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APRIL 1940

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The Magazine of the Friends' School, Saffron Walden.

VOL. XXX. APRIL, 1940. No. 91.

EDITORIAL.

IN our community we are still comparatively unaffected by the war situation, for which we are very grateful. We have no evacuation difficulties, and, though we are supposed to be rationed, the food we eat has quality, variety and quantity worthy of peace time, and to judge from Miss Wilson's success with the 200, we should have liked to have watched her with the 5,000. We are only reminded by the non-committal headlines in the newspapers and by the broadcast news, and by the activities of our fire and stretcher-bearing parties, of the vital things which are going on abroad and in other places in our own country.

To be at school over Easter, as we were this year, is a very rare event, but Easter came so near to the end of term that few people have noticed the difference. Whitsun, being a festival fixed in relation to Easter, will come very early next term.

The hard weather, which we may now say with safety was widespread, lasted for an unusually long period earlier in the term, and Mr. Jacobs and his helpers worked splendidly in keeping as large a building as ours nearly completely free from frozen pipes and in maintaining a very comfortable heating throughout this very cold spell. Despite the restriction of outside activity when the snow

was on the ground, the school held together very well. It is not easy to be calm and friendly when in such close contact with one another as we are if outside enjoyments have to be curtailed. There were much appreciated snowball-fights but no one was sorry when the thaw came, and no one would appreciate another such spell.

We were glad to welcome the Old Scholars for their lecture week-end as usual; a report appears elsewhere in this issue. In such difficult times it is good to continue as many normal activities as possible, and we hope that we shall see the Old Scholars again at Whitsun as we have done for so many years past. Not only so, but we hope they and we are able to keep up these much appreciated reunions for the duration of the war and for the peace we look to.

D.P.

INTER ALIA.

THE weather, having snowed on most of our hopes for hockey and football this term, has succeeded in banishing the games report from this issue. We did our best. Near the beginning of the term the girls waded forth into the snow and played field hand-ball. From this they derived much amusement, but no games report. The boys played a form of "snow rugby."

We were sorry to have to say good-bye to Mrs. Grahame who left at the end of last term after six years with us. In her place we welcome Miss Wilson who is making the best of the difficult task before her.

Several old scholars have made contributions to this issue. Most of us here will remember Alan Carlton Smith, but Daniel Burlingham, who is writing the report on the Lecture Week-end, and Grace Porter will only be known to those of the staff who were here with them, and to Old Scholars. Daniel Burlingham has not been here for ten years, while Grace Porter was for some time a teacher of languages in Berlin. When she was at school D.P. remembers giving her a prize for making about three hundred translations of "Ici on parle français." The prize must have been well earned.

A loud speaker unit has been set up in the dining hall so that we can now hear as much of the six o'clock news as may be heard above the noise of the clinking of china.

The societies are still surviving and are well attended. The number of girls in Senior Lit. has increased by one.

Junior Lit. is still running itself and there have been also some very spirited discussions. Apparently the Universe was tackled and disposed of in two meetings, with the kind help of Mr. Thompson and Mr. Leyland's diagrams. After which effort they went on to deal with international affairs!

Natural History meetings are not as well attended as might be, but in spite of this they have have had some very enjoyable and well-informed lectures.

"Choir" has taken up a good deal of time, but on seeing the result of their efforts—"The Pirates of Penzance"—we are inclined to think that their time was not wasted. A full account appears elsewhere in this issue.

Stella Maude
(*Stage 7*).

EASTERTIDE, 1940.

EVERY time I find myself hurrying to catch a train with only seconds to spare, I resolve that it shall not happen again if merely human agency can prevent it. I expect you are the same: most people dislike scurry but often appear to be unable to learn from experience. They can see what they ought to avoid, only they do not avoid it. The separation does not end with people: nearly everyone admits that the nations ought not to be behaving as they are now because it is destructive conduct, yet, wherever we may be inclined to place the blame, they *are* behaving so. What we think and what we do are often tragically apart, and if we are going to be honest, we ought not to dismiss this accusing contradiction in our personality. Sometimes we are apologetically indulgent about it—"it's just like me"; sometimes we are apathetic, almost indifferent—"what can I do about it? I'm made that way. Anyway, what does it matter?"

