1762). Presumably the years selected represent those in which the Abbot was at work, but the irrelevance of the dates increases our profound sense of his literary and religious immorality in selecting such subjects for his poetical gymnastics. He had, however, many highly-placed ecclesiastics as companions in his trifling, for Mr. Hilton has set apart a whole chapter for the chronograms made by Abbots and Bishops, and a large proportion of the chronograms in his book are on religious or theological themes. The amusement seems to have been chiefly practised in Northern Europe; the Low Countries, Germany and Austria being the most prolific. Of English chronograms in the present volume there are very few, and not many from France or Italy. The majority are written in Latin, but in Holland and Flanders there were a good many composed in the vernacular in honour of weddings and other minor celebrations. In these the letter D is not counted, "a grave error," we are told, though as the Latin symbol for 500 is not really a D, but only half an M, it seems to us that there is a good deal to be said for its exclusion. Of pure chronograms, those in which every letter counts, Mr. Hilton does not quote many examples. The word LILICIDIVM (the slaughter of the lily) on a medal commemorating the defeat of the French at Tasniers in 1709 is the best. If all chronograms were as compact as this, they would be better worth attention. But their rules are so easy to observe, that as exercises of the wits they must rank below anagrams and acrostics, and many other "puzzles" to which no one has as yet thought of devoting three bulky volumes. Our only reason for noticing the book in our "Record of Bibliography" is the occasional occurrence on title-pages, chiefly of the seventeenth century, of a chronogrammatic motto in place of a more lucidly expressed date. As an example of this practice we may quote from Mr. Hilton the chronogram—

"stVDIosI ab aLea et LVDIs IVre prohlbtIs abesse Debent,"

which tells us that the moral treatise which contains it was printed in 1620. The occurrence of capitals in the middle of words, or in some cases of red letters or italics, suffices to put the cataloguer on his guard in these instances, and when this lesson has been learnt, we think that the interest of chronogram for bibliographers and librarians is nearly exhausted.

Obituary.

REV. WILLIAM ROGERS.

WE have lost in William Rogers an original member of the Association, and a warm supporter of the public library movement. As honorary secretary of the London Institution, he rendered valuable assistance to the organising committee of the first London conference, which met in the lecture hall of that society in October, 1877. He took part in the proceedings of the conference, and was to his death a member of our body. He had an active share in the work of the Metropolitan Free

Libraries Association, which, between 1877 and 1886, did useful work in agitating for the spread of public libraries in London. For these reasons, Mr. Rogers has a special claim to our warm regard, but for fifty years he lived and laboured as a City parson (a title he loved), and probably achieved more for education within that period than any other public man of his generation.

He was the son of William Loran Rogers, a London police magistrate, and was born November 24th, 1819. In September, 1830, he was sent to Eton, where he studied, or rather suffered, for three years under Keate. The next four years of his time there were spent under Dr. Hawtrey, who sent him up for the Balliol scholarship in 1836. His *Reminiscences* contain some amusing stories of his schooldays. In one, he tells how he rowed in the race against Westminster on May 4th, 1837, memorable for the defeat of Eton, said to have been caused by the enervating presence of Keate at the river side. Rogers became a member of Balliol in March, 1837, and rowed fourth in the race with Cambridge in 1840. This was his chief distinction at the university, where he took an ordinary degree in June, 1840. Although not by any means a reading man, he became intimate with many who afterwards rose to high positions in Church and State, such as Arthur Stanley, Jowett, Coleridge, Lingen, Hobhouse, Farrer, Stafford Northcote, Jackson, and others.

