

# THE SPUR

Vol. VI

No. 2



# THE SPUR

RAYNES PARK COUNTY SCHOOL.

*"To each his need, from each his power."*

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Vol. VI. No. 2.

April, 1943.

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## HEADMASTER'S NOTES

The paper shortage has compelled the printers to insist upon a much smaller number of *The Spur* and has given me a convenient excuse for brevity. I am still in the process of assimilating all that I have found and I am hardly ready to produce "Notes" of any interest. But I am glad to take this chance of thanking Governors, parents, boys past and present and all members of the Staff for making me feel so quickly at home. It is difficult to realise that I am still in my first term.

Schools "are what they choose to be." Our course has been charted for us with genius and I shall do my best to follow it. But the continued success of this School, after its remarkable beginning, will chiefly depend on the conscious and deliberate co-operation of all its members. Every single one must see to it that no standards are lowered and that none of the privileges which have been secured for us are abused or taken for granted. We should think very hard about the second part of the School motto. The power of each individual becomes infinitely greater when used for the benefit of all.

We hope that Mr. Garrett will often visit us. It is good to know that he is well again, after suffering severely from the strain of his unceasing and devoting service to the School. It is also cause for particular satisfaction that the Headmaster's Fund, instituted by Mr. Basil Wright, has now been re-christened the John Garrett Fund—a fitting tribute to a great headmaster.

Mr. Joyce's departure to join the armed forces dealt us a severe and unexpected blow. He takes with him the good wishes of pupils and colleagues and leaves behind him a reputation for masterly teaching and keen perception. In his place we welcome Mrs. Horne, who joins her husband on the Staff. Mr. Milton has been temporarily seconded to other duties. I need not say how sadly he is missed.

Mr. L. A. G. Strong has once again delighted his hearers with some inimitable readings. He gives us full measure, but we can never have enough. Our gratitude to him for his constant kindness and interest is very deep. We thank the Bishop of Southwark, Mr. Brian Tunstall and Mr. W. D. Hogarth for giving up valuable time to come and speak to us, and at the moment of writing we are looking forward to a lecture-recital by Dr. Sydney Watson, of Winchester College, and to lectures by Dr. E. D. Laborde and the Headmaster of Harrow, formerly Headmaster of Bristol Grammar School.

The more use we can make of our opportunities for music, the better. Mr. Beecroft is playing successive Sonatas of Beethoven on Tuesdays and

Fridays after school and hopes to give the complete series in due time. As the scientists are still at work when the recital is in progress, Mr. Beecroft gives a special "second house" for them later in the afternoon. Mr. Loveday is organising a concert of Spring Carols for the beginning of May which should be of unusual interest.

Mr. Smith continues indefatigably to organise parties to see productions of real merit at London theatres. O. B. Clarence's "Mr. Hardcastle" in *She Stoops to Conquer* will not easily be forgotten, and Donald Wolfitt's presentation of *King Lear* reached a very high level. Mr. Smith also waited with a small party in a long queue for the Sadler's Wells Ballet and was rewarded by a fine performance of *Lac des Cygnes*. Mr. Haslam took his art class to visit the Exhibition of French Nineteenth Century Paintings at the National Gallery, which contained probably the finest collection of pictures to be shown during the war.

Athletic sports are now being revived. This term a few "standards" are being worked off by Houses. These will continue until the climax is reached with two official Sports Days at the end of July. Cross-country running, which has temporarily replaced gym. for the Sixth Form, seems to be becoming quite popular and has revealed some promising performers.

K. R. Forrest is to be congratulated on having obtained a Meyricke Exhibition in History at Jesus College, Oxford, which he will take up after the war.

The need for Harvest Camps will be greater this summer than ever before. All boys will be expected to give some kind of help to the nation during the summer holidays, and our own Harvest Camp will provide a suitable opportunity for as many as we can take. It is hoped to have it at Inkpen and to effect various improvements as a result of past experience.

Every Monday night since January 18th, about fifty parents have come to the School to listen to the Broadcast series "Living and Learning" and to join in subsequent discussion. It is most encouraging to find such genuine interest in educational matters and to be able to meet and talk with parents about methods and aims. We have been stimulated by visits from Mr. A. C. Cameron and Mr. Patrick Thornhill of the B.B.C. and from Mr. Basil Wright, and we are expecting at our meeting to have Capt. Quintin Hogg, M.P., as our Chairman.

The beginning of the term was clouded by the news of the death, after a long and painful illness, of Paul Wilson, an original member of the School. Our sympathy goes out to his parents. We have also to record with deep regret the deaths of Mr. J. T. Nunns, an old friend of the School, and Dr. R. R. Marett, Rector of Exeter College, Oxford, who was the guest of honour at our first official Prize-Giving in 1936.

## SCHOOL OFFICERS, WINTER TERM, 1943

Head of the School : F. J. W. Holwill

Prefects :

F. J. W. Holwill, M. G. Bedford, G. P. Billingham, J. A. Bell, A. H. Overell, N. T. Poulter, O. P. Rendall, K. H. Taylor, R. G. Forward, C. J. V. Liddle.

