

Rendcomb College Magazine

Vol. 8, No. 14.

February, 1949.

SCHOOL NOTES.

Autumn Term, 1948.

Term began on Tuesday, September 21st.

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The Harvest Festival was celebrated in Rendcomb Church on Sunday, October 3rd.

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Half-term was on the week-end starting November 5th. Boys were able to leave on the Friday at midday and return on the Monday evening.

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The Carol Service was held in the Church on Sunday, December 12th.

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The Christmas Party was held on Wednesday, December 15th.

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Term ended on Friday, December 17th.

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On October 12th the whole school went to Swindon to see Bertram Mills' Circus. Other outings included visits by smaller parties to a concert given by the Jacques String Orchestra in Cirencester Parish Church, various art exhibitions, and the film of the Olympic Games.

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Three parties of boys went potato-picking for Major Peter Birchall at the beginning of term.

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On Saturday, October 23rd, Mr. E. G. Neal gave a lecture on "Badgers."

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On Thursday, November 25th, there was a lecture-entertainment given by Mr. J. Forrest Whiteley.

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A good deal of new P. T. equipment has been acquired for the gym including a large box and several large agility mats.

We acknowledge with thanks the gift of a full-size Table Tennis table from Mr. and Mrs. A. Rose.

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On Monday, November 15th, between 12.10 and 12.40 p. m., the College Bell Ringers (Mr. W. Cooper, captain) rang a touch of Grandsire and fired the bells in honour of the birth of a son to Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh.

Immediately afterwards the ringers went to North Cerney, where the same procedure was carried out.

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We acknowledge with our warmest thanks a gift of books from Dr. L. J. Comrie in his capacity of Executor of the Will of the late Mr. B. F. Bawtree, of Sutton, Surrey. Some of these will be valuable in the Departments and others in the Library. Of perhaps particular interest are the first twelve volumes of the "Boy's Own Paper."

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We acknowledge with great pleasure the receipt of an advance copy of Mr. E. G. Neal's book on the Badger which has been published in the New Naturalist Series by Messrs. Collins.

Mr. Neal is now the acknowledged authority in this field, and it is pleasant to remember that the bulk of his work was done during his years at Rendcomb and with the help of members of the School.

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Our good wishes go with J. R. S. Powell who left at the end of the Autumn Term.

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We welcome J. A. Richards who entered the College at the beginning of the Spring Term, 1949.

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J. Gilchrist obtained the London General School Certificate at the December examination.

COLLEGE OFFICERS.

Spring Term, 1949.

Senior Prefect—P. W. Sumsion.

Duty Group Leaders—T. T. Walters, M. J. Morgan.

Other Prefects—C. Baillie-Lane.

Work Man—D. Henshaw.

Music Warden—P. D. Quick.

Librarians—R. T. Kendal, D. Henshaw, P. D. Quick, P. W. Dutton.

Manual Foremen—R. Gready, B. Plenderleith, J. R. Smith.

Picture Man—D. Henshaw.

Stagemen—T. T. Walters, P. G. Cockell, P. J. Ryman, B. Plenderleith,
A. J. Paish, C. D. Whittle.

Deck Chairs—J. A. Johnson.

Lamp Men—M. W. Brain, R. Gready.

MEETING OFFICERS.

Easter Term, 1949.

Chairman—C. B. Lane.

Secretary—J. Gilchrist.

Games Captain—C. B. Lane.

Field Secretary—L. V. Crawford.

Games Committee—P. W. Sumsion, E. Davis.

House Committee Treasurer—R. J. Kendal.

Furniture Committee—C. J. Brisley, B. Plenderleith, R. J. van den
Driessche.

Banker—K. A. Statham.

Apprentice Banker—P. W. Dutton.

Finance committee Treasurer—P. M. Gerrard.

Finance Committee—P. L. Waite, R. M. Sumsion.

Auditors—J. C. Waterton, P. J. Ryman.

Apprentice Auditors—M. D. Rayner, N. H. Walter.

Poundman—D. E. Barbour.

Games Committee Treasurer—J. H. Shield.

Senior Shopman—D. Henshaw.

