

JAMES.—On April 28th, 1948, at Esher, Lionel James, Assistant Master at Radley from 1892 to 1906 and Head Master of Monmouth Grammar School from 1906 to 1927.

Warden Thompson must have felt a happy man when on a day in 1892 he secured Lionel James to take charge of the Sixth and Upper Fifth. James, like himself a classical scholar

OBITUARY.

L.J.

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of Westminster and Christ Church, shared his enthusiasm for Latin plays and the writing of neat topical prologues, and altogether was likely to come as a whirlwind among Radley's ageing staff and rather half-hearted scholars. So it proved; and within two years, as page 637 of the new Register shows, the scholarship lists at Oxford were reflecting the new appointment.

The first of James's qualities to impress a new boy was his kindness. We were not only invited to cheerful tea parties; we felt that he took a genuine personal interest in each one of us. He had a special friendliness for the underdog and the misfit, and an unfailing ability to see geese as swans. He was also on good terms with all his colleagues, and this was rare in Radley's first half-century. The second quality to impress was his enthusiasm, and a "*nil admirari* spirit" was the fault he most often criticised in a boy. His enthusiasm never flagged throughout his life. It marked his teaching, however unresponsive the taught; his singing in Chapel; his founding and supporting of literary and other societies; his expeditions to the Berkshire Downs on Ascension Day; the Reading Parties he took to the Lake District in some summer holidays. Then there was his unselfishness. He loved to give credit to others, and was quite careless of distinction for himself. He coached for the Sports any Social that called upon him. He was a good half-back at Association Football, but those faded Westminster and Christ Church shirts were as often to be seen among the louts of Junior I or the bright young things of Junior II as among the experts of Senior Game. When in 1900 the *Frogs* replaced his beloved Latin plays, the credit went to others, but he was always there behind the scenes doing the donkey work. When, by a long-needed reform, the Sixth and Upper Fifth became separate forms, it was on his own suggestion that James moved down to take the Upper Fifth.

His kindliness, enthusiasm and unselfishness sprang from a sincere and simple piety and were cemented into a distinctive and very lovable personality by an unyielding obstinacy. ("Look out! James has got his ears back", they used to say in Common Room). It was a genial obstinacy, but when that chin stuck out pleas and arguments were a waste of time. There were no half-tones or shades about James; every cause, every author was black or white—usually white. You might, or might not agree with him: he could never be persuaded to change his mind and agree with you.

It was a tragedy for Radley that James never became a Social Tutor. No one did become a Tutor between 1895 and 1909, and in 1906 James had left to become headmaster of Monmouth School. But he remained Radleian at heart, and the self-appointed champion of the memory of William Sewell. "Founder's Faith", his calendar of extracts from Sewell's writings appeared in 1938; followed three years ago by his *magnum opus* "A Forgotten Genius", which will remain a Radley classic. How typical of James that work is! Scholarly, enthusiastic, thorough, kindly; and how obstinately it refuses to admit any fault in its hero!

James was not at Radley very long, but no master ever imbibed more of the spirit of the place than he or served it more faithfully. None has more fully deserved permanent honour at Radley.

N.W.