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No 1.

Editorial.

We propose this term to spare our readers and ourselves anything in the nature of a lengthy editorial. We wish to observe proportion in all things, and feel that a short term calls for correspondingly few remarks in this column.

We have to congratulate ourselves on that rare occurrence, an Easter term completely free from epidemics. If we have anything to deplore it is the weather we have had which has seriously interfered with football and which makes our immunity from disease all the more remarkable. We must hope for better things in this respect next term, for good weather, good work and good games.

With no apology for the paucity of our remarks we conclude by wishing all our readers very pleasant holidays.

Bird Life in our Grounds, 1913.

(Continued).

Woodpigeons might be heard cooing before January was out. One would think that these birds would be content to pick up their building material on the ground, but I have more than once seen them breaking twigs off the trees for the purpose; on April 9th when I was reclining in my easy chair in the tree by the gate into the field, a woodpigeon settled a few feet below me and at once began to search for a likely twig and was not satisfied with the first two or three it tried, but presently found one to its liking. A pair built at the top of the big

Scotch pine at the bottom of the field and the sitting bird could easily be seen from below. On June 14th I climbed up to inspect and found a single nestling about a week old, looking very ugly and helpless. The owls seemed to know all about it and just before it was fully fledged on the night of June 29th it was carried off, leaving many feathers on the ground beneath. I noticed that in December woodpigeons came in to roost very early arriving at Mount Lodge with great punctuality within a few minutes of 3 p.m.

Pheasant. At 6 p.m. on April 2nd I saw a hen-pheasant run across the field; presumably she nested somewhere near, for on Oct. 9th I shot a pheasant—not quite fully grown—as it was flying over the western boundary of the field. A hen pheasant is still about.

Warblers. Chiffchaffs were as usual the first summer immigrant to arrive; in fact it was weeks before I heard willow warblers. March 24th was the date of the chiffchaff's arrival, and they were to be heard all day long. I heard the first blackcap in Mount View garden on May 20th and often afterwards there and in Whiteford Woods. The willow warblers were on both sides, but chiefly, as usual, on the west boundary, while chiffchaffs kept to the east. I doubt if we shall ever have a nest of warblers to record.

Finches. I cannot find a single reference to a bullfinch in my notes and do not remember seeing or hearing one. Greenfinches reappeared on March 24th and during April and May might be heard and seen almost any day on all sides; curiously enough I was unable to find any nest on the premises, but by the latter half of June hungry twittering families were constantly on the move and could be seen chasing their harassed parent from place to place and never stopping their demand for food. Chaffinches were very abundant, particularly out of the breeding season. Two or three early singers (the first Feb. 3rd) showed great rivalry at the bottom of the field. It was here on May 10th that I found a nest just begun in the privet. It was finished in a very hasty and skimpy fashion.

and contained an egg on the 16th, but was robbed two days later. Probably it was the same pair that by the middle of June had a young family in a skilfully hidden nest in the big Scotch pine. One fine morning on Sept. 12th the behaviour of a number of chaffinches greatly interested me. A swarm of midges were hanging about the big cypress-tree. At the end of each bough there seemed to be a chaffinch—from 20 to 30 of them—which darted out every minute and made a capture with almost the same actions as a flycatcher returning to its post to continue the game. All day long this curious performance continued, but only chaffinches took part in it. Through the whole of the autumn a fairly large flock of chaffinches was feeding daily in the middle of the field, generally in the company of an equal number of house-sparrows. The ground was so bare that it was difficult to imagine what nourishment they could find there, but I discovered that it was on the tiny seeds of a small weed of the persicaria tribe, of which there seemed an inexhaustible supply. I noticed that at first these were almost entirely immature birds of the year with a few male adults; by the middle of November many adult birds of both sexes were there. They usually go about in pairs sometimes before Valentine's day—the supposed mating time for birds.

Spotted Flycatchers It may be remembered that in 1911 a pair of these attractive summer migrants occupied box 4, but that they failed to turn up in 1912. They are always late arrivals. I saw a bird once or twice in May and June and came to the conclusion that they had a nest in Whiteford woods near the Red House. I had quite given them up, when on July 4th a pair appeared at their old quarters. It was clearly a second attempt and they lost no time in finishing a pretty nest in the ivy-grown box. On July 7th the first egg was laid, but the sequel was tragic. After examining the contents of the nest I had left a step-ladder in position. It occurred to me later that this was rather dangerous and I went to take it away. Alas! it was already too late, for I found only the mangled remains of the mother on the grass

beneath; a cat had evidently caught her on the nest at night. This was on the 10th. I put the nest in the school museum, where it may now be seen; an interesting feature about it is that it contains in the lining the glittering wing of a dragon-fly.

Wagtail. My notes about pied wagtails ('water wagtails') are not very numerous, and mostly refer to the autumn. A few were passing in October, and a small flock lingered about in the field for a day or two in the middle of November; otherwise I noticed no definite migratory movement, though I was on the look out for it. There is no reason at all why a pair should not nest here, but hitherto they have not done so. As in preceding years the more beautiful (so-called) 'grey' wagtail was an interesting winter visitor. I did not see one before November 7th, though I often heard one near the front drive before then. Its favourite resort as usual was the roof of the greenhouse, where I frequently disturbed it. Often too it would perch high in a tree and utter its sharp call notes. When I was working all day in the garden about Christmas time I noticed that a grey wagtail (one individual, it seemed,) would fly high overhead from Mount View over to the Peverell fields and back again about every hour. I only once saw two together.

Magpie. A near neighbour all the year round. As early as February 16th I watched a pair already building in a tall ilex just over the wall in Mount View.

