

Rendcomb College

Magazine

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SCHOOL NOTES.

SUMMER TERM, 1936.

With this number the School Magazine appears in a new guise. For some time past it had been felt that in format the Magazine, scarcely did justice either to itself or to the College. Appearances are not everything, but if we are to venture into print we might as well do so in a comely fashion. It is to be hoped that the change will meet with our readers' approval.

The functions of a school magazine should be two-fold. Primarily it exists as a chronicle of our corporate activities, and as such it is read not only by ourselves, but by Old Boys who wish to follow our fortunes. It acts as a link between the school militant here in Rendcomb, and what we hope we may not be amiss in terming the school triumphant in the outside world.

Up to the present the Magazine has done little more. But there is another aspect which we hope will grow increasingly important. We believe that it ought to provide an outlet for our creative faculties. We want original contributions—articles in prose and verse, short stories, if they come our way. Nor would we confine these to literary contributions The Art Room has its quota to add. So has the Laboratory. Should anyone come forward with an account of the activities of an axolotl, or the eccentricities of magnetism, we shall not give him the cold shoulder.

Our invitation is not confined to present members of the School. We would welcome contributions from Old Boys as well.

By some curious perversity there would appear to be more poets than essayists or novelists in our midst. Certainly the Editor finds it harder to solicit a good, straightforward piece of prose humorous or otherwise, than a passable poem. And he has his readers to think of, who are not more notoriously interested in Shakespeare or Day Lewis than in John Buchan or P. G. Wodehouse. And he wants humour as well as gravity. It will take

time before a tradition in this matter can be established, But we believe the talent exists. And if your first effort fails, do not throw up the pen or pencil. Every budding tyro has to experience the temporary ignominy of "The Editor regrets, etc." (We have done so ourselves). But be certain nothing will be rejected that comes up to scratch. We want the best, and so do you. And we believe we shall get it.

We have pleasure in recording the birth on the 27th May, of a daughter (Helen) to Mr. and Mrs. J. C. James, and even greater pleasure in seeing the smiles of that young lady herself.

Summer Term began on May 4th. We came back after a rather wet holiday, and, as the weather turned out, cancelled cricket matches were in the offing, and those who went swimming found themselves in cold water. When we broke up the Cotswolds were still as green as an Irish meadow. Indeed the Term carried with it something of the winter, and brought not a few of winter's compensations. It does not usually tall to our lot to record in this issue reports of lectures. But if the weather was unkind our visitors were not. They came to us avidly, and they talked.

With the opening of term we had the pleasure of welcoming a newcomer to Rendcomb. Herr Ackermann, like his predecessor, was an old Salem boy, and came to help us with our field athletics. Quite apart from that, he will be remembered for his sense of humour. Contacts such as these are of value, in that they keep us in touch with other countries and other viewpoints. His stay with us was comparatively short. We wish him all good luck now that he has returned to his native land.

The Old Boys' Cricket Match took place on Saturday, 30th May 1936. We were glad to welcome the following J. E. Allen, W. S. Boardman, C. E. Coles, R. O. J. Cooper, N. Dalton, P. W. Harding, C. W. Honeybone, H. H. Hook, J. Lambert, M. H. C. Martin, J. E. Miller, H. E. Miller, K. J. Morgan, C. H. Nawton, K. Noble, J. F. Roberts, C. Sidgwick, and W. F. Smallwood. A. T. Wilcox and H. Bunce were unable to come for the match, but visited us on Whit-Monday,

Commemoration Day fell on the 5th June. The weather was fine, and parties that had taken themselves to woods and pastures enjoyed a real summer's day in the open. Two days

later the Scientists returned with their treasure trove, looking less like Arctic explorers than has been their lot on other occasions.

A break like this is doubly welcome in a term with School Certificate and the Higher looming in the offing. But we have never allowed the menace of examinations to mar these celebrations that culminate on Founder's Day. Nor is there any reason why Rendcombians should.

We have not been permitted to forget "the dignity of labour." Public work went on and the level of the new tennis courts has risen steadily. In addition a fresh venture was undertaken, under the leadership of Mr. Neal. It is called a vivarium. For the benefit of those readers who may be at sea as to the meaning of the term; we hasten to add that it is an outdoor enclosure, a sanctuary wherein reptiles, frogs, insects and every living thing that creepeth upon the earth, can find a home. It is, in short, to the Lab. what Whipsnade is to the Zoo. The site chosen is in the paddock, under the wall of the lawn at the House. Artificial pools have been constructed; rockeries built, and wire netting erected to prevent the escape of hymenoptera and lepidoptera. But we are becoming scientific again. The vivarium is a thing to be seen, rather than to be described.

Examinations have come and gone, and it remains for us to chronicle the results. At the School Certificate Examination held in July, P. J. Dyke, M. H. R. Dowding, M. C. B. Russell, J. D. Sinclair and P. H. Tuft matriculated, while J. R. Billany, D. D. Haig and D. C. Richardson passed. All the candidates who entered for the Cambridge Higher Certificate passed. We congratulate G. M. Wilson on obtaining distinctions in English and History, and W. Y. Willetts on a distinction in Biology. A. E. A. Brain and J. R. Thornhill both passed, taking Physics and Mathematics, and History and English as their main subjects respectively, Miss Brimlow left at the end of term. Although she had only been with us for a year she had made many friends, and we wish her every success in her future work.

