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The Woden

The Magazine of Wednesbury Boys' High School

SCHOOL OFFICERS, AUTUMN TERM, 1956

Head Prefect: R. M. GARBETT.


Captain of Football: P. J. Lowndes.

Vice-Captain: B. Gray.

School Representative to Old Wodens' Association: R. M. Garbett.


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EDITORIAL

The retirement of the Headmaster at the end of this term marks the end of an epoch, and due tribute is paid elsewhere in the magazine in an appreciation of Mr. Kipping's thirty-two years of devoted service to the School.

We realize that the Headmaster cannot view with any relish the prospect of retirement. Few schoolmasters can have dedicated their lives so wholeheartedly and exclusively to their task, and such fullness must be followed by a corresponding void. Perhaps retirement will furnish unexpected compensations. We sincerely hope that it will, and our best wishes go with him to greener pastures in the West Country.

We extend a hearty welcome to the new Headmaster, Mr. E. C. Witcombe, who comes to us from Hinckley Grammar School, Leicestershire, where he has been head of the Mathematics department. He is a graduate of Bristol University, where he was awarded a B.Sc. degree with First Class Honours in Mathematics. We have already had intimations of his wide interests, as much in the arts as in the sciences, and we look forward to co-operating with him in the development of his plans. A fuller notice of Mr. Witcombe's appointment, and, we hope, a photograph will be published in the next issue of The Woden.
C. S. KIPPING

Headmaster of Wednesbury High School, 1924-56

The wheels of Time revolve and the sight of fifty-one rather frightened little boys standing outside in the road at 9.0 a.m. on a September morning changes to that of more than 300 who enter confidently, many of them before 8.30 a.m.

The Headmaster was well qualified to teach chemistry. His father, Professor F. S. Kipping, F.R.S., the discoverer of the silicides, held the Chair of Chemistry at Nottingham University for 37 years and a great uncle Sir W. H. Perkin was the originator of the dye, mauve.

The example of his famous forbears did not encourage him to enter the field of academic research, but he found the atmosphere of schools far more to his liking. He had had ten years experience of boarding schools before he was appointed the first Headmaster of this School.

At first there were no laboratories and the teaching was almost entirely theoretical. In the early days, with a very small staff, masters had to teach several subjects so that Latin and divinity were added to chemistry. Our Headmaster has also taken mathematics and, for a time during the war, physics.

With the reconstruction engendered by the return of members of Staff from the Forces he decided to re-arrange chemistry and start the teaching of German in the School. Armed with a knowledge of chemical and chess terms he started to learn some grammar, and the first batch of candidates who sat for the certificate all passed. It was easy to understand their difficulties when he experienced them himself!

The parents of one of his students once politely queried the matter of accent. 'You will excuse my saying so but the people in Germany do not speak German like you do.' 'No,' was the reply, 'and the people in the Black Country do not speak English like I do.'

The development of chess teaching is dealt with elsewhere in the magazine. It is in the field of chess problems that his own reputation has been gained. He is President of the International Problem Board, composer of more than 6,000 chess problems, author of several books and a problem editor of more than thirty years standing. Two Chess Clubs in the neighbourhood, formed in comparatively recent years, asked to bear his name.

What drew the Headmaster to the teaching profession? Dare we suggest that, as an awe-inspiring prefect at Nottingham High School who expected boys to line up as he passed by, the future headmaster found both an aptitude and liking for the exercise of authority. It is certain that he has always liked boys, especially as individuals, perhaps because he has always remained young at heart. The Headmaster has, through the years, been a classroom man, happy to be teaching and completely at ease with the world shut out. So often would a joke be sufficient to quell a minor delinquent. It is instructive to hear Old Boys of the School speak of the Head. They have been nearest to him and have had the keen appreciation of his treatment of the subject in hand. To be taught by him was sometimes terrifying, always exhilarating but never dull.

The Headmaster's interest in games has remained keen to the end. The 'at home' matches have never lacked his presence and in the days when he rushed about the country-side in various cars he would often be seen also at away matches. From the days when the outfield was an untamed wilderness and small groups of strange juveniles had to be dislodged from the jungle, to the well-organised present, the playing-fields have been one of his special cares.

It is impossible to mention the playing-fields without referring to the remarkable score-box which we owe to the ambitious planning and enthusiasm of the Headmaster. To be chosen for one of the team to operate it has been a favour much sought after by small and large alike. Nor is it possible to think of school matches without remembering his insistence on the niceties of behaviour by both players and spectators. Small boys who stood about by the goal posts and a few months later strolled in front of the sight screen when bowling was that end experienced something akin to being struck by lightning. Batsmen running between the wickets have heard the roar of 'run-wide' and have been, thereafter, less concerned with fast bowling than the possibility of further thunderbolts from Jove.

Although he did not himself take part in cricket and football he was a keen lawn tennis player and trained a club-juggling troupe in the earlier days of the School.

Two war-time memories stand out clearly. The first is of a period when groundsmen were non-existent. Staff and boys must not work the petrol mower owing to danger of accidents. The Headmaster was seen, sometimes up to ten o'clock at night, reducing the grass to order and thus enabling games to be continued. The second memory is of air- raids and shelters and of a tall figure using his walking stick as a shooting stick outside the shelter entrance while he rolled a cigarette.
For more than three decades we have had a man to lead us, big in person and personality. He has always fought against regimentation and, in allowing the Staff to continue their courses unhindered, has ensured a versatility about the work of the School which has added to the sum total of happiness experienced by past and present boys. One of his main objects has been for the boys to be happy at school and he still remembers so well the formality and lack of humanity of his own school days.

Our retiring Headmaster has seen four Chairman of Governors, some thirty members of Staff (many of them temporary), and upwards of 1,400 Old Boys come and go. Now his own period of office draws to its appointed close.

NEWS, NOTES AND NOTICES

In an issue which is much concerned with good form, we are pleased to be able to extend two welcomes. First, we welcome Mr. E. M. Smyth, L.R.A.M., A.R.C.M., our visiting music master who valiantly strives at each Thursday to teach music, and helps with the School Choir, and also contrives to initiate the select few into the mysteries of the 'Cello. Mr. Smyth studied at the Royal Academy of Music, is a fine performer on the 'Cello himself, and has, as other interests, an active connection with tennis and golf.

Our second welcome is one in advance to Mr. A. J. Jordan, who will be joining us next term to fill the gap left by Mr. Rae's departure. Mr. Jordan trained at King Alfred's Training College, Winchester, and has had teaching experience in Hampshire and Northamptonshire. He takes a keen interest in sports and will be a welcome addition to our list of 'active' referees.

We are pleased to record, with our sincerest congratulations, further creditable achievements by our Old Boys. J. Fletcher obtained a 1st Class (Honours) B.A. in History at Oxford last term and after doing his National Service will be returning there to do research work. D. Croft has completed his music training at Trinity College, London, and is now a G.T.C.L., A.R.C.M., (Clarinet performance), A.T.C.L. (Piano teaching). A. Edwards graduated from Hull with a 2nd Class (1st Division) B.Sc. in Chemistry. He has now followed this up with an A.R.I.C., D.I.C. in Chemical Engineering of London.

Before leaving our congratulations to Old Boys, it may be recorded that in October no fewer than five of them 'went up' to Oxford, a most creditable record achievement for the School.

Examination honours of present pupils are recorded elsewhere but congratulations must be extended here to M. Spragg's of the Vth Form. On 6th November he was presented with his Queen's Scout Badge in the 5th (Wednesbury) Troop Room. This is one of the highest awards of Scouting and is not easily gained. Spragg began Scouting in India and is the holder of seven proficiency badges. He will be leaving us shortly to join the Merchant Navy as a Navigator Apprentice to the British Petroleum Tanker Co. Ltd.

A letter has been received from Mr. Rae, describing school life in Carlisle. The overcrowding of some of our Form Rooms at certain times is certainly not unique. Mr. Rae speaks of the average number of boys in a form being 40, all crammed into rooms designed for 30! Our pupils might well be grateful for the leniency of our punishments—at Carlisle there is a daily detention until 5 p.m. However, in the matter of equipment we must bow to the superiority of Carlisle, that 'nodal town,' for Mr. Rae speaks of a large gymnasium equipped with showers, a fully equipped stage with a 'suit of changing rooms,' and silent cine-projector, dark room with enlarging equipment, and an expensive tape-recorder. Mr. Rae has obviously fitted in well at his new school, having already taken over the School Scout Troop and Cross-Country.

HOUSE NOTES

Wednesbury

Two competitions have ended since the Summer Term Magazine was printed and must be included in this issue. They are the Inter-House Swimming and Junior Cricket Competitions.

Of the two remaining Junior House Cricket matches which ended last term, both were won and so the Juniors stayed off disgrace after losing the first two.

