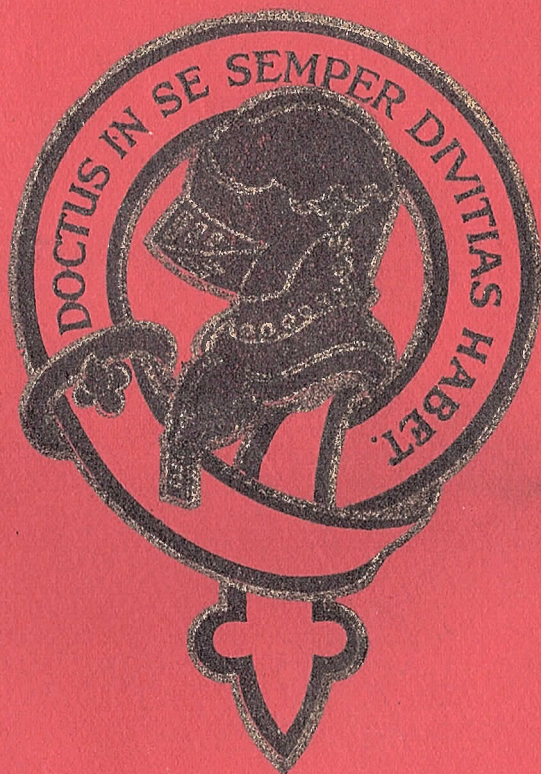


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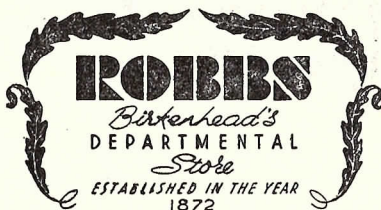
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School Calendar, 1955

Spring Term began	January 10th
Half Term	February 19th—22nd (inclusive)
Speech Day	March 22nd.
Cross Country	March 24th.
Spring Term ends	April 6th.
Summer Term begins	April 25th.
Half Term	May 28th—31st (inclusive).
Summer Term ends	July 22nd.
Autumn Term begins	September 5th.

Editorial

THE composer of an Editorial at this season might well liken himself to an officer calling the roll of his men as they parade after a severe engagement; for those who come safely through a Spring Term (using that expression with the usual poetic licence) are something near to heroes. Mutual congratulation on sheer survival is the note to strike at this hour. We have passed that most melancholy day in the whole calendar, the beginning of term, with Christmas already a grisly jest, with bills unadorned by cheerful stage-coaches in place of greeting cards, and with the ruins of our New Year resolutions about our feet. St. Valentine's Day has come and gone, leaving us heart-whole upon the field, and the Amazons in full flight. Polar weather, with temperatures as low as the stock exchange quotations for Mrs. Pipchin's Peruvian gold mine shares, has assailed us, and some of us have even been hit by snowballs. What is so elegantly described as "the mock cert." visited us for a fortnight, leaving the exact degree of mockery or certitude to be estimated as a personal equation. We have made our annual descent upon the astonished inhabitants of Landican, who probably consider us part of an invasion from space, operating locally from a flying saucer on Lever's Causeway. Finally, we have braved the oppressive splendours of the Town Hall, entrenched ourselves strategically against a barrage of civic eloquence, and, after weeks of strident harmonic labour, performed the portentous anthems peculiar to that occasion. All these trials and tribulations: a new term, examinations, the Cross Country, blizzards, and the Prize Giving, we recall at this present muster as our ranks reform, an heroic if occasionally battered company. "Soyez fiers!" as Foch bade his men. Be proud of yourselves! But you are more lucky than those who the Preacher opined regretfully had no memorial, who had perished as though they had never been. For all your deeds of the last three months, your genius for survival, are they not written in the pages of this current *Visor*? The modest outlay for a copy of your own magazine will enable you to discover afresh in the following pages what a hero you have been and to stand astonished at your own invincibility.

Salvete

EASTER TERM.

2B. Barret, E.

Valete

CHRISTMAS TERM.

5A. Christian, R. R. G.

5B. Black, A. C.; Drummond, D. W.; Patrick, C. D.

Staff Notes

WE welcome Mr. Shaw who joined the Staff this term as Music Master, the department having been in temporary abeyance since Mr. E. W. Hughes left us last July. Although the panel of honorary assistant accompanists which flourished during the interregnum is still in existence, at least once a week at prayers we are forcefully reminded of music's place in our midst by the vigorous presentment of the morning hymn under the new régime.

In Your Mime

BROTHERS, if you own a T.V. set (or better still if you have access to some other fellow's and can push to the front row in his parlour while he is busy cutting tasty sandwiches for you in the rear of the establishment), you will know by now that modern progress has evolved a rapid way of finding out what people do for a living. In ancient times the laughably crude expedient of asking a chap directly what his particular method of preying on the community was satisfied the slow-witted. "What gainful pursuit engages your waking hours, my good man?" was a question which deserved what it got—some such reply as "My liège, I follow the occupation of a journeyman pig's ear straightener," which brought negotiation to an abrupt conclusion, stifled further conversation, and did nothing to mellow society. But now we have changed all that. We have cut out the verbiage of the opening gambit and substituted a challenging "What's your line?" (whose menace always reminds me of the friendly inquiry of an armed sentry on a moonless night). At the same time, we have transformed the reply into a fascinating game lasting ten minutes. How? By doing "a little piece of mime for the panel."

Now my contention is that this idea is so brilliant that it should cease to be a game, and be adopted as the regular procedure in serious affairs. I can think of many fields where it would effect instant improvement. Take the Law Courts for example. In place of the prisoner's plea, he could be invited to "do a little piece of mime for the jury," and provide those long-suffering gentry, nay even his lordship himself on the bench, with an agreeable half hour of speculation. "Sir Wilfred, (this is not a question—I am merely thinking aloud, it appeared to me that your client was operating a mangle. If that were so, I don't think we would have jurisdiction. Perhaps the Master of the Rollers ———?" "With all possible respect, m'lud, I believe he was winding up a business." Or again in industrial circles it might be possible to identify a man's occupation without bothering to give him a uniform, diploma, card, or what not, by simply asking him to do a little dumb

show to brighten the leaden hours at the Labour Exchange. (On second thoughts, an inspired "You seemed to me to be doing absolutely nothing" might come so close to the knuckle as to imperil the harmony between capital and labour, and bring all wheels to a standstill).

But it is, as usual, in education that so bright a modern idea will come to full fruition, and the Mime might well become the touchstone by which we determine everything. A science master could do some elaborate shadow-boxing at his bench without apparatus (thus saving the local taxpayer the expense of providing him with chemicals and glassware) and then ask his class to guess what his actions conveyed. "Please, Sir, you were saturating a solution," or "I think you were trying to discover a detergent powerful enough to dissolve the kitchen sink and thus enable Mother to be in the pictures by 10 a.m." And I feel, too, that the Philharmonic conductor, having made some of his celebrated passes, might profitably turn to his audience to see what they made of the Mime. Was he conducting the introduction to Billus's "On hearing the first corn-crake in Bootle," or threatening to descend to murder the fourth flautist from the Hope Street exit, or merely in the opening throes of a cataleptic seizure?

In conclusion, I feel that what is so beautifully called "the Celebrity Spot" is what the teaching of history has long been looking out for. With some modifications, with the master as chairman and with some out-of-work or down-at-heel actors, it would be possible to cover the whole subject. Ten 'Noes' and "the celebrity" would have beaten the form and landed them in detention. Here are some suggestions. What celebrities would be represented by the following?