The following boys left at the end of term: M. M. Wilson, N. Slade, J. R. Thornhill, J. F. Roper, R. M. Ingleton, E. R. Cooper, P. J. Dyke, M. H. R. Dowding, J. H. Harris, T. W. Kitchen, H. H. Selby, J. W. B. Whall and R. G. Tyldesley. To them we extend our "valette." H. W. T. Bates joined the School during the Term.

FOUNDER'S DAY.

(By courtesy of the Wills and Gloucester Standard)

The annual celebration of Founder's Day was held on Saturday, 4th July, 1936.

Canon H. Sewell, LL.D, Chairman of the Governing Body, who presided, welcomed the company, and the President of Magdalen College. In Gloucestershire, he said, there had been in past ages a few men and women who had great power of vision. They had been few, but they had done great work. He would give them one instance.

On the Cotswold Hills, at Northleach, Hugh Westwood made a fortune out of wool, and he looked round wondering what he could do for other people, as he had been able to prosper himself. He realised the fact that real 'knowledge was the source of power. What did he do? Out of his own money he founded a wonderful school at Northleach which was to be free for the son of the squire, the son of the farmer and the son of the workman. It was a great vision.

Their Founder likewise had a great vision, He saw that in the country villages there was any amount of brains which ought to be cultivated, and cultivated for the good of the country. He saw that if those brains could be brought together and live what he, called a community life, there would be a great commonwealth of interest and it would give them a chance in life. He would not hesitate to say that he thought their founder, Mr Noel Wills, would not have had any conception of that sort if he had not been a member of Magdalen College. He felt that intensely. "One thing I want to say to the boys of the foundation of this School," added Canon Sewell, "is that I hope they will always remember the name of their Founder, and what he has done for them. (Applause). It is so very easy to forget. It is so very easy to take everything you have got for granted, but where should we have been if it had not been for those who went before us?"

"To the boys of this School I say 'Make use of this wonderful opportunity your Founder has given you'. You have got to have a stiff back through life. You want a stiff backbone. It is no good just wishing and dreaming. You have got to plough a narrow furrow, and keep straight on at it. If you do that, you will be repaying the work your Founder did for you, and I am sure that would give him infinite delight and pleasure. It was not for himself that he did this, it was for you, and may we never forget his memory."

Canon Sewell added that year by year Mrs. Wills did much for their institution and how she helped and fostered it few knew better than he did. Thanks were also due to Lord Dulverton for what he had done to help and foster the work of the School. He hoped God would bless these people, and bless the boys, and give them success in the future. (Applause).

The Headmaster, Mr, D. W. Lee-Browne, having extended a welcome to the guests, referred appreciatively to the presence of the Chairman, who, he said, would enter upon his 90th year in about eight week's time.

Proceeding with his review of the past year's work, he said the health of the College had been good. Two cases of mumps appeared early in the Michaelmas term, but it stopped at that. For the rest they had hardly a boy out of school during the year.

The winter months brought them the best football and hockey teams they had had for some time, and consequent success against teams from schools markedly larger than themselves. They had continued steadily with the system of physical training and athletics he outlined last year. It had proved itself, and they had adopted it permanently.

It had been a good year for academic work. The lower forms were promising. Form III had become welded into a thoroughly sound unit; Form V. had just taken the School Certificate. Form Va. took the Certificate in December last, and every one passed. There were no candidates for the Higher School Certificate.

Alastair Wilson was ending a fine career at Rendcomb by winning an open scholarship to Oxford University, having been awarded a Demyship in Natural Science at Magdalen College. It was therefore a particular pleasure to welcome the distinguished President of his future college as their guest of honour that day. Incidentally, they had just heard that Wilson had passed his Oxford Preliminary Examination in Science. That would enable him to go straight forward with his medical studies. He continued to be fortunate in his staff, and he was grateful for all they did, both in and out of school.

The number of boys in the School had been steadily increasing during the last three years, and at the moment they were only one less than the maximum complement. For next term there were more applications for entry than he could deal with. That was a sound position, but it meant increasing responsibility for Miss Simmons and the domestic and outside staffs, for whose loyalty and consistent work he was grateful.

OLD BOYS.

They had had three fine gatherings of Old Boys, and dinners had been held in London and Bristol.

Perhaps the most interesting Old Rendcombian event had been Dick Field's success in having two pictures accepted by the Royal Academy. He had not taken his final examination when his pictures were hung - one "on the line," and the other in a good position. He had since taken his diploma, A.R.C.A.

D. Dakin had been appointed to the staff of Birkbeck College, after a successful career as a master at Haberdashers' Hampstead School.

C. G. V. Taylor obtained a 2nd Class in the Honours School of History at Oxford; M. H. C. Martin a 2nd Class in Part I. of the Modern Languages Tripos at Cambridge; D. C. Vaughan was placed first in the first year Engineering Examination at Loughborough College.

Edward Webster, Robert Hutton, Bernard Brooks and Mark Weaver were, all doing well in the Air Force.

BOYS LEAVING.

