

# THE VISOR

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MAGAZINE OF  
BIRKENHEAD INSTITUTE

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CHRISTMAS 1954.



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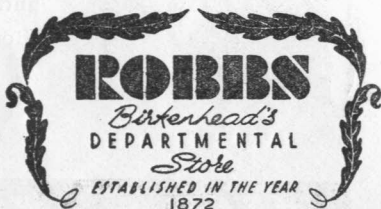
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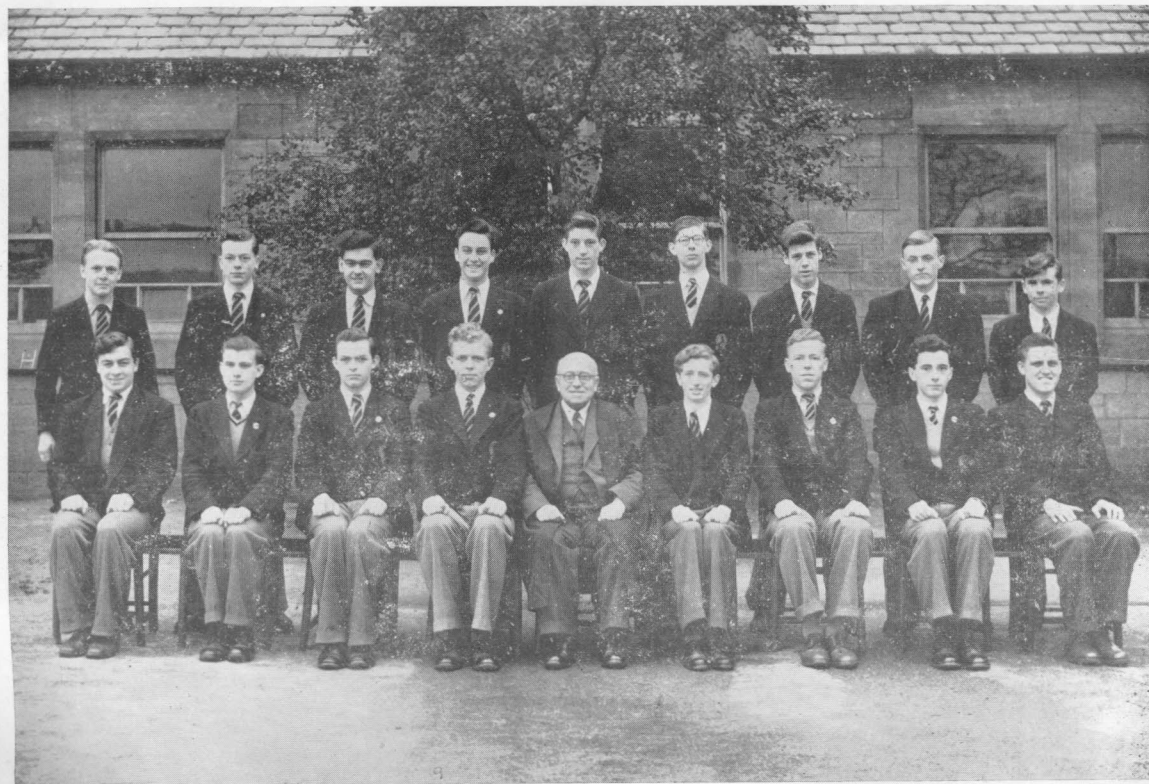
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## School Calendar, 1954-1955

Autumn Term began .....	September 6th.
Half Term .....	October 30th—November 2nd (inclusive).
Autumn Term ends .....	December 22nd.
Spring Term begins .....	January 10, 1955.
Half Term .....	February 19th—February 22nd (inclu.)
Spring Term ends .....	April 6th.
Summer Term begins .....	April 25th.
Half Term .....	May 28th—May 31st (inclu.)
Summer Term ends .....	July 22nd.
Autumn Term begins .....	September 5th.

### Editorial

SHAKESPEARE, who said it rained every day, would have felt quite at home in the weather which afflicted us this term. If mere moisture wins oscars, we should be due for a literary renaissance. After a summer term which was a meteorological joke, most of this year's autumn was melancholy and dripping. The old Harrow song said, "October brings the cold weather down when the winds and the rains continue," but, though we frequently growl at the weeping elements, our spirits have not been diluted. Like Chesterton, we at *Visor* H. Q. might say that we don't care where the water goes if it doesn't get into the editorial ink. For our pen, as usual, has much to chronicle with pride. We came out of the General Certificate with our drums beating, our colours flying and a general air of demanding the keys of the J.M.B. citadel. And, in case any one feared that we were in process of turning into pale, drooping scholars, our football results proved that we can battle as effectively with the best teams of the district as with any set of pink or green puzzles concocted by the most malignant examiners. Not to be outdone, former pupils also continue to add lustre to our name. All this and more is set forth in the following pages and should be an encouragement to the old est and youngest among us. Someone once said that life meant taking what you want out of it and paying for it. In a school it is what its members put *in* that counts and all gain in the event, not merely in success—and only a fool would deny the sweets of victory—but in the consciousness of tasks well done, and in the character and endurance which develop in accomplishing them. The *Visor*, which is an integral part of the Institute's life, takes pleasure in recording the outstanding achievements of past and present members of the School, and ventures to bid all its readers to go and do likewise.



6A. and 6S.

Haggerty, G. A.—B.; Hubbard, E. H.—M.; Longton, W. J.—B.;  
Prodger, P. G.—L.

#### ADVANCED.

Bryant, W. N.—Lit., H., L., S. Lit., S.H. with distinction in History; Dodd, T. A.—P., C., M.; Evans, G. M.—P., C., M., S.P.; S.C.; Haughton, B. A.—P., C., M., S.P., S.C.; Jones, N. N.—Lit., H.; H.A., S.H.; Marston, M.—P.; Roberts, A. G.—P., C., Williamson, J. G., H., F.

### *Athletic Sports, 1954*

THE Annual Athletic Sports were held on Saturday, July 3rd, and once again we were fortunate in having an ideally fine and sunny day. The function was graced by a visit from His Worship the Mayor of Birkenhead, Alderman H. Platt, and the Mayoress, who kindly presented the trophies, prizes, and awards. Among the other guests welcomed by the Headmaster and Mrs. Jones were Councillor C. S. McRonal; our former Headmaster, Mr. G. W. Harris, and Mrs. Harris; Miss Jackson; Mrs. E. Wynne Hughes; Mr. and Mrs. W. N. Pater-son; Mrs. J. G. Curtis; and Mr. A. Wetherell.

Three records were broken during the afternoon, the 100 Yards (Senior) and the Shot (Senior) by N. N. Jones, and the High Jump by A. S. Hodgson. We heartily congratulate them both. N. N. Jones also established a School record by becoming *Victor Ludorum* for the fourth year in succession, an outstanding achievement.

The thanks of the School are due to Mr. Meggs, who again repeated his gift of two special prizes for the two boys considered to be most prominent in the sporting activities of the School throughout the year. As before, these prizes consisted of a return railway ticket to Manchester, a ticket giving admission to the Old Trafford ground and stand, and a postal order to defray the out of pocket expenses of the winner. The two boys unanimously chosen to receive these prizes were (Senior) D. M. Mathieson, and (Junior) T. A. Fitzgerald. The tickets were for the Test Match with Pakistan, and we are pleased to report that the day proved fine and the two prize-winners had a most enjoyable outing.

Our thanks are due to those members of the Staff who spent so much of their own time in organising the event and laboriously preparing the field, to the parents and friends who so willingly subscribed to the Athletic Sports fund, and to the devoted members of the Ladies' Committee who by their generosity and services did so much to ensure the success of what many feel to be the happiest day in the School calendar.

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## RESULTS.

