

RAYNES PARK COUNTY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The

SPUR

SPRING TERM 1956



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THE SPUR

RAYNES PARK COUNTY SCHOOL

"To each his need, from each his power"

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SCHOOL OFFICERS, Spring Term, 1956

Head Boy: J. A. Pooles.

Second Boy: J. R. S. Higham.

Prefects: A. T. Boyd, D. J. Creasey, D. J. Drye, A. J. Fowles, M. Francis, D. J. Holden, M. J. Lavous, K. J. Loible, M. F. B. Read, D. C. Spencer, P. A. Tatlow, C. R. Weightman, C. C. Wright.

Prefect of Hall: C. R. Weightman.

Prefect of Library: P. A. Tatlow.

Prefect of Stage: D. J. Drye.

Secretary of Games Committee: J. A. Pooles.

Captain of Hockey: J. A. Pooles.

Secretary of Hockey: K. J. Loible.

Captain of Cross-Country: D. J. Stewart.

MALCOLM TALBOT

The death of M. E. Talbot as the result of a motoring accident on January 20th was a great shock to his colleagues in the Prefects' Room and the Sixth Form, to Cobbs House, and to us all. His loss is, and will continue to be, greatly felt. But for this untimely event, his personal charm and poise and his promising ability would, we all are confident, have won him friends and success in a wider sphere. By these qualities and his steady good will he has made his mark on the life of the School, notably as Captain of Swimming and of Cross-Country, and as Vice-Captain of Cobbs. Thereby and through all our memories of him he does not lack memorial.

Our earnest sympathy is with his family in this loss.

CAROL SERVICE

On the last evening of the Autumn Term a large number of boys, parents and friends gathered in the School Hall to take part in the annual Carol Service. The congregation sang the well known hymns heartily and listened intently to the Christmas messages from Isaiah, St. Luke and St. John, read by the Headmaster, Chairman of the Governors and Second Master.

The solos, on the flute by Mr. Ayton, and on the oboe by B. G. Barker, made everyone look forward to the time when items by members of our recently formed instrumental classes will be a regular feature of the programme.

The school choir, under the direction of Mr. Vyse, excelled itself in six four-part carols: "The Fruitful Seed of Jesse", "The Infant King", "I Saw a Maiden", "Ding Dong Merrily on High", "Past Three O'Clock", and "O Leave Your Sheep".

The festive climax of the evening came when Mr. Smith appeared as Father Christmas and heralded the Mummers' Play. Once again, after an absence of three years, the Dragon roared, the Turkish Knight raved and St. George romped his way to victory. All the players were new but the fun was as fast and furious as ever. Another sprightly Doctor appeared in the house and yet another hefty Rugger forward made his curtsy as the King of Egypt's daughter.

Finally, after tumultuous laughter and a collection for the School Orchestra fund, came the calming influence of Handel's "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace," admirably sung by Mrs. Bellis, and the congregation departed feeling term was really over and Christmas had come once more.

R.L.

"THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE"

'A Melodrama,' Mr. Shaw sub-titled it; by which he proved to mean a good, brisk romp punctuated by dramatic moments. Perhaps it is well not to scrutinise too closely; the psychological volte-faces of the three chief characters pass muster only for drama's sake, and the rest are a little stylised — they call for description in capital letters, old-play-bill-style; "Major Swindon, a Bluff Soldier; General Burgoyne, a Sardonic One," and so on. But it remains a dexterous and highly entertaining affair, and producer and cast having done it full justice, the audiences were able to do so too.

Mr. Archer and Mr. Riley started them well with a nicely-calculated set; it fitted, without obtruding, it accomplished the twin feats of making the arch seem either appropriate or unnoticeable and of appearing to give the actors room to move. All others behind the scenes could take pride likewise in a competent job. Clocks, kettles and bugles were on time, and lit candles punctually elicited 500 candle-power. And the action flowed admirably. The Shavian producer has less scope than the Shakespearean for broad effects, but more niceties to adjust, in pointing prose speeches and contriving activity without fuss. The audience took it all as arising spontaneously from the text — sure proof of deft contrivance. Flaws there were, of course; Mrs. Dudgeon's paces verged on the ponderous, the General's pauses on the statuesque, Mr. Anderson "hung up" his best coat like any school-boy, but these never broke the illusion of naturalness.

This nice, stagy little piece gave everyone his moment. Lawyer Hawkins (M. F. B. Read) conveyed the crackle of parchment, Essie (C. R. Goss) the pathos of an eagerness to oblige, Wm. Dudgeon (M. Francis) the insecurity of a reformed inebriate, Christie (S. F. Partridge) squeezed the most out of the oafish brother, and though sometimes you could see him squeezing he was always in command of his audience. B. H. Finch was not at his excellent best as Mrs. Dudgeon, whom he made bitter but not strong enough, and at emotional moments he was hard to hear. The Sergeant (M. Howard) was roundly sketched, and justified the confidence expressed in his kind by Major Swindon (C. A. Rowntree) who, alone perhaps of the whole cast, could be as choleric or embarrassed as you please without sacrifice of articulation. He made a nice foil to General Burgoyne (J. R. S. Higham) — a little gem of a part, this, with sparks in every line; the General's every pause, or laugh, or aside told well. Shaw was less kind to Judith Anderson, who has hardly a moment when she is her normal self, and spends the play bringing out the changing reactions of the other two principals. But J. A. Colmer made her look well, (perhaps too well, for a Presbyterian parson's wife then

and there), she was indignant, hysterical, and prudish as required, and easy to hear. Both Anthony Anderson (C. C. Wright) and Richard Dudgeon (M. J. Lavous) are old hands, with good poise and stage sense. Anderson's was a well-considered and modulated performance, and he coped with the abrupt change at the end of Act 2 as well as Shaw could expect. It is not the dramatist at his best. The audience has rather supposed for some moments that the parson knows Richard has taken his place — Judith's hints are very broad. They have then no idea what the sudden rush for boots and horse portends, not even guessing him to have run away until Judith suggests it. Nor do they know what he has gone to do until he reappears briefly as the victor of Springfield, (and then only by quicker thinking than audiences relish). Richard's metamorphosis, from rebel to martyr, was easier — partly because he had never swash-buckled much. He began with a cynical charm rather than a reckless enough bravado to justify the play's title, and when he accepted the role of scapegoat it was the less a surprise. The later scenes therefore suited him better, and went admirably.

Full houses clearly enjoyed the production. Last year's 'Romeo and Juliet' set bigger problems in production and had more obvious short-comings in staging and acting; but it was far more worth. This was not a great play, but it was worth doing, it varied our repertoire, and it was well and skilfully done, and it goes down worthily on our lengthening list of successes, and Mr. Smith's. He, and we, and our audiences will all the more appreciate and enjoy the next presentation of more solid fare.

CAST

Mrs. Dudgeon	B. H. Finch
Essie	C. R. Goss
Christy Dudgeon	S. F. Partridge
Anthony Anderson	C. C. Wright
Judith Anderson	J. A. Colmer
Lawyer Hawkins	M. F. B. Read
William Dudgeon	M. Francis
His Wife	J. A. R. Higham
Titus Dudgeon	C. F. W. Higham
His Wife	M. A. S. Green
Richard Dudgeon	M. J. Lavous
Sergeant	M. Howard
Major Swindon	C. A. Rowntree
General Burgoyne	J. R. S. Higham
Chaplain Brudenell	B. H. Finch

Officers, Soldiers, Citizens:

J. M. Adams, R. M. Stevenson, D. Wearn, A. T. Boyd, D. C. Stevens, D. A. Rolt, S. L. Claridge, P. C. Connor, R. C. Cottee, M. C. Flack, M. Mclean, G. V. Frank-Keyes, P. H. Newman, T. W. Simpson, C. R. Spencer, M. A. Yeldham,

SCHOOL GARDENS

The site, scarred with air-raid shelter foundations on the Bushey boundary, was two years ago frank chaos; even last year, though tidied and tamed by the activities of Mr. Trinder and his stalwarts, it remained a problem. This, we hope, is now solved, and in twelve months it should be a handsome asset. We have enjoyed the expert advice of Mr. Hopper, who prepared the plan (which boys saw in December) to convert it into a mixed herbaceous garden, and he is giving us very valuable help too in putting the plan into practice. All we shall need there, soon, will be a few notices saying "Keep Off The Grass" and "Do Not Pick The Flowers". We are very much in Mr. Hopper's debt.

T.H.P.

Our school is twenty-one years old this year and although as schools go this is not a very long time, we have a lot to be proud of at Raynes Park. We are naturally proud of our academic record and we should be equally proud of our grounds and gardens — a great deal of very hard work has gone into the creation of both these things.

Now twenty-one years ago on our site there stood a brand new school surrounded by a large area of absolutely unmade and not very promising land. What was to be done? Well look around you at the grounds as they are now and you will see that a great deal has been done in a comparatively short time. To take but two examples: every tree on our premises has been specially planted, and very carefully planted, so that it will look its best when fully grown, and every flower bed, of which there are quite a few, has been carefully planned and has even now to be carefully maintained. All this expense, toil, and effort by professional gardeners, staff, and pupils has been worthwhile only if you appreciate what they have created. For after all, the gardens have been made for your pleasure and appreciation, and for no other purpose.

About three years ago it was decided that we should do something about the old air-raid shelter site beside the path approaching the School from West Barnes Lane. It was a derelict site and had for some time been used in a haphazard way for garden plots by various enterprising boys.

Just after Easter in 1954 a lawn was put down between the Scout Reservation and the shelter site, and later that term a quick-thorn hedge was planted against Bushey School's playground. Then that summer, when the Certificate Examinations were over, members of the Sixth Forms helped to put a bank against the only standing shelter wall. Slowly the work continued. A few plants were obtained and established here and there on the site, but it still looked very bare and rough.

I could see that it was going to take an enormous amount of time and effort, not to mention money, to properly develop the site, and then we remembered that Mr. H. T. Hopper, one of our parents, had offered to help with our gardening problems, and so we contacted him. He came down to see the site and before very long we had from him a fully detailed planting scheme and further offers of help. Now the site, originally chaotic, is beginning to appear as a properly ordered garden. We are all very much indebted to Mr. Hopper for his help.

Much has still to be done, not only on this site but elsewhere in our grounds. If you are willing to help in any way at all or have any ideas of your own about future development, will you let me know? They are your gardens.