In the Swimming Sports, the House did better than last year and gained an equal second place with Willenhall House with 43 points. This was, however, far below the fine performance of Darlaston House which scored 120 points, but nevertheless the effort was still good. Taylor, D., Rotton and Turner all won events and indeed Turner's fine performance of three wins gained for him the Championship of the Junior Section.
As we retained the Senior and Junior Chess Cups, we were able to win the B.C.F. Cup and Badger's fine result at Advanced level G.C.E. earned him the Science Prize. As a result of these successes we have been awarded the A. G. B. Owen Cup, which is awarded to the house holding the most cups.

The results of the Inter-House Football matches this term have been moderately good. The Seniors have played two matches. They beat Willenhall (5—2) and drew with Wood Green House (1—1) while the Juniors beat Tipton House in their only match to date.

Chess has always been one of our strong features and Bishop, Oakley, O'Neill and Chambers are taking part in the School Competition with a good deal of success.

Watkins has been chosen as Senior and Chambers as Junior House Captain of the teams which will compete for the Inter-House Chess Cup.

A number of boys in the House have gained places in the School Cross-Country Running Team, notably, Fry, Allan and Walker.

The House now has some good boys to take part in nearly all School activities and I hope every member will try to take part in all of them to the best of his ability. The work of one or two energetic boys is not enough. With some luck, Wednesbury House will be in the top half of all competitions next year if all members pull their weight.

D. G. BRYAN, House Captain.

Willenhall

On the football field we are missing the players who left in July, the Seniors having lost 2—5 and 2—8 to Wednesbury and Darlaston respectively. However, the Juniors have made a good start by beating Darlaston 4—0.

Last term we kept the „booby“ prize for Senior Cricketer but came second in the Junior Championship.

Our Senior Chess Captain is doing very well in the School Chess Championships and this promises well for the House Championships.

I am pleased to report that we won the Rotary Shield last year and I hope that we shall keep it during the present year.

M. WOOD, House Captain.

Wood Green

A House meeting was held at the beginning of term and the following officers were elected:

- Football Captain: R. M. Garbett
- Cross-Country Captain: G. Wood
- Chess Captain: M. A. Smith
- Junior Captain: R. Barton

The football season has started badly for both Senior and Junior teams. The Senior team has only gained one point from two games.

The first match we lost to Darlaston 8—2, owing to the forwards wasting their chances and the insufficient marking of the defence. Wood Green, having no regular first team players, could not control the first team power of Darlaston.

In the next match we drew 1—1 with Wednesbury. This time hard luck coupled with poor finishing lost us a chance of both points. Wednesbury scored from a breakaway, but after this they were kept in their own half. At one stage in the second half even our goalkeeper was on the half-way line.

R. M. Garbett and B. Southall are the stalwarts of our defence, whilst D. Pace is the best forward.

Our Junior team is worse than the Seniors; they have lost all their matches. Their failure can be attributed mainly to the team not working together but relying on R. Barton, R. J. Garbett and R. Stevenson.

There is nothing to report in the field of chess as neither the Senior nor Junior Competitions has commenced.

During the last school year we have won the Work Cup for the second year running.

I feel that our teams would do a lot better if they were given more support from the non-playing members of the House.

As I am leaving at the end of this term I wish Wood Green the best of luck for the future.

M. J. SPRAGGS, House Captain.

Darlaston

Since the Magazine last went to press, we have again won the Senior Cricket Competition, the team being well led by Lowndes, who was again outstanding.
As was expected, we easily retained the Swimming Championship, with Baker once more winning the Individual Championship.

The Football Competition is now well under way. The Senior XI has played two matches to date, both resulting in victories. We defeated Wood Green, the reigning champions 8–2, and by the same margin we defeated Willenhall. So we have a fairly good chance to win the competition once again.

Unfortunately, the situation is not nearly so bright in the Junior Section. They have played two matches, winning one and losing one: v. Wood Green 5–0, and v. Willenhall 0–4. The team relies too much on three or four players and until this changes we cannot hope for much success.

I hope that when the Chess Competition begins we shall improve on our recent performances.

I should like to take this opportunity to welcome all newcomers to Darlaston House. Over the past two or three years, the Juniors have been our weakness, so I hope that they will do their best to alter this. All of them can do something. Hard work, and good behaviour are just as important as sport.

D. J. CAMP, House Captain.

Tipton

First of all I would like to welcome all new members to Tipton House. The House has in the past had a particularly strong Junior section. I hope that the first-formers will do their utmost to maintain this healthy position.

Tipton finished second in the Senior Cricket Championship. The two matches not recorded last term were against Wood Green and Willenhall. The former was drawn, Tipton making 80 for 3 wickets in reply to Wood Green's 92; and the latter was won by 2 wickets. Our final record was—won one, lost one, and drawn two. The brunt of the work was borne by Fortnam, the School Captain, Gadd, and Pooler, but the high proportion of Juniors in the team augurs well for the future. Stinchcombe and Langford were outstanding for the Junior team, which won the Championship.

Once more swimming proved a blot on our copy-book. We finished last as usual. It is remarkable and disgraceful that all our points apart from relay races were gained by two boys, Hewitt winning six of these. I urge all members to practise next year in order to improve this position.

No games have yet been played in the House Football Championship, but since six of the present School team are members of Tipton House, we should do well. We did not retain the Rotary Shield, awarded for good citizenship; let us do our best to recover this next year.

This term we say good-bye to Fortnam and Gadd. Both of these have been towers of strength in the past, and will be sorely missed. On behalf of the House I wish them luck in their future careers.

J. B. PENIKET, House Captain.

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OUR AGONY COLUMN

We have never failed to be impressed—or, more accurately, depressed—by those citizens who, with the apparent object of surfacing their undeserving compatriots ad nauseam with a space of unsolicited opinion and information, bombard the long-suffering editors of our national and provincial newspapers with sporadic—and for the most part senselessly erratic—salvoes of epistolatory lead.

Why, we have often wondered, should the country at large be expected to sit up and take notice because T. Phied (Miss) marvels that in our twentieth-century, freedom-loving democracy whips are still used to guide and good parliamentary bees in those delightful divisional round-ups of wild and woolly Westminster; or why should we be hushed in wonder when one Lou Nattique hurl's his defiance into the teeth of the ornithological world merely because he has succeeded in breeding a cross-eyed canary which can whistle 'Annie Laurie' in a minor key without falling off its perch.

How many times have we wished that Gilbert’s humane Mikado had thought of letting the window panes of railway carriages embrace the correspondence columns of the local press, and that these scribblers could be condemned to festoon the bumpers of British Railways, entrained for some Sahara-on-Sea where they could not only serve (and write!) an unending sentence amid a wilderness of wrinkles and what-the-butler-saw, but also bring new blood to that most simple species of genus Grubaneus—the common sand-scribe.

It was, therefore, not without a certain apprehension that we approached an effort which appeared recently in a local newspaper above the collective signature of those who elsewhere in the document styled themselves as “the more ancient members of this establishment.”

Sticking strictly to the rules of the game, we entered, Theslefs-like, at the top left-hand corner of this literary labyrinth, hacked our way through sinuous tentacles of non-sequitur, dashed hither and thither banging our head against blind-alley brick walls in a maze of unintelligible paragraphs, and eventually, more by luck than good judgment since we had found no Ariadne-thread of argument to guide us, staggered out into the daylight of deliverance (our senses reeling with verbal vertigo, but having encountered no Minotaur of meaning with whom to agree or disagree), and found ourselves forced to glance disparagingly at the title to find what it had all been about. Never before have we been able quite so keenly to appreciate the feelings of the very low-level G.C.E. candidate confronted, in a foreign language paper, with a piece of translation the title of which is in English!

Thinking that the subject matter must surely contain some ‘sixth’ sense—for why, otherwise, would the industrious members of our senior form waste, in writing to the Press, valuable time which they know only too well how to spend more profitably—we proceeded from the comparative to the superlative and consulted the most ancient members of this establishment: those magisterial monoliths who are, in fact, so ancient that, like their counterparts of Stonehenge, they spend the greater part of their time in a state of semi-supernatural: but even the superlative had little positive help to offer in solving this more than comparatively abstruse verbal problem.

The Chaldean of Chemistry in an energetic effort to exorcize this Beezlebub of blather treated us to manual incantations of amazing dexterity, but even the open sesame of ‘Windows!’ could let in no light on the matter. The magician of Mathematics meditatively massaged his chin with right regal rotarian rhythm, managed to get as far as “Well, well, the er... gentlemen,” but was then ruled as out of order as his digestion on the grounds that his ideas were as archaically bourgeois as his vocabulary; while the contribution from the rest of the soothsayers not only failed to reveal any sooth, but was, for the most part, unprintable.

Finally, the Daniel of the English Department was called to account for a vocabulary for which, it was felt, he must be held largely responsible; but although he was sufficiently erudite to “read the writing,” he had to confess himself stumped when it came to “making known the interpretation thereof.”