- 1.—CROSS COUNTRY (Senior) 1, Williamson, J. G.; 2, Harris, D. H.; 3, Dodd, T. A. Time: 34 mins. 35 secs.
- 2.—CROSS COUNTRY (Inter.)—1, Fitzgerald, T.; 2, Lee, D. L.; 3, McCann, D. Time: 26 m. 1.4 secs.
- 3.—CROSS COUNTRY (Junior)—1, Rimmer, G.; 2, Brown, P.; 3, Irwin, P. L. Time: 16 m. 34 secs.
- 4.—880 YARDS (Senior)—1, Dodd, T. A.; 2, Walsh, T. J.; 3, Williamson, J. G.
- 5.—LONG JUMP (Senior)—1, Hodgson, A. S.; 2, Mathieson, D. M.; 3, Smith, J. G. Distance: 16 ft. 5½ in.
- 6.—SHOT (Senior)—1, Jones, N. N. 2, Hodgson, A. S.; 3, Lloyd, B. Distance: 40 ft. 4 ins. (record).
- 7.—HIGH JUMP (Senior)—1, Hodgson, A. S.; 2, Haughton, B. A.; 3, Cundill, K. Height: 5 ft. 6½ (record).
- 8.—LONG JUMP (Inter.)—1, Fitzgerald, T.; 2, Caldwell, A. R.; 3, Lloyd, S. M., Distance: 13 ft. 10 ins.
- 9.—LONG JUMP (Junior)—1, Blackwell, R. R.; 2, Greaves, G.; 3, Boyd, E. Distance: 13 ft. 10 ins.
- 10.—440 YARDS (Senior)—1, Jones, N. N.; 2, Mathieson, D. M.; 3, Hodgson, A. S. Time: 55.5 secs.
- 11.—HIGH JUMP (Junior)—1 Wylie, D. W.; 2, Quinn, M.; 3, Hadfield, F. Height: 4 ft. 3 ins.
- 12.—100 YARDS (Inter.)—1, Lloyd, S. M.; 2, Caldwell, A. R.; 3, Hepner, K. Time: 12¼ secs.
- 13.—JAVELIN (Senior)—1, Jones, N. N.; 2, Mathieson, D. M.; Cundill, K. Distance: 146 ft. 10 ins.
- 14.—220 YARDS (Junior)—1, Wylie, D. W.; 2, Greaves, G.; 3, Mathews, A. J. Time 29.4 secs.
- 15.—CRICKET BALL (Inter.)—1, Jones, A.; 2, Brocklebank, D.; 3, Pinning, R. Distance: 71 yds. 7 ins.
- 16.—100 YARDS (Senior)—1, Jones, N. N.; 2, Mathieson, D. M.; 3, Lloyd, B. A. Time: 10.4 secs. (record).
- 17.—440 YARDS (Inter.)—1, Caldwell, A. R.; 2, Fitzgerald, T.; 3, Hopner, K. Time: 59.9 secs.
- 18.—CRICKET BALL (Junior)—1, Boyd, E.; 2, Lomax, P. A.; 3, Mergan, J. F. Distance: 60 yds. 6 ins.
- 19.—100 YARDS (Junior)—1, Wylie, D. W.; 2, Needham; 3, Phipps, F.
- 20.—OPEN MILE—1, Dodd, T. A.; 2, Williamson, J. G.; 3, Walsh, J. G. Time: 5 mins. 5.5 secs.
- 21.—DISCUS (Senior)—1, Jones, N. N.; 2, Mathieson, D. M.; 3, Jones, K. W. Distance: 108 ft. 2¼ ins.

- 22.—880 YARDS (Inter.)—1, Fitzgerald, T.; 2, Wood, J. M.; 3, Hopner, K. Time: 1 min. 27-1 secs.
- 23.—HIGH JUMP (Inter.)—1, Lee, D. L.; 2, Caldwell, A. R.; 3, Eccles, S. Height: 4 ft. 6 ins.
- 24.—220 YARDS (Senior)—1, Mathieson, D. M.; 2, Jones, N. N.; 3, Porter, M. K. Time: 24.3 secs.
- 25.—DISCUS (Inter.)—1, Lloyd, S. M.; 2, Jones, A.; 3, Paine, B. J. Distance: 95 ft. 10 ins.
- 26.—220 YARDS (Inter.)—1, Lloyd, S. M.; 2, Caldwell, A. R.; Fitzgerald, T. Time: 27-1 secs.
- 27.—440 YARDS (Junior)—1, Wylie, D. W.; 2, Jones, D. D.; 3, Pierce, W. Time:
- 28.—RELAY (Senior)—1, Westminster; 2, Atkin; 3, Stitt. Time: 1 m. 48 secs.
- 29.—RELAY (Inter.)—1, Atkin; 2, Tate; 3, Stitt. Time: 54 secs.
- 30.—RELAY (Junior)—1, Tate; 2, Atkin; 3, Westminster. Time 58.2 secs.
- 31.—HOUSE TUG-OF-WAR—1, Westminster; 2, Atkin; 3, Tate.  
Victor Ludorum—Jones, N. N.; 28 points.  
Runner-up—Mathieson, D. M.; 20 points.  
Junior Victor Ludorum—Wylie, D. W.; 20 points.  
Runner-up—Fitzgerald, T.; 19 points.
- House Championship—1, Atkin, 835 points; 2, Westminster, 727 points; 3, Stitt, 696 points; 4, Tate, 680 points.

## *Staff Notes*

**T**HE School said good bye to Mr. E. W. Hughes, music master 1953-4, with regret at the end of last term. Though his tenure of the post had been a short one, he had achieved excellent results both in the quality of our singing and in the interest he fostered in his subject, through an active and flourishing Music Society. We wish him every success as headmaster of a new school in Walesey.

We were glad to welcome Mr. Fisher at the beginning of this term. For some time, the Science staff had been under strength, and his appointment as a chemistry master has been of great benefit to the department.

## *State Scholarships*

**N**O fewer than four of these important awards went this summer to past and present members of the School. A. A. Smith, a former First XV. stalwart, gained one for post-graduate research at Liverpool University. Two Technical State Scholarships were won by Allan

Mountfield and B. H. P. Molyneux, respectively. Actually Mr. Mountfield's was a double success, since he also won a Vickers Armstrong Naval Architecture Scholarship which has taken him to Kings College of Durham University for a three years' course. Mr. Molyneux's award is for engineering at the University of Liverpool. Finally, representing present pupils, W. N. Bryant gained his 'State' on the results of this summer's General Certificate Examination at the Advanced Level. We desire to congratulate all four on these outstanding achievements.

### Coronation Cup 1953-54

	ATKIN	STITT	TATE	W'MINSTER
Athletics .....	1st ... 6	3rd ... 2	4th ... 0	2nd ... 4
Chess .....	3rd ... 1	1st ... 3	4th ... 0	2nd ... 2
Cricket .....	4th ... 0	1st ... 6	2nd ... 3	2nd ... 3
Cross-Country Runs ...	1st ... 6	3rd ... 2	4th ... 0	2nd ... 4
Mark Sheets: Autumn...	4th ... 0	3rd ... 2	2nd ... 4	1st ... 6
Spring.....	3rd ... 2	1st ... 5	1st ... 5	4th ... 0
Summer...	4th ... 0	2nd ... 4	3rd ... 2	1st ... 6
Rugby .....	1st ... 6	4th ... 0	3rd ... 2	2nd ... 4
Table Tennis .....	2nd ... 2	1st ... 3	4th ... 0	3rd ... 1
Total Points .....	23	27	16	30
Positions .....	3rd	2nd	4th	1st

### Transport

THE present generation which is compelled to visit fun-fairs or join the R.A.F. to enjoy hair-raising thrills will scarcely believe that these were once provided for a modest copper by the Merseyside Corporations. The terrors of the Big Dipper or the Dive of Death could be sampled by boarding an electric tram. A sailor bound for Hong Kong, alighting from a Wavertree tramcar at Liverpool Pier Head, is reported to have uttered a heartfelt "Thank God! that's the worst of the trip over anyhow." He is probably apocryphal, but will serve his turn in introducing you to forgotten delights.

In this district there were three relatively small car systems and one major metropolitan one. Let us take the small fry first. From Seaforth Sands Station to Great Crosby, there operated until 1925 the tramways belonging to the Liverpool Overhead Railway Company. No-one ever accused these quivering green machines of driving to the public danger.

Their progress was like that of a senile dowager. They bobbed their way along, trembling in every limb. Nevertheless they had something to offer the intrepid—the bright prospect of being strangled for a penny. Since the line was largely single track with passing loops, and the overhead wires were slung at one side of the road only, it followed that the trolley arm with its attendant rope was forced from time to time to swing out at right angles to the open top deck. There one sat on the roof of the waiting car, while a great coil of rope, drawn by the oncoming one, swept over the victims, who felt like herrings under a drifter. In later days, some Cromwellian functionary, perceiving that this was too much fun for the citizens, fitted high iron guard rails, so that the patrons became less like fish and more like parrots.

Wallasey trams had a speciality of their own, not sudden, but lingering death, caused by neglect and abandonment. On the Poulton route, human ingenuity had discovered the longest distance between two termini. At a loop near Harrison Drive (then undeveloped) one waited in despair with the Irish Sea for company. After becoming convinced that rescue would never come, relief at length hove in sight in the shape of a Seacombe bound expedition. Some words passed between the motor men on "Driver Livingstone, I presume" lines, and we were once more launched into the void.

Birkenhead, one must own, was a respectable system. Though Balls Road East and Pearson Road were fearsome descents, honoured by conspicuous Board of Trade warnings ("Drivers of down cars must apply slipper brakes"), no cars in sober fact ever ran away. But on the top of an open car one could follow the progress of the sizzling trolley-head along the intricate path of wires with the agreeable certainty that, if it fell off, any passenger upon whom it descended would be reduced to pulp.