We know we ought not to dismiss the opinions of others without giving them honest consideration, but we do. We know we ought

to try to see ourselves as others see us and ought not to resent criticism and try to escape by making excuses for our faults and mistakes. We know humility is a rare and lovely jewel. We know we ought to admit the gravity of our aversion to self-discipline. " We ought " : how often are we short.

In this age self-expression and freedom have a rightful emphasis. But freedom, oddly enough, is not doing what you like—society sees to that, as any student who has ever knocked off a policeman's helmet will tell you. So there is one limit on doing what you like, society.

So often in people's minds " doing what you like " has a defiant ring. Confound the community, I'm going a-joying ! But can you confound the community for long, and still joy ? Surely, the most genuine enjoyment is not that which separates you from your fellows (though sometimes it might be), but rather that which unites you more completely. So " doing what you like " is not arrant self-assertion, as many people assume it to be. Enjoyment often, in some paradoxical manner, multiplies by dividing itself.

Freedom, then, which people often regard as the opposite to duty is really learning how to discover and follow the laws which govern our personality, and there are two spheres in which to discover those laws. Really the two merge into one another all the time, but they are separated here for the sake of clarity. First, to discover the laws that govern the unity of the spirit within the individual. Second, to discover the laws which relate the individual most fully to the community in which he lives—the school, the nation, the world. Do you remember these words ? " Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength and with all thy mind : and thy neighbour as thyself." The stress is always on knowing how to live out from ourselves, away from the small interests we regard so anxiously to the vast regions to which belief in Jesus' words lead us.

What is the relation of these things to the separation of thought from action which was the beginning of our thought in this writing ? The relation is this: if all our intended goodness and fairness remain within the secure fortifications of our thought and do not emerge in action, we are not free people, for we have not discovered the laws that govern the freedom of the spirit within and to the community without. We all know people who preach fiercely and

practice little—ourselves, for instance. How do we learn to grow away from inconsistency into the eager effort of really doing and being what we think we ought to do and be?

You remember when Jesus was talking to His disciples before the Crucifixion and He told Peter that he would deny his Master three times, and Peter, being very like us, knew better than that: "Although all be offended, yet will not I." When Jesus still seemed certain "he spoke the more vehemently. If I should die with Thee, I will not deny Thee in any wise. Likewise said they all." Those were their sincere thoughts: we know their actions. Only Jesus did what he said he would do.

Were the story to end there it would merely be more human weakness and the vain courage of one man. But Peter went away in bitterest pain, and, so the story is told, was crucified upside down for his faith, asking that he should not be accounted worthy to die in exactly the same way as his Master. Peter and the other apostles learned from experience because their Master had shewn them the laws that governed them as people. Perhaps this Eastertide has reminded us more shrewdly than any other of recent years of the truth of Jesus' words by contrast with the desparate state we have made for ourselves. It is not very serious if we do not learn from experience in small things, though it is bad discipline: but if we refuse to face the larger issues for ourselves and our society, we are to be so much dead weight asking for direction of some kind, perverting the gifts of the spirit, and we have seen where that leads. We in the schools are the life or death of the future.

C. S.

COPPERS AND CORSAIRS.

TO one whose career at Walden ended long enough ago to allow an unbiassed approach, yet sufficiently recently for the cast to be fairly familiar, a School Performance is intensely interesting. "*The Pirates of Penzance*," despite war-time difficulties (and partly because of a blacked-out hall), did not belie the promise of its two predecessors. While, as an ex-juryman, we have a special soft spot for "*Trial by Jury*," and were brought up on "*H.M.S. Pinafore*," there was a new relish in seeing the "*Pirates*," of which we knew nothing except the Policeman's song, and the fact that the hero was to come of age a week before the performance.

The sad lack of a prima donna among the scholars this year found ample compensation in the opportunity provided for Margaret Erskine to display yet another aspect of her versatile talent as *Mabel*. On the other side of the School Kenneth Francis as *General Stanley* has made excellent use of the year-and-a-term since "*Pinafore*," and cut an even livelier (and vocally more stable) figure than he had as a member of the "Silent" Service. Bernard Jacob's indispensable tenor struck the right Gilbertian note of slightly "dumb" (in the Trans-atlantic sense) virtue, and he made a strapping *Frederick* in his green plus-fours. We quite lost our heart to the ill-used but indomitable *Ruth* of Winifred Lee, who, a new planet, swam into our ken; and though unaware of the identity of the Pirate chieftains, D. Leyland (the *King*) and H. E. Nottridge (*Samuel*), recognised them for the Gentlemen (if decayed) they were.

