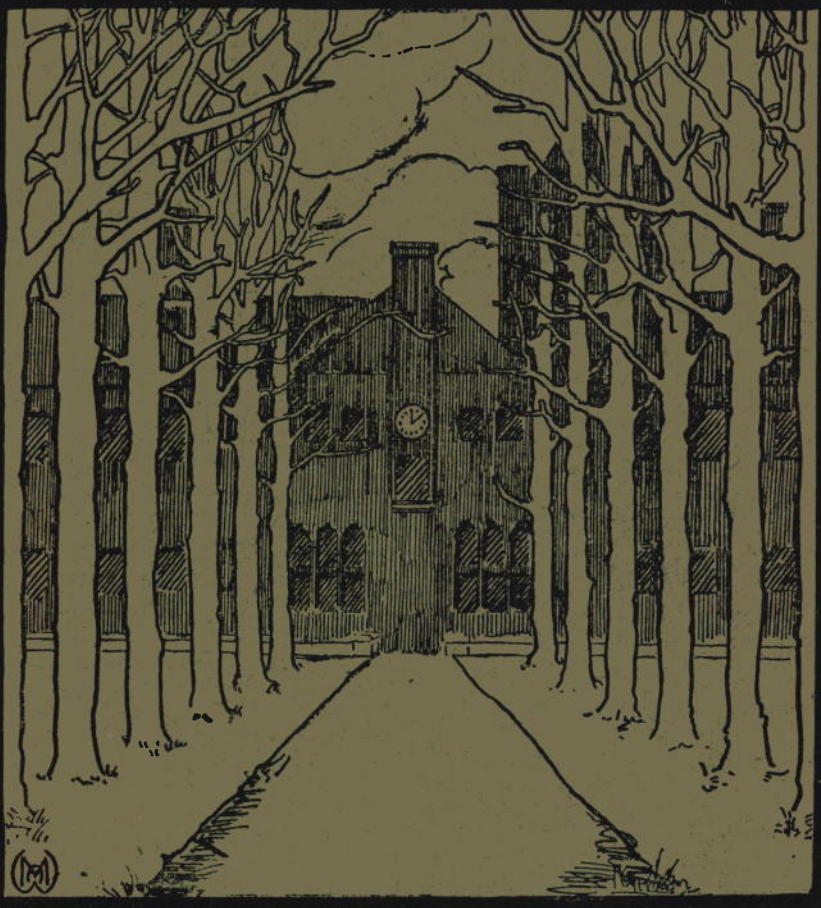
THE AVENUE



MARCH 1930

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THE SCHOOL FRONT.



The Magazine of the Friends' School, Saffron Walden.

VOL. XVIII. MARCH, 1930. No. 61

FOREWORD.

WHEN we returned to School this term we found little change in the personnel of the School, there being only seven new pupils. Miss Edith W. Rose was not able to return till later in the term on account of illness, and we were grateful for Miss Norrington's help as Housekeeper once more.

This term there has been an important change in the School food, a fresh dietary being introduced, by means of which a more varied menu is provided. In addition to this, " tuck " is not allowed and " town leave " is restricted, while by way of compensation the School sells fresh fruit at wholesale prices twice a week.

The town Meeting has lost its oldest member and leader, for Walter Robson, who had for many years been unceasing in his work for town and Meeting, passed from our midst late last year.

In the Meeting House itself there has been a noteworthy change, for the old gas chandeliers have now been replaced

by electric flood lights, the installation of which was the generous gift of Miss Gibson.

In November we held the usual concert in aid of funds for *The Avenue*, and in the collection afterwards we received the record sum of £9 4s. 2d.

At the beginning of this term those who already possessed some knowledge of Esperanto formed themselves into a Group to meet weekly for conversation, while later on, after a visit from Montagu C. Butler (Secretary of the British Esperanto Association), a class was formed under the leadership of his daughter, now in the School.

We are indebted to the Editor of *The Woman's Magazine* for permission to print the poem which follows.

Owen H. Parsons
(*Stage 7*).

TO THE GIRL WHO SLEEPS IN MY OLD SCHOOL BED.

YOU sleep in the bed where I slept,
The little white bed by the door.
I wonder—do you waking watch
The dawn break on ceiling and floor ?
Do you wait the first sunbeam's ray
Through the haze of the morning's first light ?
Do you hear the chorus of birds
As they sing their farewell to the night ;
Their farewell to the night, and their love
For the wonderful, beautiful dawn ?
Ah, does he sing to you as he once sang to me,
The big blackbird that lives on the lawn ?

I wonder if there comes to you
  The dreams that were present with me ;
The fair golden vista that stretched
  As far as my wide eyes could see ?
And the secrets of woodland and field—
  Do you know where the violets lie hid ?
Do you gather the first sweet blossoms of spring,
  Rejoicing aloud as I did ?
Do you know where the harebells first ring ?
  Or the young beech-leaves burst to the sun ?
Or the larch in the copse with its tassel of red,
  To tell you that spring has begun ?

O child, with your life all before,
  O dreamer of dreams fair and new,
May the spell that was over that little white bed
  Still spread its glad network o'er you.

MAUDE G. TYLER

(1894-7).

[NOTE.—The bed referred to is the one nearest the door in Bedroom 6. Its present occupant is Joan Colston.]

THE MAHATMA RIDES IN STATE.

BY the time this reaches England, it is probable that the Indian Nationalists will have re-commenced an active campaign against the British Administration of which no one professes to know the consequence for India or for the MacDonald Government.

It is for this reason that I cannot take my eyes off the little man on the corner seat opposite me. There is nothing impressive about him. He has a funny little face—a nice old gentleman, you would say. His spectacles are balanced over a pointed nose. He has protruding lips and ears that stand out at right angles, like the elves' ears in the fairy books.

Above the temples he is bald, and closely shaven over the rest of his head, except for the sacred tuft or tail at the back. He wears only the Indian dhoti of white khaddar (hand spun and hand woven cotton). I doubt whether you would look twice at him.

Yet for this little man millions are willing to give their lives. He holds a position unparalleled in the history of India. He is, in fact, probably the most universally respected man now living. He is Mahatma Gandhi.

We are in a third class carriage on our way from the Mahatma's "ashram" at Sabarmati to another ashram in the Central Provinces. Someone once asked Gandhiji why he always travelled third class (third class being no joke in this country !) ; and the little man, who has a humour of his own, replied : "Because there is no fourth class." He will have no luxuries beyond the reach of his fellow-men.

The Mahatma works incessantly. From the moment we left Sabarmati, he began his correspondence. The rolling-stock is the worst I have ever experienced, but the jolting does not seem to disturb him. Nor did the crowd at Ahmedabad—he visits this town frequently, so there was no need for him to speak there. The people thronged round us to see the Mahatma, and the Mahatma went on with his writing.

At every station a crowd gathers round our carriage. They struggle to get near him and present their hanks of hand-spun cotton—for that is the only personal tribute that he will accept, in token of the economic ideal for which he is striving. Money too is brought for the fund of the All India Spinners' Association. And then—generally as we are leaving—there is a mighty shout : "Mahatma Gandhijiki jai," "Victory to Mahatma Gandhi."