Second Boy : M. G. Bedford.

Prefect of Hall : J. A. Bell.

Prefect of Library : A. H. Overell.

## HOUSE NOTES

### Cobb's

House Captain : M. G. Bedford.

Vice-Captain : D. P. Rendall.

#### Rugger

We brought last term to a successful conclusion by winning the Rugger Cup for the second year in succession. In the final and most important match of the season we defeated Gibb's by 18 points to 15. For this match we were handicapped by the absence of our Captain of Rugger, K. R. Forrest ; but as Gibb's were playing without Holwill the sides were more or less equal.

#### Dramatics

In dramatics we were not so successful. We were relegated to fourth place, which was not a very fitting tribute to the hard work put into the production by our producer, Cooper D. M.

The majority of the House took part in the play ; in all about forty were concerned either on the stage or attending to the technical side of the production.

#### Athletics

Our qualifying points in athletics are on the whole disappointing considering the size of the House. We shall have to make a greater effort before the next event and tackle some really serious training—as a House our potential for qualifying points is quite strong.

#### Hockey

At the time of going to press we have played only one House hockey match. The game was against Halliwell's and we drew 1—1.

K. R. Forrest left us half-way through the term and is now training in the Army. He was a 1st XV colour, a member of The Partisans and a valuable member of the House. We wish him every success for the future.

### Gibb's

Captain : F. J. W. Holwill.

Captain of Hockey : G. P. Billingham.

Captain of Athletics : K. H. Taylor.

Last term the Dramatics Cup was awarded to Gibb's House for the first time. It was a great triumph for our producer, P. W. Vaughan, who had cast and produced the play—*The Ascent of F.6*—superbly ; and who achieved the very difficult task of creating the effect of mountainous country with complete success. The rest of the cast and the stage-hands are also to be congratulated on so ably doing their job, which gained for us a distinction we had hardly dared to believe possible.

Rugger does not present such a fine picture ; the team won its matches against Halliwell's, Milton's and Newsom's by considerable margins, but in the final match against Cobb's the team as a whole played badly. Billingham alone saved the game from being a disastrous defeat. But he was not able to compensate for the weakness of our forwards, who allowed the other pack an almost free hand. Only in the last ten minutes did the team show its real spirit ; but it was too late, and the game finished 18—15 in Cobb's favour.

So far this term we have only played one House hockey match, against Newsom's. It was a badly played game on a bad ground ; none of the team played his best, and some played their worst. The final score was 5—0 in our favour.

In athletics, qualifying points have so far been obtained in one event, the high jump ; we gained 28 points and are placed second. Soon we shall be "putting the weight," and the whole House is starting training for further events to follow.

## Halliwell's

*Captain* : J. A. Bell.  
*Vice-Captain* : Green J. F.

This term has seen the reintroduction of athletics. They are much to be welcomed in that, whereas in other sports competitions the deciding factor is almost always only the number of burly sixth-formers belonging to a particular House, the Athletics Competition is decided not only by the efforts of a few on the actual Sports Day, but also by the endeavour and general enthusiasm of a House as a whole in the qualifying. The standards are not too high, and all have the opportunity of coming forth, many from customary shrouds of indolence, to gain qualifying points and so put their House ahead. At the time of writing, only the high jump qualifying has been completed ; we achieved the highest number of points in this.

### Rugger

*Captain* : Green J. F. ; *Secretary* : Brown M. G.

The results of three matches of last term have yet to be recorded. Our best effort was against Newsom's, whom we held back a few yards from our goal-line for most of the second half and succeeded in beating 9—3. However, Cobb's, with their six stalwart members of the 1st XV, beat us by a margin of 27 points, and, at the end of the term, our team being without its only large three-quarter, Milton's defeated us, 27—3.

### Dramatics

D. B. Tait produced our play this year, and having displayed his accomplishments as producer, did very well to take over a long part three days before the competition. His own comments on the production are as follows :

We did not win the House Play Competition, but we at least beat the other Houses in some respects, for of the seventeen deaths that occurred on the stage on that fateful afternoon, we contributed eight (seven of them suicides and one justifiable homicide). For the month that the play (A. P. Herbert's *Two Gentlemen of Soho*) was being rehearsed, we enjoyed every moment of our time together, and had high hopes of victory until Bell, who should have been one of our chief characters, was struck down with mumps three days before the competition. Three days of strenuous rehearsal renewed our hopes and as during the performance our music was delicately synchronised by meticulous stage-hands, our moustaches fell off at the expected moments, and tumultuous laughter greeted us over the footlights, we felt very satisfied as we sank one by one to a blood-stained stage. Alas, we were only placed second, but it was a most enjoyable attempt. The cast which reached the stage was—

Lord Withers ...	...	...	...	Tait D. B.
Plum ...	...	...	...	Robinson R.
Hubert ...	...	...	...	Hichon J.
Sneak ...	...	...	...	Dixon R.
Waiter ...	...	...	...	Dobson K.
Laetitia ...	...	...	...	Parker C.
Duchess ...	...	...	...	Jillet R.
Topsy ...	...	...	...	Cheatle D.