Shopmen—J. W. J. Reed, D. G. Vaisey.
Entertainments Committee—J. H. Shield, M. W. Brain,
P. W. Dutton, K. A. Statham, M. D. Richards.
Council—T. T. Walters, M. J. Morgan, J. C. Waterton, C. B. Lane,
P. W. Sumsion, R. T. Kendal, D. Henshaw, T. H. Shield.
Selection Committee—T. T. Walters, M. J. Morgan, C. B. Lane,
P. W. Sumsion, D. Henshaw, R. W. Smith.
Record Committee—P. W. Sumsion, G. J. Chagrin, P. D. Quick,
M. W. Brain, J. Gilchrist.
Cycle Committee—R. J. van den Driessche, A. J. Paish, J. R. Smith.
Amplifier Technicians—B. Plenderleith, J. R. Smith.
Apprentice Amplifier Technician—R. W. Muchamore.
Paperman—D. C. de Peyer.
Breakages Man—M. G. Petter.
Almoner—J. A. Johnson.
Inspector of Nuisances—M. D. Rayner, N. H. Walter.
Indoor Games Warden—J. R. Gosden, R. O. G. Hayter.
Tennis Groundsman—J. Kitto.
Tennis Games Warden—R. W. Smith.
Cricket Groundsman—R. Gready.
Cricket Games Warden—P. L. Waite.
Cricket Secretary—E. Davis.
Hockey Games Wardens—B. Plenderleith, C. D. Whittle.
Hockey Secretary—J. G. Waterton.
Football Games Warden—D. G. Vaisey.
Football Secretary—R. Gready.
Magazine Committee—G. J. Chagrin, P. D. Quick, E. Davis.
Drying Room Committee—J. D. Painter, C. D. Whittle, P. L. Waite.
P. W. Man—M. E. Knight.

OLD BOYS' NEWS.

J. W. H. Neads is a Lieutenant, R. N. (A) on a Short Service Commission. He is hoping to receive a Permanent Commission in 1949. He is married and has a girl and a boy.

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M. H. Gleeson-White, in addition to being the Cambridge University Pathologist, is also a Fellow of Trinity Hall.

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A. W. F. Abbott, who is married and has a daughter, is working as an Engineer for the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company.

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J. R. C. Baillie is studying Photography.

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D. Dakin is the Registrar of Birkbeck College, University of London.

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N. Dalton is now back in civilian Dental practice after his time in the R. A. F.

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R. G. Daubeny, whose distinguished career was cut short by the new alignment in India, has joined the staff of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company.

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J. H. Dixon, now out of the Army, has returned to the Ford Motor Company, Dagenham, where he is concerned with the distribution of spares.

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P. F. Gurdon is at the Regent Street Polytechnic.

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N. McGregor Wood is up at Cambridge.

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W. F. Jones is working on the Administrative Staff of a firm of Builders in Bath.

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P. Alder and A. E. Shield are with the Thrissel Engineering Company, Bristol.

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T. G. Greenway is a Lieutenant in the Royal Army Pay Corps.

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We congratulate N. A. Perkins on being in the final of the Scottish Chess Championship.

H. H. Selby is married and still working with the Post Office Engineering Department. He has, however, applied to be trained as a schoolmaster. His address is St. Brelades, Saintbridge, Gloucester.

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C. C. Richardson is an articled pupil with the firm of Morgan Giles Ltd., Naval Architects, Teignmouth, Devon. We congratulate him on being in the West of England trials for the British Olympic Sailing Team.

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R. A. S. Primrose is hoping to build up a business building small boats at Dittisham.

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The London O. R. Dinner was held at the Cock, Fleet Street, on Saturday, October 16th. As usual, it was a happy gathering which came to an end all too soon. The level of the speeches was higher possibly than ever before. The following were present:

A. W. F. Abbott, J. F. Alder, J. R. C. Baillie, G. W. H. Bodman, A. P. Browning, S. J. Curry, D. Dakin, N. Dalton, R. G. Daubeny, J. H. Dixon, P. Field, P. G. Forrest, D. M. Grant, P. F. Gurdon, D. W. Lee-Browne, M. A. C. Levett, M. C. Maslin, J. E. Miller, C. H. C. Osborne, N. A. Perkins, H. Phillips, J. F. Roper, L. J. Russell, J. H. Simpson, C. G. V. Taylor, D. C. Terrett, D. V. Vaughan, N. McG. Wood.