Ten or eleven boys were leaving at the end of the term. P. Dyke, and T. W. Kitchen were going into business; A. C. Magor was thinking of becoming an optician; E. R. Cooper and I. W. Whall had just taken the Air Force entrance examination; Selby had obtained a post in the Post Office Engineering Dept.

Five Prefects were also leaving - Alastair Wilson, Norman Slade, Raymond Thornhill and John Roper this term, and Arnold Brain at Christmas. He could not remember a group of boys leaving at the same time who had done more for the place, and who would leave gaps in so many places. Wilson was going to Oxford to read Medicine; Slade to Bristol, also to become a doctor; Roper to London University to do electrical engineering; Thornhill to Ceylon to join his father; and Brain to take up articles with a firm of chartered quantity surveyors.

The Art Room was in a flourishing state. The Laboratories were seldom empty, and a serious start had been made on a survey of the fauna and flora of the district. The workshop had been used actively throughout the year, and an entirely new departure had been made in boat building. The standard of attainment in Acting remained a high one. Public Works with pick and shovel had been somewhat in abeyance owing to the weather, but the levelling of the new tennis courts went on slowly.

The General Meeting of the boys had been through a year of steadily increasing activity. The General Meeting, through its various elected committees, controlled the games, and the purchase, of the whole of the material for games, the boys' shop, the bank, repair to ground floor furniture, the library, entertainments and a number of other departments. He had recently been approached with a view to more time being set aside for that work, and it had been a pleasure to arrange it.

Provided boys were discouraged from doing too many, those activities were of great importance. They were worth while because they were not only developmental, but because they could produce deep satisfaction and quiet; and in a world where so many forms of employment were monotonous, and leisure was likely to increase, they assumed an added value. At their best, they were in the true sense re-creative for work. The more his staff and he saw of class-room teaching and the dangers to true knowledge of the School Certificate, the more they were, convinced of the importance of work done by the boys alone. To give boys more time to work on their own they were trying out a new timetable which would create a long free afternoon on Monday and release part of Friday. That time might be used by boys in practically any way they liked, so long as their activity was worthwhile.

They were trying to build up a tradition of real work as the centre of the life of the school, work having recreation as its complement, and worthwhile because of the deep-down satisfaction it brought. That was the main reason why they had no marks at Rendcomb, except at examinations. It was useful to have an annual assessment of relative positions, but for the rest of the year they were definitely not interested in who was top or bottom. They were only concerned with whether or not a boy was making his own best effort, for it was the work of the individual which mattered most to the community.

The President of Magdalen, Professor George Stuart Gordon, M.A., Hon. LL.D., said their former head master, Mr. Simpson - possibly the present headmaster agreed with him - had no very high opinion of speech days as such, but disliked formality.

He remembered the first time he wrote to one of his boys that he had been invited to speak at his school, that he received the news with complete incredulity. When it dawned upon him that he was serious his incredulity changed to horror, and when he was adamant and said he was going to accept the invitation, his son then attempted to lay down the condition that he should at any rate in good time write out his speech and forward it, and he would revise it.

It appeared there were things which, however well intentioned, simply from not knowing things, would make his life intolerable, at any rate for the time. There were things of that sort into which, from sheer ignorance, he might blunder, and they were the things which apparently he would immediately recognise and cut out. It all passed off very much more painlessly than he expected, though it was a lesson to himself in the types of blunders that a mere trusting parent might commit at the expense of the young.

He knew very well that if a vote were taken at almost any school as to which was the best of all the speeches on an occasion such as that, the vote would go to the shortest. There was a school with which he was acquainted at which one of the local farmers was asked to speak. It was a sporting country with much livestock in the fields, and the boys of the school were allowed to wander freely. His speech consisted of only one sentence, for he had only one thing to say to the lads: "Shut Gates."

There never had been a speech received with so grateful affection. It complied with all the demands of oratory. He expressed exactly his meaning on a subject of universal interest to them at once, and when he had expressed his meaning he sat down. He could not quite comply with that provided measurement, but he would do his best not to be tedious.

He had listened, as they all did, with deepest appreciation to the moving speech of their Chairman when he spoke about Mr. Noel Wills, the founder of Rendcomb. He could not name him without recalling many emotions of their association at Oxford, days which now seemed so far off, before the war. In what was no doubt a more perfect time and which they now tended to regard as a golden age, Noel Wills was his friend and even his pupil at Magdalen. It was impossible not to love his nature, and it was impossible for Noel Wills if affection and understanding were offered to him, not to return them. The whole College appreciated and loved his instinctive grace and courtesy and kindness and unostentatious goodness. They had never known a man so inclined to draw out from others more goodness and ability than they usually possessed. Always at that time a little shy and diffident about his own powers, and extravagant almost in his belief in his friends and their capacity to be great, he was a good scholar and lover of letters and art. He had read widely, but having done so it was instinctive with him to pass on from that to what they would understand in that school, a much higher stage of spirit, from acquisition to creation. Having read poetry, he thought instinctively of the writing of new

poems by himself and his friends. Having enjoyed painting, he wished to know about painting and to encourage any friend or acquaintance who seemed to possess that talent and generally in the greatest of all the arts, the making of beautiful things.