P.D.T.

HOUSE NOTES

COBBS HOUSE

Captain: M. Francis

It is my sad duty to record the tragic death of Malcolm Talbot, who was killed in a car accident in January. In him I have lost a good and a long trusted friend, the House has lost a loyal and vigorous member. With pride we remember his moments of triumph: leading the cross-country team to victory, leading the House to victory in the swimming competition, and his courageous running on many occasions in the School Sports. Cheerfully he trod the less familiar grounds of debating and dramatics. Our loss is great, but far greater is the loss to his parents; to them we offer our deepest sympathy.

Towards the end of last term the Senior Rugby team improved beyond recognition. They were unlucky to lose to a renowned Newsoms team by 14-6, after a match in which it would be unfair to mention individual players by name as each played with equal spirit and determination. In the final match of the year the team was determined to prove how underrated it had been. And by team-work and team spirit they proved this conclusively by beating Miltons (16-6). The Colts rounded off the season successfully, for although losing to Gibbs (14-6) they then beat Miltons (20-0), to be placed third in the Colt competition. The captain, Mitchell, can be justly proud of his team. The Seniors tied for fourth place with Miltons in their competition, and thus we were placed third in the competition for the Rugby Cup. The Juniors have made a good start in the competition for the Junior Shield. So far they have won their Rugby matches against Gibbs (6-3) and against Miltons (11-9).

Hockey practices in the Winter Term proved useful to third-formers new to the game, and enabled Seniors to get their eye in again. Due to the state of the ground at the beginning of this term, only one practice could be arranged before the Seniors' first match. In this, despite the absence of Atkins and Francis, the team beat Gibbs (2-1). Taking advantage of the few opportunities offered, Ingram and Stone scored once each, while the Gibbs attack was foiled time and again by Boiling at full-back and Feather in goal. This was Peter Clark's last game for the House; he put as much spirit into his play as he has done in every match he has played in for the House in the past. We wish him the best of luck in his future career. The bad weather has prevented any further matches being played up to the time of writing, but even at this early stage I do not think we are too hopeful in thinking that the Hockey Cup is well within our grasp.

We were placed disappointingly low in the Cross-Country Competition; but we heartily congratulate our captain, Stickley, on winning the race in a very good time considering the adverse conditions. Newman also ran well. If we are to improve on our performance next year, as I sincerely hope we shall, we must be sure of supplying many more than the minimum requirement of eight runners who have qualified to run.

In the non-athletic competitions of this term we have met with mixed success. In the first round of the debating competition Rowntree led the House team against Miltons. The team won on a majority verdict, defeating the motion "that religion has outgrown its usefulness". We went down in the next round to Halliwells, who put up a more polished all-round performance. Rowntree was seconded by Francis and Davey, and Barker spoke from the floor in both debates. Our inexperienced chess team, led by Hill, were unlucky to be drawn against a powerful Newsoms side in the first round of the Chess Competition, and they consequently suffered a 5-0 defeat. In the Dramatics Competition, the House is presenting "The Monkey's Paw" by W. W. Jacobs, to be produced by Francis and Rowntree. I feel sure that next term I shall be able to write about its success.

The competitions for the Swimming Cup and the Gymnastics Cup are now upon us. I hope to see every member of the House doing his utmost to secure as many qualifying points as possible in these competitions. Next term is the so called "Summer" Term. Let us hope that the progress of cricket and athletics competitions is not halted by bad weather, which has proved to be an added opponent to every house this term.

M.F.

GIBBS

Captain: A. J. Fowles

Prefects: D. J. Holden, C. C. Wright.

Reading House Notes in the inhuman print of "The Spur" is vastly different from the first inspired moments of their creation. In retrospect Gibbs' last notes seem grossly sentimental: in an endeavour to correct this, I shall now adhere very largely to the unvarnished truth. This is not difficult to do: our performances need no artificial polish.

The final positioning of the Rugby Competition, which placed us a close second, was the very satisfying outcome of the Senior and Colt teams each notching three wins. For their trio, the Colts enjoyed two crushing victories over only mediocre opposition, but met much sterner resistance from Cobbs. Fortunately, the resistance was not quite stern enough — Ayres, Wearn and their workmanlike team deserve our congratulations. Also to be praised, however, is the Newsoms Senior XV, who, in coasting home against a spiritless Halliwells team, made sure of winning the Rugby Cup.

Indeed, as yet Newsoms have seemed to exercise some hoodoo over us: this term they have worsted us both in the Cross-Country and the Michael Welby Cup. Our debating side, though well below its potential form, in no way disgraced itself, but, in general, failed to match the superior drilling of its opponents. But if the Debating was a creditable failure, the Cross-Country proved a truly glorious defeat. Except for the expert, Cross-Country is most people's idea of protracted misery, but throughout the earlier weeks of the term qualifying was quietly but conscientiously endured. Our strategy was to offset Newsoms' monopoly of "class" School runners by a combination of team-work and "guts" on the part of our less experienced team. I felt very proud when two people overlooked in the selection of the team expressly asked to be included, and, indeed, we fielded more willing and able runners than any other house. The grim, grey day was a fitting background to the grim, grey struggle,

in which our own trio of School runners led us home magnificently. Hiscock (to whom much of our spirit was due) and Beavitt fought their way into second and fourth places respectively, while Mellor, not feeling his best, came tenth. Heroic performances lower down the field from Johnson and the diminutive Mackenzie kept the result doubtful . . . At last we learned that we had been beaten into second place by just nine tiny points (99-90) and went home muttering of how we would have won by a cricket-score if the race had been judged on the first dozen home, envying Newsoms their "class" but feeling we had not bowed to them at all in spirit. The Cross-Country was, I think, the finest thing Gibbs House has done in the last four years.

The hockey remains both frozen off and unpredictable; the Senior team has played one match, losing (1-2) to a Cobbs team which should have been torn to shreds, but which (forwards take note!) knew how to shoot. Perhaps we had not recovered fully from Wright's decision that with last year's cup-winning cast available we should attempt Shakespeare's "Henry IV, Part I" for a House Play. This could just as well be a disastrous flop as a triumphant success, but there can be no sense of achievement without endeavour. Nor, with Wright to guide us, is there any reason to feel we have bitten off too much. We wish him and his cast every success.

Here, then, are our current notes. They have grown rather lyrical over the Cross-Country, but not without every justification. In the summer — with athletics and swimming qualifying pre-eminent — there will be fresh fields in which to contend. We do not want particularly to win in these; we wish to do a little better than we first thought we were capable of. That may be a very badly written sentence, but it's the right idea.

A.J.F.

HALLIWELLS

Captain: J. R. S. Higham

Prefects: A. T. Boyd, D. J. Creasey

Looking back over previous Spring Term reports, I find such phrases as "appalling conditions" and "frozen pitches" in every other sentence. We have had little better luck with our weather this year. The Cross-Country was run off in a blizzard, and in our one hockey match to date, such alien tactics as "icing the puck" were recognised and employed.

While on the subject of Hockey, Boyd and Creasey are to be congratulated on representing the School First XI. Dyer and Emmerson, both stalwarts of the Second XI, are the other stars of our House team, which was unlucky to lose by one goal to Miltons. Other matches will no doubt be played off later on, when hands are not frozen, and feet not jarred by running on hard grounds, but at the moment weekly postponements give Seniors opportunities for gym qualifying. In recent sessions the House has been well represented, and many points gained. In the Cross-Country we did not place our hopes very high; we did however field the largest team, and it paid dividends. A strategic grouping of runners in the thirties and forties ensured third place by jostling the final runners of rival houses back further. Among the more brilliant performances, we should mention Emmerson, the captain, who came twelfth, and Ali, Creasey, and Higham (C.F.W.), who finished in the twenties. The weather has already been mentioned. Perhaps in view of the arctic conditions we should congratulate all who dared to run!

Junior Rugby has also been hard hit by bad conditions. After last term's games we stand a good chance in the competition; with only one Rugby game to be played, against Cobbs, we have not yet been beaten. Against Miltons we won 11-0, against Gibbs, 9-3, and against Newsoms, 9-0. The team has been well led by Burgess, who deserves mention for a

promising kick. Among the first-formers, Elliott has proved to be a determined three-quarter, and Roberts has shown promise in the scrums and line-outs.

Our Chess team opened a short career by going down to Newsoms. A lack of finesse proved our undoing; unfortunately, determination of the sort our team showed could do little against the opposition's experience and skill. But in debating, we made up for a record of first-round failures by beating Cobbs, to go into the final. Our role as opposition to the motion "that this house believes that the protection of the cat should be our main concern" was undertaken in mixed vein. Higham (C. F. W.) thumped the table emphatically, Boyd mingled wit with gravity, while Creasey and Ali quoted poetry and statistics to confound the proposition. It was an enjoyable battle of wits and our success puts us into the final against Newsoms.

The rehearsals for House Plays are now under way, and our small cast is full of hope with Dennis Cannon's comedy "Captain Carvallo". New actors have been found in Emmerson and Hopper, and both seem to fit their parts well. We hope Colmer will again produce a good performance in the principal role, and make, with the other members of the cast, a worth-while production.

J.R.S.H.

MILTONS

Captain: J. A. Pooles

Prefects: D. J. Drye, M. J. Lavous, M. F. B. Read

This time last year I wrote of our chance of being Cock House — we failed; last term I wrote on similar lines — again we appear to have let our chance slip. On neither occasion were my hopes merely wishful thinking: we had, and still have, the talent and ability to do it. Why, then, have we not succeeded? **I will leave you to answer that; most of you can.** And most of you can do something about it, especially next term, when two of the major activities call for an all-out effort from everyone. I repeat, everyone. The activities I refer to are athletics and swimming, where qualifying points must be won before we have any chance of winning either competition outright. It's up to you, all of you!

Last term the only inter-house competition was for the Rugby Cup. Here at once we find evidence of what I have been saying. We literally won ourselves last place. Both Senior and Colt teams made encouraging starts only to fade and give up before the season had ended. The Seniors in particular, after a rather unfortunate defeat by Halliwells, showed little or no fight against Gibbs. Against Cobbs they gave up completely to lose the game, which they should have won easily, by 6-16. I can, however, end this section on a brighter note, and offer our congratulations to Lavous and Stevens on being awarded their Rugby colours. In addition, the Juniors appear to have been showing more of the necessary spirit in their games. Although they have not as yet recorded a victory, they have only been losing by the narrowest of margins, and we can therefore hope with some confidence that they will earn the win they deserve before the season finishes.

