

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-49476-3- *Almae Matres: Recollections of Some Schools at Home and Abroad*

F.B.Malim

Frontmatter

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Recollections of Some Schools
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BY

F. B. MALIM, M.A.

Formerly Master of Wellington College

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PREFACE

THE theme of these chapters is not Education but Schools, and not Schools in the abstract, but actual existing Schools, known to the writer either because he has worked in them or because he has at least visited them. For in the year 1938 it was his singular good fortune to be invited by the Head Masters' Conference to visit those schools in the four great Dominions of the Crown, whose Head Masters are members of the Conference. No commission could have been more welcome to one who believes that the most potent influence in education is personality, and that the fortunate pupil is he who has encountered the personality not only of great teachers but of a great school. The greatness of a school consists, of course, not in numbers but in the character and individuality which it has developed. It is as *Alma Mater*, as a Person, that she moulds the character and enjoys the loyalty and affection of her children.

It was therefore profoundly interesting to try to discover, even on a short visit, something about the conditions and the personalities which have helped to make each of these societies what it is. The older Dominion schools were established, as English schools for the most part were established, by Churches or by pious founders, and they have owed their survival and their growth to the wisdom and devotion of the men who have guided them. They have not been created or controlled by a Government department, but have known the hopes and

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disappointments, the anxieties and the joys which freedom brings. Freedom can produce the worst as well as the best of men; and it is true that in our experience in this country, some schools which have enjoyed freedom have made but an ill use of their privilege. But it is no less true that without freedom it is difficult, if not impossible, for a school to become different from other schools and to develop the individuality which alone commands devotion and wins love.

F. B. M.

1947