### Hockey

*Captain* : J. A. Bell ; *Secretary* : Green J. F.

As usual in the Easter term, our climate has done its best to prevent any hockey matches from being played. So far we have played only one House match ; in this we met Cobb's with a lack of skill that would have been disastrous, had it not been matched perfectly by our opponents, but with a commendable welter of energy. An even and spirited game resulted in a draw, 1—1.

## Milton's

*Captain* : A. H. Overell.  
*Vice-Captain* : R. G. Forward  
*Captain of Athletics* : C. J. V. Liddle.  
*Captain of Hockey* : Read L. W.

Usually a House spirit depends upon the House Master and the satisfaction of winning a number of sports cups ; Mr. Milton's has been no mean achievement in building up so great a House spirit as ours almost unaided by this common satisfaction ; he has our sincere best wishes and gratitude. We hope his successor, Mr. Beecroft, is as pleased to be our new House Master as we are happy to have him.

Last term was the last term at school of M. F. Saxby, our House Captain. He had been a member of the School for six years, and was Second Boy, a valuable member of the First XI and The Partisans. We hope often to see him at School functions. He is at present reading chemistry at Magdalen College, Oxford.

In rugby last term we were completely beaten by Gibb's and Cobb's ; the exact figures will no doubt be vaunted by the notes of those Houses. By Newsom's we were less ignominiously beaten, and Halliwell's were beaten by us. For some of these matches we were unfortunate in being without Saxby and Liddle, who were the *sine qua non* of our team. So far this term we have played no hockey matches ; the final issue can usually be foreseen at the beginning of a season and it seems that Gibb's will obtain first place ; however, our hockey captain has been organising several practises and our matches will at least be energetic. Liddle has been enthusiastically training members of the House in Athletic Sports ; only jumping has been qualified for at the time of writing ; 22 boys reached the required standard.

We have always tried to put as many people into our House Plays as possible ; but this year a singular lack of enthusiasm for the play chosen, *Julius Caesar*, was only too obvious among the younger members of the cast, particularly those in the crowd. But the ingenuity of R. G. Forward's production and the acting of Williams as Antony, Schoen as Cassius and Forward as Brutus covered up somewhat this deficiency and brought our final position to third.

There are certain school activities which get less publicity than set House competitions but which are more important since they are a boy's voluntary choice of pastime. Our House has members of many different organisations. Many belong to the School Scout Troop, we have the chief printer, members of the Puppet Club, two senior members of the Camera Club, a member of The Partisans—the things in fact which really matter and on which the educational richness of the School largely depends. Less noteworthy perhaps are the collectors of train numbers who seem to centre round Milton's.

## Newsom's

*House Captain* : Poulter N. T.  
*House Vice-Captain* : Cattell G. M.  
*Captain of Athletics* : Ward R. H.

Our efforts since the writing of the last House notes have hardly met with the success they deserved. The three remaining rugger matches of the Christmas term were all lost, but the margin of defeat in no way reflects upon the prowess of the team.

Up to half-term only one House hockey match has been played, that against Gibb's, in which we met with the defeat we anticipated. But we can probably hold our own in the other matches, if and when they are actually played. The chief feature of recent weeks, however, has been the revival of inter-House Athletics, for which qualifying is now in progress.

In spite of many setbacks, there is nevertheless one achievement, of which the entire House may be justly proud : namely the House Play, in which nearly forty boys were occupied, either by acting or making scenery and costumes. The fact that we were placed fifth need distress nobody, as the performance was probably our finest ever, and certainly superior to last year's trifle, which earned us second place.

Finally we wish all happiness and success to the Old Boys who have revisited us, and particularly to our first House Master, Mr. Newsom, who is now on his way to Turkey, under the ægis of the British Council.

## LECTURES

*L. A. G. Strong, 28th January.*

In the morning Mr. Strong read two stories to the Senior School. "Mr. Kerrigan and the Tinkers" was about a publican who for forty-six weeks lived the life of a "humdrum prosperous vintner," and for the remaining six usually disappeared. This story concerns his adventures with Hugh O'Leary, "as formidable a drinker and swearer of oaths as ever overawed a petty sessions, and his band of Wicklow tinkers "celebrated within the four coasts of Ireland."

"Farmer on the Fairway" told the story of Farmer Pascoe and Major Prettyman who resisted the encroachments of the Golf Club committee on common grazing land. The farmer "who couldn't go against the majossty" and the major "what rented the shottin'" tried many tricks to ruin "the golfin'." Eventually the farmer was bought off and the major took to argufyin' and writin' letters about something else.

In the afternoon Mr. Strong read three stories to the Junior School. "The Accident" concerned an engine which drove into a carriage and was "of great value and divorsion" for the onlookers.