After several hours' travelling we enter the "Talooka" of Bardoli—where the crowds are doubled. Bardoli has reason to be proud of itself. They recently conducted a passive resistance campaign there against excessive taxation, and

after a prolonged struggle with the Government the latter was compelled to appoint a commission of investigation. The result was a complete vindication of almost all the peasants' claims. Nearly everyone here is dressed in white khaddar with the white " Ghandi cap." In contrast to the previous crowds, they are generally organised in this district—seated too, in row after row over the entire platform of the stations. Whenever there is good reason and sufficient time, the Mahatma addresses them.

At one of the stations an old gentleman who has been accompanying us gets out. He is doing temperance work here—the All India Congress is always quick to follow up a victory, and strike while the iron is hot. The rest of the party clear a seat for the Mahatma to take a little rest—a hurried series of short siestas between the stations. For in this strange little man there is one truly Napoleonic trait—he can sleep at will in the shortest gleanings of time between his other duties. Without that he would have been worn out years ago. Characteristically, he sleeps in his spectacles, like the paladins who slept in their armour.

Presently a mysterious package is fetched down from the rack. This is Gandhiji's collapsible " Charka " (spinning-wheel) on which he presently begins to operate. No day passes on which he neglects his hour's spinning. He has advocated this to his countrymen, and he teaches all things by example. He sits cross-legged, talking as he spins.

At last night falls, and people prepare (optimistically) for a little sleep. But first there must be prayers, conducted just as though we were still in the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati. The rise and fall of the chants mingles with the rumbling of the train, and curious people make their way down the corridor, crowding round the door. When it is over, we make ourselves as comfortable as is possible in an Indian third-class compartment, and hope for a night's rest. Tomorrow at four or five a.m. there will be prayers again.

Most people seem to be asleep as the train draws up at the next station. As we stop they are all wakened with a deafening shout: "Mahatma Gandhijiki jai." There is no trace of annoyance on the Mahatma's face as he sits up. I remark: "They do not show you much mercy," and the little man replies with a chuckle: "Yes, the quality of their mercy is a little strained."

It is a wonder to me that there are no accidents. As we leave the station the people hang on, riding on the footboards up to the last minute, and pushing for a place near our window. In vain do the officials shout and belabour them with blows. "Is it always as bad as this?" I ask one of the party. "You should see," he replies. "This journey was left out of the papers, only somehow the news got about as it always does. But you wait till we pass through the northern towns on the way to Lahore."

"On the way to Lahore." That is where the All India Congress is to meet this New Year; and for the moment the future seems to lie in their hands. And what will be the upshot if they give the Mahatma his mandate to call on his followers for a mass movement of civil disobedience?

REGINALD A. REYNOLDS (1917-22).

(*En route* for Lahore).



OLD SCHOLARS' CHRISTMAS.

THE PARTY.

WE assembled at Friends House at six o'clock, and the first half-hour or so was spent in looking round to find contemporaries with whom we could exchange all the latest news of school politics, or the latest news of how our friends who have left school are faring in the struggle for existence.

This done, and all our anecdotes about how " Mr. So and So did such and such a thing in prep many years ago " having been exhausted, we were called to tea.

After tea we were agreeably surprised to find that the services of a conjurer had been secured for the evening. With the assistance of what he called a bright young man from the audience, he amused us for rather more than an hour. He differed from the usual conjurer in that he did things which he said anybody could do at home. What he really meant, however, was that everybody had at home all the apparatus that he used.

Between those two statements there is a great deal of difference, as anybody else who has tried to produce a silk handkerchief from their small sister's ear will have realised.

After the conjuring entertainment we found that a programme of games had been arranged, and those of us who are still young enough to be amused by such things played them, while the remainder sat down and laughed scornfully at our efforts. These games were of a very varied character: there were really energetic games, played by the very young people who were apparently able to go on running round a circle of chairs for ever; and there were rather less energetic, but equally exciting ones for people who are still young in spirit but rather

older in the flesh. Among these was a game which the person who had broken most rules while at school was expected to win, because for every small crime read out by the lady in charge, anyone who had ever committed this crime was expected to go forward one or more paces. It is interesting, and rather significant, to notice that this particular game was won by a member of the Staff who, however, did not appear quite so ashamed of himself as might have been expected.

Another amusing entertainment was given by some small girls in their efforts to put on stiff Eton collars ; eventually one of them succeeded and the race was declared over, but as it was discovered that the winner had done it without using studs, she was disqualified.

A few letters were then read from Old Scholars who had wished to be present, but who had been unable to come, and then we all joined in singing " Auld Lang Syne," and departed, bemoaning the fact that there is a whole year between one Christmas Party and another.

Peter M. Thurtle

(Stage 7).

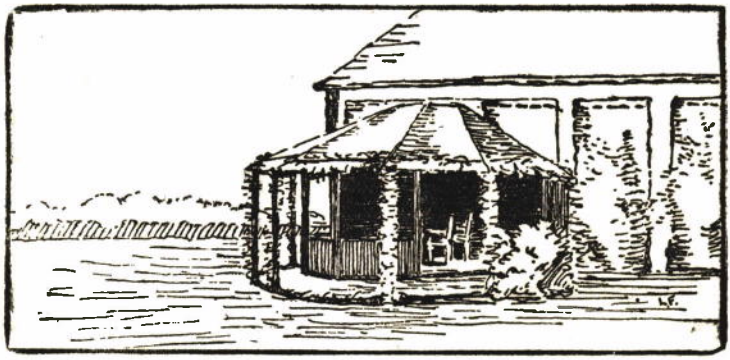




Photo by] [*H. Bedford Lemere*

THE JUVENILE SOCIETY FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE MIND, CROYDON, 1830.

SCENES FROM THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL.

SCENE III.

"THE JUVENILE SOCIETY FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE MIND."

[NOTE.—This Society was started by the girls in 1830, and met alternately as a Literary Society, and as a Sewing Meeting for the making of garments for their needy neighbours round the School at Croydon. The words in small print are taken directly from the Minute Book, and from essays written for the Society in the year 1837.]

(A Sewing Meeting in progress. Girls come and receive garments, cottons, needles, etc. Maria Heald cuts out garments.)

CHARACTERS: Elizabeth Rous, Mistress;
Maria Heald, Mistress;
Mary Browett, Sophia Napper, Rebecca Jackson, Esther Sholl, Sabina Noakes, Sarah Shipman, Ellen Smith.

MARY. I say, Sarah, have thee written thy essay yet? I have not. I don't know what to write about, but intend to try at once.

SARAH. O yes: I wrote mine last first day.

MARY. On first day!

SARAH. Yes: I think it very silly of thee to procrastinate like this.

MARY. Not so. Methinks it is about as bad, if not worse, to write one on first day as leaving it thus late. I would rather forfeit 2d. at any time.