Had the *Three Chief Daughters*, Mlles. Steven, Buck and Hicks, possessed lung-power (or confidence) to equal their charm, they could not have been bettered, whilst P. Holmes made a facile and taking *Sergeant of Police*. It was encouraging to see no less than eighteen boys in the choruses of *Pirates* and *Police*, actually outnumbering *General Stanley's* daughters by three to two, and even more heartening to hear them. A slight (and in a School production probably inevitable) want of attack was certainly not due to Stanley Thorne, whose control and contrast of singers and orchestra was admirably maintained. We are not qualified to judge orchestral performances, but found the number and variety of instruments very easy on the ear. Distinctions would be invidious in such eminently team-work, but thanks are due to the visiting instrumentalists, and a special tribute to the untiring efficiency of Edna Clark, who with the conductor must have borne the brunt of many rehearsals. The audience noted with pleasure that a gentleman who was magnificent in uniform on last year's stage, did not scorn catgut in the pit!

This year's scenery did not offer "Pinafore's" opportunities for realistic virtuosity, but its designers were at no loss to obtain the required atmosphere, and their ruined temple was a delight. Who discovered the technique of those exciting mackerel skies? Costumes were colourful and imaginative, and reflected credit on designers and seamstresses. Nor could fault be found with lighting

or make-up, unless perhaps an excess of zeal on the part of ———. Whoever was responsible for the modern Major-General ?

Remembering, then, that patriotism is not enough, the critic, that *Slave of Duty*, can still record that Walden provided a first-class entertainment, one which defied the ill omen of a dress rehearsal "even worse than that," they say; nor could there have been a greater disaster than "dropping the Pirate," and robbing the audience of its savoury reminiscences of strutting Constables, crooning flappers, bovine buccaneers and perennial tunes, which will be jealously guarded, and, no doubt most odiously compared and contrasted by the Thespians of Walden for the next decade.

ALAN CARLTON SMITH.

(1935 –37).

THE LECTURE WEEK-END.

THE subject of this year's lectures was "Agriculture and the Land." The opening lecture was given by John Morgan, M.P., on "The agricultural uses of the land." Farming is the most vital industry in existence and is still one of the largest industries in this country with an annual output of £220,000,000. With the coming of the industrial revolution investment capital was diverted from farming into industry at home and also into the development of countries overseas, and goods manufactured at home were exchanged for agricultural imports from the Dominions and the Argentine, etc. Wages in the towns became higher than on the land, and for generations the ambitious young men have deserted the countryside for the town.

Although we import 60% of our foodstuffs, the English farmer has a large unorganised market, and his biggest problem is to sell his produce at an economic price. To-day, there is a serious lack of the necessary new capital to re-equip farm buildings to bring them up-to-date, to purchase modern tackle and to drain the land to make it more fertile, etc. Ten years ago the farmers' financial position was very serious owing to the low prices obtaining for primary commodities and successive governments have come to his rescue with the sugar beet subsidy, the wheat quota, the livestock subsidy,

etc., and the institution of marketing boards. Taking the long view, if agriculture is to prosper in this country, the wages and living conditions for the farm workers must be raised to a similar level to that of the skilled worker in industry, otherwise the drain from the and will continue.

The second session was opened by Dixon Smith who gave a most interesting talk on "Pig and Dairy Farming." Too few dairy farmers are producing "Grade A" milk under modern hygienic conditions. The dairy cow should be fed a scientifically planned ration to secure optimum milk production. Most people do not realise that the pig is a perfectly clean animal if he is given the chance and Scandinavian piggeries are constructed accordingly. It is necessary to plan production, especially in war time, owing to the shortage of feeding stuffs.

Tony Skelton spoke on "Horticulture"—the cultivation of gardens (fruits, flowers and vegetables). During the years 1914—18, vegetable production increased three-fold in this country, and during the last seven years, the value of these products has increased by £2,000,000 a year. Market Gardening is becoming highly specialised; one of the ways a grower can attain success is by cultivating crops under glass to mature early. The National Mark Scheme has been a great help in marketing high-grade produce.

Raymond Dobbin next spoke on "Mixed Farming." He described the system of rotation of crops whereby the fertility of the land may be increased instead of diminished. For agriculture to be prosperous, prices must be better to secure a return on necessary capital investment and to enable the payment of higher wages to keep good men on the land. Without government assistance, the farmer may be beaten by conditions beyond his control.