Stumped! Of course!! Over the weed-choked fields of time the mouldering marathon mind painfully re-ploids its course back to those pleasantly primeval—and prime evil!—days when we were wont to wipe away the hours of irksome instruction by indulging in an agreeable though, it must be admitted, not very edifying
pastime known as “Dab Cricket.” The random stab of a pencil point on an agreed hieroglyphic decided whether a player was caught, bowled, retired hurt, or hit a ‘six’, and produced Waterloos far more interesting and exciting than any won at Eton, Trent Bridge, Lords—or even in the shadow of the score-box on the playing fields of Wednesbury. We have known an occasion on which the wicket-keeper bowled out the entire opposition in consecutive overs without taking his gloves off; another on which an eminent bowler of international fame failed to complete a single over because (we were using a History book at the time) the pencil “would keep falling on the symbol which stood for ‘wide’;” while there was one never to be forgotten day when the First Form 2nd XI, of which we were then a disdained member, defeated the Australian Touring Team (they must surely have been abominable in those days) by an innings and several thousand runs.

Yes, on profound reflection, our guess is that senes septi can have been having a game with us, and we suggest that the title of their effort could have been, more aptly, “Dab Cricket with a Dictionary.” However, they have given ample evidence of distinct capabilities in art scribendi, and we beg them to indulge, without delay, an ultimatum protest to the Editor of this periodical urging him most strongly—though, we suggest, in terms sufficiently simple to be intelligible—that we be expressively suppressed. “Tis a consummation devoutly to be wished,” doubtless, by all—and not by any means least by us ourselves. We have too long sweated under, and groaned over, the fantastical fardels of scholastic fable pass which our colleagues termly thrust upon us.

We have always admired the marked (red Biro) industry and endless verbal energy which our worthy colleague manifests in the teaching of Chemistry. We have always held him up (though admittedly with difficulty) as the supremely magnificent embodiment of all the pedagogic virtues, and have never doubted that when it should come to his “turning the gas off for the last time,” if we may so express ourselves, he would exchange his Persilled but perforated robe of office for one without blemish of acid-stain or hole. It was then, as may well be imagined, a severe blow to realise that in order to gain his filthy ends and excellent results he had descended to common bribery and corruption—as evidenced in his report of the boy who (what do you think!) after working with a suspension of a solid in a liquid claimed to have had a “super-pension.” We are, however, happy to think that this lack of virtue was its own lack of reward since the final expression employed by the boy was “suppression.”

One budding chemist shows pleasing breadth of culture, though distressing scientific inaccuracy, by saying that the blast is supplied to a furnace through the Tuileries. His learned mentor informs us that “actually,” we quote, “it enters through the tuyeres” (only he is sufficiently insurgent to omit the accent). Also, of course, as our dictionary informs us, air can enter by a TUYERE, TUYERE, TWIER or TWIRE—thereby complicating the issue for all except crossword composers who can, no doubt, derive some evil joy and inspiration from the fact.

Among the precautions to be taken in performing a certain experiment, we read that “we have to keep cool because of the currents in the air.” This, of course, might also be said by our troops in the Eastern Mediterranean, except that, unhappily, they may have to encounter, in addition, missiles much more dangerous and much less appetising.

The boy who claims to have used “some apparatus” for carrying out an experiment was obviously referring to the delicate feat of evaporating the hearts of parsimonious passers-by sufficiently to obtain a precipitation of pence during the season immediately preceding Guy Fawkes’ Night.

In a laudable effort to whiten the scientific sepulchre, the disciple speaks of “the theories and researches of a group of men called “scientists.” Not a bad attempt to dress the smell of vile odour in the sheepskin of can de Cologne, but it doesn’t fool us. Stinks is stinks, and scent is scent—and, as far as we are concerned, never the twain shall be synonymous.

We are, of course, surprised—or should be—to be informed that Linde, in developing his process for the liquefaction of air, “based his methods on some experiments of Calvini.” By a strange coincidence we know of at least one other savant who does much the same thing, and we wonder if, by any chance, this is yet another case of History repeating itself, and if our informant was thus predestined to confuse the first and second bit of cake.

“Air,” we are told, “is forced through the apparatus with an aspirator.” Anno domini is making us sadly short of puffs, and we can only get as far as the initial letter with the observation that apparatus is, perhaps, an odd collection of bits and pieces of material in which strange things happen—particularly, it would appear, in Chemistry!

We are tempted to dissolve into self-pity over the bemitted bi-lingual boy who claims that “nottre chien est pur.” However, he helps us to appreciate a little more sympathetically the feelings of the proud owner who, looking lovingly at his shockingly dirty and obviously yapping mongrel, remarks, “You know—he’s almost human!” En passant we may add that latterly we have noticed an increasing number of adolescents forsaking the coiffures of the Old English Sheep-dog or Yorkshire Terrier for the more fashionable Poodle Cut.
In his description of a certain region, a junior geographer informs us that "the lager trees are made into planks"; an eminently suitable material, obviously, for panelling the walls of the bar-parlours in public houses. We regret to have to inform the understandably immense number of prospective tourists and emigrants to this land of distinct promise—one, it appears, flowing with a sort of alcoholic milk and honey—that, unfortunately, we have no idea of its exact location. Our guess, however, is that it may be a right (politically) little, tight (on a Saturday night) little island like our own.

From a local newspaper: — "Mr. Kipping, a chess expert, has been headmaster of Wednesbury Boys' High School since it was opened in September, 1924.

"A new road safety booklet is being prepared for publication in Wednesbury in Spring 1957."

At first sight it is not easy to see a connection between these two observations, but have we, in fact, stumbled upon a hitherto-unsuspected side of the Headmaster's many activities? Can it be that Ford and Singer, of blessed memory, have been in the habit of leaving their vehicular Valhalla to walk Wood Green in the guise of spectrally special secret police cars? It is refreshing to think of the erring road-hog's juggernaut being stalled to immobility by the clarion command, "DON'T RUN!" Any of our opulent colleagues contemplating mad motoring holidays in the West of England had better look out!

Headlines hand in hand on a news placard: — "New Warning from Moscow:" "D—n—D—rs says 'Leave me alone.'" That's the stuff to give 'em! There's one star at least who isn't going to become a satellite! We wager that if ever she gets dragged into the constellation of the Great Bear she'll make the comets and meteors fly around in no uncertain manner.

We were interested to hear recently of a school which had invested in a barge—to be used, we understand, as a sort of floating classroom. This appears to open up some excellent possibilities. How much more satisfying to be able to tell some little dead-eye to "walk the plank" instead of merely to "go outside!" How much more melodic to be piped aboard in true naval fashion instead of hearing, vaguely, something in the distance which sounds suspiciously like "Eeezer!" One obviously important item of equipment which springs immediately to mind is, of course, a ship's cat with many tails as it should have lives.

In conclusion, we would ask our generous public to shed a tear for the small dim-wit, who, on being sent by his mother to the local dairy for a carton of whipping (double) cream, inquired hopefully if it was any good for external application.
After customs formalities, we bade our train to take us across France during the night—and what accommodation the S.N.C.F. had provided for us! A saloon coach intended seemingly for Paris, preceded us. The night passed slowly for those of us in the "jail," but Basle was reached in time for breakfast. After the meal, some of us went with Mr. Couham to see the Rhine, arriving back through the station just in time to catch the train for Zurich. Here, we changed trains to Rorschach (on the Lake itself), and finally we travelled on the picturesque rack railway up to Heiden itself, 2,600 feet above sea level.

We were allocated rooms in the Hotel Fröhlich, which was a very pleasant hotel whose staff always seemed to be smiling, and the following morning we experienced our first Continental breakfast in comfort. This consisted, as did every breakfast, of rolls, butter, jam, and coffee, and it was a refreshing change from the English breakfast.

Sunday was occupied by two visits to the "Schwimmbad und Sonnenbad", the local open-air swimming pool surrounded by grass lawns for sunbathing. The sun did not look very strong, but the sunbathers among us sorely regretted not covering themselves in sun-lotion, there being a succession of burnt backs! The swimming pool was patronized fairly frequently by our number; this might have been due to the interest shown by some members of the present fifth form towards two Swiss Misses: I will say no more.

The highlight of Monday was the half-day coach trip to the Principality of Liechtenstein. On the way, we had some splendid views of the valley of the Rhine above Lake Constance, the driver of the coach pointing out in fair English the points of interest to be seen. After crossing the Rhine, we entered Liechtenstein, and stopped at the capital, Vaduz. Most of us went with Messrs. Smith and Couham to see the Castle, but unfortunately we found it closed. On the return journey, the driver tried to take us back through Austrian territory, but the authorities would not let us through the frontier as we had not all got our passports. The effect of the strange food (and perhaps, may be said, cider) was felt by one of the party, he being sick before reaching Heiden!

Tuesday was a day with nothing officially on the programme, and most of us went walking. I, together with some others, set out to walk to the lakeside, but started out the wrong way, and eventually reached one of the stations on the rack railway. There, determined to reach the Lake, we tried to buy tickets on the train to Rorschach, only to find that the booking clerk spoke only German, and we could not make him understand what we wanted. All ended well when the clerk telephoned someone to act as interpreter, and as we spoke French (?), he interpreted it into German.