After making a tour on the Continent, he went to Durham, in October, 1842, for a course of theological study, with a view to entering the Church. In 1843 he was ordained deacon, and licensed to a curacy at Fulham. A couple of years later he was appointed to the incumbency of St. Thomas Charterhouse, Aldersgate Street, where he remained eighteen years. He at once began the task ever most congenial to him—that of founding schools and looking after the temporal welfare of his poorer parishioners. Costermongering was the chief industry of the neighbourhood, styled by him Costermongria. The population was 10,000, and his income was only £150. At one time he had a school for ragamuffins in a blacksmith's shed, but before long the whole parish became covered with schools. Those in Golden Lane were long famous. His energetic persuasiveness enabled him to extract between £5,000 and £6,000 from successive Presidents of the Council; he also enlisted the services of the Prince Consort, Mr. Gladstone, and other distinguished persons on the occasions of opening new buildings. School and college friends generously helped him with donations of money for parochial uses. In 1863, the Bishop of London presented him to the rectorship of the ancient Church of St. Botolph, Bishopsgate, of which he was the sixty-third rector—the first being a certain John of Northampton, in the early part of the fourteenth century. He now, in his own words, "found all the difference in the world between eternally dunning one's friends and finding ample resources to hand." Charity on non-sectarian principles was thoroughly practised by him. One-third of his new parishioners were Roman Catholics, and a large proportion of the remainder were Hebrews; with the latter he was always extremely popular. Once, on a public occasion, Lord Rosebery remarked that there was not a poor Jew in Houndsditch or Petticoat Lane whose face did not brighten at the sight of the Rector. Mr. Rogers formed part of the famous commission appointed by Lord Derby in 1858 to inquire into popular education, whose recommendations anticipated, in many respects, the great Act of Mr. Foster in 1870. To Mr. Rogers is mainly due the present efficient state of middle-class education in the City. In October, 1865, he issued a circular convening a meeting at the Mansion House. Money came as it always did at Rogers's call. A year later, the Bath Street school was

opened, and the number of scholars soon rose to 700. It was at the opening ceremony he made the remark, "Hang economy, hang theology; let us begin," to someone who opposed progress with theological and financial forebodings, which remark was at once seized upon to fix upon Rogers an unkind epithet suggesting an irreverence, which was totally foreign to his character. Although at times blunt and forcible of language, he never tolerated irreverent speech or behaviour in others, nor ever used any phrase to which reasonable exception could be taken.

He had a leading part in the organisation of Alleyn's famous charity at Dulwich, and, as one of the governors, paid the closest attention to the business of the College. The new buildings were opened by the Prince of Wales in 1870. Among other offices held by Mr. Rogers were the chaplaincies of the City of London Rifles, the Post Office Volunteers, and the Honourable Artillery Company. In 1857 he was made Chaplain-in-Ordinary to the Queen, and in 1862, Prebendary of St. Paul's Cathedral. These were all the ecclesiastical honours he received; and it has been a subject of surprise to his friends that the claims to preferment of so zealous a worker in the cause of charity and education were so often passed over by those in authority.

His literary productions were unimportant. A few sermons "printed by request," and *The School and Children's Bible*, first published under his superintendence in 1873. In 1888 appeared his characteristic and very entertaining *Reminiscences*, edited by the Rev. R. H. Hadden, a little volume which gained a success proved by several editions. The motto, from Ovid, on the title-page of the *Reminiscences*—

"Saucius ejurat pugnam gladiator, et idem
Immemor antiqui vulneris arma capit"

was suggested by a friend as applicable to the grievous accident whereby a fall from his horse some eight years previously had deprived him of the use of his lower limbs, as well as to the courage with which he had striven against his infirmity. The lines were quoted by Mr. Rogers with pardonable pride, in a speech on returning thanks at a dinner given in his honour about five years ago. He was indeed a gladiator in all good causes, full of pugnacity, energy, and good humour. He had much to do with the reorganisation of the city charities, whence have sprung the admirable Bishopsgate and St. Bride's Institutions and Libraries. Of the first-named of these he was the chairman.

On the occasion of his 75th birthday he was presented with his portrait and a gift of plate, at the Mansion House, where a brilliant gathering assembled to do him honour. Lord Rosebery—the Prime Minister—made the presentation, in the name of a very large number of friends and admirers. Shortly before his death he received the honorary degree of D.C.L., from Durham University. After a short illness Mr. Rogers died on Sunday, January 19th, 1896, in his 77th year. He was buried at Mickleham, Surrey, where he had a country house.

Fond of society, few men had a wider circle of friends, ranging from the highest in the land to many of a very humble condition. Down to his latest hours he was possessed with a buoyant, manly spirit, which was entirely English. He had an ample fund of unstudied humour, whose random shafts never hurt friend or foe. A steadfast friend, his rare kindness of heart and sterling personal qualities made him beloved by all who came in contact with him. Few London clergymen will be more missed than William Rogers, who will be mourned, both as an earnest worker in the cause of social improvement, and as a thoroughly good man.

H. R. T.