But Liverpool was the place for excitement! You can keep your Blackpool Pleasure Beach or your Battersea Fun Fair! Give me a penny ride from Upper Parliament Street to the Adelphi, about 1912, or so, on the old war-horses of Lambeth Road. These vehicles (I am not thinking of to-day's "green goddesses," of course) were substantially built, were protected fore and aft by murderous iron fenders, and their wheels encased in formidable plough-shaped lifeguards. Their onset was like that of an icebreaker driven by a grumbling mangle, and woe betide any other wheeled contraption which tried conclusions with them. Since all had a very restricted six-foot wheelbase and top deck covers which were both longer and wider than the saloons, their contortions at speed could only be compared to the lurchings of windjammers going round the Horn. Indeed the nautical experience gained upon them by the local customers probably accounted for the maritime supremacy of Liverpool;



for a man who survived the navigation of Prescott Street or Everton Valley could face the oceans of the world with composure. Those six hundred trams were driven by a breed of heroes, some of whom continued to an advanced age. There were venerable bearded figures looking like the great Lord Salisbury, bowed over their levers but still driving away and pounding foot gongs with relentless persistence worthy of a great cause. The warhorses were always engaged in one or another characteristic Liverpool noise, thundering over crossings, whining with flat-out motors until Lord S. on the front reversed everything just as bursting point was reached, when "we trembled and were still"; or growling down the scale as the electric brake went on.

In addition to the fun on the cars themselves, to the high medical value of a shaken liver and a jogged spine, the journeys never lacked incident. One could fall downstairs into the road (though it is fair to say that the most complicated staircases were found on cars which passed the hospitals); watch interesting street tumults—two women with deadly hatpins fighting in Scotland Road, provoking from an adenoidal passenger the masterly Merseyside understatement—"It looks as though there might be a bit of a bother"; wonder whether the tram would strike a centre standard or if the pedestrian who passed nimbly under our lee had in fact been quick enough. Arnold Bennett (who knew Broadway) said that the most exciting ride in the world was through Liverpool on a tram. Then there were the famous local 'brews' (i.e. brows), where ascent was a gamble and descent a nightmare. At the foot of many steep streets iron bollards were placed to reduce the chances of a citizen finding a tram in his front parlour. Some of the bollards had been made from captured French ordnance of the Napoleonic wars, and many of them were reconverted into armaments during Hitler's. Despite these precautions one car (old 447) entered a shop in Renshaw Street after a riotous passage down Leece Street, and another, which descended Paddington like a rocket, demolished a grocer's in Crown Street. Such vehicles were soon back on the road after repairs, looking for further prey.

All this was a superlative tonic for the nerves by day, but by night it was out of all whooping. The last car of the day, riding like an illuminated galleon, goes storming down Oakfield Road, smelling its supper afar off at Walton shed. One lies in bed listening as the roar recedes and a final shriek betokens that the curve by Anfield Football ground has been negotiated without disaster. So it takes itself and its clangour away into the past. Happy times! Where will one find such a penny-worth to-day?

W.E.W.



**D**URING the musica' interregnum between the departure of Mr. E. W. Hughes and the arrival of Mr. Shaw at the beginning of next term, a distinguished panel of volunteer accompanists has been playing the morning hymns. This has produced a nice variety in execution so that one morning the mood might be 'andante religioso e ponderoso,' the next 'cantabile con gusto,' according to the weather or the spirits of the performer. The School is indebted to those who rose so nobly to the occasion, giving us this valuable service through a whole term and providing us with a range of styles which must surely remain the envy of our cathedrals.

\* \* \* \*

The appearance, after a due interval for blue prints and competitive designs, of a supplementary lamp (equivalent to a penny rate) above the Staff Room table, fills a long-felt want. Not only are bridge experts now able to study the facial expressions of their rivals in the glare, but also a novel and terrifying accuracy has become possible in marking. Errant accents, decimal points, and semi-colons, which formerly slunk off undetected in the twilight, now surrender to justice without a struggle.

\* \* \* \*

The inauguration of the homework scheme for those whose domestic offices and messuages lack a scriptorium has brought a new squad of workers to 3A form-room on Mondays and Wednesdays. An invisible iron curtain separates the proscribed who are there under duress from the diligent who merely await a Ministry of Works permit to throw out a new wing at home. The disadvantage is that authority is now able to perceive how much evening labour the virtuous half actually does. Already there have been cases of fugitives getting across without undue trouble from the eastern to the western zone.

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Police inspection of the road-worthiness of our cycles on October 29th was a sharp reminder that only constant vigilance can reduce the appalling number of casualties on our roads. While the select few, whose thirst for knowledge brings them swiftly to School on sub-motor cycles, are always impeccable in braking power, this is not always true of those who still pedal. We would urge them, as well as our pedestrians (whose zeal on games afternoons sometimes causes them to leave buses without due care and attention), to remember that only common sense in these matters can save their lives as well as other people's.

\* \* \* \*

Though details of the performance of the first XV. will be found elsewhere in this issue, perhaps a mere layman may be allowed to congratulate all concerned on some homeric victories over first-class rivals. Such achievements hearten everyone, and are not readily forgotten. No doubt in years to come youngsters will still gape reverently at the heroes who were in the team of '54/55.

\* \* \* \*

Some difficulty was experienced this term in taking the prefects' photograph which adorns this issue. According to the official communiqué, the first exposure proved unsatisfactory. The photographer was therefore compelled to hold a second sitting on another day, not because (as malice suggested) his plates needed reinforcement against possible damage, but because he felt that only the very best studio work could do full justice to so illustrious a group.

\* \* \* \*

The trustees of the fund have awarded the Old Boys' War Memorial Prize for the year 1953-4 to A. S. Hodgson.





\* \* \* \*

This term we again attended a Concert at the Y.M.C.A. As usual, the conductor, Mr. Herbert Bardgett, of *Messiah* fame, entertained us with his simplified musical analyses of the works of the great composers. The highlight of the programme was probably Britten's powerful *Soirée Musicale*.

\* \* \* \*

The frequent assembly of boys in the entrance hall, and their subsequent triumphal departure down the road caused much alarm and speculation in the School. We were interested to hear that the object of these mysterious journeys was an exhibition of children's art at the Williamson Gallery. This exhibition is visiting only four places in this country and will soon be touring America and Canada.



ATKIN	STITT	TATE	W'MINSTER
			
HOUSE NOTES			

### ATKIN.

AS seemed certain when the last *Visor* notes appeared, Atkin did badly in the House Cricket competition. Only one match out of four had been won at that time, and the remaining matches confirmed Atkin in last place. The Juniors lost all their games, and the Seniors were fortunate to win two out of three. The winning of the Athletic Sports for the fourth successive year proved some consolation, but, on the other hand, the lowly position in the summer examinations was disappointing. As a result of the year's activities Atkin finished in third place in the Coronation Cup competition.

There has been only one House Rugby match so far this term. This was against Westminster, who fielded a strong team, but it could not last the pace set by the Atkin forwards. The Westminster team was kept in its own half for most of the game, except for occasional bursts at the end of the first and at the beginning of the second half. The final score was 15—3, the Atkin team being worthy winners, chiefly on account of their loose scrummaging and line-out work, in which Pritchard was prominent. The younger boys played well, Buckland-Evers being confident at full-back, Watt promising well at scrum-half, and Hopner, Caldwell, and B. Taylor showing strong running abilities. Haggerty led the forwards energetically, but the high light of the game was the ease with which Hodgson continually disrupted the Westminster defence.

All boys will have to work hard and the teams give of their best, if Atkin is to do well this year; for it is certain that the other Houses are going to provide keen competition in the battle for the Coronation Cup.

K.W.J

## STITT.

**W**HEN the last *Visor* was published, there were still many things undecided. In the Cricket, the Juniors won their final game, and the Seniors annihilated Tate by 9 wickets in their final game. As a result Stitt came first at Cricket, which was a great improvement on the previous season's 4th position.

Stitt were 3rd in the Athletic Sports, the only outstanding achievement being that of T. Fitzgerald, who was runner-up to Wylie for the Junior Victor Ludorum.

The Summer Marksheet went to Westminster with Stitt second, and as a result, Westminster won the Coronation Cup with a total of 30 points, and Stitt finished second with 27 points.

This term, there has been only one rugby match played in the House competition. Stitt Seniors were well beaten in this game by Tate, to the tune of 24 points to nil.

I.M.

## TATE.

**W**HEN the last *Visor* went to press the fate of the Coronation Cup was undecided—there being the Athletic Sports, Cricket, and one Marksheet to affect the final result. Tate were fourth in the Sports, they lost their final Cricket match against Stitt, so tying with Westminster for second place, and finished fourth in the Marksheet, which made them unchallenged wooden spoonists in the Coronation Cup.

So far this term only one House Rugby match has been played, when the Tate senior team beat Stitt by twenty-four points to nil. They have a strong senior House team, and the junior team has capabilities, so that, with practice, they stand a very good chance of victory in Rugby. The only other major event of the term will be the marksheet, and it is essential that every member of the House should do his best in both team and examination work.