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The West of England O. R. Dinner was this year held at the Midland and Royal Hotel, Gloucester, on Saturday, November 13th. It was an enjoyable gathering, and this year the meeting that followed ranked as the Annual General Meeting. D. Dakin, the President, was in the chair and J. Eyles acted as secretary. Officers were elected for 1948/9, and there was considerable discussion on the question of the War Memorial.

During the dinner J. Eyles proposed the Health of the College and the Headmaster replied. Mr. J. C. James proposed the health of the Society and D. Dakin replied.

The following were present: P. Alder, J. H. W. Bodman, R. F. Boyland, R. C. J. Brain, M. A. Bullen, R. F. Butler, D. Dakin, F. Dobbs, J. Eyles, J. B. Fell, R. E. Hayward, R. A. Hussell, L. H. Hyett, J. C. James, W. F. Jones, J. Lambert, D. W. Lee-Browne, A. C. Magor, H. H. Selby, A. E. Shield, J. W. Sumsion, A. R. Tenty, E. Webster, R. T. Wood.

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On Monday, November 22nd, the Headmaster was invited by the Cambridge Old Rendcombians to dine with them at the

Arts Theatre Restaurant. P. H. Tuft, J. F. Alder, M. A. C. Levett, A.W. Plenderleith, S. J. Curry, and N. McG. Wood were present. After dinner, which was a delightful and informal occasion, the company repaired to the Union.

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A. R. R. Tenty was married on January 1st, at Immanuel Church, Streatham Common, to Miss Mary A. White.

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We hear that Jeremy Menzies is doing his National Service in the R. A. F. and that Ken Hanney is in the Navy.

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D. J. Payne is in the Navy. G. H. Bye is in the R. A. F. C. W. Carus-Wilson and T. P. Denehy are in the Army.

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M. C. Harris is in Greece with the Royal Corps of Signals and J. M. Faulks is with the R. A. F. in Malta.

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D. F. Gallop is at Reading University, where he is reading for his Diploma in Education. He has played both hockey and cricket for the University.

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R. E. Hayward is now out of the R. A. F. and has taken a temporary post as Laboratory Assistant at Dean Close School before going to a University in October, 1949.

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We have recently had news of R. M. W. Campbell, who is at present in charge of Messrs. Seager Evans & Co., Ltd., Distillery in South America. During the war, on volunteering for service, he was put in the Pioneer Corps, but subsequently transferred to the Gloucestershire Regiment, in which he became a Captain, and spent 4 years training African troops in British Somaliland and Kenya. He finished his time with three months in occupied Germany. While in Africa he was attached to the King's African Rifles.

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The following Old Boys visited us during the term: J. W. H. Neads, C. C. Richardson, R. A. S. Primrose, H. H. Selby, D. Dakin, S. H. Groves, C. E. H. Tuck, G. H. Bye, D. J. Payne.

LECTURE.

We were all very pleased to welcome Mr. E. G. Neal back to Rendcomb on Saturday, October 23rd, and we wished that school work had not restricted him to only a day's stay.

He came to give us his lecture on "The Badger," on which subject he can well be considered an authority; it seemed peculiar to him to have an audience who knew so well the district of which he was speaking, so that there was no need for him to give a detailed description of its locality and surroundings. But although there are so many of us who are acquainted with Conigre Wood, and have often walked through it, it is but few, I think, who have paid any attention to the badger setts, or have even recognised them as such.

Badgers give away their presence in a wood by making bare patches on the trunks of trees where they have removed the bark with their teeth and claws as far up the trunk as they can reach, and it is possible to guess fairly accurately the badger's height from the height of these patches.

It is a fallacy that a badger will eat a lamb. Mr. Neal told us that the Taunton pest-control officer was rung up six or seven times in a season with complaints from farmers that badgers had eaten their lambs. Traps were set in one case, and an Alsatian dog was caught: a second time the culprit was caught "red-handed." It was the farmer's own sow.

Mr. Neal has made a graph of the times of appearance of the badger all through the year. In spring and summer he comes out at sunset, in autumn a little earlier, but in the winter he keeps to no fixed time.