This term's efforts and prospects also seem a little brighter. The hockey has so far been severely restricted by the weather and we have only played one match. This, against Halliwells, was an easier victory than the score of 1-0 suggests. The forwards moved well, but after creating openings were very slow to shoot. Holmes scored the goal mid-way through the first half with a fine shot from an oblique angle. In spite of not conceding a goal the defence appeared very unsound at times, but the basic fault was the failure of the defence and the forwards to link up. The Colts have yet to play a match, but from the evidence of practice

games they appear to have several keen and promising players, and they can do well.

Everyone who ran in the Cross-Country deserves to be congratulated, if only for braving the wintry conditions. In fact, we could finish no better than fourth. Hornsby and Bayley ran excellently to finish seventh and ninth respectively. Drye and Jameson also did well to finish in the twenties, but the rest of our team finished in the second half of the field, which rather set us back.

In the competitions not affecting the Cock House, our experiences have been somewhat mixed. The chess team have done well to reach the final of their event, at the expense of Gibbs, but in the debating we were eliminated in the first round. The dramatics has yet to be decided. Our contribution will be an excerpt from "Seagulls Over Sorrento", which will be produced by Read.

Next term is as usual a full one. Amongst activities to be decided are **cricket, athletics, swimming and examinations.** I have already spoken of our needs in two of these, and it only remains for me to wish those more intimately concerned in the last one the best of good fortune with their G.C.E. papers.

J.A.P.

NEWSOMS

Captain: C. R. Weightman

Prefects: P. A. Tatlow, K. J. Loible, D. C. Spencer

These notes unfortunately have to be written at half-term with the results that many competitions are still the subject of hope rather than of elation or despair. We can say, however, that so far our progress is good since the two cups to date decided — the Rugby and Cross-Country Cups — are ours. It is also satisfying to see that we are succeeding in providing everyone in the House with at least the opportunity of giving what he can — be it in violent action, eloquence, or on the stage. That minority to whom praise was due now is spreading pleasingly to embrace most of the House. Let us hope that when the year is over there will be no one who has not contributed in some way to whatever measure of success it is our fortune to meet.

We won the Rugby Cup. The Colts proved themselves by far the strongest of all Colt teams. They won all their matches by considerable margins. Stevenson, Stevens, Thorpe, Partridge, Yeldham, Vickers — the list is virtually endless of those who romped home with such gusto and with certainly no little skill. Well done the Colts! The Seniors had to battle, without Loible, with a very tough Cobbs team in filthy conditions. While we feel they were unlucky to lose Ingram at half-time, we find no praise adequate for Barry Spencer, who, although he had been knocked out, managed after a brief pause to score the winning try and to convert it. We won 14-6. The Rugby Cup then rested on the result of one match, against Halliwells. It was the best house match I have ever seen Newsoms play in seven years. Everyone, without exception, played superbly. On the result of this game Kearsey was awarded a place in the School 1st XV. Hayhoe played brilliantly, Robert Pevy bounced people with obvious glee while yet retaining his dignity. Tabor, D. C. Spencer, Page, and indeed all the team, deserve our praise. Stevens (A.J.), however, produced what to me was his greatest performance in any sport; he played a faultless game, tackling, falling and handling a greasy ball better than many School players do. It was a remarkable display of "guts" in a game which, after all, he does not take seriously. We won 20-0. **It is incidentally good to think we have five players in the School 1st XV and three playing for Surrey.** A lot of work went into the winning of this cup and I think we can be justly proud, but our debt to Barry Spencer for his seven years' stalwart service to Newsoms Rugby is beyond estimation.

David Spencer has won us the Cross-Country Cup again. He trained himself and the team with such energy and obvious love for what he was doing that most of the praise must go to him. Individual praise is due to all our eight:— Stewart, 3rd, Stevens, 4th, Tabor, 6th, Reeve, 8th, Howlett, 15th, Loible, 17th Spencer (B), 18th, D. C. Spencer, 19th. We got 90 points and were followed closely by Gibbs with 99. Well done all concerned!

No Newsoms team has yet played a house hockey match, and we still await a beginning. Already Mr. High has shown unfailing energy in training and organising the Colts. No matter what the results of the Hockey Cup, we must all thank him for putting such a lot into the House. It is dangerous to speculate, but in hockey, we are looking forward.

If there is one cup we should feel obliged to win, it is the Michael Welby Cup; despite this, we have never won it. This year we have made the greatest step towards it yet; we have slain the giants, Gibbs. This feat was not achieved alone by Page's matter-of-fact logic, P. A. Tatlow's convincing sincerity, Robert Pevy's beaming and irresistible benevolence, Mayer's enviable fluency or my own nervous staccato, but it was surprisingly enough a team victory. We have now to face Halliwells in the final.

In chess we have done satisfactorily. We have reached the final, having beaten both Halliwells and Cobbs 5-0. After one diplomatic scuffle with Miltons we look forward to the decisive game.

Gymnastics has now a cup inscribed with the name of another member of the House, Brian Michez. It would be a fitting tribute to him to win this cup in its first year, but it will call for the maximum effort on the part of everyone in the House. K. J. Loible will have the difficult job of stirring up the lethargic, but he should not have to. There must be no complacency.

The Junior Rugby team are held up by the weather at the moment but they have already beaten Miltons 12-3, and lost to Halliwells' very strong team 9-0. Well done Cottee and the team, and good luck against Cobbs and Gibbs!

The House Play is "Midsummer Night's Dream", and although we have not a very high reputation for dramatics we should get a lot of fun from it. What will happen remains to be seen, and, I hope, heard.

We have had this term to say goodbye to D. F. Page. He gave everything he could to the House and we are already missing him. May he prosper in his future career. His attitude towards the House I shall dwell on; it will serve as a fine example to those who are still inactive and apathetic passengers. He was not a brilliant games man, but he had boundless enthusiasm. He was always up with the ball in Rugby, he never gave up a tackle in hockey, but, most typical of all, in cricket, he was the keenest fielder in the side. May he be an example to all. There must be no complacency at our present partial success, but as with D. F. Page, in the terms ahead there must be boundless enthusiasm.

C.R.W.

DEBATING SOCIETY

During the current Michael Welby Cup competition, a flustered debater, clutching at straws, blurted out: "After all the children of to-day are the citizens of tomorrow." At the risk of appearing patronizing, this would appear generally obvious, but in terms of School debating, it is a statement worthy of consideration. Last term saw the inauguration of a vigorous and extremely promising Junior wing to our Society, and, mainly as a result of its lively eloquence, a highly delighted secretary was able to escape from his usual function of arch-procrastinator. The manner in which the House Competition has punctuated our general programme may

well, then, have caused certain complaints from among the lower forms — as usual the Seniors get all the luck. I am very pleased, therefore, to announce that, for the remainder of the year, great attention will be paid to the growing pains of the Junior Society. With the summer examinations severely curtailing the activities of the fifth and sixth formers, the Juniors should come into their own, and it is hoped that after some "warming-up" exercises, representatives drawn from their ranks can be matched against other schools. We may be taking an unfair advantage in doing this: I doubt very much if neighbouring schools can produce so many young speakers capable (as ours have proved) of outdoing their elders in enthusiasm and performance. But, if it is an unfair advantage, our Juniors deserve it. We wish them every success.

The Senior members of the School have not generally merited any accolades for their services rendered in the Michael Welby Cup. The path to the as yet undecided final (between Newsoms and Halliwells) has not climbed to the heights of last year's struggle. Some remarks on the series are being penned for this issue by Mr. Pratt, but, at the risk of poaching from him, I may perhaps add this personal comment. With two exceptions the series has failed disappointingly to elevate any fresh speaker to the ranks of the familiar few. The exceptions — and notable ones too — are Francis, who, put to the acid test, has shown great versatility, humour and charm, and Higham (J.R.S.), a vastly improved speaker. Yet the saying about swallows making a summer is still true: we have spent a chilly term's debating. Clearly the remedy lies with the Juniors, condemned, of late, to their forced hibernation. They have had their challenge: "Mr. Chairman, Gentlemen, clear the decks for action! Members of the Senior school, stand by to repel boarders!"

A.J.F.

MICHAEL WELBY CUP

16th January, 1956 — Miltons v. Cobbs.

Motion: That this House believes that religion has outgrown its usefulness.

The Motion was lost by one vote to sixteen.

The Judges gave a majority verdict in favour of Cobbs.

13th February — Gibbs v. Newsoms.

Motion: That this House believes that the best way to acquire a virtue is to pretend to have it.

The Motion was lost by eleven votes to thirteen.

The Judges gave a majority verdict in favour of Newsoms.

20th February — Cobbs v. Halliwells.

Motion: That this House believes the protection of cats should be its main concern.

The Motion was lost by three votes to twenty-three.

The Judges gave a unanimous verdict in favour of Halliwells.

27th February — Newsoms v. Halliwells.

Motion: That this House regrets the lack of liberty in this country.

The Motion was lost by ten votes to seventeen.

The Judges gave the verdict to Newsoms by the narrowest margin.

I should like to use the opportunity to make a few general comments and suggestions rather than to give detailed reports of the debates. House debating competitions have some inevitable weaknesses. One of these was shown up in the first debate of the season. The members of a house

team are collectively obliged to speak either for or against the motion as the case may be. There can be no harm in this if the motion is clearly intended to be treated in a light vein. No one really thinks the protection of cats should be our *main* concern, but anyone might enjoy trying to prove that it should. Where deep feelings are concerned the case is different. In the debate on religion having lost its usefulness at least two people were condemned to speak against their own convictions and were unable to master their own feelings of hypocrisy in doing so. In such cases it can happen that a speech intended to support one side in fact supports the other.

The speeches for the debate on how to acquire a virtue had been carefully prepared by the teams of both houses. Several speakers had taken the trouble to memorise quite long orations with rehearsed gestures to boot; and even those who fell back on reading were clearly not reading their stuff for the first time. All this in its way is commendable enough, but something was missing: the spontaneity and sparkle of repartee from minds fully alive to the challenge of the previous speaker instead of clinging desperately to carefully memorised material which in any event may prove poor retort to the challenge offered. And was it entirely my imagination that some house speeches had a very strong family likeness? All this leads me to wonder whether completely un-rehearsed debates would not be better criteria of skill at this particular game. I throw it out as a suggestion for discussion that in next year's Michael Welby Cup debates the competing teams should not, till they have actually taken their places in the House, know the motion to which they will be required to speak.