A special session was held at 8.30 p.m., for Discussion which was opened by Geoffrey Tawell. This was preceded by a Lantern Lecture by John Morgan entitled "A Farmer's Diary" illustrating the work on a farm through the seasons of the year. This was appreciated the more because the lantern slides failed to arrive and John Morgan cleverly worded his narrative to a quite different series of slides which Carl Engelmann was able to procure at the last moment.

On Sunday afternoon Geoffrey Tawell spoke on "Agricultural Training and Education." To-day, the young entrant into the industry has the opportunity of special training courses at the County Agricultural Institutes. Thanks to scientific inventions, agriculture is on the threshold of great expansion; £500,000 a year is being spent on research work. The efficient productions of the most suitable crops, the drainage of land, the use of fertilisers and mechanisation should do much to revivify the derelict and half farmed land to be seen to-day. Good grading and better marketing should bring prosperity back to the farming industry.

Carl Engelmann gave a final talk on "The Immediate Problem." The weather has greatly impeded the ploughing up programme and farmers plan to plough at night between now and mid-April. The official view of the N.F.U. is that present prices do not justify present wage levels and it is likely that a National Wages Board for Agriculture will supersede the County Wages Boards. Price linkage between wages and prices is what is required.

It was generally agreed that the speakers reached a very high level of competence and delivery and the contributions of old scholars particularly helped to make up one of the most enjoyable and instructive series of week-end lectures held in recent years.

The theme of Paul Mauger's thoughtful address in Evening Meeting was "Planning."

The Old Boys beat the School 1—0 at Football after the discovery at half-time that they were fielding twelve players! The Hockey Match resulted in a win for Old Scholars, 5—1.

D.F.B.

SO THIS IS CIVILISATION.

OLD Rudolph Sklandotz was sitting behind the counter of his shop; a shop typical of the small Jewish shops in that part of Poland. The Germans, when they had captured the town, had lost no time in branding the shops: "Beware! This shop belongs to a Jewish Swindler!"

They had broken all his property and the old man was sitting amid the ruins, mumbling to himself: "What have I done to deserve all this?"

"Nothing, father!" It was his son, Hermann, who was a strong boy of seventeen. "I must go out and see how my friends are, it worries me, not knowing what has happened to them."

"Alright my son; and God bless you." He waved to him as he went out. He then fell back to meditating upon this catastrophe that had overtaken him.

Suddenly, there were cries of "Long live Poland!" And "Down with those Nazi traitors. We'll have their blood."

This started a terrible uproar. People poured out of houses to see what was going on. A few foolish people, who thought they could do some good by shouting with the others, joined the crowd. Nazi policemen arrived on the scene and with the aid of soldiers rounded up the rioters. But they did not find it very easy to do this, and they left one of their number lying dead, when they had rounded them up. The police hounded them past the Sklandotz shop and old Rudolph, who was outside watching was caught up among them. A policeman kicked him hard from behind. "Get along you Polish rat!" But Rudolph was not able to answer that, he was lying in the gutter, unable to get up.

He was stamped on. "Get up you . . . . . !" Rudolph was hauled up and hounded along with the rest. It was a long journey while the police were threatening any stragglers.

Eventually they came to a house with all the windows barred up and armed guards standing outside. Rudolph and the rest were forced up the path to the house, running the gauntlet of guards, who pricked the unfortunate prisoners with their bayonets. When they got inside there was such a crowd that they all had to stand. Many of them had hysterics and Rudolph was on the verge of collapse. There was no talking, except for a few murmurs: "How much longer of this Hell?" And expressions like that.

When dawn came round the first batch of prisoners were called out by an official. Rudolph was among them. They were led down a long passage "to be questioned." The officer seemed particularly aggressive and swore profusely at the unfortunates. Rudolph was placed in front of a desk behind which the fierce looking officer sat.

The officer had taken a distinct disliking to Rudolph already.

"What were you doing, you dog?"

"Nothing sir!" Rudolph tried to keep his voice calm, but did not succeed.

"Shut up, you filthy swine! You . . . . . You . . . . . Take him away! Shoot him!" The man was in a filthy temper.

"Yes sir," a soldier answered and led Rudolph away. Even now he could hear periodic cracks—the execution squad was already at work.