Among many others we were shown slides of the badger as an embryo, a unique slide of five badgers, and one of a sett in winter, when there were 16 degrees of frost, and snow on the ground, showing paw marks all around the entrance and pieces of bedding left behind on top of the snow—proof positive that badgers do not hibernate. Mr. Neal also showed us a colour photograph of a badger, taken by himself from a distance of seven feet—the first ever to be taken.

When watching for badgers it is an advantage to know whether or not the sett has only one exit, as if there are more than one it is quite likely that several hours of watching will be rewarded only with wet feet. Another very important factor is that the wind must not be blowing from watcher to badger.

There is little badger-watching done now in the school, but let us hope that Mr. Neal's lecture has done something to revive interest in the pastime. There can be few schools so conveniently placed

for watching badgers and there is still much to be learned about the badger which can only be discovered by regular, patient observers.

P. W. D.

THE FIFTH FORM OF MUSIC.

On Thursday, November 25th, in the evening, Mr. J. Forrest Whiteley gave the school a lecture-entertainment on the five forms of music.

The first form, plucking of strings, was demonstrated by the singing of "I want to be happy," accompanied by the ukulele. This came as a great surprise to everyone and reminded them of the Music Hall.

Wind instruments were the next form. These were demonstrated by an assortment of bicycle pumps, whistles, mouth-organs, bagpipes and sirens. The lecturer was reasonably competent with all these instruments, especially with the mouth organ, on which he gave a performance of "Stardust" accompanied by the piano. The 1st XI football team backed this up with a commendable rendering of "Swanee River" on kazoos!

The next item was percussion, illustrated by the tambourine triangle, mouth harp, tuning fork, and clappers and bones. One member of the audience played the bones with success, whilst the others attempted to play the tambourine and mouth harp.

A novel instrument was used to give an example of the fourth form of music, friction. This was the Buddhists' Gong. It was like a small metal bowl standing on a cushion, and was played by gently rubbing a stick round the edge.

At last the Theremin was brought forth to illustrate the fifth form" of music. In appearance it was a box about two feet long by one foot broad, being about two feet high at the back and having a sloping front. This was mounted on a tubular steel frame. A short metal rod projected vertically from one corner and a metal loop from one side.

The main components of this apparatus are two radio frequency transmitters originally tuned to give identical sine waves. By moving the hand in relation to the vertical rod and varying capacity is introduced into one circuit. This slightly alters the frequency of this transmitter and the heterodyne note produced by the different frequencies is amplified and passed to a loudspeaker. The volume is controlled in a similar way using the other hand and the metal loop. A distorting amplifier is used to introduce harmonics into the radio frequency sine wave. In spite of this the tone produced was somewhat soulless and uninteresting.

The lecturer played several tunes on this instrument accompanied by the piano, and the programme was concluded by some community singing to the Theremin.

This all showed that the Theremin was an interesting electrical plaything, but one wondered why it was called the fifth form of music!

M. W. B.

BERTRAM MILLS CIRCUS.

Everything lively and bright, everything crazy and clever goes to make up a circus. And Bertram Mills has it all. Clowns were never funnier, high wire acts never more daring. Even before we enter, the atmosphere is "Circus." The Big Top, the lights, the attendants in their colourful costumes—all this before the show starts! Everything draws to a climax, the band plays, lit up by spot lights, and then—the show is on!

And now many clowns and acrobats come hand springing, cart-wheeling, somersaulting on, in a truly amazing manner. The various acts started and one got the impression that animals and people alike were in perfect physical condition. Horses were beautifully groomed and acrobats both gaily dressed and amazingly muscular. Between the acts, as attendants rolled or unrolled mats with incredible speed, clowns, especially two midget clowns having a boxing match, won showers of laughter. In one act a boy and girl, attractively dressed in black satin tights and white lace, performed on a tight wire about four feet from the ground, doing everything from crawling on their knees to cycling on a single wheel. One thing the boy did was to grasp the wire with his hands and feet and then turn a complete circle on the wire.

In the act "Louise and her canine friends," a happy little crowd of terriers barked and wagged their tails as they leaped through hoops, opened and shut gates, and even did an intricate bare-back riding act, seeming to understand every command. Coco's children, known as the Brickabats, bounced many feet into the air from an extra-bouncy trampoline, while Coco himself got very wet trying to carry a bucket of water up a ladder.