It must be admitted that something would be lost if the suggested change were adopted. We should have to miss, for example, such a tour de force as the carefully co-ordinated, historically illustrated, pun-littered destruction of the case for the protection of cats being our main concern. This must have been the result of at least a week's family fireside research. And very good entertainment it proved. Nevertheless, on balance I believe the impromptu debate would be a gain.

H.A.P.

CHRISTIAN UNION

Due to the short term, and the early date of "going to print", we have this term comparatively little to report. However, I shall attempt to give you a fair idea of what meetings we have held, and of our plans for the future.

The fact that we have only had about six weeks of term, with trial exams for G.C.E. coming in the middle, has resulted in our having held only four meetings so far. The first three were studies on Bible Prophecy. They evoked a lot of lively discussion. For the fourth meeting, which was held on 21st February, we had the great good fortune to have Mr. Tony Gill of Capernwray Missionary Fellowship to speak to us. He gave us a first class talk on the passage from 1 Kings 18, where Elijah, on Mount Carmel, demonstrates to the people of Israel that God, and not Baal, is the true God. The Capernwray Missionary Fellowship, started after the war, is a movement that carries out work amongst teen-agers in all of Europe that is not closed by the Iron Curtain — but even a Communist youth leader from East Germany came to know Christ through them. Perhaps you know of them under the name of Torch-bearers.

Our meetings this term, apart from Tony Gill's visit, have not been well attended. Average attendance has been around the eight to ten mark. At prayer meetings there have usually been about five people. In view of this, and the fact that we feel that too little time can be given to the publicising and preparation of each meeting, plans are going forward

to hold, next term, only about three main meetings, with a really good speaker at each, at the same time increasing our number of prayer meetings, combining with them a short period of Bible study. We feel that in this way Christian witness in the School will be strengthened considerably.

Further meetings this term will, we hope, include talks by Mr. A. E. Collins of the London City Mission, Mr. Way from Saint Saviour's, and Mr. Thomas of Malden Baptist Church.

P.R.J.

DA VINCI SOCIETY

The lectures of Mr. Archer, M.F.B. Read and Mr. Strettan completed the Society's programme last term. "Design in Aircraft" was the title of Mr. Archer's talk and with the use of an excellent film on the "Crescent Wing" he skilfully emphasised the importance of the part played by the craftsman and designer in the modern aircraft industry. It was apparent from the excellent shots in the film that an aesthetic application of functional form can produce true creative beauty.

M. F. B. Read in his talk on the Japanese Theatre in some way linked up with Mr. Archer's talk in that there was a common theme in the controlled artistry of the performance of the Kabuki and the considered design of our modern space-craft. The lecture admirably brought out the value of tried design allied with tradition in this highly cultured art of Japan. One was once more brought to the realisation that art is not just a matter of going into a "dreamy trance" but requires a large percentage of deeply sensitive critical analysis.

Our musical purists may shake a head but the popularity of the subject of Mr. Strettan's talk, "Gilbert and Sullivan", was undoubted. The audience, and this I feel is the correct description of our gathering on this occasion, were within a very short time humming all the well known "bits". Mr. Strettan, who has a real love of the work of Gilbert and Sullivan, based upon an active part played in many productions, fully conveyed his undoubted enthusiasm to the Society. I should not be surprised if eventually one of these productions appears on the "boards" at Raynes Park. The talk was well illustrated by photographs, taken by Mr. Strettan, of a number of stage performances, and was appropriately supported by a well chosen selection of records.

The Lecturer concluded his talk by suggesting that each member of the Society should write out one hundred times "Gilbert and Sullivan is better than Gilbert Harding"!

This talk brought us to the end of the Winter Term, and the programmes of the Spring Term commenced with a film on the life of the French artist Utrillo, presented by Mr. Riley. The film, a French production, was a model of its kind, and apart from its historic content relating to the life of the artist, was in itself an excellent example of film-making, containing many haunting and memorable shots admirably photographed. Our budding Film Club had an excellent example of film-making to study.

The restoring of paintings was the subject of one of the two films which made up the second programme of this term. In this film, a Polish one, we saw the fascinating process of literally removing a painting from an old canvas and putting it on a new one. The other film shown at this meeting was on the work of the fifteenth century wood-carver, Wit Stwosz. The film was based on his great carved alterpiece for the Mariacki Church in Cracow. The beauty and invention of this work was excellently conveyed by clever lighting and camera work.

CLASSICAL SOCIETY

In the following talk, given by Mr. Ayton, "Humour in Music", we were treated to a wide range of music from classic to jazz in the recorded examples used to illustrate this talk. Mr. Ayton has established himself as the music authority in the Society and we are greatly indebted to him for the valuable time he has given up to bring to us the excellent talks we have enjoyed. One hopes that through these talks a wider appreciation of music has been engendered amongst our members and that the "highbrows" have found something in the taste of the "low brows", and vice versa.

Once again the Society was able to have the opportunity of seeing some of the photographic work of Mr. Dennis Jones when he gave us the next talk on "Amsterdam," which he illustrated with his own photographs. In this talk he traced the architectural development of Amsterdam from its beginning to the present period of contemporary style.

At the following meeting the Society saw a film entitled "Lord Siva Danced", in which the dance forms of India were explained, and amongst the excellent exponents of the dances we were able to see the work of the internationally famous Ram Gopal. Once again we were made to realise the significance of design in art and were able to compare this Indian art form with that of the Japanese actors we learnt about in Read's talk.

It will be apparent from this report that the Society continues to flourish. Since its inception in 1952 we have had sixty-five meetings and as yet have not repeated ourselves, a credit to all our speakers, to whom we owe a real debt.

A.C.R.

LITERARY SOCIETY

Over the past six months, the Society has made but fleeting appearances, under the guises of two evenings out at the theatre, and one can only hope for further unexpected flashes in the future. One reason for the present lack of activity is the organization, which is obscure, and membership, which is, to say the least, somewhat arbitrary. A plan which began last term to read all of Shakespeare's comedies disintegrated after one reading due to the demands of the School Play, Public Examinations and Sporting activities. Faith in the Bard was not confirmed after his superiority had been challenged by a Mr. Calvin Hoffman and the majority of the Arts Sixth had been to see a disappointing performance of "Hamlet" at the Phoenix Theatre. This was the Peter Brook production that had triumphantly stormed the Kremlin in Moscow, but most of us, I think, left the theatre wondering why this company had received such praise from the Russians. At the moment, House Plays are looming larger and there is little chance of a meeting this term. The Muse has, temporarily I hope, dried up — or more tragically, perhaps, frozen over — but next term we will have an out-and-out effort to re-kindle interest.

C.C.W.

This is a dismal report from a society that this time last year could announce that it was "flourishing with almost unprecedented vitality". During the past two years we have recorded "Under Milk Wood," read plays with another school and by ourselves, visited theatres, and had a few talks and discussions. Unfortunately, the recurrent pattern has been enthusiasm for a new project quickly followed by apathy.

More steady support is needed, and more suggestions for suitable activities. These should not have to come from one or two stalwarts or myself each time. The Society will flourish again when you decide to make it.

P.A.T.

The Headmaster very kindly allowed the Society to meet at his house at the end of last term, when J. R. S. Higham read a paper on Prehistoric Britain. The President, Mr. Sweetland, first welcomed Mr. Dennis Jones and the members of the lower sixth who were attending the Society for the first time, and also three old boys, Mr. L. Bunch, Mr. P. J. Parsons and Mr. D. A. Jackson. After the minutes had been read, the President called on Higham to present his talk, which mainly concerned his "dig" at Snail Down last summer. A full and first-hand account of this archaeological exploit appeared in last term's edition of "The Spur".

There are about two thousand tombs or barrows in England, and the speaker complained that many of them were being used by the army as tank runs, with the result that "rescue digs" have to be organized before the area is completely ruined. He then described the various types of barrow which are found in this country; of these the earliest dates from about 2,300 B.C. He traced the development of these barrows during this era, showing that the changes which seemed to occur in the formation of the stone work invariably coincided with a wave of new immigrants from the continent of Europe, who brought with them new rituals, ideas and beliefs. Many of the more famous prehistoric monuments are situated in Wessex, since in this region the traders from Europe met those who came from Ireland via the River Severn, and thus a civilisation grew up where there was an important junction of trade routes from distant and varied lands. Higham then turned to deal with some of the stone monuments such as Stonehenge, and put forward the theories as to their use. Were they for sacrificial slaughtering, temples for sun worship, or had they some connection with nearby rivers? All the possible explanations, however, are fraught with difficulties and none seems to provide a complete answer. After he had dealt with this aspect of Prehistoric Britain, Higham described the conditions under which he worked at Snail Down and some of the experiences which he had had there.

After this interesting and informative talk, well illustrated by diagrams of the tombs and photographs of the site, the refreshments, which had been ably prepared by Mrs. Porter, were served. In thanking Mrs. Porter for her hospitality, C. R. Weightman declared that the standard which one had come to expect from the Society had been more than maintained. A. J. Fowles thanked the speaker for his paper and said that for him the dark ages had been considerably lightened.

This term we hope to have a paper by Mr. H. Dennis Jones entitled, "Trade, travel and geography — the key to the ancient world".

P.A.T.

FILM CLUB

The Film Club has been making steady, if unspectacular, progress this year. Towards the end of the autumn term Miss Barbara Hepworth was invited to show some of the films made by her father, Mr. Cecil Hepworth, some fifty years ago and to talk about the early days of film-making in Britain. Her films included the first feature-film made in this country — "Rescued by Rover", running time ten minutes — in which Miss Hepworth, then aged eight months, played a major role, and film records of Queen Victoria's funeral and King Edward VII's wedding. During Queen Victoria's funeral the noise made by Cecil Hepworth's hand-cranked camera attracted the attention of Edward VII, who halted the section of the cortège riding with him, giving the cameraman a unique shot of European royalty of that time. Miss Hepworth's programme also included a number of comedy films with trick photography.