Rudolph thought of the life he had led. It seemed so unreal, freedom; justice; and all that was worth living for. Yet he had lived through all that. He came to the conclusion that life, anyhow, would not be worth living.

These thoughts were still buzzing through his head when the head of the execution squad called out: "Lead in . . . . er . . . . Hermann Sklandotz."

Rudolph suddenly woke up. His son . . . . What had he done? Where was he? . . . . These thoughts ran through Rudolph's head. Then his eyes cleared and he saw his son being tied up to the post.

"I will join you soon Hermann!" He made a dive but was restrained. "Oh, Hermann what have you done?"

Hermann never answered, the execution squad had done its worst.

"Lead in . . . . Who is it? Oh! . . . . Rudolph Sklandotz." They tied him to the post and blindfolded him. His emotions were too great for him to speak, but he mumbled something that sounded like: "Long live our country! Poland, the land of the free!"

But its only effect was to hasten the order, "Fire!"

Roland Page
(Stage 7a).

LONDON.

DARK and dismal streets of London :
Where the sun will never shine—
Grubby children, dogs and kittens,
A smell of cabbage, and washing,
Hanging on a line.

Parks and greens and cemeteries ;
Where the grass is ever green,
Tended by a careful hand.
And rows and rows of houses —
All alike, in every street.

And the pavements ache and groan :
As eight million people tread the stones ;
And death is waiting round the corner,
Hov'ring over its living prey,
As they pass and cross the roads.

And all of them are strangers,
To themselves and other people :
Torn within the living stream,
Passing silently and self-sufficient,
Despairing, hoping, dumb.

London ! centre of their lives—
A town so hard and full of cruelty,
And yet, possessing beauty, wonder, light :
London in a morning mist—
Transparent, hazy, like a dream.

Ursula Alsberg
(Stage 6a).

THE MECCANO CLUB.

AT the beginning of the term the Scouts had the use of the Meccano Room.

Later it was decided to renew the Meccano Club and a meeting was arranged for the people who would like to join. The number was thirteen (I hope that nobody is superstitious).

The next thing to do was to elect the curators, secretary, and vice-chairman, Mr. Thompson being the chairman.

We discovered that there were ten shillings already in the funds, and when everybody had paid his subscription there was sixteen shillings and sixpence.

There was a time table drawn up telling us which times we must not be in the Meccano Room, which times we must not make a noise, and which times we can make as much noise as we like. We have to fit in with the Experimental Room and Mr. Thorne's music lessons in this respect.

After this some members of the club spent many half-holidays in the Meccano Room taking stock of the things that we have accumulated, taking up the old track, as we have just started to lay the new track. We decided on a track by everybody submitting his own ideas and then by taking the best ideas out of all of them. Needless to say, we are looking forward to the time when we shall have finished laying the new track and shall be using the trains in a realistic manner.

Some of the Meccano Club members have joined the larger Meccano Guild which describes itself as "the large brotherhood of Meccano boys." These boys are the proud wearers of a blue and silver badge which is inscribed with the words "The Meccano Guild" in gold letters.

I am sure that our readers who have read this account will wish us good luck in times to come, despite the membership of thirteen.

Donald Simpson
(Stage 4a.)

TWO THOUSAND MILES ON TWO WHEELS.

FOUR days after leaving Saffron Walden we were in Paris with only our bicycles and a minimum of equipment, all of which was packed into our cycle bags. After a brief stay in Paris we hurried on via Besancon and the Perte du Rhône to Geneva. The Perte du Rhône, in the Jura mountains is where the river Rhône, after flowing through Lake Geneva becomes so narrow that you can step across it with safety.

From Geneva we went along Switzerland to Zürich where we spent one day visiting the exhibition, which, though good, we did not think was as good as the Liège Exhibition which we saw later. Thence we went to the Schaffhausen Falls and along the banks of the Rhine to Basle.

After leaving Basle we re-entered France and crossed the Vosges by a col over three thousand feet high, and then proceeded via Nancy and Metz into Luxembourg. We cycled for some distance along the Luxembourg-German frontier and then crossed into Belgium. The only evidence of where Luxembourg ended and Belgium began was a milestone by the side of the road marked "Frontière."

We went straight across a small part of Belgium, stopping one day at Liège, and then going on northward through Holland to Nymegen and Zwolle.

After spending some time riding on the dykes in the lowland near the Zuiderzee we crossed the great dam, twenty-two miles long, to Wieringermeer.