1. A gentleman wearing his hat sideways and nursing one hand in the instertices of his waistcoat. Information for the form; "from Corsica, indemnity earning."
2. A depressed-looking gentleman (self-employed) seated in an arm-chair. He bids something recede, shakes imaginary moisture from his toes, scowls, and shunts his chair back.
3. A long-legged maritime-looking chap, who appears to have forgotten to put on his trousers but who wears a trim beard in compensation, shades his eyes, peers into the middle distance, gives a sign of contempt with two digits, and stoops down to propel an invisible spherical object.
4. A stout party with legs wide apart, with a feather in his hat, winks like a zebra-crossing beacon, and emits a two-note wolf whistle.

I think there is money somewhere in this, but generously throw out these hints at no extra charge.

W.E.W.

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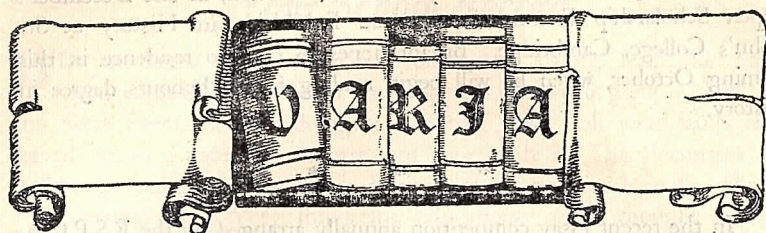
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BIRKENHEAD'S mammoth Technical College was formally opened on Saturday, January 8th, by an old Instonian, Professor Sir Henry Cohen. The Head Master was among the company of guests specially invited for the occasion. The large gathering of heads of similar colleges in the north of England included Mr. D. J. Williams formerly Senior Physics Master at the Institute, and now Principal of Lancaster Technical College.

* * *

For the first time for over a quarter of a century—according to the reliable recollection of our oldest inhabitants—the Cross Country run, originally fixed for the Friday afternoon immediately preceding Half Term holiday, had to be postponed owing to bad weather. The proposal of some enthusiasts, that a token penetration of the distant region reached by our senior run should be undertaken by a sledge team from the last base camp in Thornton Road, fell through owing to an unofficial strike of huskies.

* * *

The interesting photograph, taken by Mr. Shaw, of our venerable pile during the great snows, and of our less venerable inmates presenting that mammoth spectacle "The retreat from Moscow on Ice," not only revealed a sure eye for an arresting picture amid comparatively unpromising surroundings, but was also in itself a neat summary of a very cold term.

* * *

Two of our number, well-known like Juno's swans in "As you like it" for their close alliance, were lost awhile to us earlier this term owing to enforced spells in hospital. But what made their absence unique was that the one was overtaken by illness, in what the philosophical must regard as a most aptly chosen place, while visiting the other. The simultaneous recovery and reappearance of both relegate David and Jonathan to the *proxime accessit* class.

We congratulate W. N. Bryant on his election, at last December's Open Scholarship Examinations, to an Exhibition in History at St. John's College, Cambridge. Bryant hopes to go into residence in this coming October, when he will begin reading for an honours degree in history.

* * *

In the recent essay competition annually arranged by the R.S.P.C.A. we are pleased to note the success of R. F. Salmon of 4A, who won a Special Prize, and of L. E. White of 4A and I. D. Macmaster of 1A, who were awarded a Certificate of Merit.

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Your School Record

DID you know that throughout your school career, from the time you entered Miss Mink's Kindergarten until you grew a beard in the Sixth Form, all your doings are written down 'all your faults observed, set in a note-book to cast into your teeth'? This document or folder, something like the police dossier blonde spies pinch in the films, was invented by a Very Important Educationist (who thought a boy was a navigational aid in the Crosby Channel), worthily invested by a grateful country with the Order of the Geranium (plus two pots) second class, who now, having done sufficient havoc, rests from his labours. The charge sheet is headed 'Confidential,' which is merely official English for 'never let the rabbit see the dog.' But let me take you through a typical example, so that you can be aware of what is going on behind the scenes.

In appearance the thing is like an overgrown ration book, and there are a large number of headings and questions about YOU. It begins with date of birth, which has to be "checked by Birth Certificate" to make certain that you were born and have not been merely hanging around under false pretences. Next comes your admission number. This was stamped on your torso when you were first issued (providing you come within the scope of the previous section) and the fact that it is inked on the middle of your back may account for your having overlooked it. Then there are as many as *six* spaces for your address, since, with the present glut of houses, pupils have been known to flit by moonlight to dodge the importunities of Monday rent collectors. A long row of numerals represents your brothers and sisters, each one of whom is shown as a tick (a judgment with which you will probably agree heartily). A ring is also drawn round the number which means you in commemoration of your father's pious hope (though fate may have subsequently willed otherwise) that you would be the last of the brood. You have to state your mother's regular names and her pet name in brackets; as "Cleopatra Hortense Maud ('Honey')." For "Medical Observations (if any)" the word 'breathes' usually satisfies the authorities. Your attendance is described as either 'Reg.' (which must not be confused with your maternal grandfather's name—another department altogether reached by express lift to the seventh floor) or, if you take a fortnight off every week-end, it becomes 'Irreg.'

Under 'mental tests taken' I am a bit uncertain what 'type' means, but if it refers to the tests, I should say the answer would be 'nuts.' Your 'reasons for leaving' any time between the ages of four

and nineteen have to be given. Among the best reasons I have seen (though it is a choice and profitable field) are "My form master never shaved," "Put on the spot by the Bidston Road gang," and "Mabel's Mother was looking for me." Assuming that you are bound to be a freak, the next question asks about your "noteworthy disabilities" and "any later modifications of the above," which would be met by some such entry "Has a club foot, the vapours, and two noses. Grew a third nose in 3B after he dropped Latin." For the purposes of your attainment in class you are described as being in "a stream," which refers to your ultimate destination after your long-suffering pastors and masters have tied a heavy weight to your feet. They are very anxious to know what you have been up to in 'Art and Craft,' and this may cover almost anything from a capacity to feign the onset of serious illness just before the homework is required, to doing the disappearing half-crown-trick at the collection of dinner money.

One of the nastiest cracks at you is 'Are you Aesthetic?' This has nothing to do with chloroform but really means 'Were you ever found loitering with intent near the Philharmonic Hall wearing bright green corrugated pants and a pink elastic hair slide? If you tell a good one over which your cronies cackle during the seventh round at the local you would qualify for a credit mark in the section headed 'social.' Still harping on the idea that your abnormalities will probably land you in a circus in the long run, the next question asks about your "unusual accomplishments." Off-hand I should say the most promising candidate I ever heard of in this part of the schedule was a chap who played Mozart's Concerto in Q on a nutmeg grater at Arrowe Park Gates, while his pet monkey went round the crowd distributing free copies of Professor Thompson's "How to be as clever as me." He (the chap I was telling you of, not the professor) was a genius of course and was rapidly transferred to a modern secondary school. Finally, your "physical qualities affecting education" are demanded before this third degree ends. Any distemper affecting the forward movement of the legs on the school gate coming into view should be noted in this space.

But stay! The monster has not finished with you yet. It is pre-occupied, on the last page of the record, with your job when you leave. That is what *you* would call it in your vulgar way; the record calls it "Vocational Notes." Thus we get "Attitude to others" ('Snarls'); "attitude to work" ('Distant'). This information is calculated to keep your employer chronically 'prospective.' The concluding paragraphs about your job might well go something like this. 1. Pupil's preference: 'Platinum polisher to the Aga Khan.' 2. Unsuitable occu-

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pations: 'Anything requiring getting out of bed.' 3. Occupation on leaving: 'Tortoise-pacer in a pet shop.' 4. Post school record: 'See Finger Print Department, Whitehall 1212.' If, after all this, you find any real difficulty in getting employment, if you find that interviewers recoil from you in horror and that your only means of eating is at the Public soup kitchens, you will know what to blame. And don't say I didn't warn you!

W.E.W.