SARAH. Where is the harm? I have not written anything I should mind reading on that day, and is there more harm in writing than reading it?

MARY. I could answer thy question better if I knew what subject thee had chosen. Perhaps thee will tell me.

SARAH. Only the Secretary knows that.

MARY. Sarah, I have been thinking. We both say "thee" instead of "thou." I expect everybody will laugh at me when I leave school.

SARAH. Really, dear: I would not mind that. People would soon get tired of laughing. But shall we begin and set the example? I fancy some of our school fellows will join us.

MARY. Will thee correct me whenever . . . .

SARAH. Thee said it then!

MARY. So I did! (laughing), but so did thee!
Shall we ask the teachers what they think of our intention?

(They go and ask the History teacher.)

ELIZABETH ROUS. It is indeed a silly habit and spoils our language to talk so. Would you like to make a grammar card and pass it to each other in play hours, and the one who has it last before the bell rings for supper shall be willing to stand with her hands upon her shoulders for ten minutes without speaking?

SARAH. But I am certain I shall be the last.

ELIZ. R. Certain? Sure?

MARY. Dost thou think it wrong, when we are quite sure, to say so?

ELIZ. R. I do decidedly believe it wrong as well as unnecessary. Dost thou remember our Saviour's express injunction, "Let your Yea be yea and your Nay be nay, for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil"?

SOPHIA. But many religious persons are in the habit of saying "I am sure," and they seem to see no harm in it.

ELIZ. R. Professing Christians are not sufficiently careful—but more for want of seriously considering the subject than from their approving it. For myself, I am decidedly of the opinion that it is perfectly unnecessary for those who are in the habit of speaking the truth to use such expressions as positive, confident, certain, sure. They will not be believed any the more for it.

(She goes over to other workers.)

SARAH. What about "decidedly" then, and "perfectly"? Can thee tell me why . . .

MARY. Thou, Sarah, thou! Thee forgot. (Both point fingers.)

REBECCA (struggling with a stocking she is darning). Oh dear! I'm positive I shall never be able to darn this silly stocking.

ELIZ. R. (turning to her). Rebecca, they that make troubles of trifles shall always have troubles enough.

REBECCA (poking her hand through the stocking at last). There, I knew that would happen. It is tiresome!

ELIZ. R. (lifting her eyebrows). Rebecca?

(Rebecca pouts, and the mistress turns away, pained. Rebecca is making a face at her when she turns and catches sight of it. Rebecca sees she is discovered: is disconcerted.)

Eliz. Rous goes over to another working party, rather ruffled.

Well, my dear girls, how are you amusing yourselves? I hope your minds, as well as your hands, are profitably engaged.

ESTHER. We are telling tales. Tell our dear teacher what you were saying, Sabina.

SABINA. "A lady who had one child of whom she was very fond was one day invited out to a large teaparty. As she had servants upon whom she thought she could depend, she left her little girl, a lovely child about two years of age, under the care of her nurse, and went. During the evening, she felt strongly convinced that something was wrong at home; she therefore could not enjoy herself, and, with an apology for leaving her friends, she got up and went home. On entering the house, she heard much talking and laughing in the kitchen, whither she immediately proceeded and found her servants entertaining a large party of their friends, the nurse with the rest. The lady, anxious about her child, hastened to its bed, when there what a spectacle presented itself: At the foot of the bed was a figure, dressed up a perfect fright, placed there by the nurse to make the little girl quiet, when she, instead of staying with her as usual, went to join the party below stairs. Passing by the figure the lady caught up her babe, which lay with its eyes fixed wide open and its little hands clenched in strong convulsions. The agonised mother resorted to every possible means for its recovery, but in vain. Her little girl never regained her senses, but grew up an idiot."

ESTHER. Poor little thing: what a shocking anecdote, if it is really true!

SABINA. Quite true, I believe.

ESTHER. How miserable the nurse must have been afterwards!

ELLEN. Had we, as thou wished, Esther, a little while ago dressed up something to put into forty-nine's* bed, we don't know what might have been the consequence to Sabina.

SABINA (looking roguishly at them both). Oh, that was what you had planned for me, was it? (All laugh, except Elizabeth Rous, who obviously disapproves.)

ESTHER (with conviction). I don't really think that story is a true one. (To Eliz. R.) Please, will thou be so kind as to sit down with us and relate some historical anecdotes? We enjoy having them, because we know them to be true.

ELIZ. R. I am quite pleased to observe your growing interest in History: and if it really be your desire to store your minds with useful information, to the exclusion of such worse than nonsense, as has just now engaged your attention, I shall be delighted to instruct while I amuse you.

ALL. Oh, thank thee, thank thee.

ELIZ. R. Shall it be Ancient or Modern History? Shall Greece, Rome, France, Egypt, Switzerland, Spain, or our own dear country be the theme?

They think for a moment, undecided.

ELIZ. R. (not waiting for their decision). A mark of ingratitude, painfully presented to my view a few moments ago by one of your school fellows, to promote whose welfare your dear governess and myself have devoted much time and attention, reminded me of a man who, in ancient times, gained the disgraceful appelation of "The ungrateful guest." The story also presents an agreeable proof of the impartial justice of Philip, King of Macedon, so I will relate it to you.

A Macedonian soldier, a favourite of the king, was shipwrecked upon the shore, almost dead. A kind hearted, hospitable Macedonian, a stranger, seeing him, took pity upon his melancholy state, took him to his house, showed him every attention and had the pleasure of seeing him entirely recover his health. The soldier, who had been under his roof for nearly two months, left him with incessant exclamations of unbounded gratitude, and promised to bring his extraordinary benevolence to a stranger to the notice of King Philip.

* Sabina's school number was 49. The children were addressed by their numbers.

His promises, like those of the chief butler to Joseph, were quickly forgotten, or indeed worse than forgotten, for, feeling jealous of the pleasantly situated estate of his excellent benefactor, the soldier went to the king with a false story. The king, unwisely yielding to his favourite without making enquiry, bestowed upon him the possessions he envied. The owner, however, struck with such an act of base ingratitude and mean treachery, appealed to Philip, and represented in their true colours both his own conduct and that of the soldier. The king, indignant at the soldier's baseness, immediately restored the estate to its lawful owner, and, arresting his favourite, branded the words "The ungrateful guest" upon his forehead. This wretch—for we can scarcely call him man—lived upwards of three hundred years before the birth of our Saviour, and still his baseness is handed down to us three thousand years afterwards as an almost unparalleled instance of ingratitude, and will continue, in all probability, to be recorded in every History of Greece.

Did you ever hear that story before?

ALL. No, dear teacher. Do you know any more?

ELIZ. R. Many. But you will find them in a book in very common use among you—"The Introduction to the English Reader." They will well repay your efforts of perusal.

ALL. Thank thee.

ELIZ. R. And, if you care for it, I will lend you my dissected puzzle of English History to put together.

MARIA HEALD (looking at the clock). The hour groweth late, dear girls. Have a care that everything be folded tidily and taken away, and the room left orderly.