There were various horse riding acts including the world-famed Cumberlands. Togare, the lion-tamer, tried to make a set of very docile lions appear very fierce. And the poor elephants! Was there ever anything more unnatural than these enormous clumsy beasts balancing on two legs on a narrow wooden barrow? To see an elephant or a horse do a waltz I thought really revolting. The trapeze, high wire and balancing feats impressed me most, but the whole evening was filled with thrills and fun.

F. R. H.

MUSIC.

Apart from a Piano Recital by Marjorie Morrison and a Service of Seven Lessons and Carols at Christmas, our musical efforts have been confined to playing for our own amusement, and, we hope, not to the annoyance of others—though this has been difficult in the case of a budding cornet player who was forcibly ejected, in the early stages of his practices, from every conceivable nook and cranny wither he went in search of opportunity to work on his “embouchure.” We have a horn player and an oboist too; for repertoire we are forced to rely on hymn tunes and other improvisations, since the great masters did not have the present Rendcomb combination in mind when composing. Our great difficulty at the moment is finding a violin teacher. Mr. Lee-Browne and Mr. Tooze have written innumerable letters and made countless telephone calls, so far without success.

Miss Morrison (better known to us as Mrs. Thackray) played several of the items she had included in a recent London recital. Particularly interesting and enjoyable, was Fauré’s Theme and Variations, a work somewhat neglected in this country. Miss Morrison triumphed over the multifarious idiosyncrasies of the “Bechstein,” and we are very grateful for a delightful concert, particularly as at the time she was far from well.

The Carol Service was held on the last Sunday of term. The Choir sang “Ding Dong Merrily on High,” “King Jesus hath a Garden,” “God rest you Merry” and “In Dulci Jubilo.” There was the usual discussion about pronouncing the Latin of the last one. One young treble said to Mr. Tooze, “Sir, will you tell Mr. Thackray that these are your pronunciations?” All the unaccompanied carols were conducted, and very ably too, by Peter Sumsion. J. T.

ART.

During the past year boys have visited a number of art exhibitions which covered a wide range of contemporary art in England and abroad.

The first exhibition visited was that of Representative Twentieth Century English Painting held at the Cheltenham Art Gallery during the Cheltenham Music and Drama Festival in July, 1948. This consisted of about sixty paintings from the Contemporary Art Society and gave examples of the work of many well known English artists, in particular Henry Moore, Victor Parmore, Walter Sickert, Graham Sutherland and John Piper. This was without doubt the most popular of the five exhibitions visited.

A large party went to the Beeches, Cirencester, on September 27th, to see the School of Paris exhibition which included works by Picasso, Braque and other well-known modern French painters. Mention must be made of the guide-lecturer who gave invaluable help to the party and started, at least, to explain Picasso to those who only knew of him as the extreme in surrealism.

An exhibition at the Cirencester Arts Club attended by only a few boys showed work by John Piper, Graham Sutherland, Rowland Suddaby, John Nash and Pissarro. Two pictures which were appreciated greatly were Harold Gilman's "Old Lady," and Glyn Philpot's play.

In October the exhibition of the Cheltenham Group of Artists was opened and two boys attended the opening by Lord Methuen. Gwilym Jones's landscapes were much admired and works painted as a memorial to Richard Sharpley were also appreciated.

Finally, apart from certain obvious exceptions, the exhibition of Scottish Contemporary Art at the Cheltenham Gallery proved very colourful but tended towards the picturesque.

P. W. S.

PUPPET PLAY.

Muffin and Peewit made a welcome reappearance this term in a new play written by Mr. Molineaux called "Muffin's Half-Holiday."

Muffin and Peewit had a half-holiday, but the outlook was darkened by the impending visit of Muffin's aunt, whom he had never seen. Prepared for the worst, they were more than relieved to find that the lady was very different from what they had expected. Miss Paulette Bland, besides being young and pretty (by Muffin's standards), was actually attached to a travelling circus which had come to the town. Prospects for the afternoon brightened, only to be dulled again, however, by the inopportune arrival of Miss Matilda Pocket, an elderly relative of Muffin, whom Miss Bland had good reasons for wishing to avoid. A very awkward situation was finally saved by the entry of Miss Bland's pet lion who succeeded in driving the old lady away.