A story about the Western isles and the curse of the Macleod's contained just that degree of eeriness and legendary romance which made it so enjoyable. Mr. Strong's last story, "Evening Piece," described the woes of an old man of eighty caught after dusk with no lamp on his bicycle. After being cautioned by a policeman he wheels his bicycle to a side street ; "then, with a sly look up and down, he mounted it again, hop-hop-hop, and, after a preliminary wobble or two, went off at his queer, high-stepping amble into the darkness.

*W. D. Hogarth, 16th February, 1943, Social Services.*

The lecturer first clarified the distinction between State-organised and voluntary social services which have become so much of a national institution that we are inclined to forget that they are run solely by charitable members of the community. The State provided the mere necessities of public assistance, medical services, schools, prisons and unemployment relief. Voluntary organisations enhanced these soulless impersonalities by providing a parallel list of private aid for the poor, sick and unemployed, youth organisations, and the probationary system. Mr. Hogarth then traced the growth of social services through the sordidness of the Industrial Revolution and the nineteenth century. He told how modern methods of investigation revealed the poverty rife in large towns to the blissful ignorance of the Victorian middle class, and how in the last two decades of the last century voluntary bodies sprang up everywhere for its alleviation. After the last war the National Council of Social Services was set up to stifle petty jealousies between the various bodies and to provide strength through unity.

These social services played a vastly important part in our whole political outlook and could not be neglected. To-day we were looking to the State to fulfil all social requirements, but we still needed the voluntary social services. They would prevent the omnipotence of a bureaucracy and ensure that motives are always genuine. Without them the State would usurp all charitable instincts and stagnate in the mire of officialdom.

D.L.N.

*Brian Tunstall, 20th January, 1943, The War at Sea.*

Mr. Tunstall delineated the fundamental principles of modern sea-warfare with a clarity that proved long familiarity with his subject. He explained that although little news is released of the progress of the war at sea, (a reticence which is designed by the Admiralty, partly through the need for secrecy, and partly because no adequate day-to-day account can be given), there is, nevertheless, a vast and complex action which is spread over the surface of the globe, and which is continuous by day and night.

The sea is an impermanent highway, and its only use, for purposes of ordinary trade or military ventures. Our task is to hold that highway for our own use, and deny it to the enemy. To use it ourselves we employ some vessels to escort our merchant ships, and others, the battle-fleet, unseen but watchful, to deter any attack the enemy might make on our merchant-shipping. The battle-fleet, too, had made it impossible for German shipping to use the sea highway.

The German plan to sink commerce by U-boats has a purely negative value, for they cannot use the seas themselves. Their air-attacks on our shipping are mastered fairly easily, for they have no carrier-borne aircraft. The exploit of the latest convoy to Russia proved the success of our own, and the failure of the German plans.

N.G.B.

*The Bishop of Southwark, 24th February.*

Schools, like gasworks, had useful by-products : the three most important were Comradeship, Taste, and an Ultimate Goal.

Comradeship meant immersing one's egotism for the good of the whole, fostering team spirit, and behaving as a member of a large community. The School was very forcibly reminded of Suden's line : "Man must live among his neighbours, for he cannot live alone."

The second "by-product," Taste, was also important, not only in distinguishing and appreciating the greatest in literature, art, and music, but also in choosing the best as opposed to the second best and preferring the decent action to the cheap one.

Last and most important of all was the Ultimate Goal : difficult to define, the Ultimate Goal was not only the co-ordination of comradeship and taste but was also bound up with the purpose of life. It was very necessary to know what God intended you to do with your life so that you might live it to the full in the service of your fellows and God himself.

D.M.C.

## THE PARTISANS

*Secretary : A. H. Overell.*

*Members :* Mr. Rex Warner, Mr. Halliwell, A. H. Overell, J. A. Bell, F. J. W. Holwill, G. P. Billingham, Cattell M. G., Brodrick N. G., Tait D. B., Bannister B.

Since the last record in *The Spur* The Partisans have held three meetings. The first was opened by A. H. Overell, who plunged us into a nameless discourse upon the divisions of the human mind and kept us exhaustedly swimming among the unfamiliar abstractions of the intellect and its servant, the conscience, the emotions and sensibility, the heart and the imagination receptive or creative, and finally the soul which waxes rich on the activity of all of them. In the search for truth which followed, complication succeeded complication until one member in desperation attempted to simplify life by explaining everything in terms of "kinks in the continuum."

Nevertheless high philosophy still occupied the minds of The Partisans at the last meeting in the Christmas term, which was opened by Cattell G. M. He gave examples of progress at work in the physical, material, mental and spiritual spheres, but made the reservation that material

progress at work is only too often mental and spiritual progress at play. For progress to exist at all there must be something fairly definite to progress towards. The Partisans, practical as always, tried hard to define progress but got little further than saying it was a good thing.