(Girls gather up things and go out.)

(Rebecca Jackson leaves scissors behind, which Maria Heald discovering):

MARIA HEALD. Rebecca! Rebecca! Thou hast left thy scissors behind thee. It is a bad workman that forgets his tools. (Both go out.)

THE AMBITIONS OF A VERY SMALL BOY.



WOULD I were a Pirate, with a schooner of my own
And a heart within a savage breast, a heart as hard as stone.
I'd send all men I came across to stay with Davy Jones,
And on my mast would fly the flag of the dreaded skull and bones.

I'd like to be a robber, to go stealing things at night,
When Mummy's fast asleep in bed, and Daddy's out of sight.
I'd steal some golden coins, and some things you call doubloons,
And I'd go into a toy shop, to spend them on balloons.

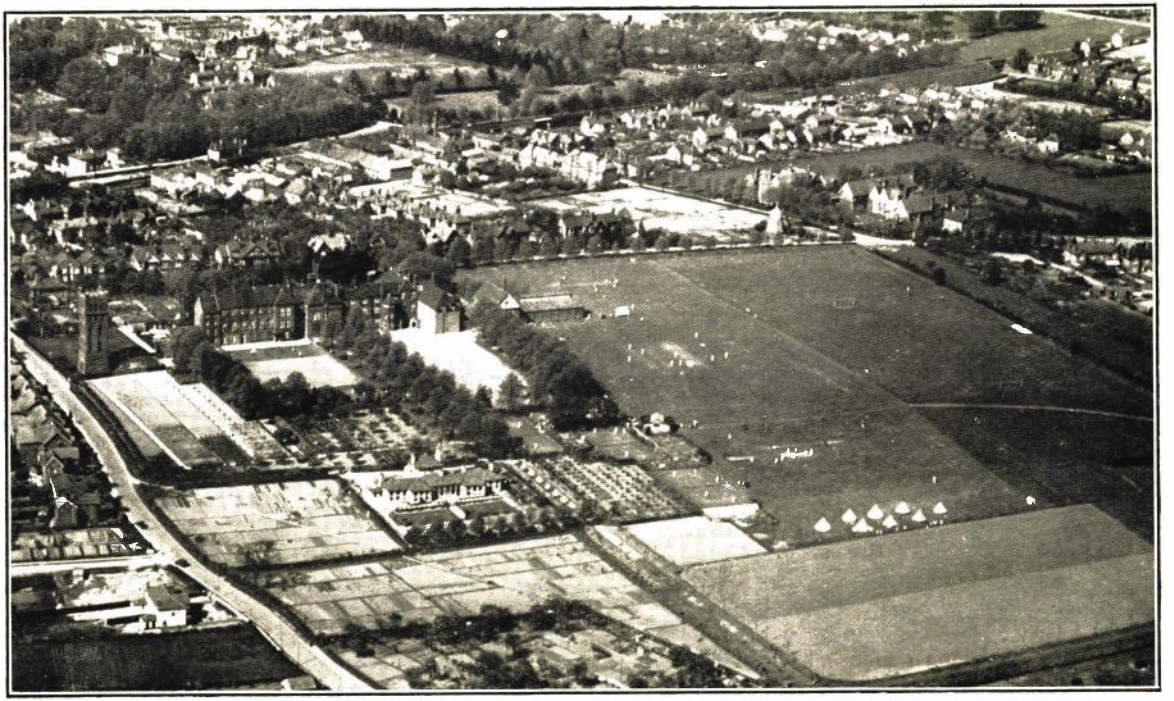
I'd like to be a hero, to go slaying things galore;
To hunt the bear, the elephant, the lion and the boar.
I wouldn't run away, or faint with cowardice or fright,
But I'd look upon the carcases with grim, intense delight.

I'd like to be a Colonel, or a Captain brave and bold,
With many men beneath me, to do as they are told.
I'd urge my gallant army on to beat our foes or die,
But *none* would be as brave a man, as fine a man, as *I*.

And lastly my ambition is to be a brave, good boy;
To bring my Father happiness, and bring my Mother joy.
For, after all, your parents are the only thing you need,
And I'll *never* disobey *them*, not in fun, nor word nor deed.

Robert E. Harper

(*Stage 4a*).



AERIAL VIEW OF THE SCHOOL, 1929.

FOOD.

WHILE I was thinking of a subject for this essay, it suddenly occurred to me that I might follow up an essay on "Money" with another on "Food." My reasons for this choice are various: firstly, I find it an interesting subject and I think that it is one dear to the hearts of all my audience. Secondly, the subject is one that is essentially of the earth and should go well with money. Lastly, I have been very much distressed at the number of essays written suggesting social or moral improvement. Anyone who knows me will realise how radically I am opposed to these so-called improvements. Also, I intend this essay to counteract any ill effects that the Society may have received from them. You never can tell where these things will lead, through desire for change, and, worst of all, doubt in the absolute power and sacredness of money. But no more of nightmares: here is an essay with no disturbing thoughts; in fact with no thoughts at all.

I am afraid that some people will, when this good subject of food is put forward, instantly be shocked and say, "How horrid!" and turn away in absolute disgust. These people will be entirely ladies, I imagine; no boy can be accused of such an attitude towards the greater things of life. Moreover, I speak entirely to the honest members of the Society, for everyone will find within their hearts, if they are candid, a very warm corner for food.

I might as well now show some of the essential characteristics of the real lover of food, he who from the cradle to the grave appreciates the blessings of Providence.

I hope none of you suffer from excess of conscience: if so, I am sorry for you; we all have our failings, but if you are determined and keep on, the edge is bound to wear off soon and you won't get anxious or worried about other people's food.

If you can't get rid of this nuisance it is unfortunate, but, take my word for it, you'll never be a great politician, millionaire or anything worth while unless you do.

Also, you must not be too critical of yourself; you are all right; don't be always asking yourself, "Am I doing the best thing by living as I do?" but rather, "Am I really doing well out of life by living as I do?" Again, don't be always thinking about other people and their affairs: in these cases your help will always be a frightful embarrassment, and you'll be quite contented provided that you don't see too much of people without your good food. If other people are without your comforts, it is your own great industry and perseverance that has got you your reward.

Above all, you must take the matter in earnest; no joking at table; care and thought are essential to appreciate the dishes of a really good cook. If you can't appreciate any of these rules you might as well take to self-sacrifice and bread and water straight away. I'll have nothing to do with you.

Even after you have removed all the above difficulties, there yet remain the limitations of the human structure. Where is the wonderful brain and perception of man, when an insignificant caterpillar far outclasses us in eating? Of course the insect has its failings: the quantity and quality of the food might be rather burdensome. I myself feel no wild thrill at the idea of eating a cartload of vegetables. Nor has a man yet been evolved who has a really efficient size of mouth. The best animal that I have ever heard of is one that has no mouth; the food just goes into it whole and alive and is then digested. It is doubtful whether the creature can fully appreciate the beauties of this gift of thoughtful Nature, being as it is, very low in the animal scale, far, far removed from us with our thoughts and ideals.