The play was admirably suited to both actors and audience and displayed a fine standard of fourth-form humour throughout. We thought we could detect a few topical allusions in the dialogue, though the Eton collars and master's gown show that the author could not possibly have had Rendcomb in mind. The dialogue came through very well but the manipulation was sometimes below standard.

CAST.

Peter Muffin—Actor, J. R. Smith; Speaker, J. R. Smith.
Ronald Peewit—Actor, D. G. Vaisey; Speaker, D. G. Vaisey.
Mr. Gregg—Actor, F. R. Herrmann; Speaker, F. R. Herrmann.
Miss Paulette Bland—Actor, R. J. Bird; Speaker, R. M. Sumsion.
Miss Matilda Pocket—Actor, R. W. Muchamore; Speaker, R. A. Powell.
The Lion—Actor, W. J. Prime; Speaker, W. J. Prime.

ENTERTAINMENTS—WINTER TERM, 1948.

Dancing was probably the most popular entertainment this term and it was held in the Music Room on most Saturday evenings. The senior and middle school attended more than the juniors, although there were one or two young enthusiasts from this term's dancing class. It was a pity decorations were not used until near the end of term, because they do contribute to the success of a dance.

A whist drive was held in the library a few weeks after the beginning of the term, and there were many entrants. By request we organised another on the last Saturday of term, but we ran a dance as well, which drew some people away from the main entertainment.

Another very popular game has been Football in the gymnasium. It was played either with a football bladder or tennis ball, but as the latter was rather difficult to see, and as it required more skill, it was not used so often.

For a few weeks the game of deck-quoits was introduced into the gymnasium by Mr. Austin, who organised several contests on a Sunday morning before church. This game is very strenuous as many people found out, and tall persons had a considerable advantage.

Release was popular on and off throughout the term, but unfortunately it quite seriously interferes with the game of billiards on account of the screams, and blood curdling yells of delight, or horror, and the rushing round of many excited boys. Sardines and ping-pong tournaments were held with poor attendance, but "Fire in the Library" was a regular feature on Friday nights.

The billiard table is still used by a large proportion of Forms IV, V and VI, and the craze is as popular as ever. Perhaps the rest all through the Summer Term accounts for this. Big School now has a table about half the size of the other, the organisation done by a committee of their own. The balls are rather like outside marbles.

Junior games have been very much enjoyed and fortunately they did not become stale. A Prize Fight and Scavenger Hunt also attracted many juniors on two Saturday evenings.

Those who practise the ancient art of bell-ringing have had a successful term, although those not participating probably do not all agree. The "A" group led by Mr. Cooper have managed to scrape the 120 changes with a great deal of noise and two new hands! The majority of another group have finished their hundred sets and will be able to ring with the clappers untied next term.

At the end of this term Mr. and Mrs. Rose gave us a full-size ping-pong table which has been placed in the gymnasium.

We would like to comment on the luck or skill of Chagrin and Harris, who have both won two prizes this term in entertainments.

To end the term there was, of course, the Christmas Party of which more will be said elsewhere.

THE CHRISTMAS PARTY.

Fancy dress was again decided upon for this year's party and ingenuity was taxed to the utmost. For several weeks beforehand at odd times in the day, boys were to be seen in varying states of undress trying on their costumes, running to the linen-room for expert assistance and even displaying their proficiency at needlework. The result was quite as fine a display of costumes as last year, with perhaps even more variety. Prizes for fancy dress were awarded to de Longh, who appeared as Mr. Pickwick, to Reed, to "Saucy Sue" (Beeby), and to Gay who was dressed up as a bottle.

Once again we must congratulate the Entertainments Committee and the kitchen staff on a full evening's varied entertainment which, as usual, passed all too quickly.

The play given was Bernard Gilbert's popular comedy "Eldorado." The small cast was well chosen and R. W. Smith and P. G. Cockell were particularly good as Farmer Watson and Mrs. Burrows. The other two parts were played by E. Davis and M. J. Miles. The play was followed by a short sketch in two scenes, the second of which was set in the Church during a bell-ringing practice. One of the ringers appeared to be having some difficulty in "setting" his bell and later had the misfortune to break a "stay"—with rather interesting results.

Note: Pages 15 and 16 "Football 1948" and "Football Matches" are missing due to being torn.