The House this year has, on the whole, considerable possibilities, and, if all pull their weight, there is no reason why last year's position in the Coronation Cup should be repeated. In fact, considerable improvement is more than a probability, but the effort must not be an individual one; it must be made by the House as a whole.

## WESTMINSTER.

AT the end of last term, the intellectual destinies of the School may be said to have reposed in the hands of Westminster. For out of a small Advanced form of eight, five belonged to this House. Their success in the late G.C.E. Examinations not only reflected credit on the School, but ensured that their House would obtain the points necessary to win the Coronation Cup. Therefore, the whole House owes them a debt of gratitude which may only be repaid by strenuous efforts to maintain undiminished the glory of the legacy which was left to them at the beginning of the term. Special mention must be made of N. N. Jones, last year's captain, whose own personal performances (being *Victor Ludorum* for the fourth successive year, establishing three School records at the Sports, and proving a very able captain of the House Rugby team) contributed so much towards our ultimate success.

When our resources for the coming struggle were examined, we found that, compared with last year's, they are by no means small beer. We have six representatives in the Advanced (including one of the old brigade); three members of the 1st XV.; two members of the 2nd XV.; and two members of the Chess Team (although Stitt have a most disheartening monopoly here). But, despite a superficial sameness in the line up, the Cup auguries have been less kind than of yore. For the Rugby season began with our convincing capitulation to the superlative Atkin team, from which one conclusion may be drawn with confidence—that nothing would prevent the victors from winning this competition. N. N. Jones was a missing bulwark whom no one could replace. Thus the House must endeavour to exhibit its talents in other spheres, particularly in the Marksheets (whose inner workings we are never privileged to inspect, although they have often intrigued us) and in Examinations.

Meanwhile, the Cross Country, Sports Day, and Cricket lie before us; and although the House is defeated in Rugby it may harbour justified optimism concerning the future. Just as Westminster has never disgraced itself in any competition in the past, there is no reason to believe that this year will prove any different. The talent is there; but it is too often buried beneath a mound of personal considerations. Once every boy determines to put House before self, we shall move mountains, but not until. Finally, if a motto for the year were required, may we parody the World's first propagandist, Cato, and suggest: "Delenda est Atkin"? W.N.B.

## Libraria

THE Library this year has more occupants than of late, although one member savoured the delights of a Welsh resort for an extra week, and was A.W.O.L. Our thoughts have turned to examinations. The happy days of leisure have passed too swiftly, and the dreaded ogre called an examiner appears on the horizon. However, our sporting colleagues have no time to contemplate the terrible gulf upon whose brink they stand; J. D. sees to that! Alas, the heady charm of wine and women has further distracted them, and one can only surmise that if they reach the portals of higher life, i.e. University, they will cause a few grey hairs in the Senate; for they only follow the examples of their friends who have entered these portals. We, left behind to weary toil at Whetstone Lane, have attended a 'Phil.' where 'Honest Jack' laid favourable odds on the possibility of the conductor 'losin' his pants.' This term the badge of authority now cloaks sixteen people, and the 'Reign of Terror' was unleashed by order of the Laird. To photograph 'this motley crew' proved impossible for an ordinary camera, and a specially toughened, amorphic, magnetic, stereophonic, wonder-of-the-age camera had to be used (with apologies to M.G.M.)

A new fashion in half-beards has appeared: the bearer claims that he is a naturist and it is winter protection. Another new fashion is the appearance of the County Caps, and the owners may be seen propping up the scoreboard at Birkenhead Park on certain Saturdays. This term, on one occasion, we were unanimous in passing a hearty 'vote of thanks' to Joe Di M\*\*\*\* on the liberation of La Monroe. The morning music is now the work of a syndicate, and two of our number are members; but, whereas one gives a 'death-march' rendering, the other is a 'boogie' specialist.

The great interest in sport, so usual in schools has bitten deeply into us, and we have tried to profit by it. Accordingly, after furious debates, the aforementioned 'Honest Jack' stands to lose not only his 'shirt,' but every stitch of clothing, if fate frowns on him. The keenness of these arguments is somewhat lacking in the instruction periods, and the soporific warmth of the heating system causes gentle rumblings of sweet sleep to issue from our artist in the corner, who dreams of building a new 'Blenheim.'

On Thursday afternoons pungent and acrid odours seep into the room, and on more than one occasion we have staggered out at the point of death. Our scientific friends are horrified at the idea of 'doing away with us,' and assure us that that thought was furthest from their minds. Apart from minor incidents, life, for the denizens of the Library, flows quietly on. Like Newby and Co. we await 4 o'clock eagerly, and then we plod our weary way home. Before we leave you we would like to ask if anyone can obtain jobs for us driving motor-cars in Italy until we are twenty-six.

## Science Notes

WHEN the time came for us to apply our scientific pen to our scientific paper, the scientific question which immediately sprang to our scientific minds was: "What, in the name of Abdullah the Twelfth, shall we write?"

Our first idea was that old standby, libel, but those scientists who are on more than speaking terms with the female branch of the local French Embassy violently disapproved.

It was pointed out that we are the senior pupils of the School, and as such must suppress our frivolous tendencies. Gone are the days when as L.6S. we could tell you of our frolics, and what a pack of clots L.6A. were. We must now, under the illustrious title of "Science Notes," attempt, though handicapped by a considerably smaller vocabulary, to emulate that majestic epistle "Libraria."

As one particularly carnivorous walrus once said, "The time has come," the Christmas term being that time of the year when every member of the Advanced acquires a writing pad with which to belabour all university registrars, deans of faculties, bursars, and what-have-you with pleading letters.

Tudd, who was told that the School motto had something to do with doctors possessing loads of spondulex, bought himself a stethoscope and is planning a one-way trip to the "Hielands." When asked why he wanted to take medicine, there came the immediate reply: "Because ye dinna hae tae tak' maths."

Many of us have found that our hearts belong to the city across the water (or is it a saturated solution of sludge?)—but there are those who have been smitten by the inevitable wanderlust.

Our favourite planet has written to almost every seat of learning still standing; since he is a gambling man, his philosophy is, "One of them is bound to turn up."

Jeg and Pete have succumbed to the lure of the bright lights, and intend setting out for the big city—Dick Whittington and all that. (Do we hear bells or is it just the pneumatic drill outside?).

Our mathematician (it is whispered) is under consideration for the comrades Faculty of Sums, Irkutsk, following a visit by two bearded gentlemen in bowlers. (One more electronic brain gone East!).

The other day one of our artistic colleagues sadly announced that he could find no university with a soccer club, a boxing club, and a card school (in reverse order of importance). His mission in life, now is to found such a university. 'After all,' quoth he, 'eddyerkeyshun an't ev'ryfink, like, ye know.'



And so we must close, although, in the words of Casca, "We could tell you more."

Much of what is written here will be history when you read it; so until your next history lesson,

We are, Sirs,

Yours in trepidation,

P.H. J.E.G.

#### PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT.

Let it be known throughout the land that the wanderlust is not the only thing that has smitten our mathematician.

## ***Form Notes***

### LOWER 6A.

THIS great and noble form has been saved from extinction by the gallantry of two ex-5A-ites in staying on to be instructed in the arts. Both members, although they make their abode in the Junior School (now rapidly becoming a Casino), have almost all their lessons in the Library with the elder scribes. We had hoped to have a third member in our scholastic struggles, but he decided, not unwisely perhaps, that a course in accountancy might be more acceptable.

We are each trying to 'bump off' the other in order to receive private tuition, but November 5th failed to exterminate either of us. And so we continue to feel that the form is rather too large.

We both enjoyed the trip across to the Y.M.C.A. to hear the Philharmonic Concert. Yes, the trip over the road was very good, but unluckily (?) we were unable to hear any music, since the Science "wackers" set up a none too melodious snoring session. We both paid a visit to E.H.H.'s "Jam Session"; but, as we derived no inspiration from this, it seems that we are not going to turn out brilliant musicians like some of our predecessors, in spite of our musical education.

We are being trained as 2nd XV. members of late, owing to the regretted departure of Mr. Dean from our friends in the "systematized knowledge" sets. If he follows in the footsteps of his namesake he will, of course, take part in a much more civilised sport (?)

We obviously expect some "mud-slinging" from the Science section now, but as we are only two in number and neither of us has any outstanding qualities (good or bad), we shall probably be safe from this attack, if it breaks out.

B.T. S.J.

THE form's first contribution is by A. R. Caldwell, who describes one of the great engineering schemes of the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board.

### PITLOCHRY DAM AND POWER STATION.

Visitors to Pitlochry are interested to see the new dam with its power station and unusual fish-ladder. Loch Faskally is three miles long, and where it adjoins the dam is fifty-two feet deep; twining between pleasantly wooded hills it provides excellent boating and fishing facilities.