He saw, in what he knew already of that school, traces of Noel Wills' mind of those years of 1910, and so on. In his love of country life and beautiful natural surroundings; in his instinctive distaste for the, meaner gains of emulation, which was marked in that school by the absence of the commoner objects of ambition, such as marks and prizes; in his outline, in which he announced in that early day that the opportunities he had of learning, both in life and letters, should be placed at the disposal of those unable to buy them for themselves; above all, perhaps in the development of the whole man, not only in brains but in hand and eye.

That school had been, he thought, not only for Gloucestershire, a most happy foundation, but he ventured to believe, for English education as a whole. The experiments they had carried out there, some, more successfully than others, had done and were doing a great thing for education generally.

He wished he could think that his time at Magdalen had contributed substantially to Noel Will's vision, He thought at any rate he could say that he was happy there, that he lived there in as beautiful surroundings as could be found in the world, and even if he and others there did not actively help him in his ideals, they did nothing that could possibly discourage him.

The connection of Noel Wills' family with Magdalen was not casual. They valued associations with his own family, and he could think of nothing happier than that his eldest son should now be a member of his father's old College, and his nephew as well. At present there were four together, or almost together, and while some of them were still at that College they would have the first Rendcomb Demy, a member of Magdalen, along with the eldest son of the founder.

There were a great many parents present, and that was, perhaps, his most important qualification. He was not a learned educationalist. It was the most important qualification he had, because he shared it with so many in the audience. He could at any rate make the boast that, never since he had sent his own boys to school had he attempted to interfere with their school-masters, feeling always so grateful that that most difficult and subtle of all tasks should have been taken out of his hands. He

had never, he believed, at any time, made a schoolmaster's job more difficult than it was. He hoped a good many of them, perhaps all, could say the same.

There was an eminent head master of Harrow, Dr, Vaughan, wisest of men, 'most amiable and desirable of head masters, who was credited with this saying at the end of a long career as a schoolmaster, that he found the boys always fair, the masters sometimes, the parents never. He hoped he was painting a state of things with which Mr. Lee-Browne had no acquaintance.

He was glad that they gave science so high a place in that school, because the humanities, as they knew them, were in no danger from science at the present day. During his youth and just after the war there was a somewhat unseemly wrangle of all the school subjects to have more than their former share in the programme of the school. He hoped they had now reached for some time a reasonable equilibrium. But reforms were very slow.

He once sat opposite an admiral at a lunch in Oxford and watched him do something which he took to be allegorical of all British reforms. He watched him pick his grapes and one by one he most carefully washed them, and he thought for an old salt that was rather a foppish operation. He watched him, wash and eat them one after another, but with what satisfaction did he see him, as they left the table, reach out his hand and drink all the water.

He hoped he was not being cynical when he suggested that story had some point for all of them in this country. He would confess to them that more and more every day he found himself to be an extraordinarily ill-educated man, if he would so describe anyone who had been in his unfortunate position of being unable to give any intelligible account of the constitution and laws of the natural world, or to apply his hand to any mechanical operation whatever. He was never taught even the elements of any natural science, and he was the sort of "man who would never be trusted to make a soap-box or mend a fuse". He knew the wrath of God was not a reasonable definition of thunder, but he could give no better reason. He was one, heavily represented at Oxford, who, if the sun rose tomorrow in the west, would notice nothing in particular.

If he might illustrate the strange helplessness of that generally, there was a celebrated Dean of Carlisle who, cycling near Oxford, was so unhappy as to puncture a tyre. He got off, and was seen by his companion to be pumping up the other tyre. His friend asked him why he was doing that, and it appeared the action was deliberate, for he said: "Don't they communicate?"

Another story, the story of the bishop and the thunderstorm, reflected just the incapacity, which he was ashamed to say he also had, of being able to handle or able to recognise any scientific fitness whatever. The Bishop slept one night on a ship during a thunderstorm. When asked next morning how he slept, the Bishop said "Very well." Then, "Something kept knocking at the side of the ship. I looked out of my porthole and found a wire with a lump of metal at the end. So I brought it in and slept with it under my pillow." Need he say the obscure "mechanical object" with which the Bishop thus came to terms was the lightning conductor?

That was not the sort of school where he need say anything about the proper use of leisure. He had never heard better principles, and he believed they were not only principles, but they were applied in that school, for the freedom of the boy in his own pursuits. He thought nowhere in the schools of this country more than in the department of a boy's life had greater improvement been made, and nowhere than in that school had it been more sensibly applied. There could never be a better test, not only of the school-boy, but of the undergraduate, and indeed of all grown-up people, than how they used their leisure. A boy must at some age find himself. No one else, however understanding, could possibly do it for him. He must find himself, and it was never, he thought, or hardly ever, in the class-room that he would do it. The class-room was quite, essential, for there were things to be learned there which could be learned nowhere else and in no other way. It was essential, just as hard work was essential, because they all of them went to pieces without it. His youngest boy once complained to him that he was being overworked at school. He said if he was worked so hard his brain would go squash. No such catastrophe in fact happened, but it was in our spare moments that we grew up. It had been put in a cryptic sentence - not cynical, he thought - "Don't let your school work interfere with your education."