The film, still untitled, which the Club started to make last summer, is now taking shape: it contains a good deal of excellent photography and we are hoping for a really worthwhile final result. Tentative arrangements have also been made with the help of the Puppet Club for a puppet-silhouette film with back-projected "scenery". We hope also to produce a short film as a contribution to the School's twenty-first birthday celebrations next autumn.

H.D.J.

INSTRUMENTAL GROUPS

Some people are already talking about "The Orchestra". I have carefully avoided writing under that title, and have, I hope, thereby dodged the unkind criticism of those who may linger in the School building on Tuesday and Friday evenings. However, although we may be painfully modest about our present accomplishments, and cautious in prophesying future progress, it is worthy of record that thirty-six of us are learning the violin under Mr. Piper on Friday evenings, while on Tuesdays eight of us blow the clarinet and five the flute under Mr. Tucker.

In a fresh paragraph — out of earshot of the other two groups — I have also to report that eight trumpeters and one trombonist meet on Tuesdays to work under the direction of Mr. Hall (and to dream of "Humph").

P.A.T.

RECORDER CLUB

The Recorder Club is now enjoying its third year of existence, and is now well established. Thanks to the careful, patient training of Mr. Vyse, the small, but growing group of players is now entering more into School activities, and will shortly be playing for the Da Vinci Society, and, we hope, will play in future carol concerts. It is in possession of tenor, treble, and several descant instruments, and therefore has the most important members of the consort.

With the recent introduction of two keen members, our number is made up to six, but it is hoped that more tenor and treble recorder players will join.

R.W.L.

WHY PLAY THE RECORDER ?

There are a number of misunderstandings about the nature of the Recorder and its music which it may be helpful to dispose of here:

— that the Recorder is not a genuine instrument. Actually it is an end-blown flute, which has existed, together with the side-blown variety, or flute proper, since ancient times.

— that the Recorder is easy to play and is therefore suitable only for beginners, who turn to a more "advanced" instrument as soon as they are able. It is in fact easy to learn, but exceedingly difficult to master. Its musical literature ranges over at least five centuries, and all composers, from the least to the greatest, held it in respect. It was especially the instrument of the cultivated amateur.

— that the Recorder is not used in the orchestra. It depends which orchestra you mean: Bach, Handel, Mozart, and their predecessors used recorders or flutes, according to the tone-colour desired.

— that the Recorder is a very limited instrument. It has a full chromatic range of over two octaves, and, unlike the flute, is available in a "consort" of five sizes, which make it ideal for ensemble playing. There is an enormous quantity of fine domestic music to be explored, much of it available in good modern editions.

— that musical history begins with Bach, and that Recorder music largely falls into the category of the primitive and the obsolete. Bach appears very late on the musical scene, and no one acquainted with "early" music would ever hold this opinion.

— that the Recorder is harsh and unmusical. Almost any instrument can be made to sound harsh and unmusical.

Furthermore, the Recorder is comparatively cheap; a wooden concert Descant costs about £8, a Treble £16; or, if you prefer it, the corresponding hand-made plastic instruments cost about 17/- and 35/-.

L.W.V.

GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY

The Society flourishes as it rarely has before and continues to attract new members; attendances show an increase of about fifty per cent on the first half of last term. It is hoped that even more people will make an effort to hear future programmes, particularly of lesser-known works. In planning these it is intended to make use of the facilities of the American Library, a department of the United States Information Service.

Last term ended with an inspired performance of Berlioz' *Te Deum*, after a series of piano concertos by Beethoven and Schumann, and the Violin Concerto by Brahms. This term opened with one of the most popular items in the violin repertoire, Mendelssohn's beautiful Violin Concerto in E minor, preceded by Fauré's *Pavanne*. The following week Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 2 was played, attracting the largest attendance on record. After an interval of three weeks, due to the examinations, Mr. Riley presented a record of Brahms' Piano Concerto No. 1. The week after half-term, Mr. Riley again presented the programme, and was this time allowed a free choice of records. He began with Dukas' ballet music, *La Peri*, colourful and evocative, and continued with Nocturnes by Debussy, the first, *Nuages*, in contrast to *La Peri*, tranquil and soothing, the second, *Fêtes*, again colourful, finishing with *Sirènes*, a picture of sirens luring sailors from the sea, helped by the addition of a female chorus.

Intended programmes for the rest of term include works by Haydn, Mozart, Grieg and Tchaikovsky, after which lesser-known modern works will be featured.

B.G.B., J.C.D., J.E.N.

SPUR MODEL RAILWAY CLUB

Mention was made in the Autumn issue of "The Spur" that two successors were needed to carry on the interests of the Model Railway Club, and we are happy to be able to report that Mr. Carlow and Mr. Forsdyke have now taken over from Mr. Yardy and Mr. Phillips, who, regretfully, found their business commitments would not allow them the spare-time necessary to run the Club. Our first thoughts therefore should, in our opinion, dwell for a short time on the earnest and enthusiastic work both Mr. Yardy and Mr. Phillips have put in over a good number of years. We also have to bear in mind that their own sons had long since left the School, but due to their enthusiasm and their combined endeavour to foster instructive entertainment for the boys of Raynes Park County Grammar School, they continued to carry on their good work until the end of 1955. Let us therefore place on record our sincere vote of thanks and appreciation to both Mr. Yardy and Mr. Phillips for their long and loyal association with the Club.

Now for the Club's current activities. We have a varying membership of about ten boys, and we shall at all times welcome any newcomers. The

Club is primarily run for the boys' own entertainment, but we are gratified to see that a number of the present members are not only interested in the running of the trains but are beginning to show an active interest in the general improvement of the lay-out. We shall encourage this new interest, as any suggestions as to future improvements should, in our opinion, come from the boys themselves if they have real interest in the Club's activities. We have recently purchased five new wagons for the tanker to pull and these certainly lend colour to the lay-out. We also hope to be able to give the whole model a "new look" for your annual Garden Party and have the "fly-over" in operation, and by so doing, we hope get your parents and friends to come along and view the working model once again, and thus make our contribution to the General School Fund. We still have some cash in hand and, with the approval of members of the Club, will, from time to time, spend this on improvements to the lay-out and the purchase of new rolling-stock.

R.L.F., S.G.C.

CACTUS SOCIETY

This has not been the best term for cactus growers. The weather may have been lovely for Eskimos, but plants that are used to a very hot dry climate just do not thrive in it. Indeed many cactus growers have lost whole collections of plants because of frost and low temperatures. May I remind you that it is essential in frosty weather to keep the plants as dry as possible, as the frost will attack the slightest moisture.

This term the Society members have been drawing diagrams showing the correct methods of cutting, grafting, and growing plants from seed. The evolution of the cactus has been gone into but this is a very difficult subject, and as yet we have little material. The diagrams and drawings will be shown on Open Night in the Summer Term.

Let us hope that when Spring comes it will bring with it some good weather in order that we may launch our plants once more on a new and successful growing season in 1956.

C.J.H.

19th WIMBLEDON SCOUT GROUP

The last two terms have seen a rather more regular pattern of meetings established: apart from Tuesday's troop meeting, Court of Honour meets on alternate Mondays at 1.10, while the Mondays between are devoted (or should be — it is hoped that more boys will take advantage of this regular opportunity) to test work; the Senior Patrol meets on certain specified Thursdays after school, and a programme of visits has been arranged to enable a certain amount of "looking wide" into the way our country is run and governed.

We are all looking forward to moving into our new Headquarters on the Res. and are glad that the necessary foundation and preliminary erection work has actually commenced. The use of the Hut should give a great fillip to our Scouting, and enable each Patrol to meet and work together more, and to take some pride in its own possessions; conditions in the Den are sorely cramped, and it is not always put to the best use.

The cabin at West Hoathly has now been fenced in and put in good repair. Several Patrols and individual Scouts hope to use it at Easter; this is the time of year when it should be most used.

We are always interested to hear of old Scouts, and cordially invite any of them who can do so to look in on us any Tuesday after 4 p.m.

D.G.L.

CHESS CLUB

Captain: C. R. Weightman

Secretary: S. J. Cohen

So far this term there have been no matches held against other schools, but we are shortly due to play Rutlish and Epsom Grammar School.

The annual knock-out competition has now been completed, and was surprisingly orthodox, in that all members of the School team showed up well. The final was played between Weightman and Cohen, and the former is to be congratulated on his accession to the title of School Chess Champion.

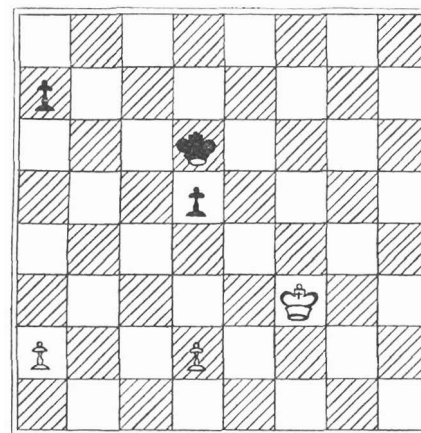
A current feature of the Club — its large size — is most welcome, and there are to date thirty-four fully paid-up members. This widespread support has motivated the purchase of a number of new chess sets to replenish our rather dilapidated stock, a state of affairs only marred by the abuse of the new properties by Junior members, which is going from bad to worse.

The opening of the house competition this term has initiated a change in the rule of four players to a house team. It was felt by the committee that this arrangement was a frequent cause of draws causing delay, and so the number was changed to five. The first round was a dual effort, with Newsoms v. Halliwells and Gibbs v. Miltons. Newsoms, a far more powerful side, with all their players in the School team, won an overwhelming victory, 5-0, against Halliwells, who had not a single School player among them. The other match was a more uncertain issue. Miltons survived 3-2. The second round was played between Newsoms and Cobbs, and Newsoms, emulating their former selves, walked away with another 5-0 victory. The final, played between Miltons and Newsoms, led to a draw, and so a complete replay is to be conducted in the near future.

S.J.C.

AN END-GAME PROBLEM

BLACK



WHITE

White to move and win. How does he do it? — Solution on page 35.

CRAFT NOTES

There has recently been an exhibition at the Royal Academy which aimed at giving an idea of English Taste in the eighteenth century. To see the exhibits was an experience which we can seldom be privileged to enjoy, coming as they did from many private homes and royal palaces. When looking at eighteenth century art one is forced to consider the outlook of the people living at that time. They seemed to have an awareness that is lacking today and indeed that appears to have been lacking for the last century or so.