The dam is fifty-four feet high and four-hundred and seventy-five feet long. The footway across the dam bridges two spillways ninety feet long with automatic drum gates, the first of their type in Britain. The power station contains two turbo-alternators of the Kaplan type, each with a capacity of 7,500 kilowatts. The rotating part of each turbine weighs sixty-five tons; the turbines are completely devoid of vibration, and pennies balanced on end, illustrate this fact.

The fish-ladder is nine-hundred feet long, and enables salmon and other fish to surmount the dam on their way up river to spawn. It consists of thirty-five pools rising up in steps of eighteen inches. An under water pipe connects each pool to the one above, and, as the salmon instinctively swim against the current, they are guided up to the loch above. The fish may be seen as they pass through an illuminated observation chamber.

The next article is by W. R. Girven, and he calls it

### MY PART-TIME OCCUPATION.

During my spare time at week ends I work in a nursery garden. Until I started work there, I had never realised how much patience, skill, and labour are needed to produce fine blooms and plants. The gardener, I found, was not only qualified in his own trade, but could act as glazier, carpenter, bricklayer, or builder; and all these jobs are part of his daily routine. Every day, every month, every year, there must be some-one in the garden to care for the plants. I discovered that a seemingly simple job like watering requires many years of experience; for lack of water kills the plant, and too much rots it.

The gardener must know the height to which a plant will grow; for it would be disastrous to put a tall-growing plant into a low-roofed greenhouse. I found that greenhouses must be kept at constant temperatures,

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and the air must be circulated to prevent mildew. Weeding, planting, fumigating, all must be done to allow the plants to grow correctly. Soil must be mixed, and old soil must be purified to prevent disease. Flowers must be cut daily for the market, and customers must be served. The work is not easy, and the pay is not great, but I found that the work is interesting and useful if one has a garden.

Finally, C. V. Kellett writes about

### FLYAWAYS.

A "flyaway" is a very common occurrence among young pigeons who have just learnt to fly. It seems that for no apparent reason the young birds take to the air as usual; but, instead of returning after their normal period of exercise, completely disappear. Some may make their way back to the loft within a few days, but others are never seen again. This often results in the loss of many valuable birds.

The birds stampede in groups, and usually fly for hundreds of miles, until they drop from sheer exhaustion, and are usually unable to return. Various theories have been advanced on this matter, one is that this is nature's way of limiting the multiplication of certain species, thus avoiding over-population, but the most generally accepted theory is that the natural exuberance of young stock suddenly overcomes their domesticated instinct not to stray too far from their home loft. Before they realise it, their pent-up energy has developed into a "mad fly."

Much depends on the temperament and environment of the young birds, and the occurrence is not confined solely to pigeons. Perhaps other *Visor* readers may be able to advance a theory.

### 5B.

**W**E commence with R. Clampitt's and F. Watts's account of form doings:

This year we have four boys who have come back into the 5th form to take the G.C.E. in November. Several of the form play for the School rugby teams. Smith, J. G. and Sheng play for the 1st XV., Walsh Meredith, Clampitt, Cundill, and Evans play for the 2nd XV. We have one member of the 2nd Chess team, namely B. Walsh. This year we are situated in the old 5B form room, the one next door to the masters' room, and the rumour is that this is because we might do the impossible and make too much noise.



With its 25,000 blooms, changed to a different design every year, the fame of the clock spread all over the world. Between the wars, the Edinburgh firm installed clocks in Southport, Blackpool, Southend-on-Sea, Weymouth, Bridlington, Brighton and Hove, and Liverpool.

Another Edinburgh idea 'caught on' and was 'exported': the famous cuckoo which pops out every quarter of an hour to delight the children awaiting its appearance. Weston-super-Mare decided to have a cuckoo fitted to their floral clock. Many places followed suit, including Swansea.

Edinburgh's clock is now a baby compared with some it has inspired: its dial is ten feet in diameter—that at Southend-on-Sea is twenty feet in diameter, and is probably the largest in the world.

And all this was inspired by an old 'throw-out' clock from a Fife-shire Parish Church, and a Scotsman's bright idea!

L. White presents some rather startling revelations about William Shakespeare.

Is there anyone who hasn't heard of Shakespeare? He's the bloke whose plays are a flop after a musical has run in the same theatre for three years. Not that he can't write plays, but—he's dead lazy: he hasn't written anything for years. Now, if he knew a thing or two about business, he would have struck while the iron was hot: when his plays were selling, he should have teamed up with Irving Berlin, and written a rattling good musical, such as "Prithee, Annie, take thy carbine," or "Le Noel Blanc."

His plays are too boring. It's bad enough to have to read the stuff in school, but to pay one and six—eighteen weeks' pocket money—for a seat in the gods, and then get nothing for it (no gags, no songs), it's no wonder he's not popular. Nobody listens to those long speeches: "Friends, Romans, Countrymen, Lend me your ears. . ." Now how on earth—! All are waiting for the interval, to throw their paper aeroplanes (made from programmes), and to boo the manager.

But no, Shakespeare's completely out of date. Anybody would think that he died in 1616.

Pardon, sir? He did? Oh sir, I *am* sorry. I hope his widow is provided for.

4B.

**W**E begin the form's contributions with D. Harford's account of

#### A LAUNCH.

Early in October I had the pleasure of seeing a ship launched at Cammell Laird's. It was a single-propeller tanker, the *Hemiglypta*. We arrived in good time, and got a very good position near the bows. The

ship was launched by Lady White. We watched the vessel slide down the ways and out into the river, where she was at once met by tugs. She looked very big entering the fitting-out basin; her long, sleek modern lines, newly painted, showed up all the other ships.

Before leaving the shipyard we saw H.M.S. *Ark Royal*; to us on the quay she looked very big, and dwarfed by the aircraft-carrier was a yellow submarine, H.M.S. *Sidon*. She is complete with 'snort' apparatus, and had recently undergone diving trials in the dock. Among the many other interesting things we saw was a destroyer being insulated against radio-activity.

Next K. E. Newton writes on

### FRESCO PAINTING.

A fresco is a mural painting executed in water colours on a ground of wet lime plaster. Drying lime absorbs carbon dioxide from the air, and turns quite hard. As the plaster hardens, the paint is drawn in, becoming a part of it, and it retains its colour and form as long as the background survives. In early Christian churches frescoes were used to illustrate Biblical scenes.

Perhaps the greatest painter of frescoes was Michelangelo, who lived from 1475 to 1564. He was an Italian painter and sculptor, who carried our frescoes for the Sistine Chapel in Rome. This chapel was built by Pope Sixtus IV. It is a hundred and thirty-three feet long, and forty-five feet wide, and the whole vaulted ceiling was painted by Michelangelo in a series of frescoes.

This set of paintings depicts the Creation and other sacred subjects. The work cost Michelangelo four and a half years of his life, and he carried out most of it lying on his back.

Finally F. G. Snowden tells us about

### TAKING OFF IN A JET.

During the summer holidays I was very lucky in being taken for a flight in a jet aircraft. It was a fine day at Royal Air Force Station, Valley, and as the aircraft was 'fuelling up' I was struggling into a 'Mae West' life jacket, and a parachute, the heavy armour of the 'knights of the air.' In next to no time I was sitting beside the station commander in a gleaming D. H. Vampire T.11. After the pilot had made a thorough check of the instruments, we both peeled on our close-fitting flying helmets and plugged in the intercommunication wires. The pilot spoke to control:—

"Hello, control! Blue King to control, request taxi."

"Control to Blue King," came the immediate answer; "clear to taxi, runaway two."

A gloved finger pushes the engine starting button, and a shrill whine is heard in the earphones, a shrill whine that increases into a hollow whistle, and then into an almost unbearable scream. The pilot gives a 'thumbs-up' sign to a leading air craftsman, who instantly pulls away the chocks holding us back, and the noises decrease as we almost crawl forward. Soon we are at the beginning of runway two.

"Blue King to control; request take-off."

"Control to Blue King; runway clear, permission to take off."

The pilot glances at me.

"Hold on, old chap; here we go."

As once more builds up the noise, so does a gnawing feeling in my stomach, and the runway begins to race away beneath us until it makes us almost dizzy to watch it. Then, as the gloved hand on the control stick moves slightly backwards, the runway falls away, and with a dull thud the undercarriage retracts into the wings and nose. The pilot dips a wing and turns us out over the Irish Sea. Almost impossible to believe, I am flying in a jet; something I shall always remember.

### 3A.

**M**CTEAR and Noel continue in their efforts to supply the form notes. We will deal firstly with the form's progress in lessons, as by this time many boys are preparing for the Christmas examinations. The half-term mark-sheet resulted in two boys being first in class, E. Williams and McTear, with Needham a close third. The form now take Chemistry under the supervision of Mr. Fisher, and we have as form master Mr. Malcolm, who has done a great deal to inspire all boys to bring money for the *Visor* sales.