The whole of Wednesday was occupied by the trip to the Rhine Falls a Schaffhausen. The coach followed the beautiful Rhine Valley from the Lake to the Falls, stopping en route at the old town of Stein where many people took photographs. The Falls themselves are superb; the waters of the Rhine, about 100 yards across, fall some 70 feet in a raging torrent. A wonderful view could be obtained as there was a ferry available from the side of the river out to an isolated rock in the middle of the Falls. On returning to Heiden, a few of us decided to go for a late evening walk; the result was a humorous amble nowhere in particular. At one point, we passed a notice which in the dark was translated by one learned German scholar to read "Danger—Minefield." It was subsequently found to be a signpost!

On Thursday, we did fulfil our wish to walk to Lake Constance. A dozen or so boys set out, and after going cross-country, via orchards, fields, etc., we reached the town. Then came the harder part—climbing back uphill. Everyone finished the course, but some were rather late for lunch, and suffered the scoldings of Mr. Couham. It was rough for one day, for me anyway.

Friday saw our last visit to the swimming pool, Mr. Smith, as previously, being rather disinclined to face the water until forced by the acid comments being passed. In the afternoon, there was a trip to Trogen and St. Gallen. It was pouring with rain at Trogen, so we went straight on to St. Gallen, where a number of people (those who had not spent all their money previously) went shopping. In one shop, I met a woman who spoke English very well, and said she had recently been there for a time. There was also a visit to the Library there, and we spent some time translating the Latin inscriptions to Biblical paintings hung in the room—of course with the able help of Mr. Couham. When we got back, we regrettfully began to pack, and the following morning, after saying goodbye to our host, we started the journey home.

A few minor points remain. The weather was very pleasant, except for the last two days, when it rained somewhat. The meals were for the most part well liked by the party, although a little different from the English counterparts. One day, the hotel even served us with chips, which were every bit as good as those obtainable here. Other "incidents" were the bedroom parties at night, the dull thuds heard in various rooms at night (slightly reminiscent of pillow-fights), and the excitement caused by news from home of Laker's Test Match feats.

The journey home was much the same as that when outward bound. We stopped for six hours at Zurich, and were taken on a conducted tour of the city by an admirable guide. We caught the train back to Basle, and spent the night travelling across
France in better accommodation than we had for the opposite direction. The Channel once more proved to be calm, and we set foot on English soil safe and sound again. The train journeys across England were carried out without incident, and it was a very tired but happy party which was met at Wolverhampton by an army of parents, all eager to hear the full story.

In conclusion, I should like to express the party’s thanks to Messrs. Coatham and Smith for arranging and conducting the Tour so well, and also to the School Travel Service, without whose knowledge and guidance the Tour could not have been carried out at all.

P. GREATEREN.

FOOTBALL SEASON, 1956-57

The 1st XI players are to be congratulated on their unbeaten record this term and on winning again the Caddick Cup.

A full review of the season’s football will be given in the next issue of the Magazine.

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LAWN TENNIS

Singles Champion: A. Fortnam
Doubles Champions: A. Fortnam and B. Gray

Despite the traditional English Summer, the tournaments were completed to schedule, apart from the necessity to have a week’s extension for the playing of one round. The season revealed some improvement in the general standard of play, compared with the last three or four years, but there is still a need for most boys to concentrate more on improving their service, which is too often a handicap, instead of the tremendous advantage that it should be—it was significant that in the Finals, when one can reasonably expect to see the best players, more games went against the service than with it.

In the Singles, Fortnam, who was defending the title he had first won in 1955, had an easy passage to the Final, which he reached with the loss of only six games. Gray reached the Semi-Final with the loss of only one game (in the Fourth Round), but then had to fight hard to gain a place in the final by defeating Bates 6-3, 10-12, 6-2. The Final was an interesting match, with some good play by both contestants, fortunes fluctuating in a way that made it all the more exciting. Gray was rather slow to settle down, but was well on top in the second set. In the last set, however, Fortnam, playing better than at any time previously, soon went ahead, and ultimately emerged a worthy winner by 6-3, 3-6, 6-2.

The Doubles Final suffered by comparison with the Singles, but was still of a much higher standard than that of 1955. Neither Fortnam and Gray nor C. Baker and A. Bates had been really extended before the Final, but then the former pair were much too good for their Fifth Form opponents, who made far too many mistakes at critical moments, particularly when serving. Fortnam and Gray won in straight sets by 6-2, 6-4.

As in former years, the Headmaster kindly presented prizes to the winners and runners-up in both events.

Towards the end of the Summer Term, at the Headmaster’s request, an invitation tournament was arranged for selected Fourth Form boys who had shown promise during the term, a racket being the prize for the winner. Eight of the best players in the two forms were chosen to compete, the honour of being selected falling upon Bayliss, B. Evans, R. Jones and Sawbridge from IVa, and upon Pooler, Rickhuss, Walker and Winsper from IVm. In the Final of this event, Pooler had little difficulty in beating Evans in straight sets, but it was in the Semi-Finals that the best Lawn Tennis was seen, when Evans had just beaten Winsper in a prolonged match, and Pooler had had to go all out to beat Sawbridge. This tournament confirmed what had been evident earlier in the term, that there was more keenness and promise among those beginning to play in the Fourth Forms than for some time past. It is worth while noting that such players as M. Shaffery (now well known as a county player) and R. Algar (now winning international tournaments on the other side of the Atlantic) looked no better than some of these when they were Fourth Formers—in fact, Algar never even won our School Championship while with us.

K.H.
"WODEN" CROSSWORD No. 21 by A.D.L.

A book prize is offered for the first correct solution.

ACROSS
1. The sailor's flight shows the fellow has a way with him (12).
8. In confusion he might appear to propose but it is certainly not his intention (7).
9. The devil and the Dean clash (7).
11. Fatty shows a poised disposition (7).
12. These are obviously said (7).
13. A pair of clean ones may be shown by the fleet (5).
14. Shattered by a show of bad temper—that's what being concerned with other people's business might mean (9).
15. Ten braves appear to be having a look round (9).
16. Authorised agents of Bacchus (9).
19. How the Cockney exclaimed in front of the doughboy, the dog! (5).
21. Pulled a net over the bed (7).
23. An excursion for Pickford finishing somewhere in Kennington (7).
24. If we keep our heads down they are less likely to get under the blade (7).
25. The trailer only contains a flap (7).
26. There were originally thirteen, but now, according to the stars, there are forty-eight (6, 6).

DOWN
1. To make a turnover is a matter of concern for the school outfitter (7).
2. Mother joins the Caledonians—they're supposed to bring luck (7).
3. A large bee, maybe, but obviously having no sting (9).
4. I do it like a fool (5).
5. He shows an enclosure going up above the air, yet his element is the sea (7).
6. What could make us forget the broken men in Asia? (7).
7. An occasion for gladiatorial butchery (5, 7).
10. The right place for a Pacific holiday between March 22nd and April 25th? (6, 6).
15. Ten braves appear to be having a look round (9).
17. The V sign (7).
18. A caretaker can hardly be guilty of this (7).
19. Arrived with a multitude where Arthur held court (7).
20. Respects in which there is little difference in reverse (7).
22. Spoon-fed—just what the doctor ordered (5).

The prize for solving Woden Crossword No. 20 was awarded to T. G. Griffiths.
CROSS-COUNTRY RUNNING
Captain: J. B. Severn
Vice-Captain and Secretary: J. B. Penket

First of all I should like, on behalf of the cross-country team, to bid a somewhat belated farewell to Mr. Rae. He was responsible for starting cross-country activities in the School, and deserves our gratitude for this. We are now continuing in charge of Mr. Hunt, and hope to improve on our past record. Our chief difficulty has been finding opponents; only one race has been held. This was against West Bromwich Grammar School over their interesting course on November 24th. It was unfortunate that we were able to field almost our strongest team, whilst West Bromwich Grammar School had a weakened one. The result was that our runners gained nine of the first ten places. Our positions were: 1st, Severn, Wood G. and Penket; 5th, Fownes; 6th, Gray; 7th, Walker; 8th, Allan; 9th, Titch; 10th, Sawbridge. The excellent packing of our team was partly due to the unseelish action of Severn in dropping back to encourage our runners. He did this, went off the course three times, and yet still managed to win easily. Had it not been for his habit of exploring paths not on the course he would have undoubtedly broken the course record. A return match has been arranged over the same course on December 12th, and we are hoping for a junior fixture to reward our keen under-fifteens.

The School has entered again for the Midlands Schools Championship at Rugeley in March. We hope to improve considerably on last year's position, fourteenth.

J.B.P.

CHESS

This season seems to offer the proverbial opportunity for our teams to make "a clean sweep."

Our strongest opponents in the past have been Wolverhampton Grammar School. Both seniors and juniors have beaten them once this term. The other four matches played have been won fairly easily, usually by weakened (but not weak) teams. Sincere thanks to the team members for their keen support, particularly to the sixth formers, Gray and Smith, who have captained our teams. The latter is proving a very good secretary.