Libraria

THE time has again come to report our activities. The delights of Christmas fare have given way to "icicles hanging from the wall," and the arrival of snow. The weather caused the annual "Revolution" against law and order, and many a "Pre" "bit the dust." Yet another consequence of the snow was the last-minute postponing of the Cross-Country. After preliminary investigations of the Course, the number of absences in Cross-Country week rose alarmingly, while the more hardy wrote to the Admiralty for diving equipment. But the spectacle of aquatic games in the Landican Mudpile was denied us, and "The Lever Causeway Rômp" is definitely not on ice.

This term we have had the sweet distraction of music, and the result is that, although Kenton and Goodman are still supreme, Bach and Beethoven are more appreciated. Perhaps the next "Phil" Concert will be more understandable for the uninitiated; if so, our Wednesday afternoon gatherings will not have been in vain.

Many of the Form have been visiting the Universities, and have returned with glowing accounts. Visits have been paid to many in the Country, and at the moment Form and Figures are being avidly studied.

A surprise innovation was the Social held by the School Scouts one Saturday evening. This is a complete departure from the usual life of the School, and the Ghosts of former days must have been startled by the soprano cries that rang through the building.

Our last piece of information deals with examinations. They came with the usual crushing effect and spread gloom and despondency throughout the Form. The intricacies of the Gallic Tongue are quite

beyond the grasp of some of us, and the prognostication of "Aldershot Barracks for you, my lad," by Le Maitre appears only too true. Thus, with another Rugby defeat, the atmosphere is oppressive, and only the forthcoming Speech Day appears as a Silver Lining.

Speech Day and Easter will be here before we tread the Gallows Walk in June. We have but three months before our time is up, and the next Libraria will be the "knell of parting day" for us. Therefore, in our final report we will try to review our seven years of education in 3 volumes at 32/- each. There will be only a limited number of copies available, and purchasers are advised to apply early.

We will now await our *Visor*, confident in the knowledge that we have all bought one. To the astonishment of the Sales Manager, the Upper Sixth paid up in one day, and confounded the ambitions of the Lower School in the race for 100 per cent. Sales.

Lately we have exercised our tonsils in reading from the Scriptures to the School in Assembly. This has called for much racking of the brain, and every day one of our number climbs on the platform with the well-known sinking sensation and dryness in the mouth. This is hard to explain for Scripture is a looked-forward-to subject for the budding Peter Cavanaghs of the Form.

Mr. W*ll**ms is still delighting his followers in his inferior subject, as most Courses of Study are, now known. Before we finally close, can any kind person please tell us how to recover from parties? Each one takes its toll, and the "athlete" of the Library has himself fallen from the peculiar disease called "Hangover," though it did not strike for 36 hours (or was it Monday morningitis, Mac?).

P.G.P.

Scientia

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IN one of this country's more important laboratories two figures are crouched over a desk—the desk and surrounding floor are strewn with paper, and three waste-paper baskets are full of rejected ideas—for before them lies a momentous task. A small, very self-possessed young man with a large gold badge of office enters and approaches the two scientists.

He speaks:

"What! Are you two clots writing your form notes again? After that last lot of rot you wrote it's a wonder you've got the nerve to send any more in. You'll certainly have to change your style, if you hope to produce anything half as good as 'Libraria.'"

That little speech, to coin a phrase, "did it."

We had been for several hours debating whether to write the same sort of notes as before or to forget all pretences to wit and write a serious, and no doubt fascinatingly interesting, article on the architecture of the advanced physics lab. Our Irish friend's timely advice made our choice obvious, and without further ado he was caused to describe a graceful parabola through the nearest window, whereupon we set about writing the following "undoubleplusungoodthinkful" notes.

As we write, the last traces of snow are vanishing—snow which, at the height of its career, enabled the Lower School to wreak a terrible vengeance on the now battle-scarred prefects. Cancelled fixtures have caused the 1st XV. to forsake the game of Rugby in favour of solo whist, and the cold weather also inspired the powers-that-be at the Education Office to serve up their "specialité pour un jour d'hiver" in the shape of cold meat, salad, jelly, trifle and blancmange—all on one menu. Another victim of the weather has been the Cross-country, whose postponement caused us to note with no little amusement the facial expressions of those who on February 18th were stricken by that strange disease "crosscuntrititis" (which occurs annually, keeping its victims bed-ridden for one day), only to be told later that the race had not been run.

We take rather a dim view of Gert., who, while visiting one of the Lit. mob in hospital, managed to make himself ill enough to be kept in there until the exams had well finished. It is rumoured that his attack of appendicitis was brought on by a sight of one of the nurses. Dimwits please note the double implication. We will make no comment about the exams except to mention that several of us now attend Church who did not do so before.

This term many of the Advanced have been called away to be interviewed by the big-wigs of distant universities, and therein lie sufficient tales to fill several *Visors*. Space and time limitations compel us to recount but one. "Honest Jack," of Libraria fame, feeling peckish while he was in Leeds, and seeking to learn the location of the nearest eating place, had the bright idea of asking the way from a talented lady undergraduatè. That this young lady made use of her aforemen-

tioned talents is proved by the fact that half an hour later "Honest Jack" found himself the price of two two-bob dinners out of pocket. It was lucky for him that he dealt fairly often during the previous week's dinner hour card games. (Violent protests at the printing of the above passage have been raised by our friend Muggins, hitherto known as Honest Jack).

Although we could write on for much longer than Mr. H*!*'s kind allowance of 1000 words (count them), we feel that it is only polite to leave room for such inferior articles as "Libraria," and so we had better restrain our genius till next term. We will leave you with two reminders.

The first is a plea to anyone with a few spare zebra crossings and traffic lights which would be most useful in the dining room, where conditions become more like a game of "Round and round the mulberry bush every day.

Secondly those who tend to forget their official headgear had better be careful. Why? Simply because Big Brother is watching you—and us!

We note that the completion of *Visor* sales for 3A was rather late this term.

J.E.M.

P.N.

NOTES:

1. See George Orwell's "1984," Chapter 2, p. 19.
2. See Journal of the National Open-Air Mah-Jongg League, Vol. XVI. (Sept. 1938), No. 9, P. 394.
3. See 4.
4. See 3.
5. See Trotsky's "Treatise on the Organisation of Puppet-Shows for Volunteer Salt-Mine Workers," Vol. III., Chapter 25, p. 4, 437.
6. Ditto.
7. Ditto.
8. See Mr. W*b*, Mr. Th*nn*, or "Francais pour les Imbeciles," par Silvanus K. Blogg.
9. See 1.

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Form Notes

LOWER SIXTH.

THE beginning of this term saw us all eager to work with a new fervour. However, this eagerness did not last long, and work is now spasmodic. A new and very prominent game has now been added to our collection—table-tennis. Two black-boards make an excellent table, and various books are employed to form a net, and we are flushed with the pride of achievement as we play on, regardless of time and the place where we should be.

A little while ago we were invited to attend a Students' Scripture Conference at the Girls' Secondary School. The majority of our form accepted the invitation enthusiastically. Were they really eager to enlarge their minds with Scriptural knowledge, or was there some other attraction? Whatever it was, they came back with less enthusiasm than they started out with.

As the dreadful day of judgment (Cross-Country day) drew near, a miracle happened—it snowed. Our form and the Upper Sixth put up a gallant fight against the rest of the School, but, when snow-balls became plentiful and accurate, like the guests in *Macbeth*, we stood not upon the order of our going but went at once. One member of our form cut a rather inglorious figure by dashing up and down Hollybank Road armed with a bin-lid for a shield. Doubtless it served its purpose, but unfortunately he attracted the majority of the snow-ballers, and when he returned to the Junior School great was his wetness.

Before closing I ought to mention the fact that half of our form are members of the School Rugby teams, a fact of which we are very proud. S.J.