While he had sinned against the law and the prophets in that matter very considerably, he was not going to talk about success in life. That was a matter not only doubtful but dubious. He thought nothing interested him more than the account of their school in that matter of practical success than the account of their general meeting, and he would dearly like, unseen, to see one, and hear one of those in progress. He noticed that among the other preparations for life which the general meeting provided was the quite successful and practical

use of money. It was a good thing to have money handled familiarly and in a businesslike way by boys at their early ages, so that it should cease to be too important a thing to them, too menacing a thing, and to hold out too many promises. It was ridiculous to advise boys leaving school to despise money. None of them, as the world was conducted, could scorn it. The founder of that school never for one moment of life placed too high a value on money, but he saw how it could be used to do good.

He would like to give them this very British outlook on matters of money and monetary success. It was from a work they all knew, but did not always read carefully enough. It was in one of those immortal chapters which described Robinson Crusoe's visits to the rock. He found on one of those visits a heap of coins.

"I smiled to myself at the sight of this money. 'O dung!' said I aloud, what art thou good for? Thou art not worth to me, no, not the taking off the ground; one of those knives is worth all this heap. I have no manner of use for thee; even remain where thou art, and go to the bottom as a creature whose life is not worth saving. "However, upon second thoughts, I took it away."

That was his last word. Having had first thoughts, at any rate on second thoughts, they should take it away, if it was there. Lord Dulverton, proposing a vote of thanks to Professor Gordon, said he was sure they would not like the President of Magdalen to go without his knowing how deeply they appreciated his kindness in coming there, and his most interesting and inspiring speech. He did not know whether Professor Gordon realised it, but he was their guest of honour that afternoon. The Headmaster, in his remarks, said how delighted he was to see the parents, relations, and friends of the boys at the School, and he would like to associate himself with those remarks. Professor Gordon, however, was the honoured individual. In the course of the years since the School was founded it had welcomed and honoured a number of eminent and distinguished men. He was going to suggest that no man could be welcomed at Rendcomb College with more widely opened arms than Professor Gordon. The Chairman and Professor Gordon had both made reference to Noel Wills' associations with Magdalen College. He would take that a step further. It was his belief that if there had been no Magdalen, Oxford, there would have been no Rendcomb.

Their guest of honour had also referred to the fact that he and their Founder were friends. He could also take that a step further. His brother held Professor Gordon in the very highest esteem and affection.

He would like to say how pleased he was personally to hear of Wilson's success. The School had not been without its successes, all of which would have given their Founder much pleasure, but he did not know of anything that would have given Noel Wills such delight as the knowledge that a boy from Rendcomb was going to have the privilege of three years at his old College.

The vote of thanks was seconded by Sir Russell J. Kerr, and carried with acclamation.

Professor Gordon suitably replied.

After the speeches the company saw the boys at field athletics, and were afterwards entertained to tea inside the College.

Later the School Play was presented in the Woodland Theatre.

Before and after the play visitors were able to see an exhibition of aquaria, experiments and other scientific work in the laboratories.

“THE PRINCESS AND THE WOODCUTTER.”

We are fortunate in having one of the most beautiful open-air theatres it would be possible to imagine. One is tempted to think that almost any play performed in such a setting could not fail to be effective. That must be the impression left among many in our audiences, but the truth is the converse. It is very hard to get plays of the right type and the suitable length for an open-air production, A. A. Milne's "The Princess and the Woodcutter" was a good choice. It is essentially an out-of-doors piece. It makes its appeal by the unfolding of a simple story, and the use of picturesque costume. The plot is an old one, a Princess who rejects her pompous suitors and bestows her hand upon simple honesty in the shape of a handsome young woodcutter. By a ruse the suitors are betrayed into exhibiting their base natures before the Queen in disguise. And the play ends - as such dramas should - with true love triumphant and "a marriage has been arranged."

D. G. Morison cut a fine figure as the woodman; P. S. Jackson was a lissom and sly Princess, while R. M. Ingleton and W. J. Harris as King and Queen respectively, both had parts that called for bravado and noise. The three rejected suitors were played by E. R. S. Gillham, E. R. Cooper, and P. H. Tuft. Each was admirably contemptible in his own peculiar way. The rest of the cast was composed of pages and attendants, played by the following: P. L. Field, P. I. Dyke, R. L. Short, M. C. B. Russell, D. F. Gallop, A. E. Godsell, G. G. Constable, J. F. Spencer, M. H. F. Fischer, R. Boyland and J. R. Luton.

A SOWER WENT FORTH.

Sign-post, which way shall I go?
Go, dear heart, down the long road,
Down the dusty long white road,
Walk with Christ down the ancient Cotswold road.

And I plucked the green corn there,
By the lean, level way-side there,
Over a stunted yellow limestone wall;
In the lush grass, where phosphorescent
Nebulous creatures swam low in the cool light
(Rendered dim so by the action of plant chloroplastids),
And deep, green corn-tips caressed my cooling thighs,
Comforting, by the hot Cotswold way-side.

“These are they which fell by the way-side.”

‘Bless Thine inheritance’, O Lord, thy Cotswold garden,
Bless the long, gold slant of the sun
On the brown bulge of plough-land:
Bless the melancholy scream that follows the plough:
And bless the cracked chaff, if you please it so,
Curled, cracked in the cart track, burnt, brown chaff;
And shine forth kindly on my head, O Lord God,
And remember not my sins, nor take them to heart.