House Sparrow. Box 12 as usual was wasted on sparrows, but they occupied no other box. I found an unusual use for sparrows in the Summer, when they seized and carried off each feather shed by the poultry during the moulting time, and did a great deal to keep the place tidy. Without them indeed I could hardly have allowed the fowls the run of the field at this time. If a couple of hens had a set-to, there would nearly always be a sparrow or two to make off with the feathers that were flying. On November 28th I noticed a very conspicuous sparrow with white wings, and I have seen it about at intervals since. With birds which are supposed to be here

all the year round it is always instructive to be able to keep a particular individual under observation, and I shall be glad of any information as to the comings and goings of this sparrow, which is seen curiously seldom

Hedge-Sparrow. There was a nest in the thick of the barberry hedge, where the eggs were hatched towards the end of April, but these birds so often seem to be thinned out in the nest in some mysterious way which I have not yet solved, and only two were reared—the others simply disappearing. Possibly it was the same pair which had a nest close by in a bush across the drive later on; it contained the first egg on June 11th and four eggs were laid, but it was too easily seen and was soon pulled out—probably by a passing errand boy, with nothing better to do. These birds are often extraordinarily fearless, without being exactly tame, and they are to be found day after day within a very small area. During the whole of the autumn I hardly ever missed seeing a hedge-sparrow in the scratching-shed of the first poultry run in the field. On Feb. 16th I proved to my own satisfaction that both male and female sing, this however is a point on which I should hardly expect to convince others.

Wren. I have never failed to have something interesting to record with these favourites of mine. This year their doings were full of interest and in many particulars confirmed previous observations of my own which were at variance with the 'books.' For one thing I think I may claim to have established the fact that the period of incubation is at least two days longer than generally supposed, if we strike an average. Apart from six unfinished nests, I had three occupied nests under constant observation. For the purposes of comparison we will call them A, B, and C. Each had a clutch of six eggs. In nest 'A,' on the west side of the field, the first egg was laid on May 9th, incubation lasted 16 days, and the young were fledged in 18 days. In nest 'B,' placed in a gooseberry-bush, the first egg was laid on May 15th, incubation lasted 16 days, and the young were fledged in 17 days, leaving one dead nestling behind. [In this case the fact that I

was taking constant photographs in full view at a distance of a foot and a half probably hastened their departure; the young were fully capable of taking flight several days before they did, and often one or two youngsters fluttered out into the bush to meet their parents bringing food]. In nest 'C,' on the East side of the field, the first egg was laid on June 22nd. [I found the parent bird roosting on it that night], incubation lasted $14\frac{1}{2}$ days, and the young disappeared on the 19th day. This third nest illustrated in a striking way a peculiarity which I remarked on in 1911. I first found it as early as April 29th, when it was complete, but unlined; yet it was more than seven weeks before it was lined with feathers; so that actually a nest which was finished in other respects before the Summer term began still contained young birds on the day we broke up! Of the extra nests three were of no special interest; one being in box 21, one in a hole in the wall behind the Red House where there is always a half-made nest early in the year, and one in an empty cocoa-nut close by. On March 25th I found a wren was trying to place a nest just inside the stable where the joist gave little foundation for one; the material fell down, but I picked it up and replaced it, nailing up a strip of wood to form a wider platform for it. The wren actually returned and was busily working at it next day; eventually it was deserted, but was used for roosting purposes occasionally later on. A nest (D) was started in a cypress by the Red House on May 18th and another (E) in the yew opposite the front door on May 5th, but both were left unlined. I have before now pointed out that when young wrens are fledged they do not return (as far as I have observed) to their own nest to roost, but either move into an extra unlined nest or take possession of any old nest available, and sometimes divide the family between two nests. On June 22nd when the wrens left nest B I was on the look out before sunset to see what would happen. The parents seemed very undecided, they seemed, after a long inspection of box 5 close by, to have fixed on it, but presently decided in favour of an old blackbirds' nest in a neighbouring bush; they settled in

here with considerable fuss, but suddenly changed their minds once more when they found they were being watched. The alarm was given and they ended by sleeping—at least one parent with four young ones—in nest (E). [Eight days later they were roosting in a thrush's nest at the top of the big cypress. The yew was lopped off short soon after this, but as late as October 20th I found wrens roosting still in nest (E)] I found a single bird sleeping in nest (D) the same evening, and succeeded too in watching the family which had recently left nest A go to roost in a deserted blackbirds' nest by the stable; all were tucked into this nest, but on a visit later in the evening only three flew out, being at once joined by a parent from somewhere else.

Blue tits, Brought off broods in three boxes. A pair persisted through all March and April in trying to re-occupy box 17, which they had held under great difficulties in 1912 against nut hatches; this time however they came off second best. From the beginning of January another pair were constantly in and about their favourite box 8 at the summer house, and their visits continued for nearly three months—the last date I observed them there being March 26th, but strangely enough in the end they deserted it. Box 10 in the field as usual was occupied, and as usual was a little earlier than the others. The 8 eggs were laid by May 16th and hatched thirteen days later. The other two selected boxes had been untenanted in previous years. In Box 15 I saw the very beginning of the nest on May 11th, the 5 eggs were laid by May 22nd and incubation lasted fourteen days. Box 11 requires a ladder to get to it, and I examined it only once on May 23rd when there were 7 eggs. The hole in the wall by the Broad Path was not occupied this time, but another at the S.E. corner of the field had a brood which flew on June 16th, and escaped observation till the day before that date. I should mention perhaps that a considerable assembly of blue tits were feeding on the beech mast by the path to the allotments during the latter half of February.

Great tits. Their cheery notes were to be heard fairly often from Jan. 8th in the field, but less as the spring advanced. On May 9th they were beginning a nest in box 5 and were at it off and on for several days. On May 18th I found a great tit sitting on the nest, but there were no eggs on later examination, and for no apparent reason it was deserted. There was not much to be seen of them for the rest of the year—once or twice in October and November, but not at all in December.

