

of attire, for that matter; for he wore yellow nankeen breeches, white stockings, and low shoes till his death in the 'seventies. My father was his only surviving son, and was born in 1842. Precociously intelligent, he had read all eight volumes of Alison's *History of Europe* before he was twelve—and I verily believe that none of it did he ever forget to his life's end; so retentive was his memory. A ready writer and a facile versifier even at an early age, everything came easy to him—maybe too easy—and his father sent him in the first year of the Crimean War to Gawcott, a boarding-school in the neighbouring county of Buckingham, which had a passing vogue. There he remained for four years, imbibing a certain amount of Greek and Latin, devouring every book he could lay hands on, writing the essays of his companions according to their individual styles, and hating every moment of his enforced captivity.

On leaving school he joined the firm of his cousin, William Whitlock, then one of

ANGLIS?

the biggest English timber-merchants, and was soon being sent by them to different parts of the country in connection with their ventures. Before he left home, a contemporary of his, still alive, says of him that "their warn't a bit o' devilry in the county as Jack Linnell warn't at the bottom of"; and it would seem that his verses and lampoons on the pompous and solemn of the district soon earned him considerable notoriety, not to say admiration, in certain quarters.

At some time during the next part of his life he seems to have become an absolute agnostic and, in his wanderings for the Whitlocks, to have studied at first-hand the habits of gypsies, tinkers, tramps, and all sorts and conditions of men not usually recognised by the conventional. Gradually a change came over him—due, he always used to aver, to the prayers of his mother, who died when he was twelve—and after long soul-struggles, which he would compare with Bunyan's, he is found as an assistant master at the old Grammar School