Now let us consider how these theories are best put into practice. I myself think little of anyone who eats for sheer

amounts : it is better to combine this with appreciation, quantity and quality.

When I go into a restaurant and when I have finished my meal, and not until, I always look round upon the assembled people and watch their style. These two near the wall are obviously not really interested in the bill of fare ; they do not ask for second helpings, neither do they display any real enthusiasm, for they laugh and talk. But these two men, seated at a table by themselves, are the true brethren ; unlike the false brethren, they order the food with care, stop frequently to discuss the merits of dishes and take some time instructing the waiter.

On one occasion at Kettering, about half way on my journey home, two stout gentlemen got in, settled themselves down, and began a long conversation on hotels and their various merits. The conversation was as follows : " Do you know the ' George ' at L——? " " No, I've never been that way." " You should ; it's a very comfortable place ; they'll give you a very good breakfast—very good bacon—" Then he paused, seemed lost in a reverie, without doubt recalling golden memories of the good breakfasts he had had at the " George." The conversation was then resumed on the same subject. Each of these gentlemen was able to discuss the relative virtues of any hotel in England, and could describe the food to be had most accurately. Later they had some lunch on the train, the absolute badness of the food giving them much matter for thought and discussion. Just before they got out of the train they discussed the Riviera, or rather the food of the Riviera ; the last I saw of them they were walking towards the buffet at Derby station.

A little incident illustrating the correct reverential attitude is one that happened to my father. " Do you carve ? " an acquaintance of his said. My father replied that he did sometimes, whereupon the other added, " You should, the carver gets many little tit-bits." Sad to say, a tragedy was

closely connected with this man: early in life he had married the wife of his dreams, but she had died young and he had never really got over the loss. She was a very good cook.

All these stories show how one ought to regard food—reverentially, seriously and thoughtfully. These gentlemen gave their minds to it and, what was much more important, thought of themselves first and foremost. We find all these attributes admirably shown in the caterpillar; it gobbles its way through life and thinks of no one else. The caterpillar is then our ideal, although, as I have said before, it has no variety in its food. We, however, can remedy this defect.

A little advice to you might be welcome here. Among the many opportunities given you at school, the good advantages for eating have never, until now, been sufficiently stressed. You are given an hour and a half daily for food, and it is up to you, as you value your own interests, to make the best use of this. There is one disadvantage about school food, and that is that it is bad food—so my two gentlemen in the train would say. I need hardly add that bad food is not merely not fresh, but lacks that subtle something dear to the heart of the connoisseur; food may be as wholesome as it likes, but be bad food, quite unfit for our consumption.

I shall not go into each meal in detail: I shall merely point out the maxims to be followed. The greatest difficulty to be overcome is, of course, the neighbour. Although I cannot claim to being much of an eater, as I shall later explain, nevertheless if you watch me carefully during meals, you will see how the difficulty may be overcome. The solution is easy: simply to ignore them until they definitely ask for it. If you pass them things you are thinking about them and are obviously going away from the fundamental principles.

The difficulty of the neighbour overcome, you can settle down, eat as much as you want, and always get the best and biggest for yourself.

By far the best meal of the day is tea ; this calls for the greatest efforts of capacity and energy. For one thing you have no girl neighbours and no one will reproach you for your attitude towards these manners.

There is a considerable diversity of opinion as regards improvements in this best of meals. Some think that there should be more time ; I myself believe that if a person has not had enough by half-past six he isn't really trying. Nothing good can be got in this life without perseverance and effort. Others believe in an absolute cutting out of all table manners—a sort of general scramble, and a survival of the fittest. I myself think this is going too far ; we must be fair sometimes and give other people a chance ; besides, my neighbours are bigger and more active than I am—this last by the way, however.

As regards my own capacity, I have been very much overrated in this respect and many have been the remarks passed on me meant to wound and discourage. Of course, as anyone who knows me will tell you, I have always had a small appetite and I have been a slow eater ; yet, in spite of these obvious facts, I am repeatedly suspected of having had more than my share of the cakes. For example, I have scored hard all afternoon for the XI, weary and worn. I get up to receive my just rewards : of course, my tea is given me in a cracked cup. It's a little hard on me, but I don't mind, I'm used to it. But what is worse, as soon as I take my first cake the captain tells me to go steadily, the other side have not had theirs yet. I cannot even hand round the cakes without being suspected of ulterior motives. Great is the tragedy of the misunderstood.

Again, in socials, I admit that I think everyone ought to make a real pig of themselves, but so does everyone else in the bottom of their hard hearts. Ah, well ! it is not for me to complain ; it is my misfortune ; but there, we all have our burdens and mine a heavy one. Yet I am wonderfully bright, and bear it all "with unshakeable patience," to use the words of the Turkish

minister about the Armenian problem, shortly before the massacres.

Even after this essay I expect some of you are still sceptical about the value of food and want to ask whether it is worth while. My answer to you is, " Don't you worry about reasons, you're here to listen to this essay and not to inquire into things. Take my word for it—Food is worth while ! "

Edmund T. Burtt
(*Stage 7*).

STEAK AND KIDNEY PIE.

MRS. HIGGINS felt that she had been swindled. But before I tell you why Mrs. Higgins felt that she had been swindled, I think I had better tell you a little about Mrs. Higgins herself.

She was just an everyday working woman who lived with Mr. Herbert Higgins in a semi-detached cottage that contained a long yard at the back, called, for politeness' sake, a garden. Every Monday morning found Mrs. Higgins out in this garden, adorned with a large clothes basket filled with various types of linen, a hot and flushed face and an array of clothes pegs. She always siezed this time as one of the many opportunities for getting a little gossip over the garden fence with her next-door neighbour, Mrs. Booker, about other people's affairs in general and the private life of their acquaintances in particular. Why Mrs. Brown over the way had to borrow Mrs. Higgins' spoons when she had company, and what the Binkses, three doors away, paid for their new parlour carpet, don't concern most people ; but it seemed to be one of the chief interests of Mrs. Higgins' life.

But to get on with the story.

Mrs. Higgins had a lodger. He was a quiet young fellow who occupied the first floor front, and who paid his rent each week,

so that there ought not to be anything unusual about him. But still, Mrs. Higgins had a vague feeling that he was not quite " normal," to put it in her own language.

" I'll tell you what, Mrs. Booker," she said confidentially on one of these Monday morning chats, " that lodger of mine is somewhat queer, if you asks me. You know what I mean, sort of unusual like. I shouldn't be surprised to find out one of these days that he was one of these bolshies, that I shouldn't."

Thus the poor lodger was watched whenever possible by the baleful glare of the suspicious Mrs. Higgins. Strangely enough, however, he did not seem to mind at all, but went on his way cheerfully enough.

The climax was reached when he returned home one night in a towering rage.