Long-tailed tits. A large family party visited different parts of the grounds between July 14th and the 20th.

Coal tits. More or less about all the year round. A pair were hanging about by the furnace-house on April 3rd and I had hopes of their nesting here. I even prepared a very tempting hole in the bank there, but they either did not find it or knew of a better one.

Marsh tits. Each season it seems possible that a box will take their fancy. Thus on April 1st a pair were busy examining box 3. It is an interesting fact that marsh tits may be seen in pairs all the year round; I am not sure whether this has been recorded in the 'books,' but I have noticed it for many years.

Willow tits. Before the present century this bird did not appear in British lists, and information about it is extremely incomplete. Scientifically it is generally accepted as a separate species, though the fact remains that in appearance, habits, haunts and notes it is hardly to be distinguished in the field from the marsh tit. In many parts of the country large numbers of marsh tits have been shot by collectors in the hope of identifying a willow tit among them. I have always had a great liking for the marsh tit, and certainly did not mean to sacrifice one for such a purpose, though I have tried to trap one alive to examine it. On June 29th however I had a unique opportunity of examining what undoubtedly was a willow tit. Attracted by their notes I had quietly stalked a pair of tits in the flower bed by the summer house, when one of them proceeded very deliberately to take a sun bath on the path just in front of me, with every feather spread out to its fullest

extent; it must have remained so for a full minute, and then the pair of them flew off a few yards to the kitchen garden and I followed up to see the same performance repeated. It gave me far greater pleasure than if I had been examining a dead bird in my hand, and was equally convincing.

Starlings. It may be remembered that in 1912 a second brood was reared in box 9. In 1913 the same thing happened again in this box and in box 7 as well. In box 1 only one nestling was reared; it was hatched on April 30th and was still in the nest on May 18th. In box 9 likewise only a single bird was reared at the first attempt; I examined this on May 13th when it was nearly ready to fly, and on May 29th the nest contained 4 eggs. In box 7 three young were reared in May, and two in June. All these three boxes are invariably in great request and every fine morning in the early part of the year witnesses many fierce disputes over them. They are all used too for roosting purposes in the autumn and winter, but I think seldom accommodate more than one bird at a time. It is curious how slow starlings are to discover that certain boxes—especially 3, 17 and 11 are not intended for them and that the entrance is far too small; they spend many hours every season squabbling in the most ludicrous fashion over what cannot possibly be of any use to them. The first young starlings were out in the world on May 18th. The holes under the lead of the roof of the Lodge was once more the scene of acrobatic feats, and owing to the difficulties of the situation the young were very late in the nest, being still there on June 3rd. There is no doubt at all that the female was the same ingenious mother as in other years; if the male was the same too, he had at length learnt his lesson from her and saved himself his desperate and generally futile scramble up the slates at an angle of 45 degrees. The alternative trick is by no means a simple one, and he usually bungled it once or twice. A brood as usual was successfully reared in the roof of the stable.

Nuthatches. Last but certainly not east in my haphazard list. I have already recorded how in 1912 a pair fixed their affections on box 17, but the hole was too small for them and defied all their efforts till one day in November a nuthatch squeezed in for the first time. It was very soon after this event that the privacy of this particular box was invaded by the new building which when completed came within a few feet of it. Perhaps this was hardly to the liking of the nuthatches, and in January and February they were seen overhauling boxes 14 and 3, but in the end they remained faithful to their first choice. All day long one heard the different variations of their ringing whistle—often so human in its tone. On April 3rd at last I saw them hard at work taking in flakes of pine bark. A nuthatch's nest is always made of a loose pile of such chips and strips of bark. The next day I watched them more closely. The hen bird always took her supply of bark into the hole as soon as she had collected it, but the cock bird never entered but clinging outside thrust his contribution in and dropped it; every now and then when he let go a gust of wind would blow the pieces of bark back into his face and scatter them outside, to his evident annoyance. At intervals both birds would resume their endless hammering outside the hole; it seemed to have hardly any effect, but was always directed along one crack, as if they aimed at chipping off one particular bit. It was not till May 13th that I made an inspection with a ladder. I found four nestlings not more than three days old. They were naked except for a little grey down, and their lemon coloured mouths were widely opened. The curious thing was that during the whole time I was looking the parent birds were on the tree within a few feet of me with food in their mouths, but not uttering any sort of alarm note such as they invariably sounded if a stray starling perched near their box. The inner side of the hole had been very effectively rounded off by incessant hammering and I examined it very carefully for any sign of mud plastering, for even when the hole is none too large for them they almost always find some slight plastering an improvement.

When I tried with my knife I found that a very thin coating had been applied. On June 3rd the young left the nest; one actually made its way into Mr. Brodie's room, and when liberated it quickly scrambled up the trunk squeaking loudly. For the rest of the month the whole family were constantly backwards and forwards between Whiteford woods and their home. They were exceedingly tame and allowed me to photograph them at very close quarters on the terrace. The hard-worked parent was very perceptibly thinner than its children, and looked in poor condition. On June 30th I noticed a nuthatch tinkering away at the old hole again, and they were continually at it all the autumn. I should add that I again observed their habit of pulling off leaves from the twigs near their box and this had the effect of exposing it much more to the light.

Though it has no direct bearing on the bird life, I ought to record the interesting appearance of a weasel which on Sept. 3rd ran across the field.

A. H. M. C.

The Prize-Giving.

Speech Day, which had been postponed from last term, was held on Friday, February 6th. The occasion was one of more than ordinary interest, as the ceremony served to inaugurate the enlarged Gymnasium which had grown up in so marvellous a manner during the Christmas holidays.

There was present a very large assembly, when at 3 p.m. the Headmaster opened the proceedings by reporting progress for the year. He dealt first of all with the subject of the epidemic which had brought the previous term to such a catastrophic end, and then made clear to parents the precautions with which such attacks are met at Mount House. The School, he continued, had reason to congratulate itself on its numbers, and the time had come when the policy of expansion had to be exchanged for that of consolidation.