5A.

A MOST interesting article is contributed by T. J. Walsh.

TWO REMARKABLE PEOPLE.

My uncle's parents, Mary and John Harrison, followed in the footsteps of C. F. Stood, one of the greatest Methodist missionaries, in spreading the word of God throughout darkest Africa. Many years ago the couple settled in the Belgian Congo, and soon won the respect and love of the natives. "Bwana Harri," as he was affectionately called, was not only a minister, he had to be a 'Jack of all Trades'; for he acted as dentist, surgeon, and peacemaker, among the fierce tribes. At first the young couple encountered much opposition from witch doctors, who re-

Form Notes

sented their attempts to stamp out barbarous native customs, but their perseverance and tolerance were finally rewarded by the natives becoming Christians.

Unfortunately John Harrison died of an incurable disease at the age of forty-eight; much of his great work, such as the translation of the Bible and a hymn-book into Swahili, being unfinished. His wife, undaunted, declared that she would continue the great work alone. Although Mary is only small in stature, she has all the characteristics of a true Scot; for she is adaptable, intellectually strong, and has indomitable courage. Several years ago a sect called the Leopard Men created havoc among the natives of the Congo by killing and torture. Missionaries in the area did much invaluable work in counteracting the unholy activities, and, needless to say, Mary Harrison was no exception.

My uncle, the son of Mary and John, possesses many of his father's belongings, including a Swahili Bible, some ebony carvings which were given to his father by the natives, a Goliath beetle, and, most prized of all, a medal awarded to his father by King Leopold of Belgium. Mary Harrison has attended many world-wide conventions, and all who have made her acquaintance agree that, like her husband, she is a true disciple of God.

N. S. Cooper, who warns us not to take his far reaches of imagination too seriously, writes about

FLYING SAUCERS.

From time immemorial strange objects have been seen in the atmosphere above the earth. Were these objects space craft? If they were, from which planet did they come? And who are, or were, the beings who have been sending these mysterious craft since the dawn of history?

I believe that some race from another planet has been observing the earth with a view to visiting it or even living on it. Flying Saucers, when seen in the past, have been described as "golden horses" or "chariots of fire." People who see them to-day disregard them as meteors or comets. There is abundant evidence that these mysterious creatures from space have been taking away men, no doubt to study them. They have taken away airliners and ships, and they once removed the whole complement of a ship—the "Marie Celeste." Individuals have also been taken away, and these disappearances were described by the priests in bygone days as "ascents to Heaven" or "stealings by the gods."

These space creatures have, several times, landed on the earth and attempted to live peaceably with terrestrial man. We, however, have re-

jected them, calling them "goblins" and "devils." Would it not be better if we were more hospitable towards these beings? They may tire of attempting to be friendly, and invade the earth, and I am sure everyone will agree that an inter-planetary war would be even worse than a hydrogen or cobalt bomb war.

5B.

THERE appear to be many sea-minded contributors in this Form. Boyd tells of

A VISIT TO H.M.S. ARK ROYAL.

On the 23rd February last a party of thirteen boys from the School visited H.M.S. Ark Royal at her berth in the fitting-out basin of Messrs. Cammell Laird and Co. We were joined at the entrance of the ship-yard by a party of boys from Park High School. A Naval Lieutenant then introduced us to our guide, Petty Officer Willétts, who led us through the ship-yard to the basin where the ship was berthed. The guide told us the ship had taken twelve years to build and had cost £25,000,000.

Once aboard the ship, we were shown the Cable Deck where there were arranged four large chains about fourteen inches wide which controlled the anchor system. After winding our way through many passages, water-tight doors, and hatches, we found ourselves in the upper hangar which is situated just below the flight deck and which we were told could accommodate sixty fighter planes. We then ascended on one of the large lifts to the angled flight deck which is 800 feet long and 04 feet wide. After an enjoyable time on the flight deck, on which we saw sixteen 4-5 inch guns, numerous Bofors-guns, a crane for launching planes, and many other objects of interest, we went inside the "Island," and walked round the bridge. We then went below and saw the sailors being issued with their "tots" of rum, and after taking a look at the generating room we went ashore, having spent an enjoyable morning.

Next Blackburn writes about

THE WORK OF THE "Q" SHIPS.

The success of "Q" ships depended on the inefficiency of the submarines in the 1914-18 War. If you can, imagine a dirty old Collier, wallowing in the Straits of Dover, on a summer afternoon. Her hull was painted green with queer-looking black stripes. She was a mystery ship or "Q" ship, meant to deceive the enemy.

The "Q" ships hang around waiting for the submarine to show itself on the surface of the sea, listening to any wireless messages from observers on the coast. An observer gives warning of the sub. on the surface, the "Q" ship sets off after it.

The earlier "Q" ships had guns fitted to them hidden by flaps, and when the sub. was seen, these flaps were lowered. To meet the threat of torpedoes the bulkheads of the ships were filled with wood, so that even if hit by a torpedo the ship would stay afloat long enough to kill the submarine. The ships proved invaluable in their service to England.

Lastly, by way of contrast, Wood tells us how to make

A LEAD PENCIL.

No lead in a "lead" pencil! This is quite true, for it is not lead that does the writing but graphite, a mineral which is the same as charcoal.

The graphite is first of all made into a smooth "dough." This is squeezed through a hole of a diameter required for the pencil. It is then cut into pieces of the right length, and left to dry.

After drying, the pieces are sprinkled with powdered charcoal and baked until all the moisture is extracted. Then it is ready for the cases, which are usually made by pushing wood (e.g. cedarwood) into "slots" 7 inches long, 2 inches wide, and $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick. Six grooves, just big enough to hold the "leads," are made in the slits. The leads are slipped into place, another slot is glued on top of this, and the two are clamped together. When these blocks are dry, they are put into a machine which forms them into six perfectly-shaped pencils.

4A.

WE commence with an article by Haughton which he calls

CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE.

The people of London are so familiar with Cleopatra's Needle on the Victoria Embankment that they seldom even turn their heads to look at it. A few look at the damaged monument, yet few think that it has endured a long voyage on the open sea.

The actual plinth is made of syenite, a kind of Egyptian granite, and measures about $68\frac{1}{2}$ ft., by 8 ft., by 7 ft., and weighs 186 tons. The obelisk was not built by Queen Cleopatra, but it is said that she offered it as a gift to Octavian, who later became the Emperor Augustus. In 23 B.C. Augustus tried to remove the Needle to Europe, but he did not succeed, and it was left lying on the sand at Alexandria.

TO BE OR NOT TO BE?

WHAT 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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In 1801, it was acquired by the British people, but no means of transportation could be devised. It was not until 1868 that the idea of sailing the needle to England in a metal casing was thought of. Other strange alternatives were suggested, but this one seemed the best.

First of all the great obelisk was jacked up, so that there was space to lay the keel underneath it. Inch by inch this was done, and in a surprisingly short time the needle was hidden in the shell, like a chrysalis in a cocoon. So that the cylinder would be self-righting, and to help to counteract the uneven balance, thirty tons of ballast were inserted. The cylinder was tested to make sure that it was water-tight, and then rolled down the shore into the water, and thus the "Cleopatra" was launched. On top of the casing were built a small narrow wheelhouse and mast, and steering gear was fitted.

On September 21st, 1877, the "Cleopatra" left Alexandria with a crew of eight, under a Captain Carter. It was towed by the steamer 'Olga' to which it was connected by a 400 yds. long steel cable. Almost immediately it became apparent that the "Cleopatra" would hardly steer, and that she moved clumsily through the waves. However, all went well until October 13th, when the two craft entered the Bay of Biscay, with a storm arising. The crew of the "Cleopatra" had to be rescued by the "Olga," and the needle was cut adrift and abandoned. After a long time of floating around in the Bay as a menace to shipping, it was found by an English ship and taken in tow. The obelisk continued its voyage to London in safety. On September 12th, 1878, it was erected on the Victoria Embankment. The very first year, the frost attacked it, and many chips of stone broke off. The next year, the monument was treated in a special way, so that this would not happen again.