As there is so much material available of such a high standard both aesthetically and technically, one is forced to wonder why, or query the very facts — were people so much more aware of beauty, or had they so much more sensibility to fine craftsmanship? There is little doubt that this was so, for many small dwelling houses, shop fronts or even just a part of a building such as a porch or a window were built to elegant proportions and with understanding. In addition, an appreciation of good craftsmanship was to be found not only in the towns but in the country, where craftsmen were quick to seize upon the fashions set by the townsmen. This was no doubt facilitated not so much by the individual work of such people as Chippendale, Sheraton and Hepplewhite (by no means the only furniture makers) as by the catalogues they published which became, in fact, design manuals.

The eighteenth century was a great era of literary activity connected with art. As the works of the great furniture makers were publicised through "Directors" and "Drawing Books", so architectural styles became known and established through similar publications. These were written by men whose names should be known to us, and influenced the work of many others — Robert and John Adam, William Kent, Batty Langley, Charles "Athenian" Stuart, Sir John Soane, John Nash, and many others of almost equal eminence.

This great bursting forth of aesthetic enlightenment was no sudden occurrence. All the factors had been 'brewing' for three hundred years, and the renaissance had been felt by Britain for most of this time; but it seems to have taken a long time for the artists and craftsmen of this country to make themselves part of the movement to the extent of giving something of themselves to it. This they eventually did, and were assisted in their task by the populace, who were eager to accept all the artist had to give.

R.G.A.

RUGBY

v. Wallington C.G.S.	lost	.....	10 - 12
v. Mitcham C.G.S.	lost	.....	6 - 18
v. Bec School	won	.....	16 - 5
v. Tiffins School	lost	.....	3 - 11
v. St. Benedict's School	won	.....	19 - 0
v. Old Boys	lost	.....	3 - 17

The ending to the season, as the above results show, was not as satisfactory as the beginning. Perhaps we lost some games because of the disappointment the team felt after the Wallington match, in which the verdict went, with many penalties, to the opposition. Our two tries, scored by Higham (J.R.S.) and Boyd, were both well converted by Nicholls, but to no avail: the points were more than made up by the try and three penalties awarded to Wallington. The team was outwardly content, but inwardly very disappointed, and with several of the forwards taking exams, we were well beaten by Mitcham in our next match. It was a match we could have won. Bec School visited the Oberon to be

beaten by the old good spirit. The three-quarters had a welcome return to form: Boyd scored twice from openings made by Lavous and Francis, and Nicholls converted once, and kicked a good penalty. Against Tiffins the team opened the game as if they intended to win convincingly, but a lack of finishing deprived us of tries, and we went down fighting. In this match Kearsey, who had only played in house Rugby before, replaced Stevens. He proved that the School have three good wing-forwards, and with Stevens injured, he remained in the team against St. Benedict's School. Again the team rolled smoothly into the attack, and tries were scored by Bray, Francis, and Kearsey. St. Benedict's went down with no answer to our onslaught. Not so in the Old Boys match, however, when a downpour of rain made both Oberon pitches into mud-baths, and the superior handling of the opposition proved decisive in the poor conditions. Only at times did the team look capable of holding their own, and our score, a penalty after Lavous had been unfortunately obstructed, when compared with the Old Boys' four tries, represents the run of the play fairly.

The second XV fared little better than they did at the beginning of the year. The one highlight of their career was their beating Mitcham by 11-0. In the remaining four matches they were defeated heavily, for all their determination, and we were unable to show such good results as the team of a year ago, which won all but one of its matches.

Turning now to County activities, we have five Surrey players to boast this year. Loible and Francis each played a game for the "County Schoolboys", and Spencer (B), Higham (J.R.S.), and Weightman, though not playing for this team, joined Loible and Francis for two games with the Surrey Grammar Schools team. Against Middlesex the team won 26-3, but lost to a Welsh team 0-3. The standard was high, and all five merited selection for the East of London team to play the West. Unfortunately, this match was cancelled owing to bad conditions. The weather has done little to help sevens practice either: we have had only one practice, and that was made difficult by hard and slippery ground.

As a result of consistent good play, colours were awarded to A. T. Boyd, Nicholls, D. J. Holden, M. J. Lavous, D. J. Creasey, Stevens, Pevy, Higham (C.F.W.) and Bray.

We are an old team. Next year most of the backs will have left, and all but three of the scrum will be gone. Others will spring up to fill the gaps, and a new first XV will take the field, I feel sure, to maintain the tradition of "maiores nostri". We wish them luck, and leave them, I hope, a respectable record to try to better.

N.H.B., J.R.S.H., D.J.C.

HOCKEY

Once again bad weather has seriously affected the hockey programme. By half term it has only been possible to play three School and two House matches. This is doubly disappointing because of the great promise shown by the School teams in the games they have played. It can only be hoped that they will be given a chance to fulfil this promise in the second half of the term.

1st XI

v. Borough Road College (Away) Drawn 3-3

Team: Stevens; Fowles, Loveday; Creasey, Holden, Pooles; Gent, Hill, Nicholls, Lavous, Boyd.

No less than seven members of the team were making their debut in the 1st XI, and their understandable inexperience and lack of team

practice put us at a considerable disadvantage in the first half against a competent but by no means brilliant opposition. Despite this, we did not deserve to be three goals down at half-time. In the second half, however, the forwards began to swing the ball about with more confidence, and at once opened up gaps in their opponents' defence. Nicholls scored our first goal from a right-wing centre, and then Hill pushed home the second from an acute angle. Lavous equalised after running on to a through pass, and both sides missed good chances in a tense finish.

v. Russel School (Home) Won 7-0

Team: Stevens; Fowles, Loveday; Creasey, Loible, Pooles; Francis, Hill, Nicholls, Lavous, Boyd.

A side strengthened by the return of Loible and Francis did not begin as confidently as was expected. Gaps appeared in the defence and the forwards failed to finish. Fortunately, Russel were slow to take advantage of their early chances, and we soon took command of the game. The first goal came midway through the first half when their goalkeeper saved a high shot from Lavous and Nicholls scored from the rebound. We then scored two quick goals; Lavous got the first from a pass by Boyd, and Loible the second from a Francis centre. We thus had a three goal lead at half-time. We continued to attack throughout the second half, and only a locked defence kept our score down. Hill scored our fourth goal after dribbling round a number of defenders, including the goalkeeper, and further goals were added by Pooles, Lavous and Hill again, to make the tally seven.

v. St. Mary's College (Home) Lost 3-4

Team: Stevens; Fowles, Loveday; Creasey, Nicholls, Pooles; Francis, Hill, Lavous, Loible, Boyd.

Again we started badly, but this time a much faster opposition took their chances and never gave us an opportunity to recover fully. We were already two goals down when, in our first real chance, Loible's fierce shot was deflected by a defender's nose. Although they were forced to continue with only ten men, St. Mary's still held the upper hand. However, the beginning of the second half witnessed a complete transformation. We swept into the attack straight from the bully-off, and inside two minutes were on level terms. First Lavous and Loible dribbled through the centre for Loible to score. Seconds later, the inside men again worked through the middle and Hill equalised. But we failed to press home our advantage, and although we continued to have most of the play, St. Mary's scored two excellent break-away goals. Loible scored our third late in the game, the ball going in off the goal-keeper's back.

In spite of lack of practice and some unavoidable team changes, the side has generally combined well and shown considerable understanding. It has, however, a tendency to panic under pressure, the defence fails to clear the ball first time, and the forwards are inclined to stand and watch instead of coming back to help. Apart from these occasional lapses the defence has been sound. Creasey and Fowles have settled down well after an uncertain start and Loveday has at times played brilliantly at left-back. The forwards have moved the ball well, but have been a little unwilling to shoot. Most of the attacks have been mounted on the right wing, where Hill and Francis have combined excellently. The left wing has been a little disappointing, but the return of Loible to the inside position has helped to add more punch here.

2nd XI.

Team from: Morley, Ingram, Ridge, Lintill, Stevens (R.K.), Holden, Orme, Emmerson, Roe, Holmes, Stone, Weightman, Dyer.

The 2nd XI has been even more unlucky with the weather, having been

able to play only two games. They were against Russel School and St. Mary's. In the first they were far too strong for the opposition and won easily by 7-1. The defence was rarely in trouble and the forwards kept up a constant barrage on their opponents' goal. Weightman and Roe were prominent in creating openings from which Stone scored four goals. Against St. Mary's, however, they met much stronger opposition and lost by the odd goal in three. It was a keenly fought game which we might have won had luck been on our side. **Holmes scored our goal.**

Generally the defence has been sound, if at times a little slow to clear. The forwards have shown their ability to score goals, an ability too often lacking in second teams. Weightman has been their chief schemer, a job which, combined with that of captaining the team, he has performed particularly well. Weather permitting, the team should do well in their remaining games.

J.A.P.

CROSS-COUNTRY

We have had so far this season considerable success, but our satisfaction has been marred by the tragic death of Malcolm Talbot, whom we all remember as a fine runner and captain.

On Saturday, 12th November, we travelled to Guildford to compete in the relay race for the Richard Haskell Cup. We entered two teams, and against extremely fierce competition the "A" team did well to finish 9th in a time of 35 mins. 41 secs., and the "B" team to finish 24th in 37 mins. 57 secs.

Our next fixture was a quadruple match against Kingston Grammar School, Tiffins, and Latymer Upper. The race was run over the Tiffins course in Richmond Park. We sent a team of nine, all of whom ran well and gave the School a satisfying win. The points were: Raynes Park 49 points, Tiffins 74 points, Latymer Upper 85 points, and Kingston Grammar 111 points.

The Juniors ran at Wallington in a triangular match against Ashburton Secondary School and Wallington, who again proved too fast and won the match. The results were: Wallington 28 points, Raynes Park 64 points, Ashburton 86 points. Coney, Mellor and Jenner must be congratulated on their good performances.

The Spring Term started with a fixture against Wimbledon Athletic Club, which proved most enjoyable as most of the visitors were Old Boys. Conditions were hard, and the horse-track and tow-path were particularly bad, but despite this the times were fast. The School team was well grouped — Stickley 2nd, Hiscock 3rd, Stewart 5th, Beavitt 6th, Reeve 7th, Tabor 8th — thus achieving a pleasing win. Stickley must be congratulated on the award of School colours.