The aim of a school was not numbers, but efficiency, and it was important that the latter consideration should not be lost sight of in a too eager striving after the first. Mr. Cox expressed the regret that the School felt at the departure of the Rev. J. L. Nightingale from St. Gabriel's, and paid a warm tribute to the work he has done for the School and the interest he had taken in it. After mentioning various successes of past and present members of the School, which have been chronicled in these pages during the year, Mr. Cox called upon Mrs. Knowling to present the prizes, when the following boys received the rewards of their efforts :—

FORM VI.—*Latin*, Cocks ; *Mathematics*, Cocks ; *English*, Nightingale (special) ; *French*, Marescaux i. (special).

FORM V.—*Latin*, Curtis ; *Mathematics*, Goodman ; *English*, Smith ; *French*. D'Arcy.

FORM IV.—*Mathematics*, Knowling ; *French*, Edwards.

FORM III.—*Latin*, Wray i. ; *Mathematics*, Cotter ; *English*, Clark ; *French*, Clark.

FORM II.—*First Prize*, Baily ii. ; *Second*, Jenour.

FORM I.—*First Division*, Freeman ; *Second*, Picken iv.

A vote of thanks to Mrs. Knowling for her kindness in distributing the prizes was proposed by Major Wray, seconded by Major Jenour and carried by acclamation. Mrs. Knowling replied in a charming speech ; she congratulated Mr. Butler on his handiwork (the new Gym.), expressed her pleasure in being present on the occasion, and concluded by hoping for many fine half holidays for the School.

At this stage of the proceedings, songs were given by Mr. Weekes's singing class who were in excellent form. A "Walking Song," a "Rugger Song" and Edward German's setting of "Rolling down to Rio" were given with great zest ; the singing paid great tribute to Mr. Weekes's coaching. After the songs adjournment was made for tea.

The proceedings concluded with an entertainment given by Mr. Frederick Chester who was "in admirable fooling." All his numbers met with huge success, but none, perhaps, so much as "The Big Drum Major," whose ghost, at least, may still be heard with some frequency in the schoolrooms and elsewhere.

Scouting.

The averson to half-holidays still continues, and three have been lost this term, resulting in a corresponding decrease of the number of Scouting days. No long expeditions have been made, but we have had successful days at Fort Austin and Plymbridge.

We are all very grateful to Miss Wimbush for her kindness in giving us lectures on First Aid. It is to be hoped that Scouts will practise their knowledge, since not only must they be able to pass their tests next term, but they should be able to render help in a real accident should they ever have occasion to do so.

Last term, it will be remembered, we had our old hunting grounds on the Dewarstone closed to us. During the present term, however, arrangements have been made, and we hope in the summer to make expeditions to Cornwood. The country round is excellent for scouting, there being both woodland and open moor. Everyone will be very grateful to Miss Dear who has given us permission to move on her land, and to Capt. and Mrs. Knowling for their good offices in the matter.

Scouts will not lose any opportunity in the holidays of observing bird and tree life. It will be remembered that Mr. Cox is offering a prize for the most proficient scout in these branches of outdoor observation. The Easter holidays cover part of a most important period in bird and plant activity.

How to run a School Magazine.

There is a right and a wrong way of doing everything. There is certainly a right and a wrong way of running a School Magazine. To start with, I will give a few examples of the wrong way.

(a) To give numberless lengthy and uninteresting accounts of very ancient football or cricket matches. As a rule, these games were played weeks ago and are long forgotten; the reports are invariably written from memory long afterwards; in many cases the 'Reporter' was not even on the field. Consequence—the accounts are always practically the same, uninteresting, and often untrue. It is bad enough to have to plough through one of these, but when there are nine more—well!

(b) Great offence is caused by the criticisms in the 'Characters of the XI,' which usually run something like this: "Brown, improved on last year; cannot get off the mark quick enough; gets flurried far too easily; a weak kick, and poor shot!" Perhaps this does more harm than good!

(c) To give Sports results, which invariably lead to complaints and general dissatisfaction. 'Why was not Smith terts put down as 3rd in 2nd heat of 100 yards under 6?' 'Why was Sutton's name put down as 'Bulton?'' etc. Half of these complaints are caused by the fact that the carefully filled in programme is annually lost as a matter of course, always turning up just in time to correct what is already written in great haste, which will consequently prove almost illegible to the printer.

(d). Angry parents scanning their lengthy bill will with great disfavour discover at the end of a long list, 'School Magazine . . . (say) 1/-.' Thus, when they have settled down to read the contents of this magazine that costs them such a sum, and can only find accounts of Sports and football matches in which they have no interest, their feeling against the inoffensive organ can be imagined!

(e) Perhaps worst of all the invariable appeal for support in the Editorial, the impassioned 'jaw' against the school for inability, laziness, and general stupidity. This does no good, and only makes the school angry, while the magazine is obviously committing suicide when it ends a lengthy harangue with the terrible threat that 'unless support is speedily forthcoming, the magazine will probably have to cease to be issued.'

Having now dealt somewhat lengthily with a few examples of the wrong way to run a magazine, perhaps I may be allowed to give a few hints to discouraged editors to make their issues well supported and popular.

(a) The magazine should not be too large. Choose a cover of some attractive colour, finding favour with ladies, a sober pink for preference. The title (a simple '—School Chronicle' is the best) and index should be in the centre with some modest decorative design round the outside.

(b) A frontispiece is indispensable. A photograph of the XI does as well as anything, but for variety a portrait of a master or well-known school figure (in jovial mood) would be very popular (among the boys!) and would largely help to making the magazine pay.