The School Senior Championship is well under way, and, although Marsh (V.) is once again almost certain to take it, it is very encouraging to see the fourth formers giving him such good opposition. He lost a game to Bishop (he has not lost a game in School matches for years) and he had to concede two draws to Conolly.

Unfortunately, there are very few really promising players in this year's third forms at present, but the second forms seem very keen and well advanced.

Our special thanks are again due to those volunteers (usually second formers) who stay to chess meetings and matches to look after tea. This term they have been very careful to leave the crockery clean and the kitchen tidy.

I am quite sure that when, at the end of this term, the Headmaster comes to the end of his long service for the School, he will be able to feel proud of the standard of play here at the point of his departure. My own limited experience would lead me to think that the standard of play now is at least as good as it has ever been.

END-GAMES

- White to play—Draw
- White to play and win

It should be known that a rook's pawn or a bishop's pawn on the 7th rank can draw against a queen if his own king is near and opponent's king is distant. Why a bishop's pawn? Because with Queen at Kt.3 and King at Kt.5 the king plays to R8 and stalemate results if pawn is captured. In the first positions above the pawn is only on 6th rank but the white king obstructs the queen from giving the checks (or pins) she requires and a move cannot be gained to bring the king nearer.
Coming now to the second position, a queen will win against a rook except in a few special cases. You drive the rook away from his king and win it with a check.

Here the play is very subtle and requires several moves. Try to solve it before reading further.


MUSIC REPORT

The departure of Mr. Rae from the School last term left us with a considerable problem, for to rehearse the Choir for Saturday morning anthems and the Old Wodens' Concert takes a good many hours each week and I only visit the School on Thursdays. That we have been able to continue in the tradition established by my predecessor is very largely due to the untiring efforts of Mr. Davis who has taken three sectional and one full practice every week and we owe him a large debt of gratitude for all the fine work he has done.

The Choir has shown great loyalty and perseverance and this was fully rewarded at the Old Wodens' Concert given on 16th November when it earned high praise for the important part which it played. The performance compared favourably with that of any school choir I have heard in Staffordshire and provided that this effort can be maintained I am sure we can forecast a bright future for the choral music of the School.

With regard to the anthems sung on Saturday mornings we would like to thank and congratulate Garbett, the Head Prefect (bass); Judson and Poole (tenors); Bayliss and Warner (altos); and Boughton, Griffiths, Frecce, Speed and Whitehouse (trebles). From comments received it is quite safe to conclude that the School has greatly appreciated their singing.

We owe an even greater measure of gratitude to our accompanist, Camp, who throughout the whole term has attended every practice, sectional or otherwise, and given his loyal support in a manner and spirit which leaves nothing further to be desired.

The delivery of twelve violins and three 'cellos to the School was greeted by many incredulous and astonished faces. However, 'cello lessons are already under way and every Thursday afternoon Boughton, T. Davis, Field and Jones, all of IA, are banished from the main building to make their strange noises in less inhabited parts. It is hoped to begin violin classes next term and within a year we should have the basis of a school orchestra. This naturally takes a long time to build up, for while most people can sing a recognisable succession of notes it is a very different matter when it comes to producing them on a stringed instrument. Nevertheless, it is an encouraging thought that by the time the present First Formers reach the Sixth Form we will be able to give a combined performance with Choir and Orchestra.

B.S.

MUSIC SOCIETY

Chairman: Mr. J. G. D. Derman
Secretary: J. B. Penkot. Treasurer: C. M. Taylor

This term the Music Society has had to contend with not a little misfortune. Choir practices necessitated the change of time of meeting first from Thursday to Friday, and then to Monday. Because of games, meetings have had to be held in the lunch-hour, and frequently the finish of the work has had to be omitted due to lack of time. Another difficulty was met concerning record-reproducing apparatus. This School is one of few in the district not possessing a machine for playing long-playing records. Since most of the records owned by boys in the School are of this type, the Society has had to rely on the good nature of one or two boys who are willing to carry their portable record-players to School when necessary. The Society is grateful in particular to Thomas Vm, in this connection.

As is the policy of the Music Society, the programmes presented have been varied in content. An attempt has been made to avoid presentations of works that have been heard every year with monotonous regularity; a whole term has passed without the performance of a single Beethoven symphony.

One regrettable feature of this term's meetings has been the almost complete monopolisation of programmes by the Sixth form. The only programmes not presented by Sixth formers were a Tchaikowsky programme by Taylor (Vm) and an unusual programme by Mr. Hopkins entitled "Modern Trends in the Cantata." One of the most enjoyable meetings was the presentation in a very
interesting way of Beethoven's Violin Concerto by Whistance. The operatic programme presented by Taylor (VI) the following week was also interesting, in its way. This way, however, is one not to be imitated by future speakers.

The "appeal to the masses" made every term was this term in the hands of Gray, who presented a programme by Ted Heath and his Music. This programme "converted" no one, but proved enjoyable to the few who enjoy this type of music. An entirely different programme was presented the following week by Barrett, consisting of Mozart's "Jupiter" symphony and Eine Kleine Nacht Musik. Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition" was presented by the secretary, principally because we liked the decoration on the jacket of the record.

Fortnam once more supported the Society in a material way, presenting Dvorak's 4th Symphony and Brahms's 4th Symphony. These works were heard a few days later by parties who attended two concerts at the Civic Hall, Wolverhampton by the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra in October, and by the Hallé Orchestra in November. By the time these notes appear a party should have attended a concert by the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, also at Wolverhampton.

**PUZZLE CORNER**

1. The local wag tried to pull the village idiot's leg by asking the simple question, "What day of the week is it?" The reply was, "When the day after tomorrow is yesterday, today will be as far from Sunday as today was from Sunday when the day before yesterday was tomorrow." What day was it?

2. Stopping at the crossroads, a motorist hoped to find the direction he wished to take shown on the road sign. This, however, had been pulled up and thrown into the ditch. How did the motorist find his way?

3. A tramp found a bottle of wine but had no corkscrew. How did he manage to drink the wine without breaking the bottle or making a hole in the cork?

4. A man made his will while his wife was expecting a child. The will left one-third of the estate to his wife, if the child should be a son, and the remaining two-thirds to the son. If, however, the child should be a daughter, the wife was to receive two-thirds and the daughter one-third. The man died before the birth which turned out to be a son and a daughter. How should the estate be shared keeping to the spirit of the will?

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**SOLUTIONS TO LAST SET**

1. Your question should have been: "If I ask your friend to point to the safe door, which one will he point to?" In this case both the truth teller and liar will point to the unsafe door.

2. The triplet, Fred, was outside.

3. 1 shot per minute is 16 shots in 15 minutes.

4. \((x + 1)^2 - x^2 = 2x + 1 = x + (x + 1)\).

5. 275 or 396.

6. The labelled price would be 1s. 6d. but you would give a two shilling piece and a shilling.

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**HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

President: Mr. J. G. Denman.
Treasurer: Mr. J. F. Ede. Secretary: J. T. Shaw.

With the passing of my illustrious predecessor to a higher rung of his educational ladder, I was precipitated into my present position at the Society's Annual General Meeting when the Staff Representatives of our elite band were returned to their former offices. However, our sole founder member still in the Society once again failed to become an officer. A maximum number of fifth-form members were elected and it is pleasing to note that there was a surplus of those wishing to join.

The first meeting of the term saw the return of the speaker at last year's first meeting, A. Fortnam, who gave a paper entitled "The History of the English Novel." From Fortnam's remarks one infers that James Joyce and company have brought us to a backwater of English novel writing.

A great audience turned up at the next meeting. Mr. Hopkins was to address us on "The Alchemists," and this eagerly-awaited meeting lived up to all our hopes.

Our last meeting before going to press was a very poorly attended one. Wilcox gave a talk on "Titus Oates and the Popish Plots." This was quite an interesting talk and one can only suggest it was the subject, probably unheard of by fifth-form members, which kept so many of them away.
There are two more meetings yet to come. One on December 3rd when Wood G. is due to give a paper, and for the last meeting this term, Badger, a "new" old boy is returning to tell us something of "The History of Ancient Persia."

There is every possibility that once again we shall be treated to another visit from Mr. Tyson next term, and if this should be so, I feel sure he will get a warm welcome from the Society.

J. T. SHAW (Secretary).

THE HISTORY SOCIETY'S ANNUAL SUMMER EXCURSION

This year's Summer Excursion was to the cities of Bath and Wells in the county of Somerset.

The outing started at the early hour of 7 o'clock and finished at the late hour of eleven, and although it covered nearly the whole of the day, the outing could not hope to contain every item of interest in the two cities.

Bath offered for our viewing its Perpendicular Abbey, Roman Baths (Aqua Sulis), Circus and Royal Crescent, the circus being a focus of roads and not a collection of performing animals, while Wells exhibited its Cathedral (a mixture of Early English and Decorated Work) and examples of Georgian houses.