The first discussion of the present term was started by J. A. Bell, who in a clear and delightful way told us of the problems of Education to-day ; particularly he emphasised that normal modern education is incomplete if one intends it to cultivate the soul, or if one expects it to concentrate on technical instruction. The Partisans mainly discussed the relation of the School with the State and decided that present conditions, in which the ideal of the School is higher than that of the State, are wrong and illogical.

The next meeting will be opened by F. J. W. Holwill.

## THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The School has known little of the activity of the Society since its inception last October ; indeed, very few know of its existence at all, while some regard it as a secret society whose aims will be divulged at a later date.

This new venture has not been publicised till now, in case it should not establish itself firmly as a part of school life. The enthusiasm of its members has ensured that it shall do so, and while not seeking blatantly to advertise its existence they do claim for it a recognised position as a school function.

It came into existence in response to a definite need in the Sixth Form. History can be an absorbing and far-reaching study, but of necessity in a school curriculum, must be restricted in scope and appeal to limits imposed by Certificate Examinations. The gap which is inevitably left can only be filled by research and study out of school hours. A number of the more enthusiastic decided to devote some of their leisure time to this commendable task, and brought the Society into being. As far as possible it aims to cover periods of history which are touched upon not at all or but sketchily in the examination syllabus. In general, the effect aimed at was the study of history as a whole with certain periods related to one another.

In the meetings up to the present moment the different papers which have been read have treated the Mediæval scene in its most important aspect—the ecclesiastical. The Mediæval Church is not a dead-as-dust subject as some may suppose. It can be handled in a lively and interesting way. This has been the aim of the Society which has attempted to relate the problems of the Middle Ages to the difficulties which exist in twentieth-century Europe.

It has been necessary to limit its members to the Sixth Form, but it is interesting to note that of some twelve members, one-third of the number is drawn from boys on the Science side of the Sixth. It is representative of the most senior part of the School, and the fact that it has flourished proves that study is not an uncongenial process to the enthusiast who goes about it the right way.

N.G.B.

## PUPPET SHOW: "ALICE IN WONDERLAND"

It was with rather a jar that we found the curtain rising upon an academic gentleman reading the first pages of the story before a class-room blackboard. But we knew that all was well when a sudden black-out led to a transformation scene : the map of England on the wall changed miraculously into a magic window, and there was the platinum blonde Alice we were expecting, in the faery light of the garden we have all seen through her eyes when she opened the little door with the golden key.

Lewis Carroll's dialogues demand the spoken voice, but it is only by puppets that his fabulous creations can be brought to life. True, the trick photographer could introduce them to the cinema, but it is altogether preferable that the Puppet Club should invite us to meet them at Raynes Park.

Turned from airy nothing into a shape, the Caterpillar smoked his hookah upon the Mushroom and crawled laboriously away. The mad tea-party really took place, and the Dormouse delighted us as he catapulted out of his slumbers and collapsed into them again.

Most convincing of all was the scene on that melancholy shore where Alice was instructed in the Lobster Quadrille. The brilliant Gryphon and the sober Turtle sat on their rocks in dignified discomfort, dealing out to the visitor their sad, educational puns, so that we could enjoy to the full the contrasted absurdity of their "jumping about like mad things" before they "sat down again very sadly and quietly and looked at Alice." Then the Turtle sang, with immense pathos and elastic neck, till Alice and the Gryphon ran off to see the trial. Darkness descended on the stage, "while more and more faintly came, carried on the breeze that followed them, the melancholy words :—

'Soo-ooop of the e—e—evening,  
Beautiful, beautiful Soup.'

## LETTER TO THE PUPPET CLUB

I was surprised and I was very pleased to see such a fine marionette production of *Alice in Wonderland* as performed by the Puppet Club of this School. I paid the Club two visits during the term and I was then impressed by the high standard of craftsmanship in the construction of the marionettes. From a professional point of view the controls were ingenious and were such as I had never seen before. There was only one thing I found lacking, and that was music. I think on some occasions, especially between scenes, a "link up" with music would have been helpful. The manipulation was good when one considers the age and experience of the puppeteers. To become really expert in the art of handling and manipulating a marionette in all its forms, its various means of expression, and its temperamental tendencies to do the wrong thing, takes on the average five years' practice. To the puppeteers I must say, "Practise !" There are so many pitfalls ; and if you practice hard to overcome all difficulties you will have achieved something wonderful. You must realise that the audience's eyes are on the figures all the time ; they are the whole play, just as actors are.

The scenery was just sufficient, and served adequately its purpose. Perhaps conditions did not allow it, but I should have liked a little warmer lighting on some scenes, and more blue on the backcloth for exteriors. Situations in a play demand "mood," therefore each scene should be lit with the appropriate colour scheme to suggest the atmosphere.

Lastly, I should like to say that you must persevere, and practise all you can ; practise in front of a mirror. When I see your next show I want to say it is "excellent," not just "very good."

VICTOR HOTCHKISS.

We are very grateful to Mr. Hotchkiss, who, before the war, was one of the leading exponents of puppetry in England. We hope soon to have an opportunity of seeing some of his works.

N.M.