Secondly we turn to sport. Fourteen boys from 3A play or have played for the Bantams, who are not having a very good season, although they are under a capable captain in Blackwell. Boyd and Brocklebank have also played for the Colts, and Morgan and Holmes have been appointed committee members of the Chess Club; Morgan, of course, plays Chess for the School.

The rest of our notes are on various form "activities." Quinn and his merry followers, who are seated at the front of the class, cause countless little disturbances during lessons, and the German member of the form, Noel, caused a sensation by having a "Bop" haircut.

Taken as a whole the form's activities are very varied.

The next item is by Morton and he calls it

## A VISIT TO HAMPTON COURT IN GREATER LONDON.

Hampton Court was one of the houses belonging to King Henry VIII., and it is still in perfect condition to-day, although parts of it have been altered and renewed by that great architect Christopher Wren.

When I went round the State Apartments, which surround the Fountain Court, I learned a great deal from the guide whom I followed. One room we passed through contained the Queen's Bed, which still had faded bed clothes on it, and in another room we found a bath, unlike a modern bath, which was just an alcove in the wall. The last room that I visited contained a few of the Queen's Beasts, which stood outside Westminster Abbey on Coronation Day. The most noticeable feature of all the rooms were the great ceilings, which were decorated with large paintings.

I also visited other parts of Hampton Court such as Wolsey's Closet, the kitchen, and the magnificent gardens, and altogether I spent a very enjoyable day there. I must visit it again some time.

We conclude with an article by Brocklebank who tells us about

## MY PEN-FRIEND.

I have a pen-friend who lives in Cantor, Illinois, U.S.A. He is at present stationed at Chicago with the United States Air Force, but before he joined up he was studying to be a motor mechanic.

At the age of sixteen he had his own car, and with his brother he spent many long holidays, including one in Florida and another in the Yellowstone Park.

They were camping, with a friend of theirs, in Yellowstone Park, and my pen-friend was bitten by a snake. However, his friend brought out his rifle and immediately shot the snake. They had another mishap when they were fishing, and their boat overturned, but they both escaped serious hurt.

On the way back from one such holiday, the tyre of the car burst, and they skidded off the road, hitting a gate and a stone pillar, and badly damaging the car.

After this crash they decided to buy a new car, as the old one was only a 1937 Ford, and was in a bit of a mess, and at present they are saving up money to buy a new Hudson.

THE first article is by K. Uytendhal on

### THE T.T. RACE IN THE ISLE OF MAN.

We set off from Liverpool at about 9-30 p.m. The boat left at 10 p.m. and docked at Douglas at about 3 a.m. On leaving the ship we made our way to a café for something to eat. As we did not fancy anything, we went to a small garden on the front and made our own. After breakfast we set out to find a good vantage-point where we could see the riders clearly as they came down the road. As it was raining, the race was late in starting, but at last the race did start, and a couple of seconds later the first rider came slithering round the bend. Then the man everybody was waiting for, Duke, came slithering round the corner in a tight turn, having learnt his lesson from last time when he rode into the sand-bags. During the race there were reports that there were thick mists on the Mountain, and that the race might be stopped, and about 1 p.m. the news came through that the race had been stopped. At this time Duke was having his tanks filled, and W. Amm went past to lead. This cost Duke the race, but it was an excellent one all the same.

The next article is by R. Dixon who tells us about

### A JOURNEY INTO SPACE.

Have you ever wondered if one day man will conquer space and reach, say, the moon? It is possible; for we could start preparing for the trip to-morrow if we had enough money, but it would cost over a billion pounds.

"That is an enormous amount of money," you will say. No-one could possibly have so much money." No-one has. That is why first there will probably be a station made in space, and from there a rocket can be launched that will reach the moon.

A rocket, to leave the gravity pull of the earth, will have to travel at the speed of 25,000 m.p.h., and no machine has ever reached that speed. The trouble is the fuel. No fuel can burn quickly enough to attain that speed, but experiments are being carried on all the time to find such a fuel. If this fuel was found, then the rocket would have to be a two stage rocket, so that, after being launched and when sufficient speed is reached and the fuel is burnt out, the bottom half of the rocket will drop, and the top half will carry on until it breaks the gravity pull of the earth. Once this happens, the fuel is no longer needed, and the motor can be switched off, the rocket coasting the rest of the way; for out in space there is no air, and no friction occurs, and therefore there is nothing to slow it down.

The last article is by G. Harrison on

### KEEPING A FRESH WATER AQUARIUM.

To keep a fresh water aquarium you need a tank. These are fairly expensive things to buy in the shops, but you can sometimes buy a cheap one at a second hand shop. If you can get an accumulator jar, it serves the purpose just as well. The tank must be placed where there is plenty of light, or the plants will not thrive. The next step is to get it ready for the fish. This is done by putting a thin layer of gravel on the bottom of the tank. On top of this, a layer of sand, about 1 inch thick is placed, having been previously washed. Willow moss or water soldier is then put in the tank for a retreat for the fish. Other forms of ferns are added and a weed known as "Canadian Pondweed" which can be found in most ponds in England. To help to keep the water fresh a few water-snails are added. Goldfish are put in, and it is best to get colourful fish like the angel fish, the golden tench, or the golden carp.

Great care must be taken not to handle the fish, and you can buy a net for the purpose for about 1/6d. To give the fish air you can place a piece of glass across the top of the tank raised on two flat pieces of wood. This also stops the fish from jumping out.

2A.

**D.** BARWELL gives the first article of the form's many and varied contributions, which is

### THE HISTORY OF CHESTER CATHEDRAL.

Chester Cathedral is the chief church and headquarters of the Diocese of Chester, which consists of all the parishes in Cheshire. The throne of the Bishop of the Diocese stands in the Cathedral. That is what makes it a Cathedral (cathedra is a Greek word meaning throne). Up to the time of Henry VIII Cheshire was part of the Diocese of Lichfield. In those days the building which is now the Cathedral was an Abbey. Both the Abbey Church, and the buildings attached to it, were the monks' house.

The Abbey was founded not many years after the Norman Conquest, but before that time there was a Saxon church here. It was called as was the Abbey which succeeded it, St. Werburgh's. St. Werburgh did not have any special connection with Chester during her lifetime. It was when the Viking pirates were plundering England that her body was brought for safety from the village of Hanbury in Staffordshire to Chester and placed in the Saxon church.

The Domesday Book tells us something of the clergy who looked after the Saxon church. The Normans were great admirers of monks, and Hugh Lupus, the first Norman Earl of Chester, turned St. Werburgh's into an Abbey with the help of St. Anselm, who came from the Abbey of Bec in Normandy. It was on his way home from Chester that St.



Anselm, much against his will, was made Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Cathedral was begun in 1103 in the reign of William I. Parts of the Norman Church of Hugh Lupus and St. Anselm still remain, but most have been replaced by work of various periods. In the nineteenth century under the leadership of Dean Howson the outside of the Cathedral was more or less completely refaced.

Lee now gives us his views on

#### AN INTERESTING SUMMER HOLIDAY.

This year I spent my holidays in Hallsands on Start Bay in South Devon. Below the Hotel where I stayed was an old village which was washed away in the storms of 1927. One day I went over Start Bay Lighthouse, which is one of the last to use a paraffin oil lamp.

I enjoyed a few trips in the motor boat when I went spinning for mackerel. I was also lucky enough to see a school of porpoise across the bay. I saw a lot of ships, among which were an aircraft carrier, a submarine, and the Royal Yacht, Britannia.

Quite near the Hotel is Slapton Ley which is famous for its rudd fishing. I spent two days fishing on this stretch and caught many fish. The final thrill of my holiday was to see glow-worms in a small lane near the Hotel.

P. Winder writes on

#### THE WONDERFUL TAIL OF THE LYRE BIRD.

One of the most remarkable birds in the world, though it has no bright colouring, is the Lyre bird of Australia. The tail feathers of the male are developed to resemble the shape of the ancient lyre, but the hens do not possess this remarkable form of tail. The Lyre has a wonderful gift of imitating the songs and cries of other birds. The birds have their own walks or playing grounds, which are never infringed upon by the other birds of their kind, where they may remain for days singing at the same spot. As they sing, the males spread their tails over their heads as the peacock does. Young cocks do not sing till they have their full tail which is not until the fourth year. The nest is constructed of small sticks, moss and root fibres and the hen lays a single egg of a dark colour.

2B.

**W**OODSIDE Ferry has had a long and interesting history, and D. Roberts contributes some notes on

#### WOODSIDE FERRY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

The 'Woodside Packet Boat' was the old name for the ferry boats. They came into use in 1864, and are said to have been better than the modern ones; they had a central saloon below, and an open upper deck. The first was the *Cheshire*. It had two funnels, one at each side.