(c) Write a nice, breezy Editorial. Congratulate everyone on everything—however bad; praise the XI (who, say won 1 match out of 6) for their plucky efforts even when luck had deserted them; condole with the Shooting VIII (who were the last but one of the Preparatory Schools) on the fact that the school rifle was so obviously out of order, etc. Above all do not mention an appeal for support, which should never come in an Editorial.

(d) The football reports should be short (but not scrappy) and very sweet; adverse criticism ought *not* to be made in the school magazine, not even in the 'Characters of the XI.' To get some account of every branch of recreation (and also to ensure the games reports not being written weeks afterwards from memory) the following rule should be made; 'That each master is responsible for some report (not necessarily by himself) of his own branch (games, gym, scouting, etc.) reaching the Editor by a fixed time, in the case of games within 2 days after the match is played, and that a fine of 6d. be imposed on anyone not doing so.

(e) Whatever report is needed for the Sports should be written by the Editor, and it should be clearly understood that only the 1st and 2nd in the Final of each event are published. Steps should be taken to prevent the

filled in programme losing itself each year, but should this be found impossible, the Editor should promptly purchase the back number of any local paper which contains the list of results.

(f) If a notice were to be inserted at the end stating that contributions of any description (fit for publication) would be suitably paid for, it would have more effect than any number of eloquent appeals, and would at a small cost (probably cancelled by the fines mentioned above) make the magazine much more interesting and popular.

(g) Open a Correspondence column, invite free and candid criticisms and suggestions, not only for the magazine but for everything else in the school; many valuable suggestions are often thus obtained, while existing mistakes are brought to light, and can be remedied.

(h) Publish a list of old boys, stating after each when he was here, what public School he has gone to, any distinctions already gained there, and his present address. Such a list is of great interest to all old boys, and enables them if they wish to keep up a correspondence with those with whom they might otherwise lose touch.

(i) Charge what you like—as long as you do not put it down under a separate head! Include the price in 'Games Subscriptions,' 'Seat in Church,' or any other item which is always unaccountably large. Free copies should only be given to old boys, prospective parents, and the Editor. The magazine should be bound every two years (incidentally, do not bind in the covers!), and placed in the school library, where it could be read, but not taken out.

If Editors were to follow these hints and not publish what I have previously mentioned, I have no doubt that their magazines would pay their way financially, and also become well-supported and deservedly popular.

C.W.M.C.

Apologia Editoris pro Vita Sua.

It is with great pleasure that we notice that one at least of our readers is so interested in, we will not say the 'Record' but School Magazines generally, as to go the

length of criticising them on paper and to their face. The critic's attacks are not explicitly levelled at us, but they are printed in our columns and we are not too proud to admit that to some extent the cap fits us. It is, however, a cap that we propose to continue wearing, and one of which we do not mind saying we are proud.

It is the modern way in the political world at any rate to meet an attack by the old and rather pointless argument of "you're another." Of such kind is the oft heard question, "What did Chamberlain say in 86?" So we might ask "What did C.W.M.C. write in the Record" for the Christmas, Easter, and Summer Terms of 1911—12? And if these are not lengthy accounts of ancient football and cricket matches, what are they?"

Rightly or wrongly, however, we are confident of our ground, and feel that we have no need to descend to what I will call, if I may, House of Commons arguments.

The two main charges formulated are (1) the undue space allotted to sports and games reports and their inaccuracy, and (2) a suggestion that the Editorials lack the "breeziness" of the leading articles of a sporting newspaper and partake too much of the nature of Jeremiads.

Let us examine these charges in order. Perhaps the best way to do this is to look at them in the light of our mentor's own constructive criticisms. We are told that the Games reports are uninteresting and lengthy; that they are written too often from memory and even imagination, and that they are not the correct material for appealing to those of our readers who are parents. How are we advised to remedy these ills? We are not told to exclude the offending articles, we are not told even to boil them down. We are to see that one of the masters writes the account of the game, whatever it be, within two days of its being played. We really do not see how this is going to affect either the length or interest of the articles; one would have thought that the latter, if anything, would be rather enhanced by an occasional dash of inspired imagination. In any case if the parents have no interest in the football or cricket matches, it cannot matter much to them whether

the reports are accurate or inaccurate. But we are loth to believe in this terrible, grown-up aloofness of the parents. As to the date of the writing of the reports, the suggestion can be nothing but a guess on the part of our critic ; certainly we have never before been taken to task for inaccuracy or for unjust reports.

Whatever charges may be levelled against the Editorials that of undue length never has been and probably never will be amongst them. What we are accused of is a weakness for indulging in "impassioned 'jaw' against the school for inability, laziness and general stupidity." Personally we do not remember ever having had occasion to take the school to task in this way, but if we had we should certainly do so. If, as our critic suggests it made the school angry, we should congratulate ourselves and hope that their indignation would translate itself into deeds and that we should be bombarded with many articles fiery in tone and substance. The editorial is the space reserved for the expression of editorial policy, and if that policy is to encourage and urge people to write the appropriate place for an appeal for support is in that column reserved by custom to the Editor. We should like too, to say that we should have very little admiration for a school which desired and was pleased to be congratulated on everything however bad.

The suggestions of a Correspondence Column and an index of Old Boys are good, but superfluous. We are and always have been ready to open our columns to letters; that these have not been printed is due solely to the fact that none have arrived. Perhaps the "Record" is not the most appropriate place for the O. B. index ; in any case we think the initiative in this should come from O. Bs. themselves.

The other suggestions, which betray in the critic a rather bilious aestheticism and colour sense, we cannot regard as anything but facetiae. In the suggestion that articles should be paid for we do seem to see the cloven hoof of commercialism and a departure from the principle of art for art's sake ; for the brain which could conceive

the idea of entering the cost of the "Record" under the item "Seat in Church" we would prophesy a lucrative career in the City.