## THE STONE AXE

Lal's world was a simple one, for Lal lived in what is now known as **Devon, in the days of mankind's childhood.** Lal knew nothing of metals, or of any materials other than those around him—the trees, the earth and the rocks, the bones and hides of animals. But his patience was remarkable. And although he had no great artistic talent, his skill in fashioning tools and weapons from the crude materials at his command would have astounded many people of to-day.

He has few personal possessions, but such as he had were guarded jealously. His greatest treasure was a stone axe, with a handle of a strange dark, hard wood, which he had found on the seashore. The sea was to Lal an everlasting source of mystery—a great, endless mass of bitter, undrinkable water, serving no apparent purpose in itself, and yet from whose mysterious depths many veritable treasures were frequently vomited.

This axe of his was rarely used as a weapon, for fear of its being broken, but served rather as a showpiece, a demonstration of his skill and power.

Lal lived alone with his family, and when he went out hunting he shunned the dwellings of other men, because there was little love lost between men in those days, and any encounter usually led to a fight.

During the winter he had to work all day long to support his family, but in the plentiful days of summer he had time to kill, and he spent the long afternoons, when he had finished the little necessary work, he would sit outside his cave laboriously decorating his axe. When he had carved the handle all over with crude pictures of animals, and polished and sharpened the stone head to perfection, he was, for some time, at a loss to see what further improvements he could make upon it, and fell back on the making of new clubs and other weapons to pass his leisure time.

And then, one day, he came upon a place where the earth had been laid bare by a recent landslip, and saw, as he had often seen before, the peculiar bright red sandstone soil. Taking some of this home, he mixed it with the crude glue he obtained by boiling fish bones. He left this mixture in the sunlight, and to his delight it hardened into a bright orange substance, hard and glossy.

He made some more of this, and, using a tube-shaped sea-shell, he filled all the intricate carvings on his axe-shaft with the putty-like mixture. When it had hardened, he polished it, first with a piece of sandstone, and then with a piece of leather, until the surface was smooth and shining. Thus Lal produced one of the first examples of an inlaid design.

It was soon after this that tragedy overwhelmed Lal and his family. Tragedy in the shape of fire.

Lal's cave was in a small escarpment, grown over with gorse and ferns. His "hearth," on which he cooked his food, was a large slab of rock in the mouth of the cave. When he wished to cook some food, he built up a fire on this rock and kept it fiercely burning for a while, until the rock was thoroughly hot, and then pushed the fire off, and placed his food on the hot slab. He had not used his hearth for some time, and a big gorse bush growing on the ridge above the cave had spread out over it. Then one day Lal caught a stranded salmon. Here was a feast! Joyously he carried the treasure home, and set about the tedious task of lighting a fire.

At last he got some dry grass alight, and soon had a roaring blaze. Then something happened which was beyond Lal's field of experience—the fire started spreading. Bracken, lying trampled on the ground, was alive with tongues of fire. But this was a new kind of fire—it moved. It crept along, turned, burst out in fresh places, swayed, split up into twin tracks and reunited. Lal was scared. Little lines of fire, like the serpents he feared so much, writhed and sidled along the ground. The

big gorse bush caught alight, and showers of burning twigs fell across the mouth of the cave. A large bough, well alight, fell down, and a curtain of fire blocked the entrance. Within, Crola, Lal's wife, and his children, crowded to the far end of the cave, coughing and spluttering in the smoke, and scared even more than Lal.

He plunged in and dragged them out, and together they fled through the blazing bracken. But their feet were soon burnt beyond bearing and they crumpled like pieces of paper in a furnace, to join the many animals and men already killed by the sweeping fire. As Lal fell, he flung his precious axe up a nearby slope. The keen blade severed a trailing root of a small tree, releasing a pile of earth and stones.

\* \* \* \* \*

The museum guide moved on to the next exhibit and continued in his catalogue—draw C: "and here, ladies and gentlemen, is a collection of weapons and tools of the Mori, a little known race who lived in parts of Devon about 3000 B.C. They lived in isolated family communities, and were more intelligent than their contemporaries in other parts. This stone axe is a fine example of their workmanship, and the fact that it has a handle of teak shows their extensive use of marine debris.

G. G. P.

## A SONNET

September's bronze is spent: The branches rot ;  
The sullen rain falls ceaseless, while the day  
Is wreathed in damp. In mire of village way  
The fallen leaves lie crushed and now forgot.  
Neglected hedges stand unkempt and torn ;  
Autumn among her drooping marigolds,  
Laments her gathered sheaves and empty folds,  
Her sodden orchards, plundered and forlorn.  
It seems all nature is condemned to die,  
As if no more the joyous Spring shall make  
A reawakening in the earth, and take  
The frost from out her heart. In vain I cry  
For mercy on the fragile Summer's breath :  
Harsh Winter is resolved upon her death.

L.E.S.J.R.  
R.D.