The Wieringermeer Polder, a section of land re-claimed from the sea, is at present the largest polder in the world, although the three other projected polders of the Zuiderzee, when they are complete, will be even larger.

From here we went via Vollendam and Edam to Amsterdam, where we spent most of one day, and then on to Hilversum, Utrecht and The Hague. Leaving The Hague and Rotterdam we returned to Belgium to complete our trip in towns such as Antwerp, Brussels and Ghent; and then, after a final bathe on the Belgian coast at Ostend, we took the boat for Dover.

Food was different in almost every country we visited but our mid-day meal consisted nearly always of a loaf of bread and some cheese or chocolate—a very satisfactory form of food when you are using up so much energy.

Breakfast in France and Belgium was merely a cup of coffee or chocolate and a roll. Swiss breakfasts were larger although there was not the variety of Holland. In Holland all kinds of things are eaten for breakfast: bread, shortbread, ginger bread, cheese, chocolate (in a granulated or flaked form), jam, and many other similar foods. Tea, with practically no milk, is the standard drink. Our evening meal was the main meal of the day and had to replace all the energy we had used up; it generally consisted of soup, meat, vegetables, and then fruit or cheese or ice cream.

Holland, Luxembourg and part of Belgium were the only countries where neither French nor German is spoken habitually and even there many people understand either one or the other or English. In eastern Holland and in parts of Belgium we came into contact with people who spoke nothing but Flemish and that led to one or two amusing incidents. Eventually we learned enough Dutch to buy most of our daily requisites without difficulty.

We had marvellous weather for the prettiest ride of all; ninety miles through the steep sided, wooded valleys of the Jura with the snow capped Alps in the distance. This was the first fine day after having had rain every day across France, but after leaving Basle we had fine weather the whole way. The only ride that was completely spoilt by bad weather conditions was the ride along Lake Geneva which should have afforded us marvellous views of the Alps.

The most interesting country we visited was Holland; probably because it was so different from everywhere else. Every evening the whole of Holland puts away its bicycle and goes for a walk; the streets seemed so crowded that the first night we were in Holland we enquired whether there were any celebrations on.

Except for a few hills in the South-Eastern part, the only hills in Holland seem to be the bridges over the ubiquitous canals. In Amsterdam alone there are four hundred and eleven bridges.

The Zuiderzee dam which for eighteen miles is absolutely straight sounds rather uninteresting but actually both ends were extremely

interesting; and to ride along a road where you cannot see either end is an amazing experience. Besides the sluice gates and the locks, both ends are fortified and we had to show our passports before we were allowed to cross.

In some places conventional Dutch costumes are still worn, varying slightly in form according to the district of Holland. Vallendam is famous for the national costumes, but we saw them in many unknown villages in the east of the country.

Besides this old tradition we saw the modern Holland as well: the Town Hall of Hilversum is famous, but in this town a great many of the buildings are fine examples of modern architecture.

The cycling effort naturally varied with the type of country but the two hardest days were through the Jura and through the Ardennes—in both cases the scenery was marvellous. The Vosges Mountains would have been a serious obstacle if we had not had the aid of a bus up the last eight or so miles of a very long hill. Nevertheless we came down every hill we went up and consequently hard work was always rewarded by a rest. There was no resting in Holland but just the same effort all the time.

The chief discomfort came not from work but from cobble stones. Cobbled roads, besides being uncomfortable were responsible for most of the nine punctures we had during the trip.

During less than four weeks actual cycling we travelled two thousand miles, seeing five different countries besides England, two exhibitions and numerous well-known towns.

J. W. L. Dutton (*Post Matric.*)
W. A. JENNINGS (1935—39).



THE SERGEANT'S MESS.

ONE of the purposes of this educational foundation is to see that attenders, after a suitable course of instruction, shall complicate the existence of an obscure sect called "examiners." These are looked upon by most common people rather as the publicans and sinners were looked on in the Bible.

To ensure victory in the uneven struggle between examiner and examinee, a less obscure, and exceedingly astute body of people is bent on helping the examinee. The name of this assemblage is Staff. Having themselves deceived examiners a number of times, and all having deceived the same kind of examiner at the Great Reckonings called General Schools for the Lesser, and Matriculation for the Greater Reckoning, they are qualified in this particular kind of low cunning.

* * *

On a certain Wednesday in late autumn four members of the male staff went to Cambridge to see what was expected of them in this war. They looked for the most sand-bagged building in the town, and, sure enough, this was the recruiting office.