## TO BE OR NOT TO BE?

**W**HAT is the question? There are a good many questions and problems in our lives to-day; new ways of living and an ever-changing world have brought about revolutions in our thought and outlook. But we ourselves are the same; human nature has not changed since Shakespeare's days; it has not changed since the first primitive man began to reason for himself, and it never will change.

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More local interest is given by L. Pollock's account of the secrets of the Mersey Tunnel.

#### A VISIT TO GEORGE'S DOCK BUILDING.

The other day I visited George's Dock Building. A guide took our party up a lift to the control room, where we saw two men at work at the switch board, which was explained to us by one of the men. We saw the rest of the control room, with clocks and switches for controlling the ventilation and exhaust system.

We then went into an air lock and down a lot of steps to the exhaust room, where many fans were sucking the foul air out of the tunnel. Down some more steps we reached the electric room, where there were transformers working, and a mechanical chemical apparatus, which was taking a sample of air every seven seconds, and recording it in the control room. Next we went into the fresh air room, where fresh air was being drawn in from the roof and taken into the Tunnel. Then we went into the Mersey Tunnel itself and saw the traffic coming and going. Finally we entered a vertical tunnel, where a lift took us to ground level.

To conclude N. Ferguson writes about

#### THE TAJ MAHAL.

The Taj Mahal is a beautiful Indian mausoleum built entirely of white marble in the year 1634. People from all over the world journey to the ancient city of Agra just to see it. The delicate carving and the glorious colour combinations of the many precious stones which are inlaid on the face of the monument need to be seen to be believed. It was built by the Emperor Shah Jehan to house the remains of his favourite wife, Nour Mahal, and when the Shah died he too was buried there. The architect of this beautiful mausoleum was a Persian named Ustad Isa, and the story goes that, when he had completed his wonderful design, he was hurled from the top of one of the minarets, so that he might never again build anything so beautiful.

#### 1A.

THE standard of 1A's contributions was good, making the Editor's task of selection difficult. Promising articles which have unfortunately been crowded out were submitted by V. Saunders, A. Langley, and B. Doveston; the first one we print is by I. Macmaster, and he calls it

## SHIPS THAT USE BIRKENHEAD DOCKS.

My father, who is a dock gatemanager, has often taken me on visits to the Birkenhead Docks, and has told me about the different shipping firms who use the docks for the loading and unloading of their vessels.

The oldest firms using the docks are the Blue Funnel Line (belonging to Alfred Holt and Company), and the Clan Line. Both these companies load and discharge their cargoes at Vittoria Dock. The Blue Funnel Line has, for many years, carried cargoes to China, Japan, the Philippine Islands, Java, and many other places in S.E. Asia. The sailors who man these ships are white men, but Chinese from Shanghai are often employed as stokers. The Clan Line has a large trade with India, and coolies often man these ships. The Bibby Line, who also sail to India, berth in the West Float. At the moment, there are many Pakistani ships in Birkenhead; these have regular sailings from Alfred Basin to India. Although the crews of these ships are from Pakistan, the skippers are British. Another old firm that uses the port of Birkenhead is the Harrison Line, which has sailings to West Africa.

Many small coasters lie in the Wallasey Dock. They carry cement and stone chippings. Dutch coasters nearly always dock in Egerton or Morpeth Dock. Besides these ships there are numerous other small craft, such as coasters belonging to I.C.I., Lever Brothers, and Coopers, who have many sand barges. Some foreign ships bring iron ore to Bidston Dock. Here, it is discharged into railway wagons to be transported to the steel works at Mostyn.

All ships have to enter the dock system through the two main river entrances at Alfred Dock; Morpeth Dock entrance, where the large cargo boats used to come in, has been closed for a number of years owing to the fact that the gates are silted up with mud. The docks are dredged, and the berths kept clear of mud, by the bucket-dredgers belonging to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

We continue with an article by M. Donahue, entitled

### A VISIT TO SOUTH STACK.

South-stack is a large mass of cliffs and caves situated on the southern tip of Holy Island off the Isle of Anglesey. There is a neat lighthouse with white walls and outbuildings on a large out-crop of rock, about a hundred yards from the mainland. A suspension bridge connects it with the mainland. There is a large flight of steps down to the bridge which is near sea-level. As you go down these steps you can see the nest-places of countless hundreds of sea birds. There are many seaweed nests belonging to sea-gulls, razor bill, puffins, shags, and little auks. These birds live entirely on fish, and lay a pear shaped egg; it is shaped thus in order that it may not roll out of the nest.

When you reach the bottom of the steps, and cross the bridge, you see a large, clean, and tall lighthouse; it is the third largest in the British Isles. It has a beam of six million candle power and sends out a five-mile beam at night. The lamp has one giant prism, and weighs about two tons. Although it is operated by two motors (there are two reserve motors), it can be turned by hand, as it floats in a bath of quick-silver.

There are four lighthouse keepers who keep systematic watch at night; two of them sleep, while one watches over the motors and the other is in attendance in the lamp-house. These men have saved over a thousand lives, and are proud both of their reputation and their lighthouse.

18.

THE form seems to have much undiscovered poetical talent. J. Mattingley submitted the following lines, entitled.

#### SCHOOL FEVER.

I must get off to school again,  
Join the others in the queue,  
And all I ask is a seat upstairs  
On the crowded forty-two.  
And the flying rain, and the windows steamed,  
And another wet Monday breaking,  
And a soaked coat, and wet feet,  
And my cold hands shaking.

I must go across to dinner again,  
For the call of my hungry inside  
Is a loud call, and a clear call,  
That must not be denied.  
And all I ask is some meat and veg.,  
And a pudding that is surprising—  
The rain has stopped, the sun is out,  
Our Rugby hopes are rising.

I must go down to the bus again,  
No more I want to roam,  
No longer sad, I race like mad,  
For the joyous journey home.  
And all I ask is a place to stand  
With a laughing fellow rover.  
When homework's done, I'll join the fun  
When the long, long day is over.

(With apologies to John Masfield).

We continue with some brief form notes by R. Davies.

At half-term the house positions were as follows:—First, Tate; Second, Stitt; Third Westminster and last, Atkin. R. Peters was top of the form with J. Mattingley second. At the moment popular opinion is that R. Wood is the best rugby player in the form. Mattingley and Elsdon are the quickest at Maths. The form has twenty-seven members, and Mr. Hughes is our form-master. Fortunately, there was no argument concerning the merits between 1A and 1B, as they are very evenly matched. Many boys are contributing articles for the *Visor* as this is the first time we have had the opportunity of writing.

William Jones now tells us about

### THE FIRST SCOUTS.

Baden Powell was a pupil at a London school in 1840. All the other boys used to give him the nick-name 'Bathing Towel,' but he paid little heed to them. He was fond of football and studied a great deal. On leaving school, he went to study a trade. As he grew older, he conceived the idea of organising a troop of boys in order to teach them citizenship. This he did, and soon had a grand troop of boys. He then wrote many books on this subject, and in these we find the first reference to 'cubs' (a title he gave to the younger boys) and 'scouts' (the name for the older boys). His idea soon spread all over England and became popular and flourishing, as it is to-day. Baden Powell took a trip to South Africa and tried to organise scouting there. He had great difficulty at first but, despite many attacks on his life, he firmly established the idea. After many years in Africa he travelled yet further, to form more 'cubs and scouts.'

## Chess Club

It was rather unfortunate for members of this highly intellectual Club, that this year, an indifferent Chess Team has coincided with one of the strongest Rugby teams on record. But let not the intelligentsia despair! For while we are certain that the game with the chequered board has a history at least as old as the Pyramids, Rugby, in comparison, is a mere parvenu, whose origin may be traced (at the farthest) to English Public Schools. Thus, by reason of its longevity, the Chess Club commands our deep respect.

Last year's captain, Dodd, who was unbeaten in school matches for at least three years, has now left, and we wish him every success at Sheffield University. F. Taylor and Riley, both of whom rendered valuable service, also departed, and a reshuffling of the ranks was necessary, after which Bryant, Marrs, Green, Morgan, H. S. Jones, P. Jones, and Sampson, constituted our new representatives. But their performance, as has



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already been pointed out, has been but mediocre. For, while trouncing Liverpool College  $6\frac{1}{2}-1\frac{1}{2}$ , we were ourselves defeated by Wallasey Grammar School  $4\frac{1}{2}-2\frac{1}{2}$ ; by Calday Grange Grammar School  $4\frac{1}{2}-2\frac{1}{2}$ ; and by Liverpool Institute (who as usual look well in the running for the championship)  $5\frac{1}{2}-1\frac{1}{2}$ . But this landslide of defeats was stemmed by a timely victory against Merchant Taylors, 4-2. To encourage the younger members of the Club, a second team has been fielded on two occasions: against Calday, where they were beaten 6-1; and against Merchant Taylors, where they lost 4-3.