## A POEM

Burn down the town slums,  
Emancipate the time servers,  
Let weeping paralytics kiss the warm ears of corn.  
Lock up your bungalow,  
Dispose of the key.  
The past is all over and soon you'll be free.  
For its now or never  
And the time left is short,  
So slip away quietly before you are caught.  
No more mowing of the stunted lawn,  
Sweep up the cuttings and burn the broom.  
No more juggling with hateful figures,  
Hand in your notice and silence the sniggers.  
Tear up your ticket for the London Underground,  
Pull the red danger lever, fine five pound.  
We've gone too far, we want to get out ;  
We're agile now, but soon we'll be stout.

Vision of Utopia  
Ideal, unreachable,  
Contained in the dreams of a million unfortunates,

Impressed by Fate to tread the trodden paths ;  
Whose lives depend on regulated threads.

Life is an epic seen from a plush seat ;  
Read in a letter from a war-worn relative  
Life is divorced from lace-curtained privacy,  
A dusty fern is the symbol of liberty.  
The factory whistle, the postman's knock,  
The unopened bill, the undarned sock,  
The daily paper and the Housewife's Weekly,  
A Hollywood nirvana and the seventh day astrologer.  
What is the outlet for those who resist ?  
Where lies the road that leads away ?  
Give us a mission the humble insist.  
It must be existent, we're bound to obey ;  
Driving back darkness, creating the right  
Brought by despair, infinite light.

## REFLECTIONS IN THE ART ROOM

Boys might be surprised if they knew how much interest and pleasure a really good piece of work can arouse in the Common Room, even in the hearts of those Masters most hardened and made cynical in their long-standing dispute with ignorance and plain dumbness. This pleasure is doubly afforded to the Art Master, for art is the one subject in which to do good work a boy must bring to the Art Lesson as much, or more, than he expects to take away from it. It is doubtful, indeed, if art can be taught at all, when we consider that the question "What is art, anyway?" has baffled the greatest philosophers throughout the ages.

The labour of the Art Master is expended in learning the technique, not of pushing in, but of drawing out ; and when he has provided a stimulus which will set the boys drawing and painting, the most he can do is to guide the flow by criticism and suggestion, in the direction from the crude to the sensitive, from the common-place to the imaginative, and from the blind to the observant.

Again and again the teacher must feel that it is he who learns most from the lessons ; he is the only one who sees all the work which is done, and who can measure any general progress of which the individual boy is often unaware ; he is the only one who can calculate the gain of some experiment of which the only outward sign is an apparent waste of time, energy, paint and paper.

The boy contributes to a whole if he is aware of it or not, and others in the future will benefit from his work. This unconscious contribution is of greater value than the results of official exhortations to serve the community ; it is the tradition, and the real product of the classes, and its worth lies in the pleasure afforded to anyone who is able to learn from it.

G.M.H.

## 19th WIMBLEDON SCOUT TROUP

Visits to the Air Scout Exhibition began a term of purposeful activity. The most encouraging thing in this term's Scouting has been the steady growth of the Patrol System. Four Patrols now have their own dens in which work is done for badges, individual interests are catered for, and, above all, the principle of the Brotherhood of Scouting is put into practice. Difficulties in staffing have laid greater responsibilities on patrol leaders, in itself a good thing, and they have responded well. We have allowed our numbers to go up to forty, and there is a waiting list of some ten or so recruits. The five patrols remain as they are, but a sixth, the Swifts, has been formed to absorb recruits and to act as a training patrol.

We welcome most sincerely the Headmaster and the Rev. Ashford as **President and Chaplain of the Troop, respectively**. The President addressed the Troop on his first visit to a Troop Parade, and now he closely follows its activities. The Chaplain has for some time been known to the Troop as the curate of Christ Church, whose services the Troop attends every month, but now he will be a more intimate friend to the Troop, and this closer connection with Christ Church has been welcomed by the S.M. and the Leaders.

Recently a Parents' Social Evening was held when some seventy parents gathered together to hear a short speech from the President, to hear some news from the S.M. about the coming District Scout Rally and the Annual Fête, and to discuss Scouting for Boys among themselves. It was a pleasant, profitable and enjoyable evening.

A Beetle Drive has been begun for raising money for the purchase of a permanent camping site for the Troop. Results were good and those who were present spent an exciting and thoroughly enjoyable evening in the School Hall, throwing dice and drawing beetles. The Troop thanks all those parents and friends who helped to make this venture a success.

On the last weekend of term the 19th have arranged a very ambitious weekend for scouts of all troops from a wide area around Wimbledon. From the small idea of a P.L.'s conference there has grown this District Rally to which we hope to attract hundreds of boys from all sections of the Movement. Over the weekend there will be a camp for patrol leaders. On Saturday, 3rd April, a General Rally in the Hall will be addressed by speakers representing the Youth Committee, I.H.Q., Rovers, and post war scouting. It will be followed by a Camp Fire Ceremony. On the Sunday morning there will be a conference for P.L.'s only, and in the afternoon a Scouts' Own Service. Both the Rally and the Service are open to all parents and friends.