The weather, of which we had been told to beware, was generous and rain only fell when the members were on the coach, allowing the sun to shine, if not too brilliantly, during visits to the Cathedral and Abbey. A conducted tour was arranged for the latter and the guide, after being very informative about the Abbey, took the members on a tour of the Baths about which he expressed many controversial views.

Dinner, which was eaten in a pleasant riverside park in Bath, and tea, which was obtained at a café in one of Wells' main streets, were both fully appreciated by the members of the Society, many of whom expressed relief at being able to sit down and drink fine, strong tea after exhausting tours.

Reluctant as they were to leave Wells, and desirous of a visit to the neighbouring Wookey Hole Cave, although it was getting late, the members, together with Old Boys Hughes and Norwood and Masters Ede and Dennan, set off on a homeward journey, which was as enjoyable as the rest of the outing and was only interrupted for a few moments at Tewkesbury for light refreshments.

STAMP CLUB

President: Mr. Hopkins. Treasurer: Mr. Davis.
Secretary: G. Hollyhead. Assistant Sec.: M. Walker

So far this term there have been only two meetings, though we are hoping to have another one before the end of the term.

The first meeting was the Annual General Meeting, when Officers and Committee were elected, and a short talk was given.

At the other meeting there was a talk and display by Mrs. G. A. Barker, of Wolverhampton. This dealt in a most interesting manner with the Stamps of Switzerland (excluding the annual Pro Joventute issues), and was thoroughly enjoyed by all present.

Subsequent meetings have failed to materialise as a result of four people all being unable to prepare displays for us at the present time, though in each case we can look forward to a future one, and three of our own members have also promised displays early next term.

This term marks the end of the Headmaster's stay at the School, and, on behalf of the Stamp Club, I should like to thank him for his consistent patronage of the Stamp Club through most of its history, and further for his parting gift to us of books for the Stamp Club Library. We also remember that he has more than once displayed some interesting covers that he has collected in connection with his Chess correspondence, as well as contributing most generously to distributions of stamps at meetings. For this we are indeed grateful. We wish him every happiness in his retirement.

G. HOLLYHEAD (Secretary).

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

When I made my last contribution to the Magazine, I did not anticipate having to write any further reports. I had fully made up my mind to resigning from the position of secretary of the Association, but at the Annual General Meeting I had no choice in the matter but to agree to carry on for a further twelve months.

At the time of writing the committee has no definite plans for the arrangements of any meetings for the forthcoming season. This is due mainly to the change of Headship in the School, for until
we have made the acquaintance of the new Headmaster, Mr. Witcombe, and know his feelings and desires regarding the Parents' Association, we feel it wise to hold any arrangements in abeyance.

I am glad to report that there was a good attendance at the Annual General Meeting and confidence of the parents in the retiring officials was such that they were elected en bloc. Our only regret is that Mr. P. R. Hatcher, the second master, who has taken such an active part in the work of the Association, feels under the circumstances that he must retire from the committee. I am sure all parents will join with me in expressing our very sincere thanks for all he has done. In a large measure his co-operation has done much to build up the strength of the Association.

We would also like to thank the retiring Headmaster, Mr. Kipping, for his interest and we wish him long life and good health in his retirement.

A. S. Maddox (Hon. Secretary).

WORKS VISITS

There are only two Works Visits to report at the moment, as none were outstanding from the Summer Term, and the first one of the present term (Guy Motors) has had to be postponed. One to the Walsall Lithographic Company remains, and will be reported in our next issue.

K.H.

Swan Village Gas Works.

On arrival we were relieved of our satchels, and divided into groups of ten.

We were told that the big water-sealed gas-holder held 5,000,000 cubic feet of gas and the smaller one 4,000,000 cubic feet. There was also a 3,000,000 cubic feet gas-holder, one of few in use that are pneumatically sealed with a great piston.

The coal is taken by an electrically operated conveyor-belt to the top of the hopper, whence it is sifted into the retorts, heated by water-gas from very modern stream-lined producers. After leaving the retort house, the gases are passed through electrostatic condensers, where the less volatile substances are condensed, the liquid running into wells, where it separates into tar and gas liquor, which go to tar distilleries and to manufacturers of ammonia respectively. The gas is then passed through the scrubbers to dissolve out readily soluble gases, through ferric oxide towers to remove hydrogen sulphide, and finally through the purifiers which extract benzene, toluene and naphthalene. From there it goes through the gasometer into the gas-holder.

We then visited the Power Station, a typical one of modern design, including all the features of much bigger ones.

After looking round a small laboratory—a bigger one was still under construction—we went to the canteen for tea, during which leaflets on the products of the Gas Works were distributed, and with these we left the only all-electric Gas Works in England, a fine modern one barely three years old.

J. Whitehouse (Vm).

George Salter Ltd., West Bromwich.

The party assembled outside the main entrance at 2 p.m. We were conducted to an office, where we left our satchels and met our guides.

Firstly our guide led us round the old building, where we watched the coiling of a massive spring. A long rod of hot metal was drawn from a furnace and forged round a revolving cylinder.

We crossed the road to the modern building, and were led into the machine shop where pinions were being made. It was noteworthy how much more modern the machinery was on this side. Passing into the tool shop we watched plates being cut for making the different parts of the balances. Next we watched balances being graduated, and our guide explained two ways of making the scale, one manual and one mechanical. These were then checked by hanging weights on the balance. The next department we visited was the assembly shop, and we also commented on the efficiency of the electrostatic paint sprayers in avoiding waste.

We then passed into the shop where the largest balances were made. Many of these could weigh up to 5 tons, while there were some crane balances for weighing up to 200 tons.

Finally we were treated to a most enjoyable tea, after which we thanked our guides and the management, and returned home.

L. Jackson (Va).

SIXTH FORM DISCUSSION GROUP

The first meeting of the term was devoted to instructing new members on facets of sixth-form life, and to electing myself as secretary of the group. Apparently one has no choice in the matter. If one is an object of fun, one is elected and no withdrawals are allowed.
The first serious meeting of the term was given by Gray (it might be noted that he it was who nominated me as secretary, and as a token of our friendship he was invited to start the term's proceedings). He gave us a discourse on "Freedom and Thought": mentioning, in passing, the influences of the conscience, mental complexes and propaganda on our freedom of speech.

The following week Peniket was invited to give us a talk and for his topic he chose "Socrates." He gave an interesting resume of Socrates' life mentioning such things as fighting, fatness, drinking and platonic love and concluding his talk with the philosopher's trial.

The third topic to be discussed was the "Suez Canal" which was introduced by Hollyhead at very short notice. Needless to say there was plenty of discussion.

The following week saw the first talk being given by a lower sixth-former, Greatrex, who wanted to know if "Radio can hold its own against Television in the Modern World." The conclusion reached was that radio would stay.

Whistance was the next member to talk and his "Ethics of John Stuart Mill" was rather beyond most people present, but the discussion that followed was within the scope of those attending.

The following week Kimbly gave us a talk on "Closed Shops" but the discussion centred upon the question of the majority conceding that the rights of the few should be respected.

Large was the next to talk and he gave us his ideas on the "Decline and fall of Earthly Inspiration" which proved to be quite interesting.

The last three weeks' discussions have all been given by lower sixth-formers, namely, Taylor L., Smith M., and Skeldon who chose to talk on the varied subjects of the "Younger Generation," "Socrates, Plato and Aristotle" and "Driving without due Care and Attention" respectively.

In conclusion, I must say that, as usual, the discussions have been carried on by only a limited number of those present, with Mr. Ede and Mr. Ladkin rather predominant. It is to be hoped that the lower sixth will soon find their feet and challenge those of the upper sixth who do most of the talking.

P. J. Lowndes (Secretary).
THIRTY YEARS OF CHESS

It is doubtful if the teaching of chess started right at the commencement in 1924. We had so many other things to learn in those days and it was almost too exciting for chess.

When the teaching of chess was introduced into the time-table we were acclaimed by the Press as the pioneer school to adopt this experiment and a photograph of the demonstration board appeared in many of the London newspapers. This photograph showed a number of boys gazing entranced at the board with a caption something like this — “These scholars take such a keen and intelligent interest in the chess lesson.” As a matter of fact the photographer had come on a half-holiday and some footballers were told to change out and put on intelligent expressions even if they hardly knew the moves!

S. Pickering, who became quite a well known problem composer, was one of our early players. He was one of the original 51 pupils in the school and later filled the office of head prefect for a whole year.

We played our first match in 1929 and lost 13–17½. The score may seem surprising but in those days we played teams of 12 and two or even three games could score points on any board.

There then followed the days of J. Dean, who came quite near to winning the Boys’ Championship and later became Chess President at Cambridge. As captain here he had great strength at his disposal for the school teams.