" Some chaps get all the bad luck," he barked, attacking the steak and kidney pie that formed his supper with vigour. " I go and get sacked from the office by the boss—and why? Just because I happened to lose a rotten old file of his. I shouldn't be surprised if he had it all the time. If I could get my hands on him, I'd wring his measly neck for him, I would ! "

With this he got up from the table and, muttering something under his breath that sounded like—" unfair old beast . . . wring his neck . . ." he marched out, slamming the door behind him.

Mrs. Higgins watched him go out with some surprise. Then she shrugged her shoulders and proceeded to clear away the supper things. As long as her rent came in, she didn't care whether he lost his job or not. She sat down in an armchair and tried to doze, but could not.

The lodger upstairs was tramping to and fro with heavy, agitated footfalls. There seemed to be something suggestive about these tramps. She listened and wondered. Suppose the lost job had made him lose his head? One never knew. He did sound rather wild at supper, and it wouldn't take much

for a person in his state of mind to think of some evil deed in revenge. She pondered a little. He could easily go to the boss's house—it was not far away—and once there, what couldn't he do? She shivered, and shook herself. No use thinking about such things, she was getting quite nervous. Then suddenly the footsteps ceased. He was coming down the stairs; the front door slammed and silence reigned.

Mrs. Higgins got up, ran across the room, and peered round the window curtains. There he was marching down the road. Her suspicions increased, and with a troubled heart she turned round, to go upstairs to bed. Late that night, she heard him let himself in by the latch-key, and go up to his room. She vaguely wondered what the morning papers would be full of, and still thinking, she fell asleep.

Next morning she knocked at her lodger's door as usual. His voice, when he answered the knock, seemed rather shaky, she thought. She was not a bit surprised when he informed her he would not want any breakfast. He went out at nine, and Mrs. Higgins went up to do his room. She was just making his bed when she saw a sight which for a moment turned her sick with horror. There, lying on the floor, was a handkerchief, spattered with blood! So the poor boss had had his throat cut; she heaved, and fled downstairs.

That day will never be forgotten by Mrs. Higgins as long as she lives. Any moment she expected a policeman to come in and arrest her. When she saw one coming down the road, she locked and bolted the doors, and hid behind the window until he had gone by, scarcely daring to breathe. She was so much on edge that she even forgot her daily pow-wow over the fence with Mrs. Booker.

As evening drew on, she braced herself for the coming of the lodger. At last he came.

"It's all right, Mrs. Higgins," he called out cheerily as he entered, "I've found another job; you needn't be afraid for your rent at all."

He was sitting down to supper looking very pleased with himself, when she brought in the remains of the steak and kidney pie for him to demolish.

His face turned a delicate shade of pea-green.

"For heaven's sake, Mrs. Higgins," he shouted, "take that beastly pie out of my sight. I wish I'd never seen the thing, much less tasted it. If you knew what agonies I suffered last night through indigestion, you wouldn't ever give me steak and kidney pie again. I couldn't keep still and at last had to go out for a long walk which didn't do any good at all, but gave me a chill. And then I had a sleepless night, and consequently when I was shaving myself this morning, my hand shook so that I sliced a chunk off my chin, and absolutely ruined one of my new 6d. Woolworth's handkerchiefs wiping off the blood!"

This was why Mrs. Higgins felt that she had been swindled.

Myfanwy Butler

(*Stage* 5*a*).

FROM FAR AND NEAR.

Concerning Old Scholars.

Old Scholars who were in Group C. last Term:

Antoinette Jenkins is at a School in Switzerland.
Ruby John.
John McLeod.
John Mould.
Eleanor Sawdon is at the Mount School, York.
Madge Spendlove.

Ruth Sandwith (1924-27) writes from Reading University:

"The first thing you are asked when you go to the Art Department at College is if you are good at Spelling and Arithmetic, and it is supposed to be a good sign if you aren't—so I ought to be quite glad I'm not! I simply love every minute of it, so it's not like 'work' at all. Now the second year course has begun we do Life Drawings nearly all the time, but we have to do one or two crafts if we want to do a Teaching Diploma, and I think that is the safest thing to get. I am doing weaving, which is awfully interesting. We have to do our own dying, spinning, etc. The colours you get sometimes are just lovely.

"We started to teach in October. It is great fun, but very strenuous. I have got the top form (Matric.). There are sixteen in the class. . . . Up till now they have treated drawing as a 'play lesson,' so it is *much* more difficult. . . . I still can't paint anything worth while unless I have the feeling. The best thing I painted last year was for a stained-glass window, and I did it the Friday morning just before I started off to come to Walden for Whitsun. Was it a coincidence?"

* * * * *

Edithe Child (1927-29) writes from Zittan, Germany:

"My main jobs are to talk English and help with the children, of whom there are four of eight, seven, six and four years, all typical little Germans. They can't speak English, of course, so to begin with we had a terribly hard job to understand one another, and to make matters worse they suffered from the rather common failing of believing that if they shouted loud enough, and repeated themselves often enough, I should understand in time, which was rather nerve-racking for me. At present they are all very keen on learning English, and say "How do you do? Good afternoon" to every visitor who comes, and air all their other English words at every possible and impossible opportunity.

"We have an English Circle twice a week, lasting for two hours. It consists of young Germans all under twenty-five and all older than I. Two of the boys are taking an exam. in which English is included, in March, another is going to America in January to take up his career there, and two of the girls are hoping to go to England next year, so naturally they are all extremely keen on learning as well and as quickly as possible. They are all supposed to know enough English to make a conversation in the language, though I think one or two at least are very doubtful, and all of them have a weird pronunciation which is awfully funny to listen to. At every meeting we read a chapter out of an English book called *The Little Londoner*, which describes the customs and everyday life of the English people—most interesting for me. Then each person has to give a report on a newspaper article they have prepared during the week. At present they are working on the *Children's Newspaper*, which I have sent to me each week, and it is very suitable for them, being easy and interesting. When all this is done we have a discussion on some easy subject such as Travelling, Sports, Schools, etc., and when they have said all they can about the German side of the subject, I tell them about our English ways. I think 'Schools' has been the most interesting discussion so far. They were all awfully interested in Walden, and when I had shown them a photo of the School building and some of the Tramp snaps, they got most enthusiastic. There are very few boarding schools in Germany, and their day schools are rather different from ours. They have no ground, or very little, attached to the school and consequently there are no organised games. They go to school to work only, and they certainly work very hard."

MY IDEAL HOLIDAY.

THERE are many different ideas as to what an ideal holiday is. Some people think that caravans are best, others camps or yachts.

My ideal holiday would be on a houseboat. You may connect a boat with water, dampness, and being rather cramped, or perhaps unhealthy. But no ! by no means. A houseboat's great advantages are these : You have much more room than you could have in a caravan, or in a tent, and you are not temporarily in one place.

There is one thing you can be absolutely sure of, and that is having a very nice open air, healthy holiday. We have our houseboat on a river, by the sea, so that we are always in the fresh sea breeze, and do not get that " penned in " feeling of a house in the village, as we practically live in the open. At night time the river is very quiet. There are no sounds at all except that of the water, which is a calm sort of noise, whereas if you were staying in a village you would run the risk of being woken up by any sudden noise, such as a dog barking, or the next door neighbour's baby beginning to howl.