A man whose only calling in life was to be a retired sergeant-major fixed the four anxious men with a critical and self-possessed eye.

"What ju young gentlemen want?"

"We want to know what to expect in calling-up regulations."

"What ju do?"

"We're all schoolmasters."

A look of surprise and disdain smoothed his wrinkled face, and made his moustache bristle.

"See the Ministry of Labour man in there. But wait till he's free."

A man was already talking to the "Ministy of Labour Man," both seated on desks in a lecture-room. The four pedagogues waited outside, reading notices that summoned all to join every imaginable kind of force. Occasionally uniformed men and women passed either purposefully or absently, all carrying files tied with faded, but very impressive pink tape. The ex-sergeant-major kept an open, jaundiced eye on his four new recruits to see they did

not get up to any jumping-in-tricks. Then someone came and summoned him away, and giving a last commanding look, he went.

The four heroes-to-be immediately walked into the lecture-room and sat waiting, and when the belligerent ex-soldier put an irate face into the room, he found them talking to the "Ministry of Labour man." Doing things without being told to is frowned on in the code of a sergeant-major.

The Ministry of Labour supplies books for its employees to save uncertainty and all information was quickly given. Now they were free to do the rounds of the forces. But only the R.A.F. was wanted, and so they went to the room where they wanted new Daedaluses (or is it Daedali?)

An officer in a Savile Row uniform passed them, and called into the room, in a Savile Row accent; "I say, Sergeant, there's a bunch of che-e-aps heah."

A gentleman with sandy, wavy hair and a short sandy moustache summoned the che-e-aps in. He was young, and probably weary of seeing prospective recruits. He had a watery eye.

"What sort o' fing ju want?"

Only one man wished to make enquiry, and he stated his qualifications and asked the kind of job they would suit.

"Well, it depends on what ye're aimin' at. Sounds as though an armourer's your job. You 'andle bombs and weppins an' ye're responsible for them. O' course, we can only take on in jobs where there are vacancies. Nex' week we may want bakers or builders. What abaht you others?"

The other three explained that their hopes of glory lay in other directions. The sergeant gave a brief outline of the values of service in the Air Force and said that there would be openings for men.

"Wot's yer jobs?"

"We're all schoolmasters at a secondary school."

"Well, mind yer, the openings I've suggested are all for men with their Schools' Certificate. 'Ave you all got your Certificates?"

The four men took it very well, really. One of them said shamelessly "I'm trying for mine again next June." His voice was very solemn.

"Ah, well," said the unwitting sergeant, "I wish you all the best for it."

And that was a bit more than the four could stand, so they left hastily.

War, praise be, has its victories no less renowned than peace's . . .

C.S.

AFTER THIRTEEN YEARS.

ON August 24th, 1939, the British residents in Berlin were strongly advised by their consul to leave the country" owing to the strained relations between Germany and England." This came as a great shock and as everything was quiet the next day, I could not make up my mind to do so. But Saturday morning we heard that all the forces were being completely mobilized and that the frontiers were going to be closed. Very reluctantly I had to decide it would be better to leave that evening. I knew it was too late to get any registered luggage through, and so I had to decide very quickly what to take with me, having, naturally, no idea how long I should be separated from the majority of my belongings, which two German friends promised to store for me. As the news that I was leaving spread amongst my German friends and pupils I received constant offers of help and during the course of the day ten boxes of chocolates were brought to cheer me on my way. The headmaster of a large school in Berlin (whom I had helped to bring out new text books for teaching English) and his wife both came to help me pack, and then insisted on taking me to the station in their car, though their petrol ration was already very small. Not a porter was to be seen as we reached the station, and I shall never forget the sight of that elderly German gentleman staggering along under the weight of my heavy suitcases. The platform was already packed with passengers and luggage and when the train came in half an hour later the rush was indescribable. However, a young Storm Trooper helped me in and even found a seat for me which, strangely enough, was next to the reserved seats of some aquaintances of mine. As the train steamed out the Headmaster called out "Let us know when you come back and we will come and meet you!" At

each of the other stations in Berlin where the train stopped and where more passengers crowded in, friends were waiting to bid me farewell.