The next article is by G. Buckland-Evers.

INHABITANTS OF THE BROWN LAND.

Amongst the flotsam and jetsam on the shore there is usually a murmur of starlings jostling one another for the dainty trifles to be found there. In the early morning Hooded-Crows join their smaller rivals in the hunt for food. Such an abundance of small birds is bound to attract some of the birds of prey, and the Harriers, Hen and Marsh, can be seen floating serenely with their larger relations, the Peregrine Falcons. Sometimes these Falcons become irritated by the Hoodies and makes a swoop, which is counteracted every time by the Hoodie turning on its back and crash-diving.

Besides these birds, there are ducks and waders. In the channels which cut up the flats into geometrical patterns you find sea-ducks, scaups, golden-eyes, and scoters, making a good meal out of the unguarded mussel beds. At the end of autumn, the packs of knots mix with the godwits and grey plovers that have stayed behind to brave another English winter. During the daytime the marsh is relatively quiet, but at dusk the dunlins join the ranks that fly hither and thither low over the saltings. Sometimes the Mallard flies down to the flats and feeds on the slimy green weeds which make small green hills on the mud flats.

In October, the pink-footed geese arrive on the shores to stay here and sample our hospitality till the middle of March; when they return to their breeding-grounds.

From what I have mentioned it can be seen that places some people term empty wilds have many birds of activity.

The last article is by R. Salmon:

WINGS OVER THE CHANNEL.

It was England, in the autumn of 1940; the Battle of Britain was at its height . . .

They rose into the air, assembled in V-formation, and headed out over the Channel towards France.

It was hot, unbearably hot, with scarcely a breath of wind to break the glass-like surface of the blue water far below them. The sky was cloudless, save for a few high wisps, tinted orange by the rays of the sun, which hung low on the horizon. They flew onwards, silhouetted against the azure blue of the sky, eyes ever alert for their prey.

They saw it simultaneously, no more than the flash of the sun reflected from a gleaming silver surface, but it was enough. They banked and dived as one. Straight down they plummeted, straight for the placid waves of the Channel, lazily basking in the calm of the evening, until it seemed that disaster was unavoidable, so low they flew. At the last moment they levelled out, settled on the water, and began feeding. Why? Because they were seagulls!

4B.

WE commence with an article by A. Dixon entitled

THE EIFFEL TOWER.

The Eiffel Tower is situated on the south bank of the River Seine in Paris. It is the third highest building in the world, being 985 feet high. The Tower was constructed in 1889 for the Great Paris Exhibit-

ion. Two and a half million rivets were used, along with fifteen thousand girders. The usual method of ascending the Tower is by means of a lift, but, if you feel energetic, you can climb the 1710 steps to the top.

I was lucky enough to visit the Eiffel Tower during a visit to France last year with a School party. We went up on a very warm morning with the temperature in the eighties, the cost being 200 francs (about four shillings). As we ascended, we saw Paris slowly become smaller. Our first stop was on the second platform, where there is a large café. After a quick look-round, we took another lift to take us up the remaining 500 feet. At the top there are kiosks, which sell souvenirs, and a large snack bar. From here you can walk up a flight of stairs to an open platform, which is the highest point you can reach. The remaining twenty feet are used by the French Radio and Television Service.

There is a magnificent view of the city from the top: the Seine looks like a black ribbon stretching away to the east and west, with numerous bridges spanning it. We stayed up the Eiffel Tower for just over an hour, after which we descended by lift. We had had a very enjoyable morning, and were looking forward to a French lunch.

We continue with a story by F. Snowden.

Mike was in the cockpit of a plane, with the engines running smoothly. His clammy, trembling hand grasped the control-column and his heart missed a beat as, with a great burst of speed, he surged forward.

"Here we go," he thought inwardly, as with beads of sweat running down his face, he eased the stick back. The nose lifted, the stick came right back, and as the ground fell away beneath him, he had a feeling of elation.

"Steady, steady," he whispered, as he gained maximum height and levelled out. His hand wiped across his forehead and came limply down, dripping with perspiration.

Mick glanced over the side of the cockpit, and, through the perspex canopy, the hundreds of heads peering up at him made him feel like a great emperor. One or two people waved, so Nick forced a smile, and waved back. The nose of the plane suddenly dipped; Nick made a grab at the stick and pulled it back very quickly; the plane jerked back into the air as did his stomach.

"Control yourself, old man," he gasped; "steady her." Nevertheless, about five minutes later, his pale face had regained its original colour, and he began to enjoy the flight.

Then, quite suddenly, without any warning whatsoever, the engine coughed, spat, and then cut out. Nick was very cool, calm, and collected, and, even though he was now gliding, he still had perfect control as he circled the place where he was going to land. Down, down, went his machine. He eased the stick back, the nose came up, the 'plan levelled out, and then he hit the ground with a dull thud. There was silence: Nick took a quick breath, then flung back the hood, and stepped out of his chair-o- plane. "Not a bad ride for a bob," he muttered.

We conclude on a topical note, as A. E. Copeland tells us about

H.M.S. ARK ROYAL.

Soon after the Ark Royal of World War II. was sunk by an enemy U Boat, plans were on the drawing board for a bigger and better Ark Royal. The Royal Navy had always had an Ark Royal, and wished to keep up its record. The new ship had its keel laid in Birkenhead in 1942, but work was suspended until 1945, when hundreds of men were employed in the construction. It soon took shape and by 1950 it was ready to be launched by the Queen Mother. After this it was fitted with the latest equipment and left the Mersey in 1955.

3A.

ONCE again M. Noel and G. McTear supply the form notes.

The form showed great respect for the *Visor*, being one of the first in which sales reached a hundred per cent. Many members of the form have played for the Bantams, and the disappointing Rugby results might be explained by the absence of C. Williams. A basket of fruit, which had been bought by the form, was taken to him in hospital.

On the academic side G. McTear came first in term and in the Christmas exams. Blaylock was second. M. Noel and J. F. Morgan (who claims he still knows the names of the men on the chess board) will be playing in the chess championships at Liverpool. Morgan will also be playing at Wallasey.

D. Harris and P. Lomax were fortunate enough to be conducted over the *Ark Royal*, and the editors have combined their two accounts.

A VISIT TO THE ARK ROYAL.

When we visited the *Ark Royal* we were amazed at its size—we had to climb a long gangway to board her, and went up three decks before arriving at the top. On top there were guns around the sides; we were allowed to swivel the smaller ones round. We noticed wires to stop the

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landing aeroplanes. There was a huge plate telling of the other *Ark Royals*. In other parts of the ship we saw radar equipment, an aeroplane lift, and the provisions made for repairing 'planes. We were also shown one of the vast hangars.

We were amazed at all the cables that were on the ship; there were blue cables, red cables, thin cables, and thick cables. We saw a place where there were many telephones, the officers' mess, and the sailors' canteen, where there were a ludo board and a chess board about five feet square, painted on the floor.

We agreed that one of the most exciting experiences of our lives was the visit to H.M.S. *Ark Royal*.

Next B. Holmès writes about

SERPENTINE STONE.

Visitors to the Lizard district of Cornwall seldom fail to find interest in watching the craftsmen busily at work on Serpentine stone. From rough-hewn stone which is worked on a lathe, many ornaments are fashioned. The finished articles are of beautiful colours, with a polished smooth surface.