With the entry of the first all-scholarship form the interesting experiment of concentrating on this form and teaching them two subjects up to certificate and also chess was to reap a rich harvest. This form finally constituted nearly the whole of the chess team and in 1935–6 with 11 out of 12 in the team, we had victories of 19–4, 18–3, 17–7, 17–4. During the years 1931–6 members of this form had a record of 190 points to 80 when playing for the first XII. On one occasion we played two schools on the same night and recorded easy victories. The names of E. Davies and R. Dunton both of whom competed in the Boys’ Championship stand out prominently. In 1936 Davis won the school championship with 13½ out of 15 with three members of Staff among the competitors. Even at this time he was becoming well known as a problem composer, and his problems were appearing on the Continent and America.

Harper and Blakemore also became strong players after gaining experience in the junior team. Harper it was (then in the sixth) who arrived at school in September 1939 and carried on his chemical studies quite oblivious or indifferent to the war.

In 1937 the B.C.F. Shield, donated to the School as a mark of distinction for our chess record, was presented by Alderman J. N. Derbyshire, President of the British Chess Federation, in person.

This shield was originally competed for by forms and it was imagined that the lower forms would require handicaps. An unusually powerful IIIA carried all before them against fourths and fifthths with victories such as 11–1. What would they do against the majestic sixth which had also secured overwhelming victories? They caused admiration and some amusement by defeating them 10–2 or was it 11–1?

The B.C.F. Shield was later awarded to the House which had the best record in senior and junior House competitions.

A short digression may now be made for simultaneous play. This had been carried on within the school for many years, a dozen boards at once and the players keeping the scores of the games. The normal time was somewhere in the region of an hour. We also invited various experts to come and give displays, among them Znosko-Borowski, Mackenzie, Wood, Sir George Thomas, Hann and, last but not least, the great blindfold player Kolotanowski, who played 12 games blindfold. He set his back to the players and the moves were called out by a teller. After an adjournment during which the chess master conversed in almost perfect English, play was renewed and the Master announced that he would call the moves from the beginning on any selected board. Once during the play he called out a wrong move, "Ah! no, there is a pawn there" and delayed so long that we went across and suggested we call out the position. "No, no, it is not that. The position—I remember it of course," and he called it out accurately. "I am thinking of a mate. Yes, I have it now. I announce mate in four..." and it was even as he said!

The next morning a lecture in English on chess.

After the war matches were played with 6 or 8 a-side with only one game to count on each board. The presentation of the L. Green Cup has promoted further interest in chess in the neighbourhood. Our School has won it six times in succession (ever since the inception of the competition) and we have selected teams from some twenty players, not usually playing our strongest teams.

One further name should be mentioned, that of A. J. Poinon, who became captain of Nottingham University and one of the strongest county players in Nottinghamshire.
For some years chess has been played before school in the morning—if perhaps not very skilfully, at least with great enthusiasm.

Friday afternoon meetings have had an attendance of 20-30 and, what is probably unique in any school, there have been meetings at the end of term after breaking-up.

During the war, when sets were so difficult to obtain, a large number of home-made sets were made and many of these are in daily use. They may be rather rough but the knights do not easily lose their heads, although they may suffer facial injuries.

Returning as a master, Mr. E. Davis has brought new life into the teaching and, in the last two years, has undertaken sole instruction of new boys with the demonstration board and later with simultaneous play. His expert coaching of the team (now including top-board player Marsh) has done much to improve the standard. While he remains on the Staff there can be no doubt but that our present high standard will be maintained.

VISIT TO THE SCIENCE MUSEUM, JULY 1956

The morning proved to be very dismal when our party gathered at various places in the district to catch the coach. 7.30 a.m. saw us waiting only for Mr. Goodyear, and when he arrived we were seen under way. The journey was uneventful, and was mostly occupied by card games and window-gazing. After admiring the Marble Arch and Hyde Park Corner, we came to a stop outside the Museum entrance at about half past eleven.

Then the visit proper began. Most of us were first attracted by the Foucault Pendulum, which is suspended in the roof of the building and reaches to the floor. It is reset every hour, and the varying direction of its swing was originally used to show that the Earth turns on its own axis. The Ground Floor was inspected, and the theme there was Motion. There was a fine collection of engines of all types: full-size replicas of the first steam locomotives, stationary steam engines, turbines, internal combustion engines, etc. Many photographs, originals, and small working models were also included, chiefly with respect to railways and roads.

While some people went to inspect the collection of Aeronautics housed in a separate building, others visited the Children's Gallery in the Basement. There, many exhibits are intended to appeal to young people, and there are a variety of working models, such as the self-operating door which opened on breaking a beam of infrared radiation. Also in the Basement are collections concerning Mining and Illumination.

On the first floor, the accent was mainly on Engineering. Among other things, there were collections dealing with Telegraphy and Telephony, Metallurgy, Radio and Television, and Electrical Engineering. The Radio section contained some of Baird's original apparatus used when he was experimenting with television, together with modern television receivers and cameras, and much other historical apparatus. The Metallurgy section attracted the prospective scientists; it showed the preparation of various common metals from olden times, along with sensitive balances used in assaying gold and silver. Inner structures of metals were studied with models and photographs.

By the time these floors had been toured, it was nearing half past two, when we were due to hear a lecture given by one of the Museum staff. The subject was to be "Very Low Temperatures," and promptly to time everyone entered the lecture theatre of the Museum. The lecture itself was most interesting, the lecturer, with the aid of slides, chiefly dwelling on the ways of reaching the low temperatures, such as cooling by rapid expansion. After thanking the lecturer, we continued touring the Museum.

The second floor was occupied by Marine apparatus of all types, including ships and boats, engines, boilers, propellers, and rudders. Another part of this floor dealt with Weights and Measures, and the Measurement of Time. In the latter, all types of clocks were featured, from very old to very new. Escapements were shown, and various accurate clocks as used in observatories were working.

The top floor was the most interesting of all, since it contained the pure Science subjects. The chemistry section contained much historical apparatus, illustrating important work by Dalton, Faraday, Crookes, and Ramsay. Apparatus used by Faraday in the preparation of benzene is shown, together with the actual specimen of benzene. Much apparatus of Ramsay, used in research into the Inert Gases, is preserved. Atomic Physics interested many people, and many exhibits relating to the discovery of the electron and the other sub-atomic particles was on show. Other subjects of which there was a fine collection were photography, meteorology, geophysics, mathematics (including slide rules), optics, and astronomy, but time marches on, and I at least had only enough time to glance briefly at these exhibits which would have been most interesting.

At half-past six we commenced the return journey, and reached home very late at night. Everyone enjoyed himself thoroughly, and I am sure we all learned something from a pleasant and well-spent day.

P.G.
PARIS

I was lucky enough last summer to get a job as a concierge at an hotel in Paris, and my night duties were sufficiently light as to leave me the whole day free to learn about Paris and her people. In J. B. Priestley's opinion, it is dangerous to comment on a foreign country if the period one has spent there is anything between twelve days and twelve years; despite this, I am going to comment on Paris after a two month stay, hoping that I have not overlooked any vivid first impressions because I was there long enough to take many unusual things for granted. In an article of this nature, of course, my choice of material is strictly limited; I cannot hope to give a comprehensive survey of this city, at once so beautiful and so brutal.

There are two Parisian traits that are immediately apparent to visitors; one of these is exhibitionism. The night I arrived in Paris I staggered with heavy suitcase from the Metro (underground) at Châtelet, and, to reach my hotel, I had to pick my way through several bodies lying prostrate on the pavement. Now, there is much abject poverty in Paris that would be tolerated nowhere in Britain; many people have no homes, and still more live in timber-buttressed tenements that should have been demolished long ago. But a lot of these _clochards_, as the tramps are called, refuse to be helped by any authority, and no one seems in any hurry to clear them off the streets. They litter the quais of the Seine, or lie on the Metro ventilation grids to get the benefit of the warm draughts. Exhibitionism in Paris does not stop with these people: it varies in others from unusual clothes (Edwardian suits do not hold a candle to them) to downright freakish hairstyles. Should you walk along the Boulevard St. Michel, the student quarter, you will feel half-naked if you are not wearing a beard; and whilst many of the young men here in the Latin quarter emulate the hairstyles of Caesar and Napoleon, the older set, who congregate in the Montparnasse area, frequented the Dôme and Rondpoint cafés where the existentialists once met, often look like reincarnations of Buffalo Bill Cody with their flowing white hair. Montmartre is still flooded with second rate artists who think they ought to paint there because that is the quarter immortalised by such masters as Toulouse Lautrec and Maurice Utrillo.

This leads on to the second striking Parisian characteristic, which is cashing in with a vengeance on the tourist, and 'taking him for a ride' at every conceivable opportunity. Not only the artists, but the dealers, tradesmen, and show people attempt to capture and perpetuate the atmosphere of the Montmartre of the 1890's, which dupes a surprising number of tourists until they discover that prices there are even more extortionate than elsewhere in Paris. Montmartre is far too select and expensive nowadays for real artists and intellectuals!

A visitor to Paris—or any other part of France, for that matter—could be excused for thinking the French had no word for 'hygiene'. Little or no precaution is taken to refrigerate or protect meats and other perishable foodstuffs. Children race round with loaves of bread four or five feet long, scraping walls with them, and menacing the public as though they were Bengal Lancers. If you gave a Frenchman a sliced loaf, I guarantee he would walk along the street stuffing it like a pack of cards.