In conclusion we should like to make our "invariable appeal for support," and to say that we shall be pleased to receive and print further suggestions on how to run School Magazines.

Amateur Theatricals.

Those of us who were fortunate enough to be present in the Gymnasium on the evening of Saturday, March 28th, were most agreeably entertained by some of the boarders of "Mount House," who took part in an amusing little Dutch play. Considering the very short time the actors had, in which to prepare the play, they are to be most heartily congratulated upon the excellent performance they gave, and great credit is due to the Stage Manager who must have spared no pains to make the play the success it obviously was. It seems a pity that more day-boys or parents were not able to be present, but we hope there will be many more opportunities of witnessing such plays given by the "Mount House Amateur Theatrical Company," and that in the future their efforts will be rewarded with a full house. Of the *Dramatis Personæ*, Knowling was perhaps the one most appreciated by the audience from a humorous point of view. He took the part of the Burgomaster's wife, and he seemed to be quite in his element, as his tongue had plenty of work to do, it being especially exercised in trying to keep "his" husband in order! Harvey as "Oom Bilkyns" and Marescaux i. as the "Vicomte de Pommeville" were both excellent and threw themselves wholly into the respective parts. Smith also is worthy of congratulations on the part he played as the Gardener. Macpherson i. and Wimbush i. were admirably disguised as two of the "fair sex," and the acting of the latter was most natural and realistic. Pode, Lewes, Picken i. and Loam all did their parts remarkably well and those who had less prominent parts to play were none the less appreciated by the audience.

The costumes were really a work of art and we secretly wondered wherever those wonderful garments had sprung from. The bright colours presented a very picturesque appearance together with the numerous plants arranged on the stage.

If we may be allowed to offer any criticism, it is that the actors were all inclined to speak too quickly and sometimes a phrase or word was completely lost to the audience owing to the apparent hurry to get through with the sentence. That fault, however, is one that is easily remedied and probably next time a play is given the actors will be more self-confident and so think less of the actual words and more of the parts they are representing.

Our heartiest congratulations to the M.H.A.T.C. and long may it flourish!

In the Bay of Biscay, O!

It was three days since we had passed Gibraltar, leaving the comparatively smooth waters of the Mediterranean, and the vessel was now rolling heavily in the trough of the huge westerly swell which always sweeps unbroken across the Atlantic, ever increasing as it goes, until rearing its crest too high it falls with a sullen roar on the rocky Portuguese coast.

There was a light south-westerly breeze as we rounded Cape Finisterre. The glass stood steady at 30.43—too high, we said, for the month; and though it might have meant foggy weather, we knew this was not so from the signalled reports of outward-bounders. So we argued that as there was a very high glass here, there must be a very low glass and equally bad weather somewhere else. As the westerly swell seemed heavier and travelled faster than usual, we added that the "somewhere else" must be to the westward of us—a surmise which subsequent reading of the shipping disasters out west, proved entirely correct.

I was keeping my eight to twelve watch on the bridge when, at about nine o'clock, I observed that the sky which before had been clear and starry, was now becoming dull

and overcast, though the movement of the clouds was scarcely perceptible.

There was not a breath of wind, and over those long silent rollers, the water lay smooth and oily, broken only by the bluff old bows of the vessel.

What she could not plough through she pushed ahead of her,—an arc of dancing phosphorescence, and when she finally passed through it, it whizzed along her sides with a sigh like escaping steam, and hissed into the gleaming wake astern.

I slipped down to have a look at the glass, but found that there was no change, and when the master gave me his night orders at 10 o'clock, he remarked the fact, observing what a fine run we were having with every chance of keeping it. He was a man of long experience, but the Bay had him this time.

On filling in the log after being relieved at midnight, I was startled to observe that the glass had suddenly fallen to 29.75. Of course that is not low, but from 30.43 to 29.75 is a big drop for two hours. I went up on the bridge again and called the second officer's attention to it, and then went below and turned in.

I must have slept for about two hours when I was awakened by a thundering crash and a feeling that I was half drowned. I had left my port open when I turned in, and about thirty gallons of water had taken a wrong turning, filling my bunk which was right under the port. Whispering sweet nothings, I bent a few dry clothes and stumped out on deck to see if the lifeboats had left me behind. If so there were two of us in a similar predicament, for rounding a corner at which I was shivering, a pyjama clad figure stepped dexterously on my toe, and cursed me effusively for my clumsiness. By his weight and vocabulary I recognized the outraged one as the chief officer, and asked him if he knew what had happened; he replied by grabbing me by the arm and throwing me on my face about two fathoms down to leeward, just as a huge sea roared aft over the exposed corner at which I had been standing. "That's what's the matter," he said: "we're going to catch it, all right, from the nor'ard and the

old——.” The rest of his observations were drowned by a blast on the siren, as, with a threatening howl a fierce squall came down on us, grey with hail, spray and hurricane wind. “Come on,” said the mate who was by way of being a bit of a wag; “let’s get below again. We’ll have a breeze and a drop of hail directly.”

There was only about an hour left for us to sleep. At four o’clock we were both called and informed that owing to the thickness of the weather the watches were to be doubled. So the mate and myself feeling like paper men as the wind caught our oilskins and tried to hurl us just where it wanted, fought our way to the bridge and relieved the second mate and skipper, who both looked pretty grey.

Everything is grey in bad weather at sea. The sky is grey, the sea is grey, and no matter what colour the deck houses and fittings are, the effect of driving spray and rain is to make them grey too.

My word, it was blowing, and what a sea! The waves coming with the wind from right ahead, crossed the eternal westerly swell, looming up in murky grey banks through the haze of spindrift and hail, and three of them easily covered a mile. I never thought a sea could rise so fast.