In the Lizard area is found Britain's largest source of Serpentine stone. Kynance Down, Yellow Carn, Ruan Minor, are a few places which provide an apparently inexhaustible supply. Many visitors seek pieces among the rocky pools in the coves, or even chip pieces of the brittle Serpentine stone from the rocks. But the craftsmen choose their stone with great care; for it must show a rich variety of colour, be free from flaws, and be uniformly soft, for ease of working.

The craftsmen in search of suitable stone frequently open small pits, and for the privilege of quarrying, and for the stone they take, they pay a small fee to the owner of the land.

The craft of working Serpentine stone has long been carried on by many families.

3B.

THE form submitted many worthwhile articles which have, unfortunately, been crowded out. Among the less successful contributors are T. Jones, T. Paxton, A. Green, G. Ward, and R. W. Snowden.

We commence with an article by B. Harrison entitled

KEEPING RABBITS AS PETS.

If you are thinking of keeping rabbits as pets, you must be prepared to keep their hutch clean and tidy, and to give them food and water twice daily. If you are going to make the hutch yourself, it must be

strongly built, and, above all, waterproof. Having built your hutch, you should put it in a place out of draughts and damp, and facing south. The hutch should be kept off the ground, so that the dampness will not get into the bottom of the hutch and make it wet. Plenty of sawdust should be strewn freely over the floor of the hutch. Two heavy earthenware troughs should also be placed on the floor: one for eating, and the other for drinking.

When choosing your rabbits, make sure that the fur is smooth and soft, and that the eyes are bright and clear. In cold weather, the rabbits like a lot of bedding to keep them warm. In summer, however (if you have a garden), let them free for a little while, but keep your eye on them, of course! Finally, if any of them are ill, call in the veterinary surgeon.

R. A. Dixon gives us

A BRIEF HISTORY OF FLYING.

The first powered flight ever made took place on December 17th, 1903, at Kitty Hawk, America, and was made by the Wright Brothers. The machine flew 185 feet at a speed of thirty miles per hour. After this initial success, many experiments took place to improve machines. By 1909, the art of powered flight had been mastered, and on July 25th Louis Blériot made the first flight across the English Channel from France to England in thirty-seven minutes. Achievement followed achievement: in 1919, Captain Alcock and Lieutenant Brown made the first crossing of the Atlantic by air. They flew from Newfoundland to Ireland, a distance of 1960 miles, in 16 hours. In 1927 Colonel Lindbergh made the first solo crossing of the Atlantic. Then came the age of the jet aeroplane, and attempts to break the sound barrier. John Derry finally succeeded in a De Havilland Swallow.

We conclude with an article by Perry entitled

THE ARMY CADETS.

Any boy between the ages of fourteen and eighteen can join the Army Cadets, the object being to prepare for National Service. Most people are under the impression that drilling is the main occupation, but the cadets have all sorts of enjoyments: rifle ranges, basket-ball, billiards; snooker; darts, boxing; football, swimming, and various other activities.

The cadets always have camps at Whitsuntide, Easter, and Summer. If you work hard in the cadets and get some tapes (stripes), when you eventually join the army there is a post waiting for you if you are up to standard. Why not consider joining your nearest corps which is stationed at the Drill Hall, Grange Road West?

WE commence with an article by G. Kellett which he entitles

VALLE CRUCIS ABBEY.

Valle Crucis Abbey, a house of the Cistercian Order, was founded in 1201 by a noble of the district. It flourished under a succession of abbots, until a fire broke out, of which no record is known. Reconstruction took place about 1350. Additional buildings were added through the ages. One of the west walls bears the date 1350, and buildings to the east have dates from 1430. Two rooms on the outer side of the Abbey are believed to have been the abbot's hall and chamber. This is unusual, as the abbot's rooms were generally in the centre of the abbey. After the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII., the abbey fell into decay. The land was given to a local noble, and from that time it has changed hands many times, until in 1950 the Ministry of Works took it over as an ancient monument.

When we visited this ancient monument, we entered through the part of the west wall which is still standing in a comparatively good state of condition. From there we made our way into the Presbytery where we saw several old graves. On entering another part of the abbey, we noticed a part of an ancient shrine in one of the walls. In the upper rooms we found ornately carved gravestones. On coming down the stairs we passed the 'wishing well,' which is the home of a spring. This spring was probably a deciding factor in the choice of the site of the abbey. When we left the abbey, we went to the road and looked back on it, surrounded by snow and deserted in the lonely valley. We found it difficult to believe that many years ago it was the centre of life in the district.

The next article is by D. Miller; he calls it

THE CUCKOO.

Cuckoos, or, as they are known scientifically, the "*Cuculus Canorus*," are mainly found in the Eastern hemisphere. In general they have a dull greyish brown plumage, though some of the Old World species are remarkable for showy colours. The female does not build a nest, but places her eggs, one by one, in nests of other birds. She is also known to remove the other eggs from the nests, in order to leave room for her own. Once her egg is placed in her neighbour's nest, she gives it no further attention. The young are hatched and reared by their foster parents.

When the young cuckoo is hatched, and while it is still quite blind and featherless, it hoists its foster-brothers and sisters one by one on its back, climbs backwards up the side of the nest, and throws them out. In

this way he secures all the good that his foster parents bring to the nest. The victims of the Cuckoo are usually the hedge-sparrow, robin, pied-wagtail, whitethroat, and sedge-warbler.

The Cuckoo arrives in Britain in the first half of April. It soon makes itself known with its two-noted cry. Towards the end of May its voice breaks and in early June it becomes silent. The Cuckoo leaves about the beginning of August.

The last article which is by D. Burrell, is on the same topic (i.e. nature), but he is talking about:

OWLS.

There are many different species of owl. The most common are the barn owl and the wood or tawny owl. Of these, the tawny owl is now the more numerous. It is hardly possible to walk in the woods without seeing it or hearing it. The call of the owl can be heard all year round. Some people think that the owl only hoots at certain times of the year, but this is a false idea.

Many game-keepers still kill owls, because they say that they prey on young pheasants, and some farmers are convinced that they steal young pigeons, but, in reality, when they hover about farms they are after rats or mice, which are attracted by the corn.

For pets, owls should be reared from the nest. The tawny-owl is sometimes found in an old crow's nest or sometimes in the cleft of a tree, or the crown of a pollard. The barn owl is more frequently found in ruins, church towers, or disused lofts. The most suitable food for a young owl is a mouse. At first the temptation is to give them too much at a time, but this must be overcome. Other food that is suitable for a tame owl is heart, lights, or liver. Sometimes they will peck at potatoes or other vegetables.

Among migrant owls, the one the most suitable for taming is the "short ear." Unlike the barn or tawny owl, which has black eyes, its eyes are yellow, and also unlike them it hunts during daytime. At one time it was believed that owls were blinded by sunlight, but when one is kept as a pet this is seen to be untrue; the bird is generally found to be as wide awake as its owner.

2B.

THE first article has been submitted by A. Dawson, who tells us about
THE BOAT SHOW AND THE SCHOOLBOYS' EXHIBITION.

At Christmas I received many presents of money, and, being interested in boats, I thought it would be a good idea to use the money on a

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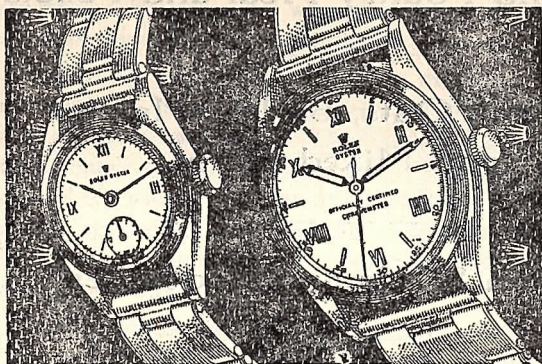
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visit to London to see the Boat Show, at Olympia, and the Schoolboys' Exhibition. I decided to travel by night, and to see the shows in the daytime.