What, then, is so fascinating about Paris? I hate to use the word 'atmosphere' since it has become very much a cliché, but apart from the many beautiful buildings, about which I will write later, there is an infectious zest for life and a disarming gaiety about the city which more than atone for the shortcomings of some of its inhabitants. Each _quartier_ has its individual flavour, and I spent much of my time on the enchanting Boulevard St. Michel, in the Latin Quarter, which was crowded all the time with young people from all over the world. Africans, Orientals, Creoles and Europeans mingled freely, and, what was more wonderful, was the complete absence of any trace of colour bar: 'mixed' couples of all sorts were as much in evidence as all-white or all-black couples.

As for experiences, I wrote to our esteemed editor for ideas. Go to the Opéra, he said; so I did to tackle Wagner. That evening was among the most agonising I have ever spent, relieved only by two intermissions during which I gazed at the elegant marble stairway. I suspect people only go to hear Wagner in French so that they can see these famous steps; or because it is 'the thing to visit the Opéra. Another concession I made to tourism was to make the ascent of the Eiffel Tower: just to tell readers of the Woden what it was like. Yes, for you, I paid eight shillings to be taken to the top of this ugly, twisted mass of girders, which, though it has no aesthetic appeal whatever, has somehow become a symbol of Paris to foreigners; nothing to get excited about. Contrary to the editor's suggestion, I did not visit the tomb of Napoleon at the Invalides: I have no time for this diminutive figure with so colossal an ego. It might be appropriate to mention here one of the curiosities of Paris, the Tour de St. Jacques, which stands near the Place du Châtelet just on the Right Bank. The significance of this tower baffled me for some time, till I found out that it was all that remained of the Church of St. Jacques; Napoleon destroyed the rest of it in order to build the Rue de Rivoli straight through, but left the tower standing to the memory of Pascal, who had tested some theory or other by dropping objects from the top, where his statue now sticks out like a sore thumb. Again, when I visited the Château at
INTO HEAVEN

It was standing on the very edge of the earth, gazing out across Paradise. Or was I?

I was resting at the top of a steep hill (so steep, in fact, that I had had to change into bottom gear and pedal for all I was worth in order to reach its summit) during a cycle ride in the south-west.

But it was worth the effort. The sight that met my stumped gaze surpassed anything else that I had witnessed—either in my imagination or in reality. For as far as the eye could see, Nature’s wonderland, so entrancingly wonderful, was stretched out, forming an awe-inspiring, celestial panorama.

Beneath and around me I saw fields—green, brown and yellow—and trees; in front of me I could just distinguish, through a fine sea-mist, above the distant mountains the sparkling, blue waters of the Bristol Channel.

At the bottom of the hill was a small and succulent grove of trees; over there came the clear, beautiful sound of a gurgling stream; and there, on the bend of the lane, nestled amongst sweet-smelling apple blossom, was a small white-walled, thatched cottage.

I don’t know how long I had remained there, drinking in the beauty of the countryside, for I was suddenly aroused by the falling rain.

During my “dream,” huge, black cumulo-nimbus clouds had built up, and a dark shadow had been cast over the earth. The rain was falling heavily. I mounted my cycle, rode down the hill, and stopped outside the gate, cream gate of the cottage, intending to ask for shelter from the rain.

I walked up the path, bounded on either side by clusters of white althaea and lobelia, and knocked at the door. It was opened by a ruddy-faced old man, silver-haired and wrinkled, who, after hearing my request, invited me in.

We passed through the hall, whose walls were adorned with family crests and heirlooms, and into the huge (for a cottage of that size) living-room.
In the centre of the far wall was a large rough-bricked fireplace, on the mantelshelf of which were a few cups won for gardening, and above it a large mirror. The table was oak (very large) and the chairs, with highly-decorated, plush seats and backs, matched it, forming a polished centre-piece to the room.

On the other wall hung two curved Arab scimitars, a brace of double-barreled flint-lock pistols, and a red and gold family crest.

The french-windows opened out on to a plush, green lawn, multi-coloured chrysanthemums and gladioli, and an orchard of sweet-smelling apple trees.

Seeing that the storm had finished and not wishing to inconvenience the old man for any longer than was necessary, I took my leave of him, thanked him for his hospitality, and re-mounted my cycle.

The sun was setting behind the distant horizon, casting a red glow on the moist surface of the lane, and the sky was encircled by the rainbow as I turned my cycle for home and began to climb the hill on my homeward journey. The small drops of moisture hung tentatively on to the leaves of the trees like jewels and added a fresh enchantment to the view.

I passed a signpost, half-hidden by long grass and overhanging boughs, and for the first time I knew the name of the beautiful place which I had just visited.

It was called simply—Heaven! B.H.J. (LVI).

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SUNDAYS PAST AND PRESENT

How strange it is that when I sit down alone before my window towards the end of a Sunday afternoon, my homework, which has for the rest of the weekend evaded my attention, seems yet more reluctant to be done. Why is it, I wonder, that eyes usually content to study Latin prose now refuse to settle on anything but the movements of the outside world, contemplated pensively through a small bedroom window? Perhaps they are intrigued by that pattern of monotony which so readily becomes apparent, a pattern that shows how alike we all are in our weekly regularity. There are no complications to this symmetric scene, for occupations are so limited. Noisily, some children cross the stage of darkened brick

dusty road as they return from Sunday school, clad in those exclusive Sunday clothes which, though worn by their grandfathers with reserved reluctance, are worn by them with a faint suspicion of the ostentation of modern youth. Three frivolous little girls knock noisily on someone’s door, then flee gaily along the street with many hasty backward glances, but their fun is spoilt, for they are out of sight before the over-fed householder has stirred from his fireside and stumbled to the door. A few impious workmen tramp noisily home, hobnalled boots clattering and echoing in the stuffy silence. Countless letter-writers venture forth to dispatch their renderings of the past week’s occurrences to distant friends: the children run heedlessly to the letter-box, pausing only to cast lightning glances up and down the road for the fortunately infrequent traffic, while the older people plod absentely along, greeting old friends on their way from church. The same sense of loneliness prompts all these elders to take the few extra paces from the letter-box to the corner of the street, and to gaze for a few seconds either way, searching for someone to speak to, so disturbed are those gregarious beings by the loneliness and quietude of this Sunday afternoon, and the boredom of having to return now to their fireside and the Sunday newspaper. Do they ever think of that daily work and Sunday newspapers? Is this the way they while away the precious time—the only time, for them—when life and happiness can be sampled to the full by wandering over our hills or through our valleys, whether they are studded in their unspoil beauty or harmoniously modified and softened by the hands of man? The choice is theirs, and we can surely say the means are theirs. But it is not to be; for many of them, life will begin at seven o’clock tonight, when they join their friends and drink in the beauty of our countryside in the most literal sense. Ah, if I were in their place, I should be far from this suffocating drudgery, far away where true happiness is found in having the wild earth and Nature as my only companions.

Soon the scene before the window fades; the sooty bricks become the leaves of gently-waving trees; the road becomes a field or rutted country track, while overhead the sky discards its cape of grey; for now the roving mind recalls the memories of Sundays spent in far more pleasant ways—when life was sweet and worries far away from us who drank the beauty of our English countryside. What times we had, in beaming sunshine shimmering down on undulating meadows tranquilised by grazing cows or sheep, while intermittent call of curlew, rook, or martin pierced the silence even to the farthest nook of rustic cope or glade; or, clad in stoutest garments to resist the ravages of biting wind or drifting snow, riding homewards while the dazzling slivery orb above us bathed in mystic light the frosted furrows of the fresh-ploughed earth, and
turned each twisted, naked tree into a silhouette against the silver sky. What thrills we felt when, after struggling heartily through drifts of virgin snow, we reached the wind-swept summit of our mountain goal, and deemed it worthy of our trial to see the mantled earth for miles around, and strained our eyes to seek through swirling mist those rolling hills, obscured by sombre, snow-filled clouds, whose heights we had to conquer ere we might begin our journey home to supper and to bed.

Alas, the vision fades, for twilight shrouds the outside scene with misty veils. The mind awakes itself and sees the folly of such wanton wanderings, for now I contemplate regretfully my books which lie neglected and which now I must attack with vehement resolution, for the day is almost gone and there is much to do—I must redeem myself.

"Non studeo, sed circumspicio."

J.B.S.

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**PRAISE TO A NIGHTINGALE**

Enchanting in the widest sense
   Is thy sweet voice, O bird.
I love thee for thy lovely notes,
   Though thou canst speak no word.

Within my mind sweet thoughts now blend
   With thy shrill singing clear,
And memories more vivid seem,
   Of many a bygone year.

The memories of childhood days,
   When I did run and play,
Those memories of careless youth—
   How fast they slipped away.

Though sunk as now I am in age,
   I hope that your glad song
Will never leave my listening ears,
   E'en through the whole night long.

J.B.