W. Y. W. (Form VII.)

LECTURES.

Perhaps we should scarcely use this formal expression for the informal (and therefore all the, more intimate) talks that we enjoyed this term. The speakers were our guests, coming of their own free will, and we would like to thank them for what they brought us.

On Sunday, 10th May, Herr H. A. Nathan spoke in the library on English and German concepts of sport. Much that he had to say was highly contentious. Like so many semi-expatriate Germans, he possibly sees the land of his temporary sojourn through rose-coloured spectacles. At any rate we will be modest enough to think so, though doubtless we felt flattered when he suggested that the Englishman's idea of sport was the better of the two. It was, he contended, the more spontaneous. Athleticism in Germany has been vitiated by the pressure of patriotic propaganda. The Englishman is the real enthusiast. The German is too deadly in earnest. The phenomenon of the "tennis face" has appeared on a large scale, and the smile has gone.

"Art for art's sake" may be an exploded doctrine, but there is no doubt that "Sport for sport's sake" is nearer to the mark than "Sport for superiority's sake." Athletics were made for man and not for the militarists. That is where the English athlete is more fortunate. To him "the game's the thing," and big-game shooting is left to others.

Herr Nathan's talk was the exposition of two contrasted psychologies. It was supplemented by a collection of vivid photographs, and the discussion that followed showed he had given us much to think about.

On Thursday, 9th July, Mr. Cecil Day Lewis paid us a visit, and gave a reading from his own poems to the upper forms. He began with that arresting account of the flight to Australia, taken from "A Time to Dance," and followed it with poems that reflect his Left Wing sympathies, "Johnny Head in Air," and the choruses from "Noah." It is a rare privilege to hear a really important poet reading his own verse, and to listen to a craftsman very modestly explaining the problems of his art. We are convinced that no approach to poetry that ignores the contemporary can be vital. It is not a question of whether present-day poetry excels or falls short of what has gone before. That is a matter the future will decide. But what is near us in time is

immediately and immensely exciting. And once the excitement is communicated it will set the past for us in a new perspective. It will bring it to life. That is the only way we can make it our own. Cecil Day Lewis will have helped not a few of us to that end. And the knowledge that he has done so will be the best thanks we can give him.

Dr. Brian Matthews is more than a distinguished physiologist. He is a born explorer who loves doing difficult things for the sake of doing them. He visited (or rather camped at) Rendcomb on the second week-end in July, and left us indebted to him for a fine talk about his experiences in places as remote as Bolivia and Lapland.

He went to the Andes to find out what it is like to live at high altitudes. And he took his camera with him. He showed us films of the journey up from the coast into the volcanic table lands. The last mining camps with their rail-heads were left behind, and we, saw the expedition going about its business on the summits of snow.

He is not a professional showman. He used his cine-camera in the way any intelligent amateur would. But the impression left behind by his plain, straightforward photography and his directness of speech, was more vital and lasting than that produced by the purveyors of the conventional travelogue. We have forgotten why he went to Lapland. Probably because it was so difficult to get to, and he had never been there before. It is just the sort of busman's holiday that would appeal to him. We shall be glad if he can fit Rendcomb in again in one of his excursions.

CHAMBER MUSIC.

It is rarely in these days of gramophone and radio music that we are permitted to enjoy a recital of Chamber music such as we heard on Sunday, 5th July. What is probably the most satisfying form of music making - that of Chamber Music - has practically deceased, at any rate among amateurs. Except through the unsatisfactory medium of the concert hall, music-lovers are seldom able to get a first-hand knowledge of one of the most fruitful branches of music.

Mr. Shimmin brought Miss Grace Adams over from Malvern and gave us a delightful afternoon of Bach, Beethoven and Mozart. The Bach sonata in G major was very lovely; it gave us an insight into the purity and spontaneity of Bach's character.

Especially so when we reflect that it was for amateurs that he wrote, and that his music was played in the same atmosphere that was present on Sunday. We were a little less enthusiastic over Beethoven. He never really acclimatised himself to composing for two virtuosi simultaneously, and sometimes we can see how the quality of the music was sacrificed to create effect.

The Mozart sonata in A major was the “tour de force” of the afternoon. It was composed only four years before his death, and therefore should contain music more profound in character than is usually associated with Mozart. This we discovered in the Andante, as was natural, while the presto and allegro sparkled with an abundance of tunes.

Miss Grace Adams gave us a kind and generous performance on her violin, She produced great dexterity in the quick movements into which she threw herself with obvious enjoyment, and played the slow movements fully and restrainedly. In such recitals as these the violin naturally comes into prominence, while the piano is often allowed to fall into the background of a “sympathetic performance.” Mr. Shimmin maintained an expert balance between unlawful aggression and mere accompaniment. We always felt pleasantly conscious of the piano’s role, particularly in the Mozart, where Mr. Shimmin was ‘kept very busy almost without intermission. We were all, including the agnostics and atheists, very grateful to Miss Adams and Mr. Shimmin, and we hope very sincerely that they will be with us again in the near future.

CHOIR OUTING.