The vessel was behaving pretty well though: she was just holding her own, though straining and groaning every time she plunged. She would dip her nose down—down in the grey valley between two huge rollers, and then as we wondered if she would rise in time and ride that mountain of water ahead, up she would shoot, burying her stern, while the crest thundered over the fore-castle head, roared over the fore deck and broke with a shaking thud against the bridge. As the sea swept aft her stern would rise clear of the water, and the propellor, as if rejoicing in its sudden freedom, raced madly round and shook the old tramp until her heart must break.

And all the time the gale howled unceasingly, driving the stinging hail and spray like shot against our faces and nearly blinding us. The well decks were full all the time. Before the water from one sea could clear away, another

would come thumping aboard filling her up again, and as she rolled and pitched the water rushed backwards and forwards with such force that it would be difficult for a man to stand in its course.

I was new to steam and was just thanking my lucky stars that she was not an old windjammer. On sail we should all have been up to the waist in that whirl of rushing water, and hanging on for dear life every time she shipped a "dollop." Here, thought I, was a welcome change, but I soon found out my mistake.

The sea was mounting higher and higher with every squall. Suddenly the vessel took a sickly plunge, almost standing on her stern. Another sweeping down from ahead, although two furlongs distant, stood up above the foremast, and I had to crane my neck to catch a glimpse of the sky above it. She shot up to it like a bird, but was too late to ride it all. As the toppling crest came sweeping over her, mast, bridge, and funnel were hidden until she passed, and when we looked forward, winches, steampipes and ventilators had been torn off the foredeck or flattened out like a toy under the foot of a bricklaying parent.

There was not a moment to be lost. That part of the wreckage which had not been swept overboard was taking charge and threatening to do more damage, as it swung here and there with every plunge of the ship. Water too was pouring through the holes left by the ventilators, into the hold. Throwing off oilskins and seaboots, we waded forward, mustered the watch and proceeded to square up. After a long struggle in which we earned many bruises, we managed to secure the steam pipes and what was left of the winches. It was a bit safer now to move round, so we commenced plugging the ventilator-holes—the ventilators themselves having been washed overboard before we had time to secure them. You must understand that the difficulty of the task lay in the fact that enormous seas were crashing over as we worked, threatening to carry us overboard or dash us up against the bulwarks if we did not hang on. After a good fifteen minutes' work would be undone in half a second, as with a dip of the bow, a big green sea would come thumping aboard, carrying us off our

feet and trying to tear us away from our grip at the nearest fixture.

All but the last hole had been securely plugged with wood, covered with canvas and lashed firmly with spun yarn when she took a fearful plunge and the sky was darked behind us. "Hang on," shouted a voice from the bridge, but personally I could find nothing to hang on to at the time. Half the Western ocean then arrived, and I found myself flying goodness knows where and wondering which side of the rail I was to come up. A series of stary thumps took me clear of all anticipation and anxiety. When I saw daylight again it was through the port over my bunk.

I afterwards learnt that the two men who had been working with me had grabbed a ladder bolted on to the forecastle head, but that ladder and men had both been swept away by the force of that awful sea, and carried aft to the break of the bridge. One of them found a broken leg, but the other lucky beggar sustained no injuries, and helped to carry his less fortunate ship mate to a place of safety.

As for me I have been on my back ten days now and am to turn out to-morrow. I must add that my respect for steamboats has increased considerably. If you want to know how the storm broke and cleared away you must ask some one else.

The Gymnasium.

THE DISPLAY.

With our customary good fortune we were favoured with a fine afternoon for the display of Free Movement Exercises. "A fine afternoon" is rather a flattering description of the weather on that day. It was cold and rain was so much expected that we were prepared to hurry off into the Gymnasium where everything was ready for an indoor display. The boys' of the Red House began with an exhibition of marching. The performance of exercises which followed spoke eloquently of the good training they had received from Miss Coward.

The Lower Division of the boys of Mount House then marched out and formed up for their exercises. This is the first time the smaller boys of Mount House have given a display and in consideration of this they are to be commended for their exhibition, while their faults which were many, and their failures may be indulgently passed over. Marescaux i. gave a good lead and the older boys were good, the blemishes coming from the smaller boys, many of whom have had but one short term's acquaintance with the exercises.

The Upper Division then gave their exercises, the ten boys who were competing for the Gymnasium Cup wearing rosettes of various colours. There was great keenness and rivalry in these exercises for it was known that the Judge laid special stress upon them and preferred them to the work upon apparatus and that consequently a large percentage of marks would be to them. This method of marking was supposed to favour Norman i. and to handicap Harvey, but as it was known some days previous the real effect was to give a stimulus to the exercises, and an eager desire to excel in them, together with a wholesome contempt for the horse and parallel bars, the result being a general levelling up. These exercises were more difficult than those of former years, and all gave a creditable exposition under the exemplary lead of Harvey.

Another new feature this year was the music accompaniment to the exercises, for which we wish to thank Miss Wimbush. The music greatly added to the success of the display and we hope to continue to have musical accompaniment.

COMPETITION FOR THE WILLIAMS CHALLENGE CUP.

This — the oldest of the cups is held for the year by the boy who gains the highest aggregate marks in the competition. As a rule the competition narrows itself down a few weeks previously to a contest between two boys and the rest enter merely to measure themselves against that standard. This year it lay between Harvey and Norman i. There are limits to the capacity of all of us, especially if there be a time limit, and what the exercises gained the

apparatus lost. There was a falling off in style and smartness.

THE BOXING CUP.

The Boxing Cup is the latest addition to our shelf of Challenge Cups, holding one name only—Hamilton-Jones, 1913. There was a lack of merit this year and the result of the contest was a foregone conclusion. No one was fast or heavy enough for Harvey and he holds it for the year.

THE PRESENTATION.