We reached Osnabrück at 5 o'clock the next morning. Here the station was crowded with soldiers and I was struck by the look of abject despair on their faces. Several hundred Americans got into the train and we started off with ten adults and three children—not to mention the luggage -- in the compartment. We heard that the newcomers had set out for England on a German ship but the captain had been ordered not to land, and after cruising round the North Sea for three days they had been taken back to Hamburg.

Before leaving Berlin I had been told that I was mad to go via Holland as there was already fighting on the Dutch frontier, but as we neared it, all we saw were solitary soldiers standing at the cross roads. I had, however, been persuaded to take enough money with me to pay for a ticket through Denmark if this should be necessary. At the last stop before the frontier the Storm Trooper got out—he had to climb through the window to do this as it was quite impossible to move along the corridor and continental trains only have doors at each end of the cars—I quickly put the bank notes I had into an envelope, addressed it to a friend in Berlin and asked him to post it for me. I have since heard that it reached its destination. Before we passed into Holland, the many emigrants in the train had to get out with all their luggage, and they were so thoroughly searched that most of them were unable to get back before we started off again, though, for some unknown reason the train was held up for two hours. My English acquaintances were also turned out of the train because they hadn't through tickets to London (they had had return tickets from Hamburg to Grimsby but no more boats had been running). As they did not know whether the money they had with them would see them through, I lent them my 10 Rm. (about 16/- which was all each person was allowed to take out of Germany). I afterwards heard that as the boat service from Flushing was cancelled they were sent to Rotterdam and were there held up by the police for 24 hours!

And so I left the country which had been my home for 13 years; a country I love and which I intend to return to as soon as possible.

We reached London after midnight—nearly four hours late. No one was there to meet me though I had wired before leaving

Berlin—the wire had, however, taken 26 hours instead of the usual two! As I was wandering about the stacks of luggage on the platform looking for my suitcases from which I had become separated at Harwich, and wondering what I was going to do without a penny in my pocket—oh! how tired and cold and hungry I was—I suddenly ran into a German lady whom I had known in Berlin, and who at once offered to put me up for the night. We managed to retrieve all my luggage except one piece, which unfortunately has not turned up to this day, and it was not long before I tumbled into bed having been fortified by a good meal and a badly needed hot bath.

GRACE PORTER (1916—21).



SCHOOL DIARY.

January 18th.—School re-opened.

„ 21st.—Meeting, Mr. Littleboy.

„ 28th.—Mr. Herbert Banyard, "So This is London."

„ 29th.—Meeting, Mr. Herbert Banyard.

February 3rd.—Mr. G. A. Lundie, "British Columbia."

„ 10th.—Mr. G. Morris, "A Holiday in Czecho-Slovakia."

„ 24th.—Football Match: Boys' XI. v. S.W. United, won 5—1.

Hockey Match: v. S.W. Training College, 1—1 draw.

Film: "Wings over Everest."

March 2nd.—Old Scholars' week-end.

Football Match v. Old Scholars, lost 1—0.

Hockey Match v. Old Scholars, lost 4—1.

Lecture: Mr. John Morgan.

„ 3rd.—Meeting, Mr. P. Mauger.

„8th & 9th.—"The Pirates of Penzance."

„ 16th.—Football Match: Boys' XI. v. S.W. United, lost 5—1.

Mr. Donald Bridger, Recital on Oboe and Cor Anglais.

„ 17th.—Meeting, Miss D. Milliken.

„ 23rd.—Hockey Match v. S.W. Ladies' Hockey Club, won 2—0.

„ 28th.—Taken as a Holiday.

April 4th.—School closed.

NOTICES.

Three numbers of *The Avenue* are published each year, price 8d. per copy (post free 10d.) or 2s. per annum (post free 2s. 6d.)

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Articles in *The Avenue* by boys and girls are signed in italics.

C.S.W.O.S.A.

You may join the Old Scholars' Association by giving your name and paying 1s. (the special rate for first year Old Scholars), to Mr. Littleboy before you leave school.

You will then have full particulars of all functions direct from the O.S. Secretary, Henry B. Rowntree, 16, Wood Street, Chelmsford, Essex.

SCHOOL MAGAZINES.

We wish to acknowledge the receipt of the magazines of our companion schools which arrived after going to print at the end of last term, and those which have arrived so far this term. Besides the obvious interest to us, the exchange of magazines is a courtesy we much appreciate.

The magazines received are: *St. Christopher's Magazine*, *The Beckside*, *The Georgian*, *Cambridge and County High School Magazine*.

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