At 10 a.m. on Monday 20th July, twenty-five members of the Choir left the College, under the supervision of two masters. As the bus left, joyful shouts were raised; it was evident that they were looking forward to a good day. Passing through Cirencester and Cricklade, the party arrived within three miles of Swindon. Here permission was obtained from a farmer to use a nearby field, First of all a game of rounders was played. At mid-day a sandwich lunch was eaten, and at 1:30 the bus started for the Swindon Railway Works. The party had to split in two, in order that things might be seen and heard with greater ease. First the carriage works were viewed, a completed carriage was shown, then one in a stage before completion, and so on, until one came to the workshop, where the different parts were made up before they were assembled.

Later crossing the main London-Bristol line, the party duly arrived at the engine workshops. On the way to these the electricity generating plants were seen. Here again, interest never lowered; the making of the different parts seemed much more complicated. There seemed to be no new engines in the workshops, but only old engines that were either being reconditioned or scrapped. But time was getting short, and tea was served in the canteen on Swindon Station at five o'clock.

The homeward journey commenced soon after six, and College was reached after a speedy and pleasant run. It was definitely one of those occasions of which one could truthfully say, "A good time was had by all."

THE HUMAN AEROPLANE.

(With acknowledgments to Hilaire Belloc).

This is the tragic tale of Jane,
Now called the human aeroplane.
Read this, O children, lest Fate send
You as terrible an end.

When Jane was only three or four
She showed a fearsome passion for
Whatever flew on wings.
She stayed awake at night, while bats
(They still inhabit modern flats)
Plunged round her in weird rings.
But when a 'plane roared overhead
She'd lash and thump about in bed
Till you could hear the springs.

At five years old the things she knew
Were more than I could ever do.
She'd mastered all an expert learns:
The reason why the airscrew turns,
The way the joy-stick works.
And how a side and forwards flip
Can tilt the rudder at the tip --
She'd practised all these jerks.

In fact, when she was only five
She knew the way to loop and dive,
That if the engine seems to cough
You must have shut the petrol off.
She knew as much as humans can
About the tricks of Immelmann;
Moreover, she could do the whole
Manoeuvre of the barrel-roll ;
She was not interested in
A small thing like a rocket-spin,

But, naturally, when young girls think
Of nothing else, but steel and zinc,
And why the petrol-gauges sink,
They get into a state.
It leaves a mark upon the brain,
And so it was with poor, dear Jane;
She thought she was an aeroplane,
I shudder to relate.

She made herself two cardboard wings
And painted them with brilliant rings,
Red, white and blue, and in and out
The passages she buzzed about,
She threw herself upon the floor:
When asked what she had done it for,
"A nose-dive," she replied.
And once when she had almost split,
Her little sister threw a fit,
And very nearly died.

She got herself a pair of wheels
And tied them firmly to her heels;
Her under-carriage came to be
A thing of instability.

And thus our dear beloved Jane
Grew daily like an aeroplane.
Her body used to thunder when
She didn't mean it to, and then
Would suddenly stop work again.
(The silence brought relief),
Till one fine day we heard a shout,
And saw sweet Jane go taxi-ing out.
(T'was quite beyond belief).

Her ailerons were both dipped down,
But Jane soared up above the town.
The people standing far below,
Marked how her fuselage did show,
Then turned their eyes away.
And now she's just a tiny spot:
They looked once more, but Jane was not
Within the eye of day.

This simple, tale that I have told,
its simple moral does unfold,
As obvious as true.
Excess in anything incurs
As horrible an end as hers,
T'will do the same for you,
Air-minded, per'aps, you ought to be,
But not to such satiety,
Lest one day you should be as Jane,
And die a human aeroplane.

Nemo, Form VI.

BIOLOGICAL NOTES.

During the past year the aquarium has become well established, and since it was stocked last summer, little change has taken place in the number of inmates. The only loss incurred was the death of three pike. Several innovations were effected last term, including the installation of an efficient electric aerating system, and a thermostatically controlled tropical tank.

Among the interesting exhibits in the aquarium, the tropical fish (Guppies) are most fascinating. Their bright coloration and amusing antics, coupled with their prodigious powers of reproduction, make them a very valuable asset of the tanks. The axolotls, which always excite comment, have been blessed with three lots of young. Unfortunately the first two batches died from a fungoid disease soon after hatching. Mr. Neal however, has been able to rear the last lot with a great measure of success and there are now about fifteen healthy specimens.

At the beginning of this term a marine aquarium was set up in the stables. It has been stocked with specimens obtained in

South Wales and all are quite healthy, although it is probable that the starfish will not survive, owing to the exhaustion of their supply of mussels. An attempt has been made to arrange that the specimens shall live under natural conditions. To this end a tidal system has been fitted. The water rises and falls at intervals, thus reproducing conditions akin as far as possible to that of an actual rock-pool.

A new activity has been commenced by the erection of a vivarium in the paddock at Rendcomb House. It has only been finished recently, and thanks are due to Mr. Bill Smith, who built the wall, Mr. Neal, and a number of boys who assisted him in the construction of the breeding cage and pools. It is hoped next year to augment the present stock of toads, adders and grass-snakes by more exotic varieties, such as terrapins and lizards.