## OLD BOYS

[The late Headmaster has kindly sent us the following notes on the activities of various Old Boys.]

It has occurred to me that I probably have in their recent letters to me information about some Old Boys of general interest. I am therefore **sending a few notes and quotations**. I have omitted all letters from the universities, as they have their own means of telling their stories, and have restricted myself mainly to Old Boys serving in H.M. Forces.

Firstly, congratulations to I. W. Wotton (Prefect, 1936-37), on being the School's first Old Boy to be married. We wish him all happiness. He left an office job to go farming in Australia. After fifteen months with the A.I.F. in Egypt, he was recalled to the Far East. The Censor has meticulously cut out all place names, but he writes of "old Dutch forts in islands which tell vividly of our colonial clashes with the Dutch in the 18th century." He has been "into the interior, visiting the local headmen, attending devil dances and drinking vile arrak and toddy." "I've played cricket against the Sengalese Police, encountered every animal and insect God in His wisdom has created, and eaten native food carried to a degree I didn't think possible." He was married in Brisbane last August. At Christmas he was in hospital with malaria. He is now a L/Sgt.

K. O. Richards (Prefect, 1938-41) writes from Canada, quoting lines which sum up his impatience with present conditions. He wants to get back for operational flights over Germany.

"We're tired of waste and muddle and the mind  
Perpetually and helplessly confined  
To barracks and parades upon a tidy square."



W. H. Whiteley (Sub-Lieut.) writes with enthusiasm of "the marvellous background of learning and character" which School gave him, and of determination to help found a worthy Old Boys' Society after the war.

L. C. Fielding (Prefect, 1936-37) tells of a visit to Cambridge, when they were shown over Trinity by the Master. He remembers enough of School to be duly excited at having met C. M. Trevelyan. "Our day finished at St. John's and the Wren Library. I could spend weeks there." After the war he could do worse than spend years. I always wanted a university career for him.

E. J. Nagle (Prefect, 1938-39) proudly claims that "more was done at Raynes Park for Secondary School than in any other school of its kind." He has been in "some really fine sand storms"—and since then one suspects storms of another kind.

J. W. Robbins (Prefect, 1939-41) has been in Scotland. He has found that that country goes to sleep on Sundays, his one free day. He has been in the Macbeth country, but able to see little of it. He gets through a lot of reading—*War and Peace*, *Cordoroy*, *Mr. Morris Chvnges Trains*, *Sense and Sensibility*. He has lately been learning to ski, having to climb 3,000 feet to find any snow.

W. J. Stephens (Prefect, 1938-40) says: "You ought to have seen me in my overalls cleaning the lavatories out." He spent Christmas in Blackpool. He commends the last *Spur*, and adding, "It is good reading about the old place."

J. F. Smith (Prefect, 1937-38) tells lurid stories of celebrations at a R.A.F. station. He has even experienced the old custom of beer at breakfast.

A. Fabian, at Film Centre still, seems to divide his leisure between reading Trollope and Tolstoy, and participating in a dance band which his enterprise has brought to birth.

A. Day (Prefect, 1940-42) has just finished his course in Turkish at Dulwich, and is about to go into the Army. He reveals that Molchonoff, "the arch art cynic," has capitulated to the delights of the ballet. He writes enthusiastically about the Exhibition of 18th Century French Painting.

D. G. Austin (Prefect, 1939-40) and J. Adamson have been to see me in Bristol. The former, just back from Canada, is longing to resume his university career, and to get on with his training as a schoolmaster. Long and welcome letters have come from Mr. Polack in India and Mr. Joyce in Yorkshire.

On Sunday, March 7th, I was proud and grateful to be their guest at the first annual dinner of our Old Boys' in Oxford.

## CORRESPONDENCE

The Grammar School, Bristol,  
14th March, 1943.

To the Editor of *The Spur*.

Sir,—I should be grateful if through your column I could once more thank all those people who, with generosity and kindness greater than I deserved, contributed to presents to me on my departure. I have them all around me in my room here in the school house. The desk from the boys naturally dominates the scene. It is the only desk I have ever known which is big enough! The Parents' chest of drawers goes admirably into a recess, and the Staff's Persian rug makes an antiquated Axminster carpet look apologetic. The Old Boys' chair accommodates, with fashionable austerity, parents and boys alike. Their beautiful dessert plates

await the return of fruit. And if the handsome suitcase from the Governors, and the travelling toilet set from the Parents can hardly find a place in my decorative scheme, they are there ready for that visit I hope to make to the beloved School before the year is out. In early days here it has been a real encouragement to work among tangible expressions of the friendliness and goodwill which I experienced at Raynes Park. Best wishes to you all, and many thanks.

Yours sincerely,  
JOHN GARRETT.

## "THE SPUR" COMMITTEE

Committee : Bannister B., Brodrick N., Cooper D. M., Nightingale D. L.,  
A. H. Overell, Simeone R. N.

Editors : Cooper D. M., Nightingale D. L.

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