Finally, then, while our prospects of winning the Wright Shield have disappeared, we have again entered for the Cheshire Challenge Shield Competition, in which we hope to redeem ourselves.

W.N.B.

## Music Club

AFTER last term's examinations two meetings of the Music Club were held during school hours. At the first, records of the first movement of Tchaikowsky's First Piano Concerto were explained by the Club secretary. The second meeting saw Mr. E. W. Hughes's final illustrated talk. With the help of records and illustrations on the piano he showed that many popular songs have been 'pinched' from the works of the great composers, and he concluded by explaining how to make lots of money by selling the Greig Piano Concerto! At this meeting Mr. Hughes was presented with a silver pencil, bought by the boys of the School. We thanked him for the work he, as music master, had done for us, and wished him every happiness and success in his new post.

While we await the arrival of a new music master, Mr. Townsend has very kindly consented to take the chair at the meetings. Soon after half-term we held a 'free-for-all record session,' when everyone was invited to bring along records to be played. The results were both varied and interesting. A few weeks later some J. M. B. contestants drove us out of our home, and we met in the gym., when a talk on Part Singing was given by J. R. A. O'Hare of the Advanced, who, with S. J. R. Jones of the Sixth and R. G. Taylor of the Second form, provided 'live' choral illustrations; and before the meeting ended we heard a record of a chorus from the *Messiah*. It is hoped to hold another meeting between the time of the *Visor's* going to press and the end of term.

Thanks must be given to all who, by co-operation in arranging and presenting the meetings, or by their attendance at them, have made it possible to carry on this new and valuable contribution to the life of the School.

E.H.H.

## *Literary and Debating Society*

AT the Society's first meeting to elect officers for the forthcoming year, it found itself without a Chairman who was a Member of the Staff. Thus an experiment (which has proved successful) was tried whereby a prefect took the Chair for each meeting. The Society also owes a vote of thanks to Mr. Prodger, whose untiring efforts may be said to have held it together at a dangerous period when it looked like falling to pieces. As a result of the voting, the House elected Messrs. Green, Phipps (who later had to withdraw, to be replaced by Mr. Hubbard) and Shearer from the Sixth; Hopner and Girven from the Fifth, as its new committee, while Mr. Bryant became the new secretary.

If the hand of authority was removed, at least an unaccustomed freedom of speech enhanced the popularity of debates to no small degree. But, strangely enough, by defeating the first motion of the season, 'That each School should have a Schoolboy Parliament,' proposed and seconded by Messrs. O'Hare and Hopner, opposed by Messrs. Prodger and Girven, the House was denying a fundamental principle of its own existence. A second debate, that 'This House regrets that Guy Fawkes failed,' was both amusing and instructive, although it was fiercely disapproved. Then came the great evening when Mr. W. E. Williams read a paper containing a mosaic of amusing anecdotes which he had read. And the final event before going to press was a 'Stump the Storyteller Competition,' at which, the House unanimously agreed, Messrs. Green and Girven excelled. With an average attendance of about twenty-three, we may anticipate a most successful second half of the season.

W.N.B.

## *Rugby Football*

1ST XV.

SO far this year the 1st XV. has had rather a good season. This is mainly owing to Hodgson, the captain. He has maintained a high standard of play throughout the year and has led the team magnificently: indeed, Hodgson seems to be the whole pack in the line-outs. The School forwards are, thanks to Mr. Robins, the best set of forwards we have had for some time, as well as the fittest pack. Because of this the 1st XV. shows a better record than it has shown for some years, and we have managed to win 8 of our 9 matches, losing one game to St. Anselm's. We have scored 141 against 21, and entertain hopes of continuing this good record for the rest of the season. The highlights of our season were the games against Wade Deacon, Birkenhead School, and C.G.S. It was the first time the School had beaten Birkenhead School for several years, and against Wade Deacon it was the first time Wade Deacon had been beaten by so many since before the war, and I think I am right in saying that the School team has never beaten them

before. Against C.G.S. we showed our best form ever, and deserved to win by more than we did. Howard Jones and Alan Jones must be congratulated on winning their colours.

#### 2ND XV.

This season has been one of mixed fortunes for the side, owing partly to the inability to field an unchanged side. To date the team has won 3 and lost 3, having scored 87 points against 75. The pack is very promising, but the backs have not yet been in complete harmony. If the XV. plays as a team in future, the record will be vastly improved. The main weakness of the team lies in its duty of having to provide its best players for the 1st XV. because of injuries. The best match to date was the match against C.G.S.; if we keep this form up we shall show far better results.

#### COLTS.

The Colts, so far this season, have played 6 matches, winning 2 and losing 4. The heaviest defeat of the season was against Grove Park Grammar School when they lost by 34 points to nil. They have, however, made up for their defeats by beating Birkenhead School and Rock Ferry High School. Lowry has led the team well, Lee was the chief scorer, and Buckland-Evers is confident at full-back. The chief difficulty this year was the inability to find a full team.

#### BANTAMS.

With two fixtures still outstanding this term, the Bantams have yet to record their first win. Although individuals have played well, they have not yet learnt to combine effectively as a team. Often they have had more of the game than the results of their matches suggest, but they must learn to fight back hard all the way, even when their opponents have gained early successes and the situation looks bad. Far too often the opposition have scored not as a result of their own prowess, but because of faulty marking and ineffective tackling on our part. When these weaknesses are overcome there is definitely enough potential talent in the team to achieve improved results.

#### RESULTS.

	1st XV.	2nd XV.	Colts.	Bantams.
Wirral G.S. ....W.	34—0	L. 16—17	L. 3—18	L. 0—32
Park H.S. ....W.	6—3	W.25—0	L. 3—15	L. 5—35
B'head School ...W.	8—6	L. 5—27	W.17—3	
Wade Deacon ...W.	17—0	—	L. 0—35	L. 0—40
Ruthin ....W.	3—0	—	L. 3—6	—
Rock Ferry H.S...W.	35—0	W.19—8	W. 9—6	—
Grove Park ....W.	8—0	—	L. 0—33	—
St. Anselms ...L.	3—9	L. 8—14	L. 8—11	L. 3—20
Calday G.S. ....W.	27—3	W.14—9	—	L. 0—28

work), where we may go. However, in spite of the different life and surroundings, we are constantly reminded of the B.I. by the many familiar faces that we see each day, and I am sure I myself shall never forget the years spent there.

Our exams. begin in about ten days, and we must be getting down to work; so I must close now.

Yours sincerely,

B. A. HAUGHTON.

## *News of Old Boys*

THE broadcast talk in the Third Programme on October 21st, entitled "From the Old World to the New," was given by an Old Instonian, John Gallagher, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and lecturer in history in the university. The economic effects of transatlantic migration in the nineteenth century were the theme of Mr. Gallagher's broadcast, a subject on which his researches into Empire history make him an authority.

\* \* \* \*

An Old Instonian, Flying Officer Frank Leeming, recently took part in the airlift taking supplies to the North Greenland Expedition. He navigated the Sunderland Flying boat which left England on August 5th and called at Reykjavik before proceeding to the expedition's headquarters at Britannic Lake. Mr. Leeming, who was commissioned in the R.A.F. for an eight-year period of service from 1951, had some interesting experiences on this special duty, but his most lasting impression was of the clear atmosphere of the Arctic, allowing navigators visibility up to two hundred miles. Evidently he bears a charmed life since he escaped without injury when a Sunderland crashed in the Faroes on October 23rd.

\* \* \* \*

We congratulate J. Davidson on gaining the award for the highest proficiency as a cadet officer on the *Conway*. This is given by the Mercantile Marine Association, and is highly prized in the profession. We wish Mr. Davidson every success in his future career at sea, following as he does in the footsteps of many Instonians who have served as masters and officers in our merchant navy.

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## *Old Instonians R. U. F. C.*

**T**HE Old Boys' Rugby Club is again enjoying a very successful season.

The first team, at the time of writing, has won eight and lost three matches, having scored 170 points with 52 points against. The second team has a similar record, and the third team is holding its own very well. The playing record of all three teams is thus very encouraging, and we have high hopes of maintaining this standard throughout the season. A full social programme is also being carried out, and the various schemes for raising money for the Ground Fund are proving to be very successful.

Altogether, your Old Boys' Rugby Club is in a very flourishing state, and is able to offer to any Old Boy all that he could wish for in the way of good rugger and social entertainment. Boys still at School can become Associate Members free, and will be welcomed as either playing or non-playing members on leaving School; so don't forget to come along when your days at B.I. are over.

Judging from the School's record at rugger this season, there must be many first-class players in the School, and we would like to congratulate you on your high standard of play this season. Best of luck in your future games! We also give our sincere thanks to all the boys who help us in so many ways throughout the season; this help is greatly appreciated.

Finally, a very happy Christmas and successful New Year to all members of the Staff and School from the Old Instonians' Rugby Club.

G.A.T.

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