Rendcomb has proved to be very rich in rare species of both flora and fauna. Field has done a lot of work in cataloguing the flora of the districts. Among the rarer specimens that have been found are green hellebore, birds' nest and butterfly orchids.

A similar survey of the fauna of the district has progressed well, and Mr. Neal and his assistants have caught a number of valuable moths and butterflies. A large number of elephant hawk moths, both large and small, have been found.

From the above account it can be seen that it has been a very successful year.

CRICKET.

This season we were favoured with the worst of weather. This, coupled with a certain lack of enthusiasm in the Upper School, did not go to produce a good cricket season.

We must express our thanks to Mr. James and Mr. Neal for all the help and advice that they gave us, and hope that next season the School will be more responsive to their teaching.

At the beginning of the term one had hopes of a successful season. These seemed to be confirmed in two of our first three matches, but after that the standard of play deteriorated steadily as the date of examinations drew nearer.

The following are the results of the 1st XI, matches, with a few notes on each of them.

1st XI, v. OLD BOYS. 30th May.

Old Boys - 78 for 4 declared. College - 53 for 3.

Rain delayed the start so much that this degenerated into a 40-minute innings for each team. On that basis the Old Boys won. Harding quickly made 62 runs out of a total of 78, while for the College, Richardson played a good innings of 21 not out, against some uncomfortably fast bowling at times.

1st XI, v. MISERDEN C.C. Away. June 1st.

We lost our annual Whit-Monday match with Miserden by a large margin.

Miserden - 183 for 5 declared. College - 111.

All the bowlers, except Wilson G. were hit unmercifully, especially by one opponent, who scored no less than 144 not out, including no less than 13 sixes. The College started promisingly, having at one time 86 for 2, but after Willetts was unfortunately run out, when he had made 50, an unaccountable collapse set in. The only other scorer of note was Brain with 28.

1st XI. v. BURFORD G. S. June 18th. Home.

Burford - 59. College - 116 for 5.

This was our best match, and the team played well. There were several good bowling performances, among them being G. Wilson 1 for 0, Short 2 for 4, A. Wilson 2 for 6. The Burford score was passed with 8 wickets to spare. The top scores were again Willetts and Brain, with 34 and 21 respectively.

1st XI. v. SWINDON COLLEGE. June 20th. Away.

Swindon College - 85. College-32.

We dismissed Swindon quickly for 85, but we in our turn were even more quickly dismissed for a total of 32. Bowling : G, Wilson 3 for 9, Brain 3 for 14, A. Wilson 3 for 15. Batting : Ingleton 13.

1st XI. v. NORTH CERNEY. Home. June 25th.

North Cerney - 108 for 8. . College - 31.

This was an evening match, in which the last team to bat came off worst, The only performance of merit was Richardson's 13 against good bowling and bad light.

1st XI. v. Mr. JAMES' XI. Home. July 27th.

Mr. James' XI. - 102. College - 67

G. Wilson bowled particularly well to take 6 wickets for 20 runs. The best batting performance was that of Brain, who scored 35.

It might be of interest to record that the best batting average of the season was Brain with 19.4, and the best bowling was that of G. Wilson with 6.23.

The junior XI played three matches in all, of which they won one and lost the rest.

The match against Kingham Hill, which they won, was particularly exciting, as 18 runs were needed at the fall of the 9th wicket. Powell and Palmer obtained these in masterly fashion.

The score was:

Kingham Hill - 60. Junior XI. - 61.

The other matches against Oakley Hall were lost by 51 to 39, and 64 to 47. Though not so successful as some Junior teams, they were above the average.

In bowling no one stood out as being particularly brilliant, nevertheless Constable, Morris, Jackson, Godsell, formed quite a formidable array of bowlers. Stone, who could bowl very well at practice, put down astonishingly bad balls in some matches.

Godsell and Jackson stand out as the most successful batsmen, but that does not detract from the merit of the rest.

TENNIS.

At the beginning of the term tennis started with its usual amount of enthusiasm, but the amount of play was checked by bad weather conditions. At the outset the ground was soft, but later it became very hard.

The front court would have been in a very good condition but for an invasion of rabbits, while the two House courts were rather overgrown with moss. The new stop-netting around the courts proved very useful, and was very much appreciated.

Bad weather prevented any extensive practice for the tournaments against Wycliff College, so that the standard of play was not as high as it might otherwise have been.

R. H. Bettison played the singles match.

G. Wilson, D. Richardson, and R. Thornhill, W. Y. Willetts, played as the two double teams.

The form of the tournaments this year was different from that of other years. The singles match was played as the best of five sets, while the doubles played the best of three sets against both opposing pairs.

The School tournaments were played with much interest, but were held up by bad weather,

The results were:

In the Open Singles, Bettison beat J. H. R. Thornhill 7-5, 6-3, 8-6.

The Senior Doubles were won by A. Wilson and G. Wilson, who beat R. Thornhill and H. Selby, 6-3, 11-9.

The Junior Singles was won by A. Godsell, who beat D. Stone 6-0, 6-0, 6-0.

The Junior Doubles were won by A. Godsell and J. R. Luton, who beat A. Tenty and F. J. Willis, 6-1, 6-2.