I booked my ticket at a travel agency on the day before I was due to go. Next day, I went to the chemist's and bought some "Kwells," as I suffer from 'bus-sickness. In the evening I caught a bus to the Haymarket, where I was to catch the Crosville coach for London. I arrived in London at 7 a.m., and had breakfast in a snack-bar. I then went to the Schoolboys' Exhibition, where I saw many interesting exhibits, including a demonstration of railway-carriage making and a stand showing bicycles and their development. Also, there were three desks designed by Emmett. The first was fitted with a milk-bar, a chestnut roaster, and a school meal "edibilizer." The second desk was designed for classroom warfare, and was fitted with a multiple arrow-firer, pneumatic ink squirter, and a steel guard reinforced with school pastry. The third desk was a mobile one, which enabled you to do your homework on the way to school and, by means of a short-wave radio set, to answer roll-call when still miles from school.

Having had a good look round, I went to Olympia to see The Boat Show.

At the Show, there were boats ranging from dinghies and kyaks to large forty-ton yachts. A number of boats on show were made of the new fibre-glass. In one corner of the hall, a huge tank had been installed. Here, Royal Marine frogmen were demonstrating how to attach limpet-mines to the hull of a ship.

After seeing everything twice, I left Olympia, and, after having some tea, returned home.

We continue with an effort by G. Brady, entitled

A DAY ON THE FARM.

One day during the holidays, I visited my uncle's farm, and had a very interesting time.

I arrived at the farm very early in the morning and, after helping my uncle to milk the cows, I fed the hens and collected the eggs. After breakfast, I went to the orchard to collect apples for my aunt. My uncle then took me round his farm on a tractor until it was time for dinner.

After dinner, I went down to a field to help my uncle to pick some potatoes. There were a great many potatoes to pick, and, by the time we had finished, my back was aching. After watching some ploughing, I

took the sheep dog, Lassie, for a walk. When I returned, it was time to say good-bye to my uncle and aunt. That night I went home thinking about the wonderful day I had had.

Raymond Pulford is apparently a member of the Fire Service in his spare time, and he tells us about

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FIREMAN.

It was seven o'clock when I heard the fire-bell ringing; I quickly slid down the pole to the fire-engine, and a few seconds later we were rushing to the scene of the fire. I was soon directing a strong jet of water at the blazing house.

I saw a woman up at a window, and, having passed my hose to another fireman, I ran up a ladder through thick clouds of smoke. At last, I reached the window, in spite of the shouts from below saying, "You will never make it."

As I was carrying the woman down, I began to feel faint, and, when I arrived at the bottom of the ladder, I collapsed.

When I revived, I felt the wind on my face, and I asked, "Can I get up now?" "If you feel fit enough," was the reply.

An hour later there was nothing left of the house, except the charred remains. When I asked about the woman, I discovered that she was in hospital suffering from shock and burns. Next day, I was called into the chief's office, and was told that I had been promoted.

1A.

THE following article by B. Doveston reminded the editors that they recently came across a press cutting, dated about 1900, describing the new residential district being created at Prenton, where some beautiful large houses had already been built on the hill. Many people still remember Woodchurch Road as a narrow country road, and at this moment fields are disappearing under the Prenton Dell Estate, which has almost reached Prenton Hall.

SIDELIGHTS ON PRENTON COUNTRYSIDE.

The countryside of Prenton is gradually disappearing, as more and more houses are being built. One has to go far afield before seeing the country in its natural state, without human interference. Before man thought of building houses there, it was an excellent place for nature-lovers, but the top of Northwood Road still ends in a lane. Colourful hedges are situated on each side. Half-way up this lane there is a farm

surrounded by large fields. Further on is the Golf Course, where there are two small spinneys, one of which was once the favourite nesting-site of a yellow-hammer. The nest of this bird was built near the ground in a little hollow in the stump of a small pine-tree. Lined with smooth down, it made a perfect nest for the fledglings.

Along the path is a small stream. Frogs live in it; for it is just deep enough, and very slow-running. If one follows the stream, the remains of an oak tree are reached. This tree is the carefully picked home of a little owl, whose nest is in a hole half-way up the trunk. So Prenton is not yet entirely devoid of interest for the Rambler or Naturalist.

The next contribution is also inspired by a love of nature. M. Donahue writes some notes on

BIRDS.

Bird-watching is an interesting hobby, but it needs plenty of patience. There are two kinds of bird-watchers—one goes out along the path, whistling, full of enthusiasm, swinging his camera, and missing everything except a few sparrows. The other is prepared to lie in a cramped position for hours on end, waiting for one particular bird.

There are three types of birds. They are the sea birds, who nest on cliffs or shores, the waders, living on reservoirs, sandflats, or marshes; and the inland birds. Ringing experiments have proved that the most common British bird is the chaffinch, not the house-sparrow. A great mystery is migration; every year countless birds, such as the swallow, migrate to warmer countries, and return to this country in the spring, often to the same nesting site. Some British birds are driven to extinction or to other countries. A pair of ospreys who had nested on an island on a loch were persecuted by egg-collectors, and they finally departed, never to be seen again.

IB.

WE commence with an article by A. Lord, who tells us about

A VISIT TO THE TOWN HALL.

Last year I had the pleasure of meeting His Worship the Mayor, Alderman Short. I was asked if I would like to clean the Mayor's silver, as the Boy Scouts' "Bob-a-Job" week was drawing near. So it was that, on the following Tuesday, five of our scouts from the 50th troop met outside the Town Hall. When we had all arrived, we walked up the steps of the Town Hall and were received by the Scout District Commissioner, Mr. R. S. Archer, M.C., who accompanied us to a room overlooking Hamilton Square.

Here, we were introduced to the Mayor, who showed us beautiful silver dishes and trays, one of which depicted a Japanese scene. Mr. W. Cull photographed us at work, and the picture later appeared in the *Liverpool Echo*. The Mayor gave us £1 and signed our "Bob-a-Job" cards. After he had shaken hands with us, we left the Town Hall in search of more jobs.

We continue with an amusing article by J. Pendleton entitled

A FOOT ROMANCE.

A young lady, a chiropodist by profession, sat in her cubicle, awaiting her three o'clock appointment. The receptionist came along and announced a Mr. X, whose name I withhold.

The chiropodist was slightly impressed, and so, apparently, was the client; for in a few weeks' time he made a second visit—but with very little foot trouble! Some development took place, which resulted in a wedding. Guess who? My father and mother!

We conclude with an article by B. W. J. Litherland on

UNDERWATER SWIMMING.

Frogmen-style swimming is a sport which is becoming more and more popular. It has been greatly popularised by television and cinema films.

To pursue this sport, you require a pair of foot-fins, a face mask, and a nose-clip. The mask gives you a wide field of vision, and the nose-clip prevents the perspex from steaming over. Finally, you need a breathing-tube; this consists of a hollow tube with a mouthpiece at one end and a rubber cage at the other. Inside the cage is a table-tennis ball which blocks the tube when the water rises too high, thus preventing water from entering one's mouth. If you are very ambitious you can buy a face-mask and breathing apparatus combined, but this equipment is considerably dearer.