The next fixture was a triangular match against Tiffins and Whitgift. Stickley and Hiscock ran well, finishing 2nd and 3rd respectively. The result was: Raynes Park 49 points, Tiffins 56 points, and Whitgift 78 points.

At the time of writing there are still some fixtures to run off. These will be reported in the next edition of "The Spur".

THE INTER-HOUSE CROSS-COUNTRY RUN

On Thursday, 9th February, some sixty runners took part in the Inter-House Race over our 4 mile course over Wimbledon Common. Conditions were bad: a biting north wind swept across the golf-course, bringing some snow with it. Nevertheless, Stickley took the lead and

finished 1st in 18 mins. 54.5 secs., a very creditable performance. The result of the race was:—

Newsoms — Points 90; Position 1st.

Stewart 3rd, Stevens 4th, Tabor 6th, Reeve 8, Howlett 15th, Loible 17th, Spencer (D.) 18th, Spencer (B.) 19th.

Gibbs — Points 99; Position 2nd.

Hiscock 2nd, Beavitt 4th, Mellor 10th, Fowles 11th, Thresher 13th, Holden 14th, Mackenzie 21st, Johnson 24th.

Halliwells — Points 237; Position 3rd.

Emmerson 12th, Creasey 20th, Ali 22nd, Higham (C.) 25th, Higham (R.) 32nd, Gamble 34th, Young 40th, Colmer 42nd.

Miltons — Points 267; Position 4th.

Hornsby 7th, Bayly 9th, Drye 23rd, Jameson 29th, Lavous 43rd, Crocker 47th, Lach 50th, Cohen 52nd.

Cobbs — Points 275; Position 5th.

Stickley 1st, Newman 16th, Lea 37th, Poynter 38th, Beattie 41st, Francis 48th, Carter 55th, Thomas 56th.

D.J.S.

HAMLET

Whatever the Russians may have thought of Peter Brook's much publicised production of *Hamlet* it did not meet with the same approval from a party of hypercritical Raynes Park sixth-formers who went to see it at the Phoenix Theatre, London, early in the term.

Technically the production was quite fair, The lighting, except for the single spotlight which followed Hamlet around in his soliloquies, suggesting pantomime more than high tragedy, was on the whole good, while the permanent set was well designed and well used apart from the court scenes, which became altogether too cramped and too confused — something exemplified particularly by the King's exit in the play scene, when he actually had to scramble his way out across the over-crowded stage. The producer was evidently aiming at making the play brisk and lively, and so there was much bustle and flurry, which not only had an overall effect of hindering and slowing up the production, but also obscured the play's general meaning and much of the poetry. Hamlet's melancholy, caused by his father's death, his mother's weakness, his uncle's wickedness and his own inability to act, was lost almost completely; moreover it was not suggested that Hamlet was delaying, or indeed, that there was any urgency for him to act at all.

Here, of course, the individual acting was responsible as much as anything. Had this been of a reasonably high standard the production would have been a fair one. But as it was, apart from the pleasing performance of Alec Clunes as Claudius, the acting was indifferent or bad. To begin with, Paul Scofield's

Hamlet was quite flat. He neither brought out Hamlet's spasms of violent passion and anger, nor his moments of profound and sorrowful passion. Instead, he maintained more or less the same dispassionate attitude throughout the whole play, while he threw away much of Shakespeare's most beautiful poetry by gabbling over many of his lines with a monotony that was quite astounding coming from such an accomplished actor, and whenever he did vary his voice he could only do so with a certain element of artificiality. Thus all in all Scofield's performance was rather disappointing; but the same cannot be said for that of Alec Clunes, who played Claudius. This was undoubtedly the best performance of all, its most commendable feature being that it was so well balanced. This Claudius was not all villain; instead, he was a clever blend of wickedness and weakness. We naturally disliked him, but it was impossible not to feel with him his fear and uncertainty. The scene where, praying at his bedside, he pours out all his anxiety and sorrow provided one of the most moving speeches of the evening. Diana Wynyard, as Gertrude, put up a competent performance, conveying both the sincerity and frailty of the widowed Queen. Michael David as Horatio was also fair, but perhaps a little too unsympathetic towards Hamlet and too much a brusque man of action rather than a scholarly companion to the philosophic prince. Richard Johnson provided a rather uncertain and uneven Laertes, making him juvenile and erratic, while Earnest Thesiger as Polonius was more like Justice Shallow than the Chancellor of Denmark. The Ghost could not, of course, help being so solid, but some attempt might have been made to conceal the fact. **There now remains Ophelia. And what an Ophelia!** I could not have imagined worse. Mary Ure's voice, to start with, was very harsh and penetrating, and instead of a sweet and gentle maiden we were presented with a female altogether unfeeling and obdurate. When she went mad, therefore, we did not see a distracted maiden, but a screeching witch. The beautiful little ditties, at once charming and tragic, were completely ruined, because they were for the most part not sung, but howled out with a throaty scream. As Clune's performance was well balanced so Mary Ure's was quite misjudged.

Thus, all in all, this was a disappointing *Hamlet*. The acting was really at fault; this was not due at all to any lack of talent but to the general misconception of the play and characters. Had it not been glorified by its trip to Moscow the production would have been taken off the stage long ago.

M.B.

THE HERO

"Be brave," said the whisper of courage
that sighed through the cedars above the Sports Pavilion.

But how could a boy be brave
on a wind-chilled rugby afternoon

Among such careless heroes ?
Easier far to keep back from the game
Suppressing the personal whisper of shame.

"Help me !" cried the shriek of agony
that tore from the wreckage-trapped lips of his mother.

But how could a son give help
With a bone-bared lacerated arm,
Among the steel-gouged tarmac ?
More natural far to faint with sickening pain,
If but himself to see a coward again.

"Be brave," said the whisper of courage
breathing softly strong from the corn-rippling No-Mans-Land.

And now must a man be brave
With a lung-choked comrade crawling back
Among the enemy fire.
And the quick, chaste flame of valour hissing fast
"Now ! Coward, Now ! or your Life is as your Past."

"Die now," sang the fragment of shell
that bit through his neck with contemptuous ease.

But how could a corpse still smile
on a grain-crimsoned Flanders day
Among such an obscene paste ?

"There lies a Fool, who never need have died,"
A look-out thought, and enviously cried.

A.J.F.

PRIESTS AND KINGS

" . . . her death was doubtful,
And but that great command o'ersways the order
She should in ground unsanctified been lodg'd
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers
Shards, flints and pebbles should be thrown on her:"

These few lines from the last act of Hamlet have a meaning and significance which, if pursued at length, bring fascinating speculation to the reader. They are spoken by the priest, who represents the church as opposed to the crown: for some the "great command" will bring to mind the long struggle between the two for superiority, a struggle which gave birth to the 'king by divine right' idea. When in early times the Pope drew clauses from the Bible to support his claim in material as well as religious spheres, the Holy Roman Emperor replied with references to his divine powers.

Later each king used such quotations as "by me (God) kings reign and princes decree justice", to justify their assuming superiority. Our own Richard II tried this, but failed; Henry VIII, however, managed to break with Rome, and the issue was still alive in Shakespeare's time, when James I tried to assert his superiority over his Parliaments.

Some, however, will not bother about comparatively recent issues, but prefer to seek satisfaction in discovering the small beginnings of kingship and priesthood. They will find the priest-king a tribal chief, whose impersonation of the male god brought rain in due season, and thus made the crop fruitful. But when winter came, and the crops did not grow, he was thought to have lost his procreative force, and was sacrificed by being hanged on a tree. The phallic significance of the tree is obvious; so is the sceptre he handed on to his successor, whose "birth" or election in the spring was celebrated round the maypole. The annual death soon became undesirable, especially to the king himself, and at first a son or an animal was killed instead. Finally he demonstrated a ritual death by cutting his arms in an annual festival, and his term of office ended when a successor managed to kill him. The Grove of Nemi is famous for its succession of killings. Soon the death and rebirth of a leader for his people became an important part of myth: Odin died on his spear. After Christianity had superseded the old cults, "Odin" went into hiding, became "Robin Hood", lived in the depth of the forest, and died, in a religious setting of cut arteries.

Christianity's fight against these older religions is fascinating. Primitive people were greatly influenced by the cults, and though in times of prosperity they might accept Christianity, they were apt to blame any subsequent change of fortunes on their conversion, and go back to the old way of thought. The Church's easy way out was to accept the older devotions but show that they were misdirected: early preachers, for example, found the Britons wearing a small Odin axe on a necklace. The conversion was easy. The axe, when turned upside down, became a cross, and the wearer a Christian. The old thus remained, but with a new significance. To this day we still have vestiges of cult ritual in the sceptre, the Christmas tree, still a fountain of gifts, and the hot-cross bun, which was originally a cake bearing Isis' symbol, the ankh. The devil, as we imagine him with horns and tail, still remains. Ceremonies featuring reindeer-horned men, originally to propitiate the spirits of reindeer killed for meat, were prominent in ritual. Christianity turned the awe felt for such ceremonies into new channels: the reindeer men became evil, and represented the devil.

Some will accuse me of wandering from the subject, but the inclusion of pre-historic beliefs is justified, if only because Shake-

speare's mention of "shards, flints and pebbles" refers to the survival of another ritual. In order to explain its presence, we should consider primitive man's fear of the wandering ghost. The form such a ghost might take, by the way, depended on the way the corpse was buried: the Romans burnt their dead, and left nothing of the body, so the ghost appeared as a weak, togaed Roman, a "shade". The Saxon ghost was a skeleton, because that was what they might find in one of their graves. When they wrapped the body in a shroud, the skeleton, assuming a shroud, became the popular sheeted spook. The Polynesian ghost looks like a decomposing corpse: that is because, in their shallow graves, the earth is often blown away, revealing the dead body. No wonder, then, that spirits everywhere were to be avoided, and in burial it became the custom to hamper the ghost. In England it was prevented from moving by being held down by a mound of earth. Sometimes a ziz-zag trail led from the mound, crooked because the ghost would find exit the more difficult. Bones were filled with metal, or broken, to stop them walking again, and anyone attending the funeral wore a disguise (later to become mourning clothes) to prevent the ghost from recognising him. But, far more important, stones were stamped down to stop the ghost from walking again.