In the morning when we get up, we have an early morning bathe which is lovely and refreshing and wakes us up thoroughly, as well as doing beautifully instead of a wash. It is not so very energetic as it sounds for we have not to walk to get to the water, and we don't have to get undressed, for we can get straight into our bathing costumes. After a good breakfast consisting mostly of fruit we make our bunks. This is rather amusing, for my sister's being above mine, she has to stand on the edge of my bunk, consequently her feet get all muddled up with my blankets, and get tucked in.

Sometimes we go sailing in our boat. I love doing this, and when it is fairly calm we go out to sea. This is lovely when evening is coming on. When there is a glorious sunset which is reflected in the sea, we almost forget we are sailing on water.

It seems as though we are going over lovely clouds of every hue, green, pink puffy ones, mauve mingling in with blue. Oh! it is a sight not to forget.

It is very funny to hear the different remarks about us made by people who walk along the bank. Once a person said scornfully: "Call that a boat"? When people are rowing they usually come as near as they can to have a good look in, and when they are sailing and have to zig-zag up the river tacking against the wind, they usually come straight at us, and then turn at the last minute.

In the evenings sometimes friends come to see us and we have dancing on the roof, which is very spacious. There are awnings up, and for light we have Chinese lanterns which give a mysterious air. They are far superior to electricity, which we could not have on the "Ursula" even if we wanted it. We have the wireless, and it seems very funny to hear the same old voice saying "London calling" in such a remote place on the river.

In the mornings I revel in going up on to the roof and watching all the things in the river life. Sometimes I bring a big bag of stale bread up with me. This I throw in little bits into the river, and soon a great collection of birds congregate. It is lovely to see them take a graceful swoop, and then come up triumphantly with the bread. The birds get very busy when a shoal of whitebait come down the river. It is a funny spectacle to see the fish jumping up out of the water, and then diving in a lightning flash and the poor old seagulls get so annoyed, for although they are quick they are not quick enough.

One holiday I stayed at a lovely farmhouse, but I like the houseboat best. Although the farmhouse had beautiful woods round it, I like the lovely moorland best, and although there was a river to bathe in, I like bathing in the waves best. Yes, I like the houseboat holiday best of all.

Betty Snow
(Stage 4b).

HOUSE COMPETITIONS, 1929.

"SELDOM has the leader led by so large a margin, or the winners of the wooden spoon been so far behind." This is a sentence from last year's report, and it might have been written for this year. Actually there is a slightly larger margin between the first two than last year, but the positions are reversed, and Morland has regained the "Ashes." The actual figures are as follows:

1. Morland, 450.3.
2. Crosfield, 428.5.
3. Godlee, 337.6.

At the end of the second term Morland led by one point only, but they did better in the competitions in the Autumn Term. We hope that Godlee's "lean years" are coming to a close, and that they will soon be running the other Houses to a close finish.

The sectional details are given herewith:

	Athletics.	Literary.	Scientific.	Manual.	Aesthetic.	Classwork.	Conduct.
Morland	90	33	19	25	43	102	140
Crosfield	96	36	16	30	39	90	125
Godlee	55	15	10	22	39	76	114

It will be noticed that Morland led in four, and Crosfield in three sections.

The Lecturettes again provided a very full and enjoyable evening. The time-limit was strictly enforced and the subjects were very varied, Political, International and Scientific subjects all found a place. The House plays were again excellent, if not quite up to last year's standard, and Crosfields' presentation of "The Oak Settle" was placed first.

As usual we were favoured with excellent weather for the House Excursions—it is remarkable how seldom these have

been spoilt by rain. Everybody enjoyed themselves and once more each House was satisfied that neither of the others could have had as jolly a time as they had.

It is now proposed that in future the House Year shall correspond with the School Year, so that this "year" will consist of only two terms; good luck to the spirit of keen, but good-natured emulation.

J.P.W.

DIARY.

Nov. 9th.—Football Match: "A" XI. *v.* Saffron Walden Rovers, home, won, 3—1.
Hockey Match: 2nd XI. *v.* Bishop's Stortford Ladies 2nd XI., home, won, 2—1.
Lantern Lecture: "Bird Life on a Farm," Geoffrey H. Tawell.

,, 14th.—N.H.S. Mtg. Current Events Report, C. J. Smith. Meteorological Report, Richard Dell. Lantern Lecture, "Romney Marsh, its Scenery and Architecture." "Description of the Beetle, *Dytiscus Marginalis*," J. C. Smith.

,, 16th. Lantern Lecture: "Kipling's India," Captain Fitzgerald.

,, 21st.—Lit. Soc. Social.
Merit Half Holiday.

,, 23rd.—Lantern Lecture: "Life on the Sea Floor," Mr. William Hunter.

,, 30th.—Football Match: "A" XI. *v.* Langley, away, lost, 4—6.
Avenue Concert.

Dec. 4th.—Football Match: 1st XI. *v.* Cambridge Friends, home, lost, 2—3.

,, 5th.—Lit. Soc. Mtg. Diary, Harding Rees and Ruth Edmundson. Essays: "Tea its Geography, History and Manufacture," F. Radley; "Christmas in a Village," Irene Barry. Pianoforte Solo, Beethoven's "Sonata Pathétique," 1st Movement, K. Spurge. Two minute speeches.

,, 6th.—Boys' Reading Club Mtg.

,, 7th.—Football Match *v.* Cambridge Bootham Old Scholars, home, lost, 3—4.
Lantern Lecture: "Lapland," Mr. G. Morris.

Dec. 9th.—Girls' Reading Club Mtg.

,, 14th.—Football Match: 1st XI. *v.* Horneybrook's, home, won, 5—1.

Hockey Match: 1st XI. *v.* Saffron Walden Ladies' XI., home, won, 5—1.

Exhibition of the Sibford Film.

,, 16th.—Competition Lecturettes.

,, 17th.—House Plays.

,, 19th.—End of Term.

Jan. 16th.—School re-opened.

,, 18th.—Lantern Lecture: "Canadian Industries," Mr. G. Morris.

,, 23rd.—N.H.S. Mtg. Meteorological Report, Richard Dell. Essays: "The Religion of Prehistoric Man," Betty Harland; "The Beech Woods this Winter," Bruce Piercy; "Ants," Richard Brooks.

,, 25th.—Lantern Lecture: "The Merseyside and the Empire," Mrs. Tillemont-Thomason.

Feb. 1st.—Hockey Matches: Girls' 1st XI. *v.* Herts. and Essex High School 1st XI., away, lost, 2—4.

Girls' 2nd XI. *v.* Herts. and Essex High School 2nd XI., home, lost, 1—2.

Football Matches: Boys' 1st XI. *v.* Newport Grammar School 1st XI., away, lost, 0—8.

Boys' 2nd XI. *v.* Newport Grammar School 2nd XI., home, won, 2—1.