Chess

LIKE Napoleon after Austerlitz, our Chess team has suffered a disastrous and signal eclipse during the current season. We had our Leipzig and our Waterloo against Wallasey Grammar School and Alsop High School, where we touched the very nadir of our fortunes. But where the glorious career of the little corporal ended in ignominy in 1815, universal law decrees that our humiliated Chess team shall again win glorious victories—no matter when, albeit in an entirely different garb. The old brigade shall depart; a new and more vigorous generation shall replace it. Indeed, the secession of veterans is as essential as lopping off defunct arborial encumbrances, that younger branches may arise in their stead with a

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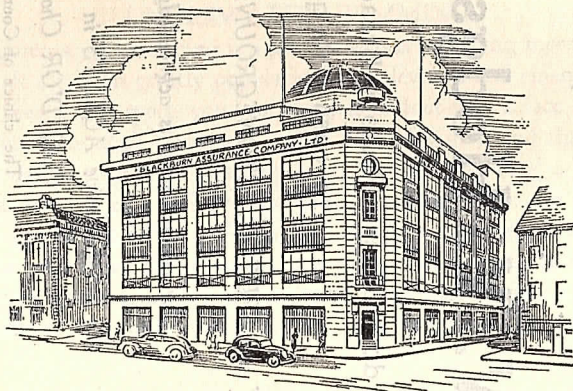
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rejuvenating influence on the whole body. The outstanding contribution made to this sphere of School life by the lower forms reminds us of the parallel with the fabulous bird of mythology which begat its successor within its own funeral pyre. This Chess team will go to seed in the Easter of 1955, like an extremely bedraggled and seedy phoenix, to emerge again a bright, new vigorous bird perhaps in Michaelmas 1957; perhaps later, besides whose performances the defeats of 1954/55 shall seem but as yesterday or a watch in the night. The testing-ground of this future team will be the Annual Junior Chess Congress at Liverpool, which, like Disraeli's "Young Conservative" movement, will engender exponents of the highest calibre in the years to come. From seventeen of our youngest hopes we anticipate this year an honourable reflection of the School's venerable Chess tradition, as also from the lone figure, perhaps our brightest star, who flies our colours at the Wallasey Congress. Thus, although the trek may be long and arduous before the light of success again shimmers clearly before the gallant B.I. seven, and notwithstanding the immense numerical superiority of our Liverpudlian rivals we too shall have our hour again when the coveted trophy shall reside in its appointed place within these precincts—a fitting tribute to the unswerving endeavours over the years of an enthusiastic and encouraging Chess master.

RESULTS.

(a) WRIGHT SHIELD GAMES.

v. Merchant Taylors	Won	4	—3
v. Liverpool Collegiate	Lost	3	—4
v. Holt	Won	4½	—2½
v. Alsop	Lost	1½	—5½

(b) CHESHIRE CHALLENGE SHIELD.

v. Wallasey Grammar School	Lost	2½	—5½
			W.N.B.

Music

THIS term we welcomed Mr. Shaw, who has already prepared plans for new musical activities. The idea of voluntary music in Assembly has been introduced, and it is hoped that the lower forms will soon be able to provide descants. The panel of pianists, once described as the "early morning medley show," has been retained and augmented, and any more boys who consider themselves competent to accompany a hymn will gladly be given an audition.

A group studying the elements of harmony and composition has held its first meetings; it is hoped that its members will ultimately produce some original compositions as well as becoming proficient at harmony and

improvisation. Mr. Shaw is anxious to make the acquaintance of parents, Old Boys, and other friends of the School, who are interested in music, with a view to holding musical meetings, and perhaps forming an orchestral society or a choir.

It must be emphasised that the responsibility of building up a general musical interest in the School is in the hands of all members but especially those in the lower and middle forms, and the enthusiasm and co-operation which are shown will increase the strength of the valuable contribution to the life of the Institute. E.H.H.

Rugby

THE high standard which the 1st XV. showed throughout the first week of the season has been maintained this term. We were again defeated by St. Anselm's, which was our only defeat. The highlight of the term was our defeat of St. Edward's, which is one of the strongest Rugby Schools on Merseyside. We defeated Grove Park Grammar School again, which was a greater feat considering the size and ability of the team they fielded. Hodgson still shone in the pack, but celebrated his move to the wing position, against Grove Park, by scoring two fine tries. G. Lloyd has been awarded his colours, and must be congratulated on his fine performances in the pack. This 1st XV. has been one of the most successful teams the School has ever had, and, we are glad to say, three of the team were chosen to represent Cheshire against Lancashire; these were T. Jones, D. M. Mathieson, and A. Hodgson, who excelled themselves in this match.

The fortunes of the 2nd XV. fluctuated appreciably this term owing to a differing team spirit. The side played well against Rock Ferry and Park High, but were extremely poor against St. Anselm's. Lowry, Robb, and Hopner, showed consistency throughout the season.

The Bantams XV. were not very successful in the only two games they played. They were beaten by Park High and St. Edward's, the last being a rather heavy defeat. T. Harris, on the wing, and Wood, in the forwards have both played well in these two games.

RESULTS.

		1st XV.		2nd XV.		Bantams.
Rock FerryW.	9—6	—	W. 43—0	—	—
St. EdwardsW.	9—6	—	—	—	L. 0—43
St. Anselm'sL.	3—11	—	L. 6—15	—	—
Park HighW.	12—0	—	D. 9—9	—	L. 8—23
Grove ParkW.	14—0	—	—	—	—

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University Letter

THE UNION,

BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY.

15/3/55.

The Editor, the *Visor*.

Dear Sir,

I feel, and rightly so, that I am greatly honoured to be able to submit a University letter to the esteemed *Visor*. I must admit that I have read the University letters of bygone years with covetousness in the hope that I might gleam something, if not inspiration, for the learned epistle that I should expound when my turn came. But, alas, having nothing much to say, I shall of necessity say little, if anything at all.

Perhaps a few advantages of Brum would not be untimely. However, there should be no need to stress that Brum is the place for exacting students in academic and social activities; without a doubt it is second to none. It would perhaps be unfair to say that all students here give themselves whole-heartedly to the task of serious study. For by the time one sobers up, after indulging in wine, women, and song; turfing nurses out of their beds or maybe pouring dye into the city fountain, two terms have gone by remarkably fast. Then one begins to hear (but not heed) the constant reminder of the pessimist that there are only so many more weeks to the summer finals, after which one is in the ever present danger of expulsion—anyone care to buy a Brum scarf and maybe a few books?

May I take this opportunity, Mr. Editor, of reminding all members of the Upper VI. who wish to indulge in University life away from home, quote (T. S. Hodgson)—that although there is no place like home, there is also no place like Brum—unquote. How about it, boys? Think of those colours on your scarf and shout—"I wanna go to Brum."

I remain, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

M. MARSTON.

Old Instonians R.U.F.C.

SINCE the last *Visor* appeared, the Old Boys' Rugby Club programme has continued, but has been greatly reduced by the very bad weather experienced this year. In fact, of the eleven games since Christmas, five have been cancelled owing to snow and frost. However, the 1st XV. has the satisfactory record of 12 won, 3 drawn, and 6 lost; the 2nd XV. has won 11 and lost 6; the 3rd XV. has won 12 and lost 5, and has now gone 7 games without defeat. We shall again be taking part in the Birkenhead Park and Caldy Seven-a-Side Competitions at the end of the season, and would greatly appreciate as many cheering members of the School, to encourage us, as possible. Also, we are sending a team to the Isle of Man Seven-a-Sides, and shall be defending the Shield which we won in the North Wales Seven-a-Side Championship at the end of last season. We thus have a very busy time ahead of us at the end of the season. Whilst on the subject of Sevens, we should like to wish the School success in the Birkenhead Park School Sevens, with the sincere hope that the School team goes one better than the last two seasons and wins this year.

I should like to remind all School members again that they are very welcome as Associate Members of the Old Instonians whilst still at School, the subscription being absolutely nothing. We shall also be very glad to hear from any boys leaving School at the end of this term. We can offer a full and interesting programme, both playing and socially, to any boy, whether as a playing or non-playing member, so do come along and introduce yourselves. The Club depends upon new members from School to keep going. Meantime the Old Instonians' Rugby Club sends its very best wishes to all Staff and boys at the School.

G.A.T.

I remain, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

M. MARSTON

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