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First published in 1913, John Venn's collection of writings describes college life in the early days of the University of Cambridge. Venn, a leading British logician and moral scientist, was president of Gonville & Caius College, and had been a student at Cambridge in the 1850s. This volume of 'reminiscences of a reading man' contains articles he contributed to the college magazine, *The Caian* and speeches and addresses given at College Chapel and Hall. These are interspersed with letters written by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Cambridge scholars, and embedded in a commentary that provides additional insights into student life and university politics. He also includes, as an appendix, 'College Life and Ways Sixty Years Ago', recounting his own student experiences. Ranging from the Elizabethan to the Victorian era, *Early Collegiate Life* offers an honest and delightful glimpse into the daily lives of Cambridge scholars of the past.

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# EARLY COLLEGIATE LIFE

**JOHN VENN, Sc.D., F.R.S., F.S.A.**

**President of Gonville and Caius College.**

**CAMBRIDGE :**

**W HEFFER AND SONS LTD.**

**1913**

## PREFACE.

The articles in the following volume were mostly contributed, during the last twenty years, to the College Magazine, *The Caian*. Others were delivered as addresses or speeches in the College Chapel and Hall. As was natural and suitable under the circumstances, the individual details and the personalities described or referred to, were mostly those of members of our own foundation. From this point of view I hope that these studies will serve to encourage others to enquire into the past history of whatever corporation they may belong to; and, in particular, to trace in the course of the events so displayed the main currents of the stream of national history.

But though many of the illustrations here offered may be drawn from a somewhat narrow field, the picture of early college life which I have endeavoured to portray is, I hope, a fairly general and truthful one. It should be clearly understood that the social distinctions and pretensions which to some extent prevail at present, as between one College and another, had very little significance in early days. There was no college, as I believe there was hardly any school, which was supposed to be predominantly frequented by "gentlemen's sons."



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## PREFACE

Such distinctions as existed were mainly, at bottom, topographical; that is, were dependent on the part of the country from which the students were drawn. There was also a real, though temporary, influence sometimes to be traced in the personality of a dominant Master or Tutor. A good example of this is to be found in the Romanist reaction described in the "Elizabethan Episode." On the whole the several Colleges may be considered to have been doing similar work, and doing it with similar efficiency, throughout the period in question.

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