When Christianity came upon this last ritual, it incorporated it, but reduced its application to such people whose ghosts might cause trouble, misfits such as suicides. This practice went on until 1823, when it was abolished by law. I wonder if Hamlet knew the real significance of Ophelia's burial when he said,

"Who is this they follow?
And with such maiméd rights? This doth betoken
The corse they follow did with desp'rate hand
Fordo it own life."

J.R.S.H.

THE BIG RED MONSTER

You are going down into the bowels of the earth to await your fate — if you can call it that. Down on the feeding ramp other victims are waiting for the big monster to devour them. Everything is still except the rush of wind. The monster is coming; this must be its breathing! Now far in the distance there is a growling which gets louder and louder every moment. All the people move back from the edge. Now its eyes are to be seen for the first time, for it is rounding the corner. The monster is glowing with anger and it starts to slow down. Very slowly it slows down, and now you can see people in its inside. Unlike ordinary monsters who have mouths in front, this one has many

mouths on its side. People are drawn in, and once inside, its mouths close, and with a weird assortment of noises it slowly moves off down into a tunnel at the end of the feeding ramp. So this goes on many times a day, many days a week, many weeks a year, for it is not done to keep the big red monster hungry.

G.W.C.I.

DON'T COUNT YOUR CHICKENS BEFORE THEY'RE HATCHED

"Darling, you're not doing those dreadful pools again are you?"

Her son was an open, candid fellow, who became rather tired of his mother's doting, but knowing that he was the only person she could pour her affections on, bore it like a man, as indeed he nearly was.

"Don't be silly mother, it only costs a shilling or two, and anyway it's good fun."

So saying, he marked a cross on the space provided asking whether one wished one's name advertised if one won the tremendous amount that xxxx Pools offered each week.

The episode just related took place on Thursday; it is now Saturday, and the son, John, is poised pencil in hand, paper before him, waiting for the six o'clock news.

It seems odd but the same thing happens in million of homes every week, but oddly enough the suspense and keenness never wavers.

"And now here are the Association Football results: League Division One: Tottenham Hotspur — four, Chelsea nil." "Mhmn," thought John, "lucky I didn't support Chelsea this week." "Manchester United — nil, Sunderland — one—" "Good," said John, marking a two in the column supplied.

The man droned on and John continued to place a cross, a two, or a one against the appropriate result. He was beginning to get a little excited now for so far he had not dropped a point. He began tapping the table with the pencil, drumming with his fingers, waiting for the next result that concerned him. The man was coming near it — Bristol and Coventry.

The door opened and his mother entered; the man had now reached the pair immediately above his own, and John was bent with his back towards her, oblivious of everything but the wireless.

The wireless began — "Bristol City . . ." Simultaneously John's mother began — "Darling you're not doing . . ."

"Shhh!" hissed John. The wireless had finished with the pair immediately concerning him. John was angry.

"Oh! mother, that really is too bad of you, I've missed it now and I was doing so well".

John's mother appeared hurt, crying, "If you enjoy hearing that trash more than listening to me, I am sure I have no objection." So saying she hurried out of the room.

A prickling silence fell for an instant over the room, but John quickly shook himself back to his immediate surroundings and listened intently to the last few results.

"Hmm," he thought, "twenty-two certainties and perhaps another one. I might be able to retire at twenty-one yet!"

In bed that night he lay on his back thinking what he would do with the money if he won.

"I'd buy an old house," he thought. "Re-decorate and furnish it throughout myself. In the sitting-room I'd have the wall by the fire-place covered with bookshelves and I'd browse around second-hand shops to find some good leather-bound classical books to fill them. I'd collect swords and pistols and have a suit of armour in the hall. I'd invest the rest and retire."

Then it occurred to him that perhaps the "hanging" result might change everything. Thinking of this he spent the rest of the night tossing and turning, and was out of bed and downstairs directly he heard the paper boy's feet on the path.

He tore the paper from the letter-box, ravelling the paper around trying to find the inside back page, which contained the football results.

He let out a whoop of joy.

"Mother, we're rich!" he yelled up the stairs.

His ardour was somewhat dampened, however, when his mother incredulously asked him whether he had remembered to post the letter.

John grew haggard with worry, and his boss at the office asked several times if he was in love. To which John replied with a sickly grin and a shake of the head.

He began asking questions as to when the man representing the pools came around to a winner's house. John learned that it was Thursday: he spent that day hopping around with anticipation, and even ordered a taxi in his eagerness to arrive home.

He opened the door and rushed into the sitting-room. His mother was sitting gazing into the fire.

"Well, mother?"

"I've got a confession to make, John; don't be angry with me. Sit down."

The expression on her face and her manner made him sober and he sat down.

"The man came to-day," she began.

"Did he!" said John, brightening up.

She ignored his remark and continued, "He asked whether John Tomlinson lived here, and I said, 'Yes, I'm his mother.' And the man said, On behalf of Weep Profit Pools I would like to present you with a cheque for twenty-five thousand pounds!"

"I was taken aback, John. 'Twenty-five thousand pounds!' I said, 'Why that's wonderful, just right for his twenty-first birthday.'"

John sat upright, giving his mother a withering and accusing look, and said, "Go on," and sank back into his chair.

"I realized what I had said, immediately," his mother finished, "but it was too late. He took the cheque and went away."

R.M.S.

LET'S ALL SCRAPE TOGETHER

One day in English lesson, our English master said, "We're starting a School Orchestra — strings, brass and woodwind —" (Pause. "You know what you're learning this term, x x x x?") "To keep my mouth shut, sir." (Pause). "Will anybody who would like to join the string section please put up his hand?" I, poor unsuspecting fool, put my hand up.

I had conjured up in my mind visions of myself as another Yehudi Menuhin, or even better, another Vic Oliver, but these illusions were quickly shattered when I put horse-tail to cat-gut, so to speak. All I got was a mixture of what sounded like a cat being strangled and a piece of cloth being ripped slowly. Then I remembered that the bow had no rosin on it, and furthermore was slack. I applied rosin, tightened the bow, and played. The result was like a soprano cat being strangled and a piece of cloth being ripped quickly.

I went to school on the Friday morning, case in hand, as the lessons began that night. On entering the school gates I was met with a barrage of cat-calls and rather weak quips, but I endured it, and, putting my violin on top of a cupboard, I started classes. The day passed uneventfully, except for the English master again reminding x x x x what he was learning that term. As our violin lesson wasn't to start until a quarter past five, Skinner and I went

for a walk. (Skinner was another foolish youth who had taken up the violin.) Arriving back from our brief walk, we collected our gear and went into violin class.

Our music teacher was a thin, bespectacled man with a fiendish grin. It appeared that he derived the greatest pleasure from snapping his pupils' E strings. He proceeded to impress us by talking about C sharps, E flats, quavers and crotchets, and then he played for a time on his violin, which was very old and, as he told us, very valuable. He then invited a certain boy out to hold it under his chin with a patent shoulder rest. The boy did this, and affected a very dramatic pose. It is my firm belief that the music teacher was doing this in the hope that the boy would drop it and break it, thus enabling him to buy a newer one with the insurance money, for his one was very old — about five hundred years old I should think. Then, after tuning my instrument and telling me to apply alternate layers of candle grease and chalk to the tuning pegs, he began the lesson.

First he explained the art of fingering on the "instrument". "Instrument of torture", I should prefer to call it, for it requires one to put one's fingers into such positions that, after one or two saws, they become full of aches and pains. Then he said: "If Rutlish can do it, I'm sure you can." This put new vigour into us, and at the end of the lesson he said we were very good for our first time.

I arrived home, practised a few scales, and then tiring of this after ten minutes, tried the "Trumpet Voluntary", — and was surprised to find it sounded like it. Unfortunately, my parents didn't agree, and I realised that I had a long way to go — even before becoming the first boy in the world to play the "Trumpet Voluntary" on the violin.

M.M.

SOLUTION TO CHESS PROBLEM

The key move is 1. P-Q4. There are two main variations. If 1 ... K-K3, then 2. K-Kt4; K-B3. 3. K-B4; K-K3. 4. K-Kt5; K-K2. 5. K-B5; K-Q3. 6. K-B6; K-Q2. 7. K-K5; K-B3. 8. K-K6, and the black king is forced off his queen's pawn. 8. ... K-B2. 9. KxP; K-Q2. 10. K-B5, (or the equally good K-K5). 10. ... K-B2. 11. P-Q5; K-Q2. 12. P-Q6; K-Q1. 13. K-B6; K-B1. 14. P-Q7ch; K-Q1. 15. K-Q6. Now we arrive at a position which would be stalemate but for the two pawns in the rook file. The black pawn is therefore compelled forwards by zugzwang 15 ... P-R3. 16. P-R4 !! (Not P-R3, for then the game is drawn. White must make Black give him the move). 16. ... P-R4, (forced). 17. K-B6, (or the equally good K-K6). 17. ... K-K2. 18. K-B7. Black any move. 19. P-Q8 (=Q) and wins.

The second variation is 1. ... K-B3. 2. K-B4; K-Kt4. 3. K-B5! (Not 3. K-K5 because of 3. ... K-B5 and White has no move left after 4. P-R4; P-R4 but to relinquish his queen's pawn to the tender mercies of the Black king, who callously swallows him up). 3. ... K-Kt5 (for the same reason). 4. K-K6 (threatening KxP) 4. ... K-B5 (forced) 5. K-B5; P-R3 (Black tries to waste a move). 6. P-R3; P-R4. 7. P-R4 (and Black fails). 7. ... K-Kt5. 8. KxP; KxP. 9. K-B4 (shutting in the Black king). 9. ... K-R6. 10. P-Q5; P-R5. 11. K-B3 (shutting in the Black king again). 11. ... K-R7. 12. P-Q6; P-R6. 13. K-B2; K-R8. 14. P-Q7; P-R7. White cannot get his Queen yet because it would be stalemate. Therefore he plays 15. K-Kt3!! (Not K-B3, which is a draw). 15. ... K-Kt8, (forced). 16. P-Q8 (=Q); P-R8 (=Q). 17. Q-Q1 mate.

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EDITORS.

P. A. Townsend, Esq. A. J. Fowles, J. R. S. Higham, C. C. Wright.