Lantern Lecture: "Montpellier," Mr. G. Morris.

,, 6th.—N.H.S. Mtg. Diary, J. C. Smith. Meteorological Report, Richard Dell. Essays: "Rood Screens and their History," R. Morland; "The Sea," R. Dell. Exhibition of Fern Specimens, Mr. Morris.

,, 8th.—Hockey Match: 1st XI. *v.* Cambridge Ladies' 2nd XI., away, won, 5—3.

Football Match: Boys' "A" XI. *v.* Langley, home, won, 4—0.

Lantern Lecture: "Some Famous Pictures and their Painters," Mr. C. F. Cook.

,, 13th.—Lit. Soc. Mtg. Diary, Endré Sarreti and Kathleen Butterworth. Essays: "Golf," Harding Rees; "Performing and Captive Animals," Eileen Wooldridge; "Hungary," Endré Sarreti; "Glimpses of the Sea," Vera Brewis. Pianoforte Solos: "Cradle Song" by Kierulf, Joan Francis; Grieg's "Erotikon," Edith Kilbey. Violin Solo, "Sonata" by Handel, R. Erskine.

Feb. 15th.—Hockey Match: 1st XI. *v.* Homerton College, home, won, 3—2.
Lantern Lecture: "The Italian Lakes," Mr. J. P. Whitlow.

,, 19th.—Hockey Match: 1st XI. *v.* Haverhill Ladies' 1st XI., away, drawn, 5—5.

,, 20th.—N.H.S. Mtg. Current Events Report, Richard Brooks. Meteorological Report, Richard Dell. Diary, Betty Harland. Talk on Mosses, Mr. Morris.

,, 22nd.—Hockey Match: Girls' XI. *v.* Perse Girls' School, away, lost, 1—2.
Football Matches: Boys' XI. *v.* Newport Grammar School 1st XI., home, drawn, 3—3.
2nd XI. *v.* Newport Grammar School, away, won, 2—1.
Lantern Lecture: "Tramping and Camping in the English Lake District," Dr. Dalton.

,, 27th.—Lit. Soc. Mtg. Diary, E. Sarreti and A. Scott. Essays: "Derwent Water," Kathleen Butterworth; "Winter Sports," A. Scott; "Queer People I have met," Myfanwy Butler; "Bravery and Cowardice," D. Seed. Pianoforte Solos: "Three-fours" by Coleridge-Taylor, Ivy Hubbard; Sinding's "Rustle of Spring" and "Marche Grotesque," A. Mulholland.
Merit Half Holiday.

March 1st—2nd.—Old Scholars' Lecture School Week-end.

,, 1st.—Hockey Match: 1st XI. *v.* Old Scholars, home, won, 2—1.
Football Match: 1st XI. *v.* Old Scholars, home, won, 4—2.
Lectures: "Yuletide and Spring Festivals" and "In the Land of the Magyar," Mr. Pryde-Hughes.

,, 2nd.—Lecture: "Touchwood," Mr. Pryde-Hughes.

,, 5th.—Girls' Gymnastic Competition, won by Crosfield.

,, 6th.—Address on Africa by Mr. Roome of the British and Foreign Bible Society.
N.H.S. Mtg. Diary, J. C. Smith. Current Events Report, Margaret Rollason. Meteorological Report, R. Dell. Essays: "Scarborough Castle," C. J. Smith; "Mersea Island," Lucille Rayner; "Cuba," June Cornish.

,, 8th.—Hockey Match: 1st XI. *v.* Fowlmere Ladies' XI., away, won, 6—0.
Football Match: Boys' XI. *v.* S. Christopher's School, Letchworth, away, lost, 0—6.
Lantern Lecture: "Fountains Abbey," Mr. A. E. Binyon.

,, 12th.—Football Matches: Boys' XI. *v.* Newport Grammar School 1st XI., home, lost, 2—4.
Lower School XI. *v.* Newport G.S. Lower School XI., away, won, 6—0.

NOTICES.

Three numbers of *The Avenue* will be published during 1930, price 8d. each (post free, 10d.), or 2s. per annum (post free, 2s. 6d.).

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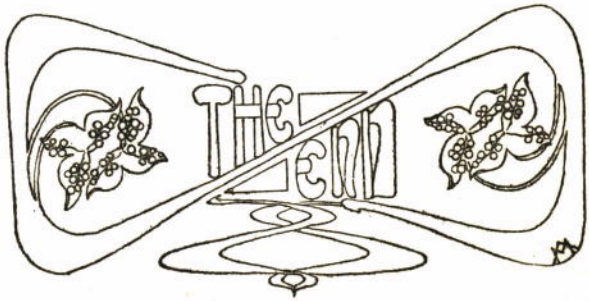
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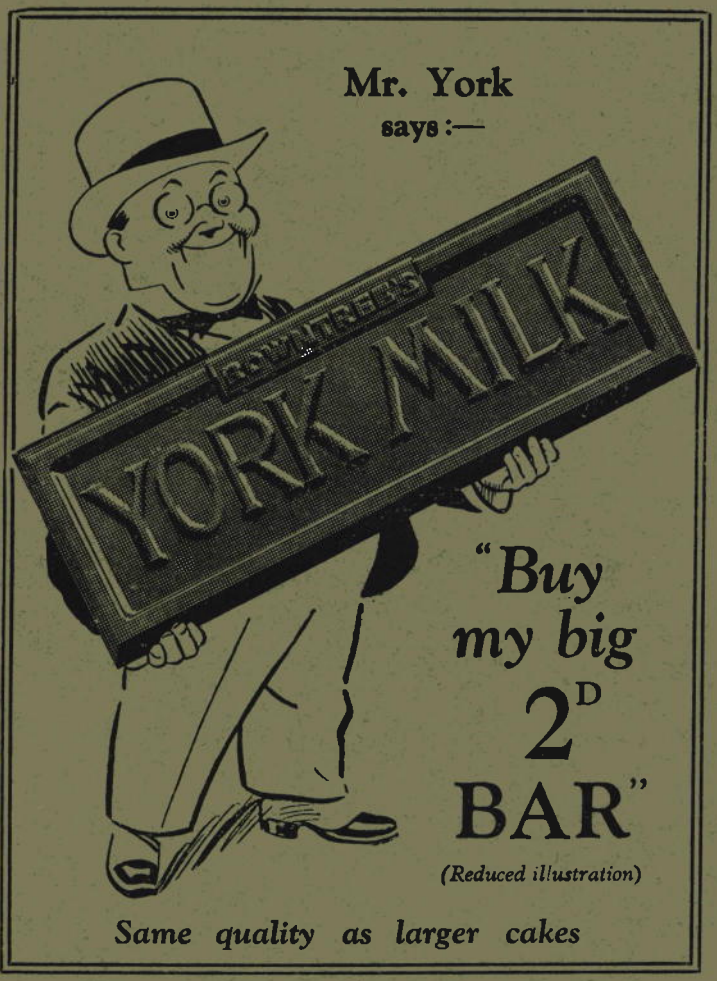
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