After the boxing was over Captain Royds announced the winners and contrasted the competition of "beef" that day with the contest of "brains" which was taking place that week indoors in the examination room. He then spoke of the value and introduction of free movement exercises in schools.

Mrs. Royds then presented Norman i. with the Gymnasium Cup and Harvey with the Boxing Cup. Three cheers were then called for Captain and Mrs. Royds and we were then all ready for the tea which was provided in the dining room.

Our pleasantest task we have left to the last—to thank Captain and Mrs. Royds very heartily, the one for very successfully judging, and the other for so graciously presenting the cups to the winners. We consider we were very fortunate in having Captain Royds to judge, for he is very interested in athletics and has himself a great record in the athletic world behind him.

The marks for the Cup Competition appended here explain themselves.

	Exercises.	Bars.	Horse.	Rope.	Total.
Maximum	100	60	60	10	230
Norman i.	100	54	55	9	218
Picken i.	94	53	58	10	215
Harvey	88	57	56	10	211
Smith	98	57	47	8	210
Bolton	96	55	49	6	206
Pellew i.	96	55	49	6	206
Elliott	96	53	40	9	198
Norman ii.	90	52	48	8	198
Burnard	94	47	50	0	191
Yonge	84	47	39	10	180

Extracts from Old Boys' Letters.

D. HITCHINS, (Kelly College) :—I am getting on very well here. I am in the Lower School, in which I am second. There are sixteen boys in the Lower School. We have quite a big Officers Training Corps here. There are only eight boys in the school, who are not in it. About six of these are too young to be in it. We had our Field Day here on Thursday. We started at nine and got home at seven. We went to Yelverton, and from there went up to the moor. We had to defend Yelverton with a half company of Royal Scots. The attackers were Plymouth College Corps and another half company of Royal Scots. We won. All of the corps except two marched home here. Yesterday we had the confirmation. The Bishop of Crediton was the Bishop. Ferguson A, who came here last term was confirmed. About three weeks ago we had our cross country race, I went in for it. A boy called Homfray won it, who used to be at Mount House. F. Clarke was third and I was fourth. About a fortnight ago we had the house gym competition. School house won. F. Clarke was very good. On last Tuesday we had the Gym competitions. To-day we had our sports semi-finals. I was very lucky. I was left in for the finals of four events out of five. These were: 220 yds, 100 yds, 350 yds, and the long jump. All being under fifteen events. The long jump was the final, which I won. We had three jumps each, in which I jumped the most. Then the second and third had two jumps for the second prize. The second jumped more than I did, but as it was after his third jump I got the prize. I jumped 13 feet 10½ inches and he jumped 14 feet. You will also be glad to hear that I have been picked to represent School House in the junior House Relay. I have to run quarter of a mile and two other boys have to run 220 yds each. So far school house are winning most of the cups. They have got both steeple cups, the gym cup, and the senior relay, which was run to-day.

W. NIGHTINGALE, (Marlborough) :—We have two half-holidays on Tuesday and Saturday in the Lent and Christmas terms, and in the Summer term we have an extra one on Thursday. In the Lent and Christmas terms we have two fag-days on Monday and Wednesday, and in the Summer term three. Fag days are days when there is prep as well as school in the afternoon. We get up here at any time between 7-15 and 7-45. Prayers are at 7-55, and breakfast at 8-0. Morning prep starts at 8-45 till 9-15. School begins at 9-30. There are three hours in the morning 9-30—10-10, 10-15—11-0, 11-7—12. On Saturdays there is another hour from 12-30—1-20. Dinner at 1-30; on Fag days prep 3.45—4.30; school 4.45—6.20. On non-Fag days school, 5—6.20; tea 6-30; prep in the evening 7-15—8-20; chapel 8-30—8-45; supper 8-45;

bell for silence for prayer 9-10 ; lights 9-15 ; second silence 9-30 ; gates are at 6-0. I am in the middle IV form. Greek and Maths are taken in sets. My Greek set is "Y" and maths C5. Yesterday being the division of term there was a concert held in Upper School. The choir performed "The Pied Piper of Hamelin," the music by C. H. Parry. We play hockey this term and we have had several matches. The first against Hampstead, we won 7-4 ; and the second against University College, Oxford, resulted in a draw 2-2. I am 12th in form, out of 25, for half term. We break up on April 3.

A. C. GEAKE (Sherborne) :—We get up here at a quarter past seven, and start work at nine and work till eleven then we have break and then work till a quarter to one. We have dinner at a quarter past one, and after we have football till a quarter past four, but if it is a half we have roll call at three, and we do without the work, which is from a quarter past four till six. Then we start prep at seven and go on till a quarter to nine then we go to bed. Our house has just lost the junior football cup and the thirds football cup. I was playing in the final of the thirds, we were beaten by the School House.

Vinter is head of our house and is second in the school. We have Commander Evans coming to lecture on Monday about the Scott Expedition. I hope you are doing well in football this season and beating St. Andrew's and St. Edward's. We don't play any school matches this term only house matches. We break up on the 31st of next month and come back on the 29th April. We have a sham fight on Tuesday and have to go to Salisbury plain for a field day on March 12th. I expect we shall have to get up at about five or something like that. We have got about three hundred and fifty boys altogether, and thirty-nine boys in our house. We have got thirteen challenge cups altogether including the house fives, senior football, senior and junior cricket cups and fielding cup and sports cup and point to point, and some others besides. I suppose the gym is nearly finished now. We have got at present five first fifteen colours and the captain of cricket and of boxing in our house.

[We hear later that Geake is to be congratulated on his performances in the sports at Sherbourne. He was first in the long jump, for boys under 14, beating the record by six inches with a jump of 15 feet $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches. He was also second in both the 100 yds and the 220 yds.]

W. P. Bennett writes that he is having a good time at Osborne. He is in his term 1st XV. and plays hockey for his dormitory.

At the Kelly Sports