

THE SPUR

Vol. VI

No. 5



THE SPUR

RAYNES PARK COUNTY SCHOOL.

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

Vol. VI. No. 5.

April, 1944.

HEADMASTER'S NOTES

Our sympathy is extended to the parents and relatives of Flying Officer A. V. I. Cook, who is now known to have been killed in action. We join in the anxiety felt for Flight Lieutenant Roy Barnes, who is reported as missing from air operations over Germany.

R. N. Simeone has been awarded an Open Scholarship in Geography and History at St. John's College, Cambridge. His achievement is a landmark in the progress of the School. The news reached me after the end of the Spring term and is therefore not generally known. But I am sure that all readers of *The Spur* will join me in congratulating him on the honour which he has won.

Mr. W. H. Herdman has now joined the Staff to take charge of Physical Training and other work of a varied nature. He comes to us with a fine record of games played for Durham University in addition to his other gifts. We hope that he will be happy here. He has certainly brought strength to the School and to the A.T.C.

It is good to have Mr. Basil Wright visiting us once more after his long absence in Canada. The School owes more to him than many of its newer members probably realise. His brilliant lecture on the Canadian outlook has started a greater interest in the British Commonwealth than has been felt here for a considerable time. I am uncertain whether his confidence in our knowledge of Canadian geography is wholly justified!

The Christmas term ended with a series of interesting occasions—the Prize-Giving, the House Play Competition and the Carol Concert. The Spring term has been correspondingly quiet. After so much excitement a pause was needed before the summer's activities engulf us. I think that the interlude has been well spent, though it was unfortunate that the enemy should choose the time of the Trial Examinations to open his new programme of disturbances.

I am very grateful to Colonel C. H. Wilkinson, Dean of Worcester College, Oxford, for distributing the prizes and for delivering so scintillating an address, to Mr. A. K. Boyd for judging the House Plays and for sending the detailed and acute commentary which appears in this number, and to the many lecturers and speakers who have visited us during the past months. It is disappointing that Mr. Raymond Mortimer should have been called abroad at the last moment, but I have every hope that it will not be long before he can come and read poetry to us.

The development of music in the School has been remarkable. The Orchestra, formed only at the beginning of the Christmas term, played at the Carol Concert without any outside support. Squadron Leader Bernard Shore's viola recital was a delightful surprise, and Miss Foreman's

short demonstration of the rare beauty of the oboe proved that music can be enjoyed just as much in the early morning as in the evening. I hope that the Orchestra will steadily increase in size and that it will have much to do in connection with the summer production of Shakespeare's "Tempest." The Music Club, too; has had a good term. Mr. Bernard Brophy's song recital covered a large and fascinating field and showed (to any who doubted the fact) that the human voice is the most subtle and sensitive of all instruments. Capt. Desmond Shawe-Taylor brought his well-known analytical skill and wit to interpret the Fourth Piano Concerto of Beethoven. Miss Foreman and Mr. Frederick Handover, assisted by Dr. Coventry, gave a charming recital of music for violin, oboe and piano. Mr. Cyril Winn's lecture on Russian music, amply illustrated by records was much appreciated. We are looking forward to the visit of his orchestra on 31st May.

The Verse Speaking Competition was judged, as in previous years, by Mr. L. A. G. Strong. His kindness in coming to hear a series of rather mediocre recitations is greatly appreciated. It is to be hoped that one day we shall reach a standard worthy of so distinguished a judge. The influenza germ which attacked Mr. Strong immediately after the competition was virulent and malicious but I cannot deny that it had its good points for me, as it brought me the good fortune of having Mr. Strong at my home for ten days instead of the one night originally arranged. In the Easter term we had the great pleasure of hearing Mrs. Strong play the piano accompaniments for Mr. Brophy with exquisite understanding.

Many Old Boys have already been here this year. K. O. Richard brings back with him to England an enthusiasm for Canada and the United States which I find highly encouraging. Anthony Hinton is on sick leave after a serious accident in North Africa. His accounts of the reaction of the Arab populace to its European guests are very illuminating. The October Short Courses are now over, and those who have gone on them have clearly made good use of their time. I hope that many of these Old Boys will return to the Universities after the war. Michael Bedford secured two distinctions at Edinburgh and was rated third of all the R.N. personnel on the Course.

I expect this number of *The Spur* to be an interesting one. New ideas are being considered and more will follow. Above all, there is a constant need for original contributions of quality. I hope to see a great increase of these, especially in verse. A school to which a book of modern poetry has been dedicated should make an appropriate response.

ROLL OF HONOUR

Killed

Sgt.-Observer M. H. C. Ashdown, R.A.F.
Sgt.-Air Gunner J. A. G. Billingham, R.A.F.
Flying Officer A. V. I. Cook, R.A.F.

Missing

Flight Lieut. R. Barnes, R.A.F.
Sgt.-Pilot J. A. Smith, R.A.F.
Pilot Officer S. G. Palk, R.A.F.

Prisoner of War

Pilot Officer J. D. L. Moore, R.A.F.
Sgt.-Pilot R. G. Franklin, R.A.F.

Any information about Old Boys serving with H.M. Forces will be welcomed by *The Spur* Committee.

OBITUARY

A. V. I. COOK

He has given; we have yet to give. Let each one of us pledge ourselves the more earnestly to establish in ourselves the noble idea by which he lived and for which he died; for "substance is one of our greatest illusions." He was "a very true and gentle knyghte."

THOMAS COBB.

The war has made us treat life as something impersonal, and it is only when it concerns one near to us that its real significance is felt. The news that Alec Cook had been killed while serving with the R.A.F. was a great blow to all who knew him. The School has lost a great friend—the School which he loved so much and served so well. He was an original member of the School, and he will be remembered by all who were with him during those first exciting years in which the School grew up and established itself. As a schoolboy who won the respect and admiration of his fellows, as a sportsman and prefect who showed such powers of leadership and encouragement to others, he will remain in my mind an essential part of the School towards which he always displayed a great devotion. On behalf of the School and the Old Boys' Society I express our deepest sympathy to his parents in their great loss.

JOHN ROBBINS.

SCHOOL OFFICERS, EASTER TERM, 1944

Head of School : G. P. Billingham

Second Boy : N. T. Poulter.

School Prefects :

G. P. Billingham, N. T. Poulter, N. G. Brodrick, M. G. Brown, J. A. Carter, J. F. Green, A. G. Hopkins, D. A. R. Reid, J. J. Roberts, B. A. Ruff, C. Thompson, K. W. Wright.

Prefect of Hall : J. A. Carter.

Prefect of Library : N. G. Brodrick.

Secretary of Hockey : K. W. Wright.

Secretary of Games Committee : J. J. Roberts.

PRIZE-GIVING, 1943

Prizes were distributed at an informal ceremony on 14th December by Colonel C. H. Wilkinson, Dean of Worcester College, Oxford. Mr. T. Braddock, Chairman of the Governors, presided, and in the course of his introductory remarks paid tribute to the women who have taken the place of Masters absent on war service from this and other Schools. Colonel Wilkinson's address was a *tour de force* of wit, learning and wisdom. Though delivered without a single note, it was rich in fluent quotation from an immense range of English and Scottish authors. The advice which it contained departed from the hackneyed formula that the future of the world will be what the present school generation makes of it. The speaker pointed out that, in actual fact, his audience would have little chance of changing "this sorry scheme of things entire" immediately on leaving school. While keeping their wider aspirations, they should concentrate on first perfecting their own native qualities. One of these was the power of the ordinary man to look at himself humorously; self-criticism was a sign of victory and to regard ourselves as fools might well be a virtue. Next came simplicity. The directness of Martin Parker's "The king shall enjoy his own again" and of "Lillibulero" was more

akin to our ordinary selves than the subtlety of Shakespeare. Finally there was gentleness. The "Strong Enforcement of Gentleness" was perhaps our most characteristic impulse. Even if we could not here and now create the world we wanted, we could make the most of the qualities we had inherited.

In addition to the Higher and School Certificates, the following prizes were distributed:—

FORM PRIZES—VI Arts, C. W. Baker; VI Science, R. E. Jahn; VI Economics, C. Thompson; V1, A. G. A. Eyles; V2, A. P. Tuthill; V3, D. M. Saunders; IV, R. A. J. Wood; Middle 1, F. B. Cook; Middle 2, G. E. Judd; A1, R. A. Birch; A2, T. F. Cromwell; A3, A. F. Conchie; A4, A. S. Warren.

SUBJECT PRIZES—Latin and Greek, E. Roydhouse; History and English, N. G. Brodrick; French, M. G. Schrecker; German, D. L. Nightingale; Geography, R. N. Simeone; Physics, A. E. Bond and D. B. Tait; Chemistry, B. Bannister; Mathematics, C. J. V. Liddle; Biology, M. T. Smith; Verse-Speaking, N. T. Poulter, R. M. Robinson, B. T. Schrecker, D. Grindrod and J. B. Baldwin; General Knowledge, V. M. Andrews and J. R. Hopkins; Handicraft, P. Evans and J. B. Pooley; Printing, D. M. Saunders; Leaving Prize for Head of the School, F. J. W. Holwill,

HOUSE NOTES

Cobb's

House Captain: J. A. Carter.

Vice-Captain: A. G. Hopkins.

School Prefects: C. Thompson, B. A. Ruff.

Rugger

After keeping the Rugger Cup for two years, we surrendered it this year to Gibb's, after a very spirited game, in which the team played very well, but not well enough to check the prodigious scoring of Billingham. The score was 32—3.

Dramatics

For the last two or three years the House has been noted for its last-minute productions which have secured us a very obscure position in the competition. This year the whole cast managed to keep off the plague of influenza which hit some of the other Houses very hard. The choice of play was good and rehearsals were very keenly attended. As a result of this we won the cup, although our confidence of success was rather damped by the excellent performances of three of the other Houses. We were fortunate in having Mr. Cobb in the audience, but unfortunately he was not able to be present for the final result. Some of the younger members of the House played difficult parts very well, and it is their performance which makes us look forward to a further success next year.

Athletics

As a result of the dry weather this term, qualifying has been on a fairly intensive scale. We have some very promising athletes in the House and if all the members co-operate by qualifying, we shall meet with greater success than last year.

Hockey

In spite of a promising turn-out at a preliminary practice, our first match was disappointing both in the absence of our Captain, B. Ruff, and in the actual play of the team. Our matches against Newsom's and Milton's, however, were more successful; in the first half of each game, we played reasonably well with good team work, but in the words of Mr. Warner, "the second half rather resembled a House match." The Gibb's-Cobb's final was a very exciting game and although we lost 4—1, the game was very enjoyable and lacked much of the frivolity which accompanied the other House matches.

Gibb's

House Captain: G. P. Billingham.

Vice-Captain: D. A. R. Reid.

School Prefect: K. W. Wright.

The last term has provided proof of the state of the House; we have excelled in activities in which success or failure has depended on certain individual members of the House, and we have failed where co-operative effort is required. There are at present far too many passengers in the House, people who sit at the lunch table with us, who attend House meetings regularly, and yet are not members of the House in the true sense of the word. We do not suppose that every member of the House has athletic ability, but we do expect them to support those that have. At the moment there are people in the House who have never been known to support a House Match in their lives, who seem to think that the House has no call on their time. They should have realised by now that the House is a definite writ in School life; that each House has a character of its own, and that it is no part of the character of this House to allow the same boys to appear in every House activity. Many juniors have not the physical strength or ability to take a very active part, but they are expected to show a real interest in House affairs.

Rugger

Captain: G. P. Billingham.

When *The Spur* went to press last term we had played two House rugger matches and won both easily. We then played Halliwell's and won 31—12, and in our last game we beat Cobb's by 32 points to 3. Thus our hopes of once again securing the Rugger Cup were fulfilled.

Hockey

Captain: G. P. Billingham.

For the second year running we have won the Hockey Cup. We won all our matches by good margins, and mention should be made of the promising play of some of our juniors. The last game against Cobb's was of a very high standard.

Athletics

Captain: D. A. R. Reid.

Qualifying has been in full swing this term, and the House is at present in a good position. Several of last year's colts, who did so well, are now in the seniors, and if the whole House works hard at qualifying and training there is no reason why we should not give a good account of ourselves.

Dramatics

The less said about the House Play the better. The play was a bad choice, and as a result of illness we were left without our producer shortly before the competition and illness within the cast itself also hindered production. Nevertheless the cast worked hard, and although we were placed last, we did not disgrace ourselves. Next year we must be very careful in our choice of play and in the casting.

Halliwell's

House Captain: J. F. Green.

Vice-Captain: M. G. Brown.

The Spring term finds us with very little to record but this is not a sign of inactivity: the House has rarely been so lively. In spite of this our performances in all competitions have been very mediocre and it is time we aspired to something higher. As it is there is nothing left but to review our accomplishments however meagre they may be.

Rugger

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

Our last two House matches of last season have yet to be recorded : they form a striking comparison with one another. We easily defeated Milton's (who, let it be admitted, were a heavily weakened side) by a margin of 40 points. The odds here were so loaded in our favour, the ground so sticky and the play marked by such an uncreditable lack of skill that few people, if any, derived pleasure from the encounter. We lost heavily to Gibb's, however. Here the sides were relatively even until our full-back was soon forced by an injury to leave the field. Our defence at once collapsed and, although our attack remained threatening, we were beaten 31—12.

Hockey

Captain : M. G. Brown. *Secretary* : Chamberlain K. L.

We started the House Hockey Competition by playing what is, perhaps, the strongest House—Gibb's. At half-time the score was 0—0, rather because the Gibb's forwards were shooting wildly than because of our defence, and we finally lost the game 7—0. Our next match was against Cobb's, with whom we drew 2—2. In the Halliwell's—Milton's game our forwards were in Milton's defence most of the time—in fact, during the second half, the full-backs spent their time lying on the ground ! We won 7—0. The last match is against Newsom's and promises to be a hard game, because the absence of the secretary will weaken our half-line considerably.

Dramatics

Our play was "The Man Who Was Thursday," from the book by G. K. Chesterton. After much hard work we succeeded in tying for third place. Our faults, the adjudicator said, lay in the choice of play, and in cutting the last act by which we lost the real atmosphere of the whole.

Milton's

Captain: J. J. Roberts.

Vice-Captain: Oliver F. J. B.

Again our successes are limited to academic achievements. The untiring work of Schrecker M. G., together with the support of almost the entire House, secured us second place in the Dramatics Competition. We were both ambitious and original in choosing the first play from Dorothy Sayers's cycle, "The Man Born to be King." Schrecker M. G. and Schrecker B. were particularly commended for their performances as Herod and Ephraim, respectively.

From last term we record the ignominious defeats which our XV suffered at the hands of all other Houses. We were unfortunate in playing most matches without our captain, Williams, whom with Roberts we congratulate on the award of school rugger colours. Lack of weight seems to have been our great disadvantage ; but it is encouraging to see that next year the same team will be playing together.

All the House hockey matches have now been played, and in none can we record victory. Our only consolation lies in the fact that we have some very promising colts in the House who will provide a sound basis for next year's team. We were again unfortunate in losing our captain, Read L. W., after the first match.

Next term will see the beginning of intensive training in athletics and swimming. We should do better this year at swimming than we did last, as several quite good juniors have since joined us. The House is, however, reminded that the efforts of individual swimmers in the sports are completely useless, unless a large number of qualifying points are obtained. In view of this members of the House should attend the baths regularly.

This term Read L. W. has left us and is awaiting call-up for the R.A.F. We wish him the best of luck.

Newsom's

House Captain } N. T. Poulter.
Captain of Hockey }
Vice-Captain } N. G. Brodrick.
Secretary of Hockey }
Captain of Athletics: R. Ward.

"Newsom's Uber Alles." Triumphant peal!
For us the issue's never been in doubt,
And while we have a single voice to shout,
That cry shall crown our efforts on the field.
"Newsom's, Newsom's Uber Alles."

Our record has not always been defeat ;
The rugger games we lost were not in vain.
Yet more! We know our honour bore no stain,
So hard we played, so tough the foes we met.
"Newsom's, Newsom's Uber Alles."

And what of "Faust"? Ah, there we had success!
The height of tragedy we gave that night.
It proved the others wrong and showed us right,
Our sense of drama than of pantomime no less.
"Newsom's, Newsom's Uber Alles."

For five long weeks we had to curse and pray,
Make frantic efforts to avert a flop.
The dress-rehearsal! We had better stop
And dwell upon the triumph of "the day."
"Newsom's, Newsom's Uber Alles."

Faust magnificent, a human soul in doubt,
The cast that backed him nobly in his rôle.
Nothing can detract from such a whole,
And least of all the issue of the bout.
"Newsom's, Newsom's Uber Alles."

Our hockey games were hard ; the first a win,
Though two defeats our spirit couldn't quell.
Our dash was great. Our execution—well,
Let's say it was the absence of our Captain.
"Newsom's, Newsom's Uber Alles."

A Newsomite will ever be ambitious ;
Two of our number leave to serve at sea.
A source of sunshine one has strived to be,
The other, though Vice-Captain, was not vicious.
"Newsom's, Newsom's Uber Alles."

Supreme in caste, without a wish for gain,
We scorn the jeers and floutings of the crowd.
To stoop unto their level from the clouds
Is Newsom's pet aversion and our bane.
"Newsom's, Newsom's Uber Alles."

RUGBY FOOTBALL

What a pity that after a really good start to our Rugged season we should have had in the middle such a patch of mediocrity and broken morale that we lost four good matches by a margin that was no reflection of our true worth. Of course we had our difficulties. An injury to Michael Brown robbed us of a full-back that, try as we would, we could not adequately replace: G. H. G. Williams, shaping into a really powerful attacking wing three-quarter, was lost to us through illness. But it does not speak very well for the health of Rugged in the School if we cannot find more than a bare fifteen men of a reasonable standard.

After some experimenting it was found best to take T. P. Cousins from the wing and put him at full-back, where he eventually settled down to being fairly reliable and intelligent. V. R. White was brought into the wing position, a move that was not an unqualified success.

It was only right at the end of the season that we found our form again and defeated the Old Boys by 14 points to 3 in a grand roaring game, probably the best and most enjoyable we have ever had against them.

The result of the latter half term matches was as follows:—

v. Beckenham County School	Lost	8—20
v. Wallington County School	Lost	8—27
v. Rutlish	Lost	0—29
v. Wimbledon College	Lost	8—30
v. Old Boys	Won	14—3

Characters

- M. G. BROWN (full-back)—A grand tackler, strong and courageous, with a kick more long than accurate. Had the valuable quality of giving confidence to those in front of him. His powerful running encouraged him quite rightly to make ground and even score himself.
- T. P. COUSINS (wing three-quarter)—Not very fast or powerful but neat and intelligent. Rather too orthodox, perhaps, and should vary his tactics more. As a substitute full-back he used his head. He should be very useful next year.
- B. A. RUFF (inside three-quarter)—Quick acceleration, a deceptive run, poor hands and a somewhat unreliable defence. He's got the makings of something good.
- J. J. ROBERTS (inside three-quarter)—Well-built and nippy. With a little more experience and a better defence he will be good. Uses his head and uses it well.
- G. H. G. WILLIAMS (wing three-quarter)—Showed great promise at the beginning of the season. Powerful in attack and in defence.
- V. R. WHITE (wing three-quarter)—Who came in as a substitute, lacked the experience and the wits. Swift running without any bump of locality can be very profitable.
- G. P. BILLINGHAM (stand-off half) (Captain)—A player of stature, a Gargantuan scorer and a kicker of length and accuracy. A tower of strength whether in attack or defence, and a very capable captain. The best class player the School has ever had.
- K. W. WRIGHT (scrum-half)—Would that he could use his hands as swiftly and courageously as he uses his feet! Quite the best dribbler on the side, but that isn't his primary roll. Nimble witted, nimble footed and elusive.
- K. W. CLACK (forward)—A good tempered and hard working St. Bernard! Imperturbable, polite and friendly.
- J. F. GREEN (forward)—Hooks well and pertinaciously, but must use his head more over the rules. Plays a steady game that might have more fierceness in it. Leads the scrum well.

- R. A. J. WOOD (forward)—Quite sound but a little too sedate. He needs to see the rabbit.
- J. A. CARTER (forward)—Forceful and hard working in both the tight and loose. A very solid backbone to the scrum, always there or thereabouts.
- D. A. R. REID (forward)—A bustling, hard-working forward with energy and commonsense. A spirited player.
- P. MASON (forward)—Started the season well and played steadily throughout. Only needs more experience and originality to become something really good.
- R. H. WARD (forward)—Compact of body and purpose. Light hearted and fierce either in attack or defence and revels in a good maul.
- A. G. HOPKINS (forward)—Lion-hearted and indefatigable. He always plays flat out and gets through an enormous amount of constructive and destructive work. Other forwards please copy.

R.W.G.

HOCKEY

Characters

- *G. P. BILLINGHAM (centre-half)—A good captain, who has both a powerful hit and kick, and supports the forward line in able fashion.
- *K. W. WRIGHT (centre-forward)—He usually manages to make his way into the circle, and he has at last had some success in his shooting.
- A. G. HOPKINS (left-back)—His hockey bears a remarkable resemblance to his rigger, but he is able to hit the ball hard, and to stop it.
- N. T. POULTER (inside-right)—An unselfish player with a stereotyped pass. He excels in back sticks, and feeds his wing well.
- J. J. ROBERTS (left-half)—He performs his job in an effective manner, although his hitting is a little uncertain. His kicking has been developing this season.
- B. A. RUFF (outside-right)—Has an unhappy knack of falling over at crucial moments, but he gets across good centres.
- *READ L. W. (inside-left)—A tower of strength in defence, he has a devastating shot, which is not often stopped.
- *POTTON F. (outside-left)—One of the best left-wings the School has ever had, with a shot both powerful and accurate. He nearly always gets the better of his opponent, and follows up with a good centre.
- WHITE (right-half)—A former-right wing, he has lost his selfishness, and plays a really good game which, aided by admirable stickwork, is strong both in attack and defence.
- THOMPSON D. (goal)—Defends his goal with increasing verve, but is apt to muddle with his backs. His kicking has improved steadily throughout the season.
- HARVEY (right-back)—A little clumsy. He roams the field, hits the ball hard, much to the danger of nearby players, and usually manages to stop the man he should mark.
- * Denotes School Hockey Colours.

Notes

This year we have, after a few trial games, produced a team which, although handicapped by a poor ground, manages to play something approaching hockey.

The forward line, strong on the left, has played more as a unit than in previous years, but the shooting in the circle is slow, erratic and inaccurate, although it has been improving.

The halves stop the ball well, and feed the forwards in an able manner. But they still have a tendency to mark either the wrong man or else nobody at all.

The backs, now that they have learnt how to use the "One back up" principle, usually manage to keep the ball out of our own circle. They

do not yet, however, realise the full value of hitting the ball hard, straight up the field, instead of attempting to beat another man first.

The 1st XI have had a successful season, although they have been unfortunate in losing L. W. Read, who, having played for three years in the 1st XI, has been a great loss to the forward line.

The Colts have improved this year mainly through the games that they have played on Mondays and Thursdays. Their match team is strong owing to the inclusion of the School 1st XI goalkeeper and one of the School backs—both young enough to be in the Colt team.

K.W.W.

School Hockey Colours were awarded this season to Potton F.

Results	1st XI	Goals		Result
		For	Against	
v. Beckenham County School	1st XI	2	7	Lost
v. Kingston Grammar School	1st XI	0	6	Lost
v. Caterham School	1st XI	3	0	Won
v. U.C.S. Hampstead	1st XI	3	0	Won
v. U.C.S. Hampstead	1st XI	5	1	Won
<i>2nd XI</i>				
v. Beckenham County School	2nd XI	3	5	Lost
v. Caterham School	2nd XI	1	7	Lost
v. U.C.S. Hampstead	2nd XI	4	1	Won
v. Kingston Grammar School	2nd XI	1	1	Drawn
v. Kingston Grammar School	2nd XI	1	3	Lost
<i>Colt XI</i>				
v. Kingston Grammar School			Won

19th WIMBLEDON SCOUT GROUP

At the end of last term Captain Gibson gave a thrilling first-hand account of his escape from Hong Kong, his adventures while crossing the Malay Peninsular, of journeys across two oceans, one in intense heat, the other combating fog and icebergs, and so back to this country. The lecture was worthy of a much larger audience.

A Carol Service was held just before Christmas at Holy Trinity Church and this Troop was responsible for the distribution of the many gifts to the three local hospitals. There have been the usual Church Services this term.

Several seniors paid individual visits to a steel works during the holidays and, among other activities, spent some time at arc welding. The holidays also saw another two-day hike and a Youth Hostel visit. A party of eight set out from Dorking and used paths and tracks but always with the distant mist outline of Hindhead as the path-finding guide. They stayed the night in pleasant company and with good food at Ewhurst Green, and on the following morning made for Coneyhurst Hill, Gomshall, Hackhurst Downs, and so back to Box Hill and Dorking. The field-day which is to take place at the end of term will centre around the Coneyhurst Hill area with its fine views and extensive rough woodlands.

Five seniors have now passed the St. John Ambulance Association Certificate in First Aid. They are Troop Leader Kentish, Patrol Leaders Mason, Newman, Styles and Fleet. Nurse Hill is to be congratulated on a very efficient method of training and a happy one. Dr. Kelly examined for the examination and we are grateful for her interest in the Troop's general activities. On the first Wednesday of next term, Dr. Kelly is coming to talk to the Troop and present awards. She will also give a film and talk on Blood Transfusion.

Some fifty parents and friends gathered together on the 29th January to see a demonstration of signalling led by Mr. Mason, of ambulance work led by Nurse Hill, and of defensive P.T. by Mr. Thomas. A social evening followed: Troop affairs were discussed and plans for the summer fête were set in motion. Each Saturday evening now sees a general Group Meeting taken by Mr. Phillips and assisted by Messrs. Thomas and Mason. The main work has centred round the proposed demonstration to be given at this year's fête. This is to take place on Saturday, 3rd June, and we look forward to the co-operation of a large circle of parents and friends.

During the term Mr. Warner gave another lecture on the Wild Birds of Surrey, and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds sent a fine collection of slides. Our late Troop Leader is to be congratulated on his good work as Secretary of the Wimbledon Patrol Leaders' Guild and on the start he has given to a District Patrol Leaders' Programme.

Seniors over 15 years or in a Vth Form may now apply to join the Chough Patrol. This was originally formed years ago to cater for Old Boys of the Troop. Several are still members and write to the Scoutmaster. Now, it is intended that this patrol shall provide both for Old Boys and the seniors who need a more adult programme of activities and who can meet in the evenings and weekends. The programme for the next month includes a visit to the Gas, Light and Coke Company's Works at Fulham and to the printing house of the *Evening Standard*.

A major event in the near future will be the new version of last year's experimental rally. It is the International Rally and Conference and takes place on 15th to 16th April. Among our distinguished speakers and guests will be J. Chuter Ede, Esq., M.P., the Bishop of Southwark, Chief Education Officer, the Mayors of Wimbledon and Malden, the County Commissioner and the I.H.Q. International Commissioner. The Canadian Rover Crew will be among our guests from overseas and will stay overnight with members of the Troop.

E.G.R.

THE JUNIOR SCHOOL

From experiments which started rather tentatively in the Autumn Term and which have been developed in the present one, we feel that some definite results are now beginning to show. The Junior School is developing a character and personality of its own. As a unit within the Junior School the Form has replaced the Club, which gives scope for competition between parallel Forms amongst boys of the same age. But it is not this competition that we are so much seeking to foster as a desire on the part of every boy to realise his own responsibility to his Form and School.

In order to help the Juniors to recognise themselves as a developing entity we have planned meetings which are attended by the whole Junior School. Some of the most popular of these have been the Film Shows, which are reported elsewhere. On the first Thursday of the term Miss Whitman gave a talk on "A good, square meal" which had the double purpose of teaching the boys the values of the various foods that are available for a meal, and the wisdom and necessity of leaving an empty plate after lunch. School lunch itself is also a daily function where the Junior School assembles with its Form Masters, Form Prefects and sometimes other Masters and Prefects, and here stress is laid upon the importance of courtesy, decent behaviour, and a recognition of the existence and rights of one's neighbour. Perhaps the conversation is not always as elevated as one might hope for, but at least most of the Juniors are beginning to learn the value of lunch time as a social occasion. Other activities take the form of Chess Clubs, Nature Study Groups, Stamp Clubs, and the Cosmos Club, whose Form Prefect took a party of his Juniors to Madame Tussauds.

The organisation of the Junior School is in the hands of the Junior

School Council, which decides what further experiments may be tried out and what measures must be taken against offenders, of whom there are still too many.

We are hoping that the day will come when each boy in the Junior School will realise that he personally has some contribution, either great or small, in work or play, to make, and that he is making it all the time either for good or for ill. Failure to recognise this and to remember it is a form of selfishness that we do not wish to see. It is only by putting our very best into all that we do that we can expect to get the best out of our School.

D.E.W.

JUNIOR SCHOOL FILM SHOWS

As this has been a very short term we arranged to hold only two Film Shows for the Junior School. These were duly advertised in the School Diary, but such a spirit of hopefulness seems to surge from within a small boy that scarcely a Thursday dinner time has gone by without the enquiry "Please, sir, will there be a film show to-day, sir?" Consequently feeling ran fairly high on the two days when the answer was "Yes."

On 3rd February the two films shown were "The Life of the Tawny Owl" and "Oxford." The Nature Study film was easily first favourite, although one or two boys liked the other, which however was not very informative, being rather a breathless survey of a tower here, a window there, a quadrangle, a street, a bridge, all rather disconnected and each college being introduced with its own rather loud and overwhelming signature tune, which completely obliterated the commentary. It was therefore decided to stick to Nature Study on the next occasion and not to show "Cambridge."

On 9th March we had a very popular show, consisting of "Roots," a film showing what happens underneath the ground to those seeds which we restrain ourselves from pulling up to see if they are growing; a very fine film on "The Tortoiseshell Butterfly"; and lastly a longer film, "Bird Sanctuary." The latter is a film about the bird sanctuary on the Faroe Islands and is to be commended for its excellent photography and most convincing sound recording. It was amazing to sit in Raynes Park and hear the Kittiwakes and Terns calling so realistically.

But the Junior School is not conservative in its demands and I have been asked to find a film on such diverse subjects as beavers, town planning, the malaria parasite, Edinburgh. I may not be able to comply with all these requests, but it is gratifying to know that the Film Shows have been so popular. We are very grateful, too, to Tuthill and Perry for the help they have given so willingly with the projector.

D.E.W.

LECTURES

18th January, Squadron-Leader Bernard Shore.

In a recruiting speech made on behalf of the Air Ministry to encourage membership of the A.T.C., Squadron Leader Shore laid great emphasis on the necessity of every boy having some form of pre-service training, as a preliminary step to joining one of the Services in the capacity of an officer. He said that in a school the A.T.C. should be parallel with, and part of, the general education; the A.T.C. gave boys the chance of asserting their personality and showing their ability for leadership, under service conditions. For air crew duties at least one year in the VIth Form was desirable, though not indispensable; for the A.T.C. had given those boys who left school at the age of fourteen an opportunity to show their qualities. In Squadron Leader Shore's opinion, the A.T.C. had a definitely stimulating effect on boys of all types—especially as an adjunct to school life; it accentuated the characteristics desirable in the potential officer—intelligence, personality, initiative and responsibility.

I.P.S.

24th January, "Biography," Harold Nicolson, M.P.

No one could have been better qualified to speak on the subject of Biography than Mr. Nicolson, himself the author of a really superb "Life of Tennyson." He gave us his own estimation of the three fundamental attributes of successful biography—truth, vividness and literary worth. A good biography combines strict accuracy, the power to make a personality come alive and a value as literature. The art of writing biography has all too often neglected these fundamentals and has been beset by certain root evils. The tendency to write a biography for the purposes of commemoration, whether the subject is good, bad or indifferent, too often leads to bad biography. It is just as fatal to write an idealised life history for the purposes of example and instruction.

Good biography is written under the guiding stimulus of curiosity. It leads the good biographer to record those vivid touches and strange idiosyncrasies which make a character come alive. Asaph's "Life of Alfred" has these qualities and may fairly claim to be the first good biography in our history. Roper's "Life of Sir Thomas More" is the next. In the seventeenth century we find the instincts of the good biographer in Aubrey's thumb-nail sketches "Minutes of Lives." Unfortunately he was incurably careless. Among other things his carelessness cost posterity vital facts about Shakespeare's life. Johnson is the central figure in English biography. He defined the scope of the subject, gave us many excellent portraits of literary men, and was himself the subject of the greatest biography in the language. Boswell's opportunity was one of which most biographers dream. Then, in the nineteenth century, Froude introduced the satirical element into biographical writing, an element which appears too frequently to-day.

Mr. Nicolson concluded with a few words on the reading of biography. It is far better to read around a whole group or subject than to select those biographies which we have been told are good.

N.G.B.

31st January, "The County of London Plan," Henry Braddock, A.R.I.B.A.

Planning is by no means an innovation in human affairs, for all of us must plan on a small scale if we are to live our lives at all. It merely means that we must make some consideration for the future in whatever we undertake. The re-planning of our cities and towns is necessary because our predecessors took no thought for future developments when they built over the face of England. London provides a terrifying example of what can happen under haphazard development, and if we are to avoid even worse confusion it is essential that we plan its future development now.

The Royal Institute of British Architects has made its own plan for London which it is submitting as a basis for redevelopment. The area under consideration is that of the London Civil Defence Region, comprising 850 square miles, with a population of eight and a half millions. A map of that area will show how successive "rings" of development have girdled the City of London, until we have the sprawling mass which we know to-day. The "Victorian ring" in the last century extended the radius of London by one mile. Railways were largely responsible for this development and they thrust into the heart of London. After 1900 came another building wave which went on until the whole L.C.C. area became completely built up. Within our own time a building boom has swallowed up the small towns which lay outside the London area.

The plan which had been put forward was based upon a development of lines of communication. Building must be subordinated to a coherent system of roads and railways. London was to be given a system of concentric roads which roughly followed the building "rings" already in existence. To supplement these ring-roads a number of radial roads would be built. Building would be kept clear of the roads, which would

run through park-land. This would ensure the safety and health of the population, and make it possible for everybody to reach the country easily. The railways would remain much as they are at the present time.

In our own area the separate communities which had been swallowed up would be given a separate existence once more. Over a number of years building development would be carried out, and areas of country would take their place beside the re-planned towns. The confused jumble of to-day would be made into a balanced and coherent whole with the spirit of community once more restored.

N.G.B.

13th February, "The Labour Party's Plan for Surrey," Thomas Braddock, F.R.I.B.A.

Mr. Braddock was doubly welcome, as Chairman of the Governors, and as one of the chief sponsors of the plan for the reconstruction of Surrey. Interest was further increased by the fact that we had already been addressed a week previously by his brother, Henry Braddock, A.R.I.B.A., on the County of London reconstructional plan.

He first impressed upon his audience that the Surrey Labour Party placed first emphasis on the provision of adequate food for the whole population. Any plan of reconstruction must be subordinated to that primary aim. He went on to discuss those factors which made it imperative that we should plan for Surrey's future now. The population of the county had swelled enormously in the past three decades, while the north-eastern corner, which was already overcrowded, was rapidly becoming too densely populated. In the future, moreover, we had to anticipate an influx of population from London if that county were to put its own plan into operation.

The essence of the Labour Party's plan was a redistribution of population from the overcrowded north-eastern area to the south and south-west of Surrey. This would take place over a certain number of five-year periods, and at first there would be a phase of building activity rather than demolition. New building areas would have to be created for the housing of the population before any over-built areas could be cleared. A number of new towns would come into being, and in all towns there would be immediate access to the countryside.

The interest felt by the audience in the plan was reflected in the number of questions put to Mr. Braddock. How are we going to put the plan into operation without first getting control of all land? Can we have a separate plan for Surrey? How are people going to be induced to move to new areas? Are the new towns going to be self-contained? Will the sites of new towns be occupying valuable agricultural land? Why are the lines of communication being placed so far from the towns?

Mr. Braddock was generally able to answer each of his eager questioners in detail. He admitted that the plan had limitations and claimed no finality for it. At the same time he pointed out that the basis for a plan was in existence when the authorities chose to act. That was the essential point about this plan.

N.G.B.

16th February, Rev. P. Gay, R.N.V.R.—Address.

In the Devonshire Regiment in the last war there was a soldier who was the cause of endless trouble to the authorities; he was a drunkard, and always late on parade; he was court-martialled for striking an officer. To avoid being sent to France he swallowed glass; when that failed, he tried buttons, but again he was unsuccessful. He crossed the channel. Here he began mutilating himself to keep out of the front line; he shot the top off a finger, but it healed; he shot through his own foot; that, too, eventually grew better. In desperation he shot and smashed his left hand. By now he was a physical wreck and a cripple. He was stationed for his court-martial in a village within range of the enemy's

guns; it was constantly shelled, and one spot in particular on the corner of a street was invariably hit. One day while he was out walking with two guards, shells began to fall. At the same time two people were driving round this corner in a cart; they were stunned by the first shell that landed; others were on their way. Then that soldier ran from his guards to the cart and began to help those two people away. He knew that the spot was dangerous; he knew that in all probability he would die; yet he took the risk. The next shell killed him. In spite of his record he was looked upon as a hero; even the street in which he died was named after him. All his life he deliberately caused trouble; yet his last action showed how splendid his record might have been; he chose to suppress the good that was in him. But it was there all the time, lying latent within him, had he wished to use it.

1st March, "Russian Music," Cyril Winn, Esq., H.M.I.

Before the time of Peter the Great, folk and peasant music, of which there were enormous quantities, was predominant in Russia. This music was characterised by the frequent use of the falling 4th, irregular rhythm and repetition. The fine quality of the Russian singing voice is due to the fact that no instrumental music was allowed in the churches for the purpose of accompaniment. After Peter the Great, however, European music began to infiltrate into Russia and in the year 1800 began the great revival. Glinka, the pioneer of the use of Russian folk music, had had considerable acquaintance with Italian opera, and introduced its idiom into the music of his own country. From this time opera in Russia became the expression of the life of the populace. 1860 saw the raising of the banner of nationalism by the "big five"—Cui, Borodin, Moussorgsky (best known for his "Pictures from an Exhibition," in which he obtains an effect similar to that of Walt Disney), the influential Rimsky-Korsakov, and Balakirev. Other important figures include Stravinsky, Scriabin, who associated music with colour, the grotesque Prokofiev, known for his "Peter and the Wolf" and "Love of Three Oranges," and Shostakovitch. Tchaikovsky cannot rightly be considered a nationalist composer. The prominence of Russia in the realm of music to-day is largely due to the fact that the composers and artists there are supported by the state.

Mr. Winn illustrated his talk with music of Glinka, Moussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Prokofiev and Shostakovitch.

G.B.T.

2nd March, "Post-War Europe," George Glasgow, Esq.

Mr. Glasgow did not disappoint us when his long-awaited return visit took place. His theme was a continuation of his previous talk last term when he discussed post-war problems which would arise in Europe. This had stimulated a number of questions which had been sent to him, and it was to these which he now turned his attention.

The problem of Spain, he confessed, was a difficult one, and the problem of defining our attitude to her was complicated by several issues. For one thing, we could not presume to dictate any form of government to the Spanish people, or indeed to interfere in their internal affairs, while we maintained our arbitrary control of Gibraltar, which is a piece of Spanish territory.

He dealt next with Austria and generally with the rights of the small European nations. The Peace of Versailles had established the independent status of many smaller nations, but the bid to give expression to the multitudinous nationalities of Europe had tended to fail in face of overwhelming economic difficulties. Somehow a system of economic unity had to be restored.

This brought him to the question of European confederations. Although a United States of Europe was still but a visionary scheme,

smaller confederations would have to play a vital part in post-war politics. Indeed, various schemes had already been put forward, and it seemed likely that much of the disintegration which the last peace had brought about would be remedied.

The question of India would almost certainly be solved after this war by the granting of full dominion status, and it seemed probable that the whole question of empire would be brought to a head in the next few years. We are on the threshold of a vast new change in international relationships, when subject peoples would cease to be exploited and dominated by the larger powers and the rights of all nations would be respected by their neighbours.

N.G.B.

7th March, "Dr. Johnson," Dr. Arundell Esdaile.

Dr. Johnson was born in 1709, the son of a Litchfield bookseller; his father's failure in business took him from Oxford after a stay of only a year. Poverty drove him to London, where he obtained regular work on the staff of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. He then began to compile an English dictionary almost entirely without scientific reference to books; for this reason the technical terms are weak, but the work, which includes illustrative quotations in chronological order, is an outstanding feat of memory. This and his earlier novel, "Irene," gained Dr. Johnson a literary reputation, and on his publication of a moralising periodical, *The Rambler*, his fame spread to such an extent that in George II's reign he received a pension of £300 a year, as the most outstanding man of letters of his day. Whereupon Dr. Johnson resolved to work as little as possible, and to settle down to enjoy the delights of conversation. At this point in his life he first met James Boswell and Mrs. Thrale; and now begins the most interesting part of Boswell's great biography; the wisdom of the great man, his sharp wit and humour now becomes evident. His style of conversation is quick and simple; it cuts like a knife. Strangely enough only a small part of it is literary, and there is also to be found a certain lack of interest in the realms of philosophy. In France at this time Rousseau descended upon the unsuspecting populace with his creed of "the noble savage." Johnson was shocked by his revolutionary outburst; Johnson believed in class distinction, in the respect afforded by an inherited position, in the grand principle of subordination. He was a Tory, and objected to the Whigs as much as Rousseau approved of them. By nature Dr. Johnson was generous, and all but £70 to £80 of his pension found its way into charities or the hands of poor children. Such a picture as we have of Dr. Johnson is taken from Boswell's biography; it is not the only record of his life, but it is the first and greatest of them all.

B.A.R.

14th March, "Canada," Basil Wright, Esq.

Mr. Wright has just returned from a six months' tour of Canada and the United States. His lecture dealt with the general politics of Canada from the point of view of Canadians all over the dominion.

Canada is the most advanced of all the dominions. The country, which occupies an area larger than the U.S.A. but which has a population of only 12 million, possesses the greatest natural resources in the world. One-third of the population is of French descent, 20 per cent. is composed of various nationalities such as Japanese, and the people of the Central European states, and the other 50 per cent. are of Anglo-Saxon descent. Thus Canada is not entirely populated by emigrants from the "Mother Country" and is rightly annoyed at the British attitude towards her as part of the Empire which is dependent upon Britain.

Because of the diversity of race in Canada, the Federal Government at Ottawa has to be very careful with its legislative powers. Each of the nine provinces has its own Cabinet and Prime Minister and is very jealous of its provincial rights.

The French section of the population bears absolute national identity to France and the province of Quebec has a deep rooted culture which is lacking in other parts of the dominion. The French Canadians have very large families of 13 to 20 children and they hope that in time they will become the ruling majority and get back many of their lost rights in Canada. As it is at the moment, no federal Government can rule successfully without the support of the French.

In contrast to this, Southern Ontario is completely pro-British. The population here consists of big business men who exercise great industrial and financial power. The Prairie Provinces are largely populated by Central Europeans who favour immigration.

With her great natural resources Canada's industrial development has expanded four times since 1939. If this new industrial movement is to be kept up after the war, the domestic market will have to be increased to 36 million people. The only way to do this seems to be on an international basis, by which the Jews and other persecuted races will be allowed to settle in the vast areas where at present there are only three people to the square mile.

Canada's greatest fear at the moment is to be swamped by the U.S.A. The building of the East-West railway has stopped the influence of the U.S.A. spreading northwards into the country. Lying athwart the main air routes between Russia and the U.S.A. she naturally wants closer relations with Great Britain as a source of protection. The people of Canada are fighting in this war because they are interested in a world federation and believe it is just as much a Canadian war as a British one. She is unable to take a very large part in world affairs, however, because of her isolated position.

J.A.C.

16th March, "The National Trust," James Lees-Milne, Esq. (Secretary to the National Trust).

The National Trust came into existence fifty years ago in order to meet the menace of industrialisation and speculative building which was threatening to engulf the countryside and destroy places of architectural worth. Its activities since that date have been unceasing and manifold, until, at the present day, it holds in trust over 150,000 acres of English countryside, besides numerous buildings and controlling rights over other property. It is performing a service to the whole nation by its activities. It preserves vast stretches of our countryside against the encroachment of building. It provides the people of our crowded industrial towns and over-populated areas with facilities for walking through some of our loveliest countryside and enjoying the prospect which would otherwise be denied to them. It preserves places of architectural and historical value against the ravages of man and nature and provides the public with opportunities for visiting these buildings. The types of property which it holds vary enormously. The largest part is open countryside and parkland, but it also controls country-houses, farms and cottages. It owns one complete village, several town houses and sites of excavations, prehistoric remains and Roman buildings.

But the expense of purchasing and maintaining this property is immense. Only a fraction of it can be covered by public subscription and even if land is given to the trust its upkeep still renders it a liability. Indeed, in the past, the offers made to the trust of various gifts of land and property had often to be refused because the expense of maintaining them would be too great. The property of the National Trust has to support itself either by the income derived from it or from some other wealthier property.

Mr. Milne concluded his talk by showing on the epidiascope some pictures of property preserved for us by the National Trust.

N.G.B.

22nd March, "The Middle East," C. A. F. Dundas.

Mr. Dundas first gave a brief account of the political divisions of the area known as the Middle East, both before, and after, the last world war, mentioning especially the mandates of Syria and Lebanon under the French, and Palestine and Iraq under the British.

The Middle East was important because it lay across the communication and supply routes to India and the Far East, and because it was a most important source of oil.

Just before the present war, there was a great deal of trouble in that region, caused mainly by a desire for self-rule and Axis propaganda, which convinced the people that Great Britain was decadent, and should be overthrown, if they were to receive help from Germany.

Mr. Dundas then described the military events which had occurred in the Middle East up to the present day, showing how much of our final success we owed to the co-operation of the people and the authorities in the mandated and independent territories of the Middle East.

In pressing that this co-operation should continue, he said, "We must find some way of ensuring, as a permanency, the same degree of assistance and co-operation from the people in this area (the Middle East)."

K.W.W.

HOUSE DRAMA COMPETITION

The ill wind of influenza which blew the House Drama Competition from 3rd to 17th December was a favouring breeze to at least one participant, the adjudicator, who could not have attended the earlier date, and so would have missed a stimulating experience. Enthusiasm, enterprise and integrity of purpose had gone to make this entertainment. All the pieces chosen offered a real challenge to producers and actors, and three of them were to all intents first performances, in that probably none of the actors and very few of the audience could have seen them performed before. This fact indicates a desire to interpret life in fresh terms on the stage, and not merely to copy the interpretations of others. The standard of acting was uneven—how could it be otherwise? That is unimportant. What matters is that there was always a sincere creative purpose at work which found expression, sometimes with decisive effect and never negligibly, in dramatic form for the entertainment of an audience. My only regret was that I had to place all the plays in order of merit. None of them deserved the stigma of a low place in the order.

In dealing with each play I shall not dwell on the obvious faults of acting which inevitably occurred from time to time. The most prevalent were looking on the ground, movement without purpose, and a tendency for those out of the main stream of dialogue to stop acting. The standard of audibility was high,—a tribute too rarely possible in the amateur theatre. In the following review the plays are placed in what I adjudged to be their order of merit.

1st, COBB'S. "Thunder Rock" (abridged). This was an admirable choice of play and it had been cut with skill and discretion. It was remarkable how much not only of the thought of the play but also of its construction survived in this version of less than an hour. The beginning did not promise the heights that were afterwards attained. It looked as if this might be a one-man show, in which Ruff as *Charleston*, with his technical competence, would leave the rest of the actors—and the play—out in the cold. The producer, who afterwards showed plainly his firm imaginative touch, mistimed *Joshua's* first entry so that it fell flat; and at the first appearance of the passengers he failed to establish their "other-worldly" quality so as to distinguish them from the real characters. But gradually the play took hold. The climax was finely developed, and the spiritual conflict which animates the action surged over to the

audience irresistibly. Ruff must share with the producer (Simeone) the chief credit for this. He had a real understanding of his part and he knew how to express it with admirable use of his voice and a fine restraint of movement and gesture. Carter, as *Joshua*, with less of the external devices of acting at his command, built himself up by degrees as a solid monument of sincerity and character. E. R. Warren, as *Kurtz*, also lingers in the memory,—an excellent example of how character can be created by the use of repose. Of the other passengers Lines as *Miss Kirby* was the best; but she never quite came to terms with her umbrella. An aggressively male umbrella was doubtless right,—but why that Bond Street roll? Tanner (*Melanie*) suffered most from the blue pencil and not much of his part remained. As a piece of the background he was not always quite in the picture, and he should study the posture of seated females. But all the actors contributed their quota to a memorable and often moving piece of work, with a touch of real distinction in it. The play was not, like some of the others, given a flying start by its setting, which was rather ordinary. Acting and production alone were responsible for this fine achievement.

2nd, MILTON. "Kings in Judæa." This extract from "The Man Born to be King" had outstanding merit and ran the winner close. It was lively, interesting and full of colour. The subject was handled in a forthright, secular fashion, as Miss Sayers evidently intended it to be; but that was not the whole of Miss Sayers's intention. Set in these mundane events is something which is to the authoress of more than mundane significance; and in the conveying of this to the audience the production tripped up badly. In the first place the handling of the Evangelist was seriously at fault. It may be possible to defend his wearing of everyday dress (though I do not see how); there may be some case for his facing the stage (though mere expediency should have dictated his speaking so that he could best be heard through the music); but there can be no possible defence for his lax and nonchalant attitude. Not only was he a sad and irrelevant blot on the stage picture (strayed from a play by Thornton Wilder or Pirandello), but in his treatment there was a glaring failure to seize an opportunity for the truer interpretation of the play. The second lapse was due entirely, I think, to lack of experience and not to insensibility. An obvious danger was not foreseen, with the result that at a crucial moment, through sheer maladroitness, the play foundered, and its devotional content evaporated in laughter. It is no good blaming the audience in such cases.

One more blemish must be mentioned—the grouping of the scene which followed *Herod's* first entry. *Herod* was wrongly placed, and the whole scene suffered badly. But now I have done with adverse criticism. What remains after these deductions is an animated, vigorous and theatrically effective production. The producer, M. G. Schrecker, was also responsible for an outstanding performance as *Herod*—well spoken, beautifully timed, and full of authority—the best piece of acting in all the plays. B. Schrecker's study of a fussy old man, *Ephraim*, was well conceived and really came alive, but he must beware of a tendency to overact. Cockman, as *Mary*, evidently knew what the play was about. When I say that the rest of a large cast gave excellent support it should not be read as a cliché from the local Press. The setting was admirably suggestive, and the costumes were pleasing to the eye and well devised (with one exception—*Joseph* looked as if he had left his sleigh outside and scored an ill-timed laugh in consequence). The handling of the unseen crowd was masterly. This performance came very near to being first-rate.

3rd, NEWSOM'S, "Faust, Part I," and HALLIWELL'S, "The Man Who Was Thursday." In the third place the sublime and the ridiculous go hand in hand. I give precedence to "Faust," *honoris causa*. What a brave and aspiring venture, to put these immensities into less than an hour's traffic of the stage,—a venture doomed to miss full achievement

(even a quart will not go into a pint pot, much less a torrent) but how well worth attempting! Many of the audience who have (like myself) never seen Goethe's "Faust" acted before and may never see it again, have reason to be grateful to Newsom's for this glimpse. I wish I could have placed it higher, but the truth is that the imagination behind this production was far greater than the accomplishment of the performance. The producer was faced with a terrific, almost an insuperable, problem. "Faust," even in full, read at leisure, is no easy matter: abridged like this (I feel like echoing *Puff's* plaint—"The pruning knife—zounds!—the axe!") it must be barely intelligible to an average audience. Yet interpretation on the stage should illuminate places which remain dark to the reader. In this performance the acting did little to illuminate. There was a prevailing flatness; the play was taken too much as a piece of ritual, with an evenness of pace and a lack of climax and emphasis which helped to deepen the obscurity. To many of the audience it must have been a mere perplexity interspersed by lucid intervals of coherent narrative. *Faust* himself (Poulter) gave a thoughtful and always interesting performance. He spoke his lines with feeling and conviction; but he lacked light and shade and those variations of timing and inflexion which would have conveyed his mind more vividly to the audience. *Mephistopheles* (N. G. Brodrick) could well have had more attack (a quality which A. T. E. Bray as *the Witch* notably supplied); there was an evenness in his rendering which gave the diabolic temperament little scope. Music was well used between the episodes. The choral speaking off-stage was not a success.

But in spite of all its shortcomings the fact remains that the performance was both impressive and entertaining. There was an imaginative quality behind it which persistently obtruded itself. One felt it in the general conception and one saw it in the stage pictures, and particularly in the lighting, which was skilfully and artistically used. I can, in conclusion, pay no greater tribute to this gallant adventure of the mind than by saying that, in spite of insufficiencies in the rendering, the greatness of the theme was never wholly lost.

Now for the ridiculous. In writing of "The Man Who Was Thursday" I am at a disadvantage. Knowing the book but not the play I cannot tell whether it was the adapters of the book or the abridgers of the play who changed it from fantasia to farce. Someone undoubtedly has abstracted most of the Chestertonian flavour and all the underlying purpose (to which Chesterton at least made some pretension). So this production is judged solely on what survived of the play in performance. It started brilliantly and did not begin to flag till the joke wore thin and the end could be plainly foreseen. There was invention and wit in the production, and the first two actors (C. R. E. Parker as *Gregory* and R. H. Robinson as *Syme*) hit exactly the style which the matter demanded. Both in the acting and in the effects there was a delightful artifice and an inspired attention to detail. What fine touches were the Anarchist's Anti-personnel Bomb and the closing of that inexorable door! True, the "branch" Anarchists did not come fully to life in the first scene, and *Comrade Buttons* looked youngish for the chair; but *Syme*, by finished and subtle artistry, and *Gregory*, by the extravagance of his attack, carried it through. The second scene was finely contrived and *Sunday* (R. A. J. Wood), with his back to the audience throughout, held them with an effortless mastery—a noteworthy performance. If the later scenes had not the persistent sparkle of the first two, it was chiefly the fault of the play. As the plot proceeded on its preposterous but rather obvious course there was less chance for sparkle and plain buffoonery came to its own. The general level of acting was higher in this play than in all the others; none of the minor characters failed to rise at times to the comic occasion. There was an infectious enthusiasm in the whole performance; the actors evidently enjoyed it, and so did the audience. Given material of more sustained merit, these producers (Dodson and Baker), with this cast, would have taken a lot of beating.

5th, Gibb's. "The Devil in the Cathedral." Another radio play, but one which does not yield its dramatic secrets so easily as "The Man Born to be King." It is a play of the moment, about things which matter to us all, but very difficult in performance. It has little action and depends for its success on a technical proficiency which most of this cast did not possess. They were unlucky in losing their producer—a loss which may well have been decisive to their fortunes; more experienced production could have transformed this presentation. As it was, the many resources by which a play with little action can be made and kept dynamic were little used, and the result was a certain deadness and lack of momentum, aggravated by a rather serious hesitancy in the words. The grouping was poor; much of the play was performed in a three-sides-of-a-square formation more suited to the parade ground than the stage. But the ultimate weakness was a lack of conviction in the actors and an inability to project themselves and their thoughts across the footlights. There was some good acting: the vigour and vitality of the *Man in Black* (Peake) gave intermittent life to the stage, and the *Woman* (Warner) spoke beautifully and had a sensitive perception of the meaning of the part. On the whole the performance was disappointing, because it lacked the zest and belief in itself which the other plays had so abundantly. My sympathy goes to the cast and their absent producer. If, as I imagine, he was largely responsible for the choice of this play there is every possibility that he would have made something very different of it.

In conclusion, I must congratulate, in no formal manner, all who played a part, visible or invisible, in this most thought-provoking entertainment. It has left a pleasant afterglow in the mind. "Thunder Rock" stands out in recollection; but all the plays, by drawing here and there on the sudden bounty of that mysterious, ever-varied thing we call Drama, have added something to a valuable memory. A.K.B.

A DRAMATIC RECITAL

MISS HELEN SPALDING AND MR. L. A. G. STRONG.

26th January.

We are very grateful to Miss Spalding and Mr. Strong for the trouble they took over this well-arranged recital and for reminding us that plays and poetry are intended to be heard, not merely taken in by the eye from a printed page. The reading was clear and unaffected, and the performers' own enjoyment of their material was fully appreciated by the audience.

1. MISS SPALDING AND MR. STRONG.
A scene from "The Way of the World" *William Congreve*
2. MR. STRONG.
Three pieces of Irish verse :
"She moved through the fair" *Padraic Colum*
"What mad Thomas said in a pub" *James Stephens*
"Kitty, me love, will ye marry me?" *Anonymous*
3. MISS SPALDING AND MR. STRONG.
A scene from "The School for Scandal" *R. B. Sheridan*
4. MISS SPALDING.
Poems:
"Let me not to the marriage of true minds" *Shakespeare*
"From you have I been absent in the spring" *Shakespeare*
"Ballad of the Carpenters" *L. A. G. Strong*
"Night Mail" *W. H. Auden*
5. MISS SPALDING AND MR. STRONG.
Two scenes from "The Importance of Being Earnest" *Oscar Wilde*
6. MISS SPALDING.
"My Hippopotamus" from "Songs of a Subman" *P. Barrington*

THE MUSIC SOCIETY

This term the society has been very active, and membership is now about forty. The first meeting of the society this term consisted of a gramophone recital arranged and presented by Dr. Coventry. The programme was as follows;—

"Variations on a theme of Haydn" *Brahms*
"Fourth Piano Concerto" *Beethoven*
(Soloist—Walter Giesecking)
"Symphony in D" *Cesar Franck*

The Fourth Piano Concerto, the records of which were very kindly loaned by the Headmaster, was included in this programme in order that members might have an opportunity of hearing the work before the lecture-recital by Mr. Desmond Shawe-Taylor at the second meeting. Mr. Shawe-Taylor, radio critic of the *Sunday Times*, gave a very interesting talk on the concerto, and in the second half of the recital delighted us with some music of a lighter nature. At the third meeting guests were invited. Mr. Bernard Brophy, accompanied by Mrs. L. A. G. Strong, gave a recital of songs. Mr. Brophy's choice of songs was very wide, but perhaps the most enjoyable of his songs were the "Lieder" by Schumann and Schubert. Some mention must be made of the brilliant accompanying of Mrs. Strong, who was only visiting the School for the second time.

The last recital of the term will be a recital by Mr. Oates' quartet.
D.A.R.R.

RECITAL BY BERNARD SHORE

We are indebted to Mr. Bernard Shore for his recital of viola playing, of which he is a leading exponent. He began by contrasting the viola and the violin, explaining the shortcomings of the former,—it was small for the depth of tone it was required to produce. He showed how Lionel Tertis had gained recognition of the viola as a solo instrument, and then gave a recital of the following works:—

1st Movement from Violin Concerto No. 1 *Handel-Tertis*
Serenade from "Hassan" *Delius*
Christmas Carol *Vaughan Williams*
K.W.W.

THE CHRISTMAS CAROL CONCERT

The consciousness of approaching Christmas, the sense of relaxation at the end of the term, the presence of a large number of guests, the brightness of the traditional decorations and of the posters contributed by the Fifth Forms, all increased the expectancy of the audience in the School Hall. Attendants with hair brushed as it is only brushed on important occasions had distributed the programmes, and the good humour and sympathetic attention of the audience were established, when, instead of the rather lengthy preliminaries of a full overture, a small boy with a trumpet bravely performed the Trumpet Voluntary, the credit for which has so long and so wrongly been given to the immortal Purcell.

The first two sections of the programme represented the themes of "The Prophecy" and "The Nativity," with a selection of traditional carols interspersed with readings from the poems of Milton and Richard Crashaw as well as from the Gospels. The full choir gave a rendering of the carol "O little town of Bethlehem," which was followed by a pause while music stands were arranged and scores distributed. And so the orchestra opened the third section "The Festivity" with "A Christmas

Overture," in which the themes of various tunes associated with the Christmas season were blended together. The mood of this section was indicated by the sub-title of "Scherzo," and was well sustained by a reading from Thomas Love Peacock's "Dr. Opimiam on Christmas." Excellent also was the trebles' performance of the old Burgundian carol "Patapan," accompanied by an unusual drum beat.

The conductor, having performed with his usual skill, was able to retire while the yokels of Hardy's "Under the Greenwood Tree" came to life and debated the merits and sanctity of the good old instruments, then being ousted from Church choirs in favour of the profane harmonium. One of their number performed a viola solo, which was followed by the entrance of a group of old English mummers; a rotund and jovial Father Christmas presided over their sport, while St. George with hobby-horse and Roman helmet slew his opponents. The merriment overflowed into the Hall and provided the innocent pretext for a collection among the audience.

The Finale was based upon the magnificent music of Handel from the "Messiah," "Come unto Him," "Since by Man came Death," "Behold, I tell you a mystery," and "The Trumpet shall sound." After a reading from the Revelation the audience rose to sing with the choir "O come, all ye Faithful," and departed with warm appreciation of the work devoted to the concert by its organiser, Mr. Loveday.

G.M.H.

THE DEBATING SOCIETY

President: G. P. Billingham.
Chairman: R. C. A. Oates. Secretary: N. G. Brodrick.
Committee: G. P. Billingham, R. C. A. Oates, N. G. Brodrick, Bray A. T. E.,
Overell B., Reid N. W.

There has always existed a need for a senior debating society within the School, and, in the past, several ill-fated attempts have been made to launch one. This term an entirely new Sixth Form Debating Society has come into existence and we hope it will survive as a flourishing institution for the future. Its actual foundation made School history, for the initial impetus came from a group of interested senior boys and not from the Staff. A mass meeting of the Sixth Form decided unanimously in favour of this new scheme, and, with the approval of the Headmaster, it became a part of the School machinery.

It is essential that every boy should have a knowledge of public speaking, for it enables him to put forward a logical and coherent argument and trains him to think clearly and deliberately. The give and take of a discussion group can sharpen a mind and indicate new trains of thought, but only the ordered sequence of a formal debate can give expression to an innate talent for eloquent speaking. Such an opportunity for speaking in public is afforded by the Debating Society and we hope that every Sixth Former will be quick to seize it. At the time of writing the initial enthusiasm is tending to fall off, largely through pressure of examination work. But it is essential, if any such scheme is to be a success, that Sixth Formers should show and maintain enthusiasm for it. There is very little time in the school day for extra-scholastic activity, but time must be found if our tradition for such activity is to be preserved.

Two debates have been held this term. In the first, the motion, "That this House believes that the economic system of this country will in future demand a State-dictated plan," was carried by one vote.

The motion of the next debate, "In the opinion of this House Germany must be given a square deal at the Peace Conference and a free hand thereafter," was carried by two votes.

N.G.B.

THE PARTISANS

Too often in the past have these pages contained little more than a mere record of the activities of The Partisans, and, in consequence, few people realise what a flourishing life is led by this society. Indeed, the youngest members of the School can have but a very faint idea of who The Partisans are and what is their function.

The Partisans were formed as a senior discussion group just over three years ago. Our original patron and benefactor, Mr. Warner, is happily still with us as guide and counsellor. It is due to his energy and perseverance that the group has continued its activities without any loss of vigour for so long. Mr. Haslam has also joined us, and the Headmaster is a frequent visitor at our meetings. In all we are now thirteen in number, an omen which has failed to appal us.

Without boasting we may fairly claim to have continued our activities for three years with no interruption from the exigencies of war or the conflicting claims of school life. Someone with a flair for statistics might be able to calculate how many speech-hours have been spent during the whole of this period. The total must be frightening—even the hardest Partisan would shudder at the prospect.

After this brief pause to blow the trumpet of The Partisans some short record of our meetings must here be given. Towards the end of last term John Roberts talked to us on a subject which he laughingly summed up as "Ethics." Philosophy led him on to theology, and even the boldest spirits quailed before his flow of eloquence. Very few of our speakers have been such masters of their subjects—indeed, very few have dared to tackle such a subject.

Mr. Haslam's paper on "Art and Dreams" maintained this high standard of erudition. In effect, he related the whole question of art-forms to the problem of dream interpretation and a vigorous discussion was instituted.

At the beginning of this term we enjoyed a musical interlude, an occurrence which has only two precedents in our history. On this occasion R. N. Simeone talked to us about Chopin and illustrated his talk with gramophone records loaned by our guest, M. Ulysse Wagnière.

Arthur Bray gave a very interesting paper on "Modern Architecture." It struck a happy note of practical interest after the tendencies towards æsthetic discussion in recent paper.

The final meeting of the term was opened by the Secretary, who is retiring from office. He gave a somewhat flippant and superficial talk on what he pleased to call "The American Problem." Throughout all these meetings discussion has never failed to come up to a high standard and interest has always been maintained.

N.G.B.

THE WESTMINSTER CONFERENCE

During four days of the Christmas holidays a series of lectures and discussions was held at the Central Hall, Westminster, for "To-morrow's Citizens." It was arranged by the Council for Education in World Citizenship. Over one thousand boys and girls from schools throughout England and Wales attended. Despite their numerical inferiority the boys easily held their own in the discussion groups. In these groups the lectures were discussed and subjected to criticism or approval. On the last afternoon reports were presented which summed up the general opinion on the three main subjects—"Racial Problems," "International Co-operation" and "Social Security." Dr. Audrey Richards expounded the first of these, showing the possibility of remedying racial hatreds, the causes of conflict, by removing fear. She cited the racial concord which existed in Russia and the U.S.A., a concord not only of peoples

but of cultures too. A race cannot understand another people unless the two mingle and become acquainted with each other's idiosyncrasies.

Professor Brodetzky, speaking on international co-operation, laid stress on the relationships between the individual and the State, and the State and the World. Too little importance has been attached to the latter, and this must be ratified. A federation headed by the four major powers—Britain, America, Russia and China—must be formed, a federation which must be united to prevent aggression. An international point of view is essential. Small States must not be ignored.

On the third day Sir William Beveridge spoke in defence of his Report. The individual must be secure from poverty, the remedy for which is a redistribution of income and a suitable pension for the aged, secure from idleness and unemployment, and secure from war. This last can be ensured by international justice and an international police organisation. To those people who declare that security will take away all sense of adventure, Sir William replied that adventure comes, not from the hungry, but from the satisfied. Want in the mist of plenty is a crime, but Sir William failed to make clear who was perpetrating this crime.

Other eminent men who spoke at the conference included the Headmaster of Harrow, the Headmistress of Roedean, the Rt. Hon. Phillip Noel-Baker, M.P., Professor Coles, the Headmaster of Rugby and Mr. J. B. Priestley. International co-operation and control were heavily stressed, to deal with the political relations of nations and also with world economic problems. Mr. Priestley remarked that nationalism in culture is essential, but that in politics it is dangerous.

The Ministry of Information film, "The World of Plenty," was shown on the last day. It made clear that the world produces or can produce more than enough food for everyone, and that international distribution alone is required. It showed America, for which country the film was intended and where it has been banned for "technical reasons," how efficiently our system of rationing works, and how an international organisation on such lines could be run.

In case the youth of this country believes that it controls the world, it is well to reflect upon the words of Mr. R. W. Moore, the Headmaster of Harrow, who impressed upon the conference that youth is not going to have the job of setting the world aright, but the task of consolidating the arrangements of those who will actually do it.

B.A.R.

SONNET

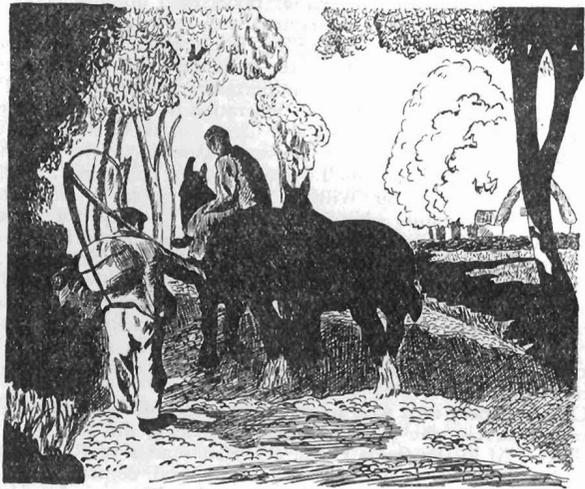
AND SOME FELL UPON STONY PLACES.

Oh Life, I knew thou could'st not hold me long;
Not thirty years yet have you smiled at me
And though it seemed a smile so motherly,
It was but irony, through right and wrong.

I wonder now, when from this height I look
How I shall feel on falling to my doom
As faster, faster, faster still doth loom
The closing of my unromantic book.

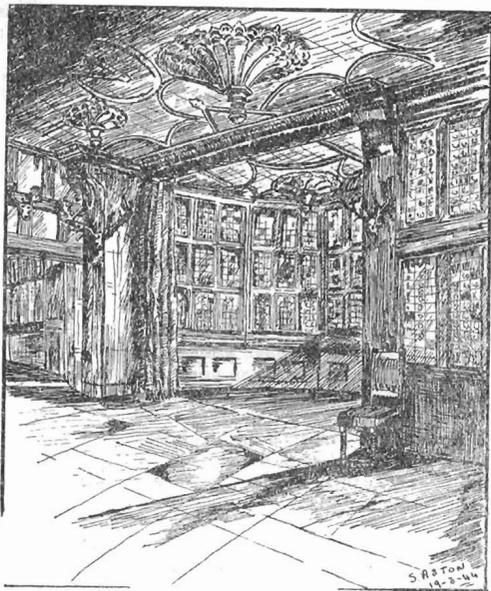
My groping hands undo the window sash;
I see the habitation of this town.
I see the road, which runs the race to Hell,
And there the women scream as though I fell
With unheroic fear, in preacher's gown,
With thought of prayer still hot before my clash.

R.A.S.



SUMMER—
AFTER GEORGE CLAUSEN.

E. G. Green (V3)



BAY WINDOW AT
BRAMHALL HALL, CHESHIRE.

S. Aston (V2)

UPTON SINCLAIR

AN APPRECIATION

Upton Sinclair is undoubtedly the most widely read of contemporary authors. His fifty-eight books—including thirty novels and as many other books on subjects ranging from politics to spiritualism and mental telepathy—have been published and translated in more than seven hundred different editions, in forty-five foreign languages. He is the most popular author among the Swedish; he is second to Dickens in Australia; and sixteen years ago there was a literary epoch in Japan known as “The Sinclair Era.”

The author’s father spent his youth in Virginia during the Civil War, and this war ruined him, so that after it he had to enter into competition with Yanks, handicapped by a Southern gentleman’s notions of dignity (and also a Southern gentleman’s weakness for mint-juleps). Nevertheless, no matter how poor the family might be, Sinclair was brought up strictly according to the traditions of the South.

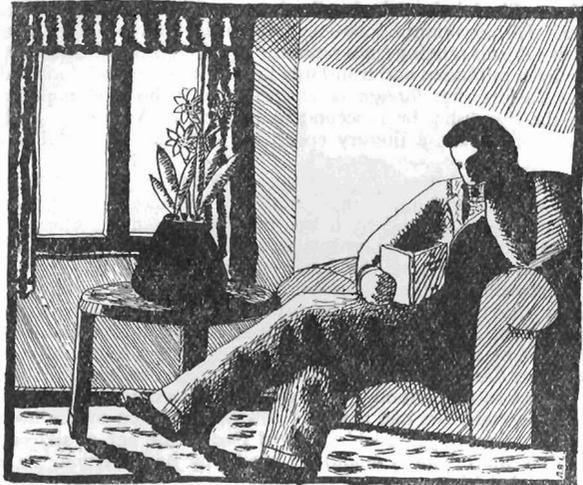
As a little boy, once every twenty-four hours, he absorbed the militant cynicism of the *New York Sun*. All that he read in it he took for the truth, and from it he made all his ideas. Later, his main source of culture was the *New York Evening Post*, and it was from this paper he learnt that American politics were rotten, although how rotten he was not told, nor did he find out until several years had passed. Always fascinated by the newspapers, Sinclair obtained a job on his beloved *Post* at the age of sixteen, but he found that more money could be made by hack-writing, an incident which puzzled him.

His experience as a writer in these few years brought him into contact with lies and injustices, and the failure of people to discover or remedy the causes of these lies and injustices was maddening to him. Through the medium of art—Jesus, Hamlet, Shelley, Milton and Goethe—Sinclair found his own craving for truth and beauty. He discovered that life could be ennobled and lifted from the muck of graft and greed, and so he ran away and buried himself in the wilds of Canada. There he wrote what he thought was the great American novel. It was a painfully crude performance, but it had a new moral impulse in it, which the youth believed would convert the world to ways of love and justice.

Returning home, he tried to sell his book, but, one after another, publishers rejected it. They admitted it had merit, but it was not what the people wanted, it would not sell. Meanwhile, Sinclair existed by hack-work; he divorced his first wife and married again, this time to the daughter of a wealthy Southern gentleman. Ideas for books and plays were stolen and once more he fled into the wilderness, living in a tent with his wife, and writing another book.

As before, this book was rejected and after spending one more winter in New York, wrestling with disillusionments and humiliations, he fled yet again to the wilderness for a third attempt. This time he wrote “The Journal of Arthur Stirling,” the story of a young poet who is driven to suicide by neglect and despair. The book was given to the world as a genuine document, and its genuineness was accepted almost everywhere, and consequently, when the secret came out, a few critics were cross with him, and some have never yet forgiven him.

His next effort was “Manassas,” a novel of the Civil War, and it is his one book which has no propaganda motive. Into it he poured all his dreams of what America might be and inscribed in it: “That the men of this land may know the heritage that has come down to them.” The novel which came next was written as the result of a strike of the wage-slaves of the Beef Trust in Chicago. The “Appeal to Reason” offered Sinclair five hundred dollars on which to live if he would write a novel dealing with the life of these wage-slaves. He went to Packingtown, and there lived for seven weeks amongst the workers, and returning home,



THE READER.

A. B. Levy (V3)



THE OLD INN.

A. Hender (V2)

he wrote "The Jungle." This won him world-wide celebrity in a day, and before unknown, he was now a familiar name on two continents.

Previously classed with long-haired violinists from abroad, painters with fancy-coloured vests, woman-suffragists with short hair and religious prophets in purple robes, it was now discovered that here was a writer with whom it was worth reckoning. He no longer opposed social wickedness with the fragile weapon of poetry, with visions and inspirations; instead, he took the sharp sword of contemporary fact and thrust it into the vitals of all the monstrous parasites sucking the life-blood of the American people—Big Business. This last-named organisation is unbelievable to those who first come across it. It will spend millions of dollars on one man so long as that man is endangering their pockets, and it found Sinclair worthy of those millions of dollars.

Ever since the first appearance of "The Jungle," Sinclair has been boycotted in America and the methods used are even more astounding than Big Business itself. They use the most trumped-up charges that it is possible to imagine. For example, in the Colorado coal-strike, Sinclair realised that the only way to get news of it into any newspaper would be to do something really novel. So he and several other distinguished persons decided that they would picket in perfect silence. Of course, a policeman on duty immediately told him to stop, but Sinclair knew he was not breaking any laws and therefore refused. He was promptly arrested and thrown into prison on the charge of "using threatening, abusive and insulting behaviour."

There are only two other fields more dangerous than politics, and they are religion and sex, and Sinclair has been made the centre of attack where both these subjects are concerned. The books he has written on these subjects include "The Profits of Religion," "Our Lady," "They Call Me a Carpenter" and "Sylvia," "Sylvia's Marriage," "The Book of Love" and "Love's Pilgrimage." The attacks have been made by garbling extracts from these books. Just as one can find evidence in the Bible of Christ justifying suicide if one does this kind of thing: "And Judas went and hanged himself . . . Go then and do likewise," so Big Business found evidence for accusing Sinclair of being an atheist and a free-lover.

An example of the accusation of Sinclair's being a free-lover and an hater of both the idea and state of matrimony is found in "Love's Pilgrimage." In this novel the idealistic young hero discovers that his wife is in love with another man and he considers it his duty to step out of the way. The solemn ass writes a letter to the other man, and he writes: "The crux of the whole difficulty, I imagine, must lie in what you say about your profound belief in the sanctity of the institution of marriage. That is, of course, a large question to attempt to discuss in a letter. I can only say that I once had such a belief, and that as a result of my studies, I have it no longer." The last sentence was immediately seized upon and garbled; the cartoonists used it to portray Sinclair as a bespectacled devil enunciating: "The sanctity of marriage . . . I have had such a belief . . . I have it no longer."

By that time Sinclair was thirty-five years old and he moved to California, where he has lived ever since, writing books about this home state, thinking that this was his way of serving mankind. But occasionally his feelings would boil over and he would go out, make a political speech and get arrested. Three times he let himself be persuaded to run for public office as a more immediate form of protest. Twice he ran for Governor, and once for United States senator, always on the Socialist ticket.

When fifty-four, he began to think of retiring from politics, and settling down as an author. But then came Hitler, which was to Sinclair "the most hideous phenomenon since the days of the Inquisition." He saw all around him little incipient Hitlers—the "Californazis." That made him think. What was the use of taking a lifetime to build a Socialist movement, when one's enemies could destroy it in twenty-four hours? He sat down and tried to think what was wrong with the Socialist party.

The conclusions to which he came and the remedies he set forth in a little book "The Way Out." This book attracted attention and he was invited by the Democratic party to register as a Democrat. Sinclair did not like the idea at first, but he realised that this would give more advantages to do what he wanted than anything else. So he registered as a Democrat—a fact which almost caused a revolution in itself—and ran for the Governership of California once more. The story of his election campaign and his epic plan for ending poverty in California are told in a book called "How I got kicked and why." He had what seemed a good hope of getting elected, but the capitalists used every method they could, all of them foul, to fight him. Every crime but murder was shamelessly resorted to, falsehood, forgery, libel, slander, character-assassination—all played their part.

For the last forty years Sinclair has been working to end poverty, and he will not stop until he dies. He is using various channels to accomplish his aim: writing plays, novels and motion pictures, and sure that he has started a great Democratic revolution, we may leave him with the following tribute:

"Upton Sinclair is the gallant soldier of Humanity who loves justice, hates iniquity and is the fierce champion of the underdog and the savage attacker of the exploiter."

M.G.B.

CINEMANIA

Mr. Arnold Haskell, the celebrated ballet critic, contributed a new word to our language when he defined "balletomania" as the incurable disease of the true ballet-lover. Indeed, no victim has any desire to be cured of this malady, so strong is his passion for the loveliest of all visual art forms. Balletomania frightens no one save the fools and barbarians of this world, for it is a recognition of perfection and beauty combined.

"Cinemania" is a word we may coin to describe a certain lapse in cultural standards to-day. Briefly, it represents all that is bad and all that is dangerous in the contemporary vice of "picture-going." It is not a disease to be welcomed, but a blight with which our twentieth-century civilisation is cursed. Cinemania is rapidly killing off any critical faculty and any powers of discrimination which our people may possess, and, if it is allowed to extend its deadly influence unchecked, it will finally bring all our cultural standards toppling to the ground.

The cinema to-day is patronised week after week by audiences who refuse to discriminate between what is good and what is bad, who make a weekly habit of attending their local circuit-cinema, whose apathetic acquiescence in the mediocre and the commonplace is responsible for the tyranny of big business in the film industry. In a word, cinemania is the very opposite of balletomania, it is the passive acceptance of a debasing and degraded form of art by the mass of people in our modern world, and it is a danger which must be recognised.

This is no mere exaggeration, and the people in this locality will have no difficulty in recognising the symptoms of cinemania already mentioned. We are cursed by the existence of a large number of circuit-cinemas throughout the neighbourhood, whose programmes and policy follow a plan laid down by a clique of business-men in London. In fact, the cinemas of this country are, with few exceptions, dominated exclusively by business combines, whose object is to make money from the film industry rather than to further the art of the cinema. Cinemania is fostered by the film magnate and by the combination of producers and distributors here and in America. We shall have more to say about the activities of these groups later, but for the present let us return to our original theme, which is the passive acceptance of the trite and the banal by cinema audiences.

The spread of cinemania has two root causes, in the film industry which finds profit in fostering it, and in the audiences who blind themselves to its appalling consequences. We must face the dreadful fact that there exists in this country a large section of the population to whom the weekly visit to a cinema is essential. To them cinema-going is a form of drug, by which they hope to escape the necessity of thinking for themselves, a narcotic which is taken in through the visual senses and which can deaden the mind to all faculties of perception and discrimination. The cinema is the all-important factor, the choice of film relatively unimportant in their estimation. Plush seats, air-conditioning and the strains of a modern dance orchestra can atone for the most pitiful attempts at entertainment which may be served up to "the patrons" on the screen.

Yet the future of the cinema is in their hands, if they only paused to think about it. They are the public, and it is from them that the film industry derives its income. While they continue to accept passively the puerile entertainment which is offered them, such entertainment will be served up to them by the unscrupulous money-makers who are directing that industry. But if they choose to assert their authority over the film-magnates, cinema combines and various film critics who are joining in an unholy league to defraud the public with inferior films, they will affect the future of the whole industry. Various steps of a practical nature can be taken by the cinema-public, and the most obvious is to boycott the bad film. No cinema owner will find it worth his while to continue the presentation of bad films if his cinema is left empty for a considerable period. Another step would be the formation of local groups of cinema-goers who would put combined pressure on cinema-owners and film companies. Surely it is not too much to ask that groups of intelligent people should watch out for the cheap and shoddy in pictures, when hundreds of misguided fools can devote time and energy to the task of keeping cinemas shut on Sundays!

Now for the other side of the picture, the appalling crime which is being perpetrated on the art of the cinema by the film-industry here and across the Atlantic. It is not too much to say that the art of the cinema has remained almost at a standstill since the advent of the talkie-film, save in a number of merely technical advances. This, of course, excludes the whole field of documentary films, which has fortunately been controlled by men of enterprise and vision. In this article we are dealing specifically with the "entertainment film" which appears at our circuit-cinemas. The entertainment film has remained in a groove from which it shows no signs of being able to emerge. At the hands of the business-men it will never be permitted to emerge, for it is more profitable to exploit existing forms rather than develop new ones. The interests of the artist and the financial magnate will always be in conflict, and, unfortunately, so crazy are the standards which prevail to-day, that the artist is the one who is compelled to take a back seat.

Briefly, the film industry has been hypnotised by the monstrous system represented by Hollywood, a system which is paralysing the art of the film and enabling money and vulgarity to triumph over culture and refinement.

The numerous faults of the Hollywood system must be obvious to anyone who gives any consideration at all to the matter. By far the worst aspect of this system is the complete domination of the business man, whose main consideration is in presenting films for profit, whose first thought is how large his returns will be, and to whom artistic and cultural values are completely foreign. Big business permeates Hollywood and its clammy touch contaminates nearly everything which emerges from the film metropolis.

The influence of money and big business is everywhere. The Hollywood production is carried out on a "colossal" scale, where enormous sums are spent on incredible displays of vulgarity and bad taste. It would not occur to a Goldwyn or a De Mille that there could be anything

wrong with a film on which millions have been lavished, and in which stars and directors, engaged at huge salaries, co-operate together. If a system is designed to make wealth for its backers, then everything in that system is going to be measured by standards of wealth and by no other consideration. While the profit-motive is permitted to dominate the film industry, considerations of culture and technique will never stand a chance. Hence we are regaled at our cinemas with one dreary, mammoth "epic" after another, until even the taste of the public for display and splendour is sated.

We must never forget the fact that a few film magnates, acting from motives of profit, make the decisions which affect the cinema programmes we see for months ahead. They boast continually of their ability to give the public what it wants, while in reality they are completely out of touch with the public which attends the cinema. Hollywood does not know what we want, it merely gives us those films calculated to appeal to the lowest and most debased instincts present in all of us. A craving for spectacle, for easy entertainment and for sex—these are the only instincts to which Hollywood makes its appeal. By denying culture or any higher considerations to its audiences it is deliberately debasing human nature and denying any outlet to nobler instincts. "Girls! Glamour! Music! And more Girls!" We have seen Hollywood's own advertisement too often not to recognise its policy when we see it.

The actual choice of films is limited in the extreme, and a dreary cycle of ceaseless repetition is maintained year after year. We have the musical with its multitude of stars, lavish settings and complete absence of story; there is the western or pioneer epic, the countless variations upon the eternal triangle theme, and, of late, the war-film. Most of them betray an absurd escapism from the unpleasant realities of life, the large majority have a liberal quantity of sex sprinkled throughout, and all of them are permeated by the clumsy attempts of the film magnate to substitute spectacle for realism. How often do we see a film which is merely a re-hash of an old familiar theme? At the end of each million-dollar production we realise, with a sinking heart, that "we have been here before." The stories are bad and generally unsuited to the screen, but very few producers have ever realised that the art of the cinema calls for a special approach, independent material and a new technique. He is content to go on using old stories, worn-out technique and familiar situations because he knows that they have had a certain amount of appeal in the past, and because he believes that there is no money in change and experiment. Instead, he is content to botch-up what is fundamentally cheap and hackneyed by casting in a million dollars and a dozen "stars."

Stories, in fact, are usually built around the personality of a certain "star" whose name alone will draw the cinema-public. The glorification of the star is debasing all standards of dramatic art, and it is significant that the Hollywood system produces so few actors of talent. Hollywood does not really have a use for actors of any type, for it finds its material in glamour-girls, band leaders, and half-baked Romeos whose features leer at us from the screen week after week. A handsome face and qualities of sex-appeal are a far greater recommendation in Hollywood to-day than all the ability in the world. We can count the number of actors in the industry on the fingers of one hand, but the so-called "stars" are as innumerable as they are ephemeral. How many actors has Hollywood borrowed from the European stage and film industry in order to lend her productions that atmosphere which she could not otherwise obtain! How many has she dragged down to her own level and spoiled with her standards of success! Charles Boyer has been reduced to the position of the Great Lover, and nothing he can do will ever enable him to escape that awful fate. Hedy Lamarr is now a mere glamour-girl, a fate which is even worse than Boyer's.

It is much the same with technique. Directors are still using the

methods of Duvivier and Fritz Lang, for the improvement of technique is impossible while the magnates see no profit in change. The film is not being developed as an independent art form, but is being fed with material totally unsuited to the screen and its particular function. The rebels against this degradation of technique have usually been forced to come to terms with the magnate and his millions. Foreign directors, imported for their freshness and originality, have been reduced to coping with stories and ideals which conform to Hollywood's standard of success. Mr. Alfred Hitchcock, whose interpretation of film-craft was totally new, has done little to justify himself since Hollywood added him to its ranks. M. Duvivier has gone the same way, and his brilliant technique has been swamped by his environment. The latest rebel, Mr. Orson Welles, a product of Hollywood itself, is even now being forced to temporise with the system. His three brilliant experiments, "Citizen Kane," "The Magnificent Ambersons" and "Journey into Fear," were suspect from the start by the cinema-owners, because he offered something fresh and exciting, qualities which they feared "would not pay."

There are some things which even Hollywood can do—it can give us the Marx Brothers and Chaplin, it can describe the development of its own vast country, and it can show us the American way of life, when it chooses to strip off the glamour and the spectacle—but if it is going to justify itself at all as an instrument of value it must evolve new forms, and shake itself free from the stranglehold of the magnate. It must learn that there are things which all the dollars in the world cannot lend to a film—that no De Mille is able to capture the finish and atmosphere of the French film, and that the Warner Brothers cannot replace the broad humanity of a British war-picture by featuring Alan Ladd as the wholesale butcher of Japanese soldiery.

This, then, is the system which is responsible for the disease of cinemania. It is exceedingly doubtful whether the system will ever change or reform itself from within, and the only way left for us to change it is by action on the part of the public here and in America. Cinemania is a product of the last decade, and it is spreading ever more rapidly before our eyes. If we are not to be overwhelmed by it and completely dominated by the Hollywood system, we must take immediate action to obtain better films and a better technique, by rejecting what is cheap and shoddy in our cinemas at present.

N.G.B.

DETECTIVES I HAVE MET

"Extraordinary," I said.

"Elementary," said he.

Sherlock Holmes was the forerunner of the super-sleuth, the eccentric being with inhuman powers of perception. It was the age of the cigar-ash and the finger-print, the semi-obliterated footmark and Watson of the pedestrian intellect.

Detectives can be divided into two classes—the type that regards Scotland Yard as a nest of hide-bound officials whose appearance on the scene of the crime heralds the obliteration of the less obvious clues, and the genuine police inspector.

Formerly, detectives belonged to the first category, but to-day they mainly consist of police inspectors and investigators who look to the police for help and guidance. A few, like Arsène Lupin, change gradually from criminal to policeman, while Superintendent Wilson is sacked from Scotland Yard and becomes a private investigator. These aberrations can be explained by a change in the moral values of the author, by a paucity of ideas or by an increase in his technical knowledge.

The decade after Holmes contained only Holmsian investigators who relied strictly on facts. M. Hanaud of the Sûreté was the first police

detective after Holmes: the first also to employ psychology in solving crimes. Modern detectives too are psychologists, for psychology is of public interest, and hence of news value.

Hercule Poirot, the little Belgian with the waxed moustache and the egg-shaped head, who shares a contempt for the niceties of the English language with a fervent belief in the little grey cells, is almost the opposite of Holmes. He has little regard for clues or investigation and relies on theory and the cold powers of reason. He is almost an armchair detective, though he has his faithful Watson in Captain Hastings. Peter Wimsey is in the same class as Poirot, though, as an English Lord with a reputation to uphold, detection for him is only a minor pursuit.

Father Brown, the little priest with the round head and shabby umbrella, is an exception among detectives. Not only is he a priest, but most of the crimes he investigates have a religious significance and their solutions entail a mixture of metaphysics, character and philosophy.

The ranks of the police have contained many famous investigators, usually employing the slow process of routine police-investigation, detailed reports and innumerable finger-prints. Inspector French investigates crimes which in themselves are credible but which are supported by impossible characters, long catalogues and complicated time-tables. Inspector Allyn is gentlemanly, unobtrusive and almost normal, while Inspector Higgins is coarse, assertive and often violent. Superintendent Wilson had the distinction of investigating too closely the Home Secretary's private affairs. He was sacked, and became a private investigator, later being reinstated at Scotland Yard. Mrs. Pym, the only woman police-inspector, follows Inspector Higgins closely in theory and practice.

Dr. Thorndyke, with his assistants Jervis and Potton, was the first of the scientific investigators. His aids to investigation were a collecting-tin, a high-powered microscope and an elaborate card-index.

The humble, apologetic detective is best illustrated by J. G. Reeder, with his square mutton-chop whiskers and furled umbrella. He investigates crimes in Limehouse or some other unsavoury quarter of London, and always holds some trump card up his sleeve to play in the very last chapter. The Saint can hardly be classified as a detective.

From the days of Sherlock Holmes, the sleuth has degenerated slowly from a keen, inhuman investigator to a plodding time-table reader. If this trend continues we may expect in the near future a school of detectives without feature at all, acting as a mirror to reflect the aspects of the crime—as undistinguished as a piece of blotting-paper. Dr. Priestly is of this calibre.

It is to be hoped that the detective of the future will be neither a pure scientist nor a mere personality, but an evenly balanced combination.

K.S.W.

“RIGHTEOUSNESS”

A SHORT STORY

Nestling in a hollow in the Wiltshire downs is the village of Rudthorpe. It is of ancient lineage, and, like many other villages in that part of England, has a large church all to itself, showing that it was once much more important than it is now. A Norman knight, one John-de-Witt, sleeps in its shade, and the heavy oaken door has the mark of three hundred years of service on it. A hundred years ago, Rudthorpe was much the same as it is now; if anything, a little more prosperous. Many sheep were kept on the downs near by, and the whole population, comprising about three hundred souls, were engaged in agriculture.

Samuel Tanner, a farm labourer, occupied one of the picturesque cottages which lay in a row at the foot of the slopes. He and his family often went hungry in the winter, and indeed on eight shillings a week were never well-fed in summer.

During the summer evenings, until the shadows lengthened and the hush of twilight descended upon the downs, he would toil at his allotment, aided by his wife. The allotment, which was often the sole barrier between his family and starvation, was neat and well cared for.

The summer of 183— was hot, with little rain. The downland grew dry; the ground cracked and crumbled, and the lank grass in the pastures grew yellow and slowly died. Cattle and sheep languished, and sought vainly for shelter from the rays of the sun: some died, and the rest turned into “ill-doers.”

In the village, old George Scammels wished his daughter, with whom he lived, good night, and tottered upstairs to bed. Next morning he was found dead in his bed with his face drawn into a look of unutterable weariness. The weather continued unchanged, the ancients of the village declaring that there would be a hard winter; and then, when it seemed almost too much to bear, the weather changed, and rain came to the burnt land overnight. Too late to save the harvest, it yet continued, unabated, for a whole day and night. The distant hills were invisible through the heavy rain. The grass in the pastures grew again, green and rank, but the harvests were poor, and the yearly fold of wethers brought in no profit.

The winter set in, grey and hard. Samuel, with the other labourers, was thrown out of employment at the farm where he worked. With a wife and four little children to support, he, driven desperate, procured meat for them, one dark moonless night, in an adjacent fold.

Alas! one of his children, while playing with some companions whose families were starving, let out that she was not hungry, for they had as much meat as they wanted.

The children, at their humble fare later, asked “why they weren't given nice meat to eat, like Mary Tanner, when they were so hungry?” The news spread from cottage to cottage, and soon reached the constable's ears. He, already informed of the loss of a wether from a neighbouring fold, went straight to Samuel and charged him with the theft. The constable was unmoved by his pleas, and led him to the lock-up. There he remained for the rest of the morning, till the constable, fortified against the cold, was ready to take him to Salisbury.

The neighbours, gathering round the gates of the lock-up, predicted that the village would never again see Samuel Tanner.

The case was so simple—he had confessed his guilt—and it only remained to condemn him. He was taken in an open cart to Salisbury, for the quarter sessions were to be held the next day.

The last view the people of Rudthorpe had of him was when the cart slowly rounded the bend in the road, at the foot of the downs, and then climbed slowly to the top, whence it disappeared.

The judge had had, the night before, a drinking bout with the local squire, and was in a ferocious mood. “This Yokel; he should be made an example.” That he had a wife and family made no difference to the judge.

Accordingly, the jury found Samuel Tanner, labourer, guilty, and the judge, donning the black-cap, pronounced sentence of death, expressing afterwards the pious hope that no mercy would be shown to the prisoner.

Samuel gazed stupidly at the florid judge and the legal men who, in their wigs and black gowns, appeared as a different species of men.

He remembered the days of his childhood: the green fields, the woods, and the rolling, ever-peaceful downs.

He remembered his little cottage, poor but clean, the allotment, and his wife and children; and still came the memory of those great, rolling downs—the gaoler touched him on the shoulder.

R.B.

LONDON PILGRIMAGE

From the station we made our way down Whitehall through the colourful, though confused stream of hurrying people. Here and there Mr. Haslam stopped to point out some interesting features from the numerous public buildings from which the administration of Britain is carried on. The Banqueting House of Whitehall Palace built by Inigo Jones impressed us all, for it stands out in its pure Italian Renaissance style against the rather artificial buildings which surround it. We passed on by the Cenotaph to Downing Street, where we saw Number Ten—an unpretentious Georgian house. I had always imagined it to be some grandiose structure fit for a king to live in, but here it spoke of the sturdy respectability of the English character.

Then we passed on to the Abbey itself with its lofty towers rearing upwards to the grey sky. As we entered the precincts we might have been taking a step back into the past out of the noise and rush of this modern world. Mr. Haslam told us about its history and the hundreds of builders who had contributed their small piece to its structure from 1245 onwards. The simplicity of the Early English; the extravagance of the Decorated and the dignity of the Perpendicular all combined to make Westminster a monument of the past. The flying buttresses are in themselves very fine, for they give to the building a sense of power and action by the tremendous weight they are holding up, which seems to keep it alive in its old age.

The interior, on entering, gave us all the impression of towering height above and a long vista of columns leading to the altar at the east end. The whole effect is one of simplicity, which, however, is somewhat spoiled by the multitude of small busts and memorial stones along the aisles. After all, they are of minor importance when compared with this great Abbey, merely dust upon the wind.

The vaulting and the capitals denote Early English Gothic, especially the vaulting, which is rib and panel. So we passed along into Poets' Corner, which impressed me, being a fervent lover of poetry, with its air of beauty blossoming in the dust. On in the cloisters we come to the most ancient part of the building, and it certainly felt old with its massive stonework and heavy roofs almost black with age. We noticed with sorrow the damage done by bombs, which fortunately was not considerable. Also it was a great pity we could not go into Henry VII's chapel, where there are some sublime examples of fan vaulting.

However, we had now seen everything there was to see so we bade farewell to Westminster Abbey and set out for the Roman Catholic Westminster Cathedral near Victoria. After a short search we managed to find it. The exterior view is rather ugly, for it merely consists of an extremely high tower and a cluster of low domes. On entering, the colossal size made us gasp. The space is vast, it is built on a grandeur of scale only surpassed in Roman and Byzantine buildings. It is, in fact, a good copy of a Byzantine building complete with pendentives, domes and mosaic vaulting. It is not yet finished but the little chapels are complete and have some beautifully delicate mosaic work in them. The size of this place makes one feel small, which is perhaps good for it humbles the spirit in prayer.

We went to the top of the tower and obtained a fine view of London sprawling beneath. It was indeed a planner's nightmare which so far has defied attempts to plan it on a large scale and bring order out of chaos.

After this we went our ways home, much enriched with knowledge which no amount of reading could impress—the knowledge of the spirit behind English church architecture, the spirit that urged men to raise such glorious monuments to God.

H.S.P.

AN OXFORD LETTER

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

To the Editor of *The Spur*.
Sir,

In asking me to set down my impressions of Oxford you have given me a rather difficult task. Perhaps the most striking impression which the newcomer to Oxford receives, especially when he comes fresh from school, is the great degree of freedom existing at a university. Restrictions are reduced to a minimum, and for the first and perhaps the last time in his life he may do more or less what he likes. This freedom is especially precious in war-time when the ordinary citizen is being compelled on the one hand to do things he dislikes and on the other prevented from doing those things which he wishes. A University student living a peaceful, unrestricted life, withdrawn from the world in secluded and beautiful surroundings, feels that he is a superior and privileged person.

Your readers will be interested in my fellow Old Boys at this University and I welcome this opportunity of giving news of them. P. Crumley, B. Bannister and A. Bond are all reading chemistry, which is my own subject. Crumley is at Balliol, Bannister and Bond at Oriel. Crumley is secretary of his college boats and is practising hard for next term's Eights. I too have taken up rowing and hope to get into one of the college Eights. At the end of this term I took part in the Experimental Theatre Club's production of Auden's and Isherwood's "The Dog beneath the Skin," which was presented at the Taylor Institute.

Paul Vaughan is reading English at Wadham. He is treasurer of the Oxford University Film Society and a member of the Committee of the Ballet Club. He also organises Jazz recitals for the University Socialist Club. Eric Daniell is at Oriel and is working hard for his finals next June.

For the past two terms we have had with us several people on University Short Courses. J. A. Bell is on an R.A.F. short course and is reading law at Oriel. He has played rugger and hockey for his college and has now gained his rugger colours for Oriel. He is a member of the Union and the Conservative Society. V. H. Andrews and A. Barker are on R.A.F. short courses at Exeter, reading history and maths. with physics, respectively. They have played rugger and hockey for Exeter. Denis Rendall is taking a R.N. short course at Wadham and is reading history. He has gained his college hockey colours and is hockey secretary for the college. He has also played in Varsity trial matches.

All of these go down this term to join their respective services. Next term one more old boy comes up to Queen's on a R.N. short course.

Yours sincerely,
JAMES HITCHON.

"THE SPUR" COMMITTEE

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CONTENTS

	Page
Headmaster's Notes	1
Roll of Honour	2
Obituary	3
School Officers	3
Prize-Giving	3
House Notes :	
Cobb's	4
Gibb's	5
Halliwell's	5
Milton's	6
Newsom's	7
Rugby Football	8
Hockey	9
19th Wimbledon Scout Group	10
The Junior School	11
Junior School Film Shows	12
Lectures :	
Squadron Leader Bernard Shore... ..	12
Hon. Harold Nicolson, M.P.	13
Henry Braddock, A.R.I.B.A.	13
Thomas Braddock, F.R.I.B.A.	14
Rev. P. Gay, R.N.V.R.	14
Cyril Winn, H.M.I.	15
George Glasgow	15
Dr. Arundell Esdaile	16
Basil Wright	16
James Lees-Milne	17
C. A. F. Dundas	18
House Drama Competition	18
A Dramatic Recital	21
The Music Society	22
Recital by Bernard Shore	22
The Christmas Carol Concert	22
The Debating Society	23
The Westminster Conference	24
The Partisans	24
Sonnet	25
Drawings from the School	26, 28
Upton Sinclair : An Appreciation	27
Cinematica	30
Detectives I have Met	33
"Righteousness" : A Short Story	34
London Pilgrimage	36
An Oxford Letter	37
"The Spur" Committee... ..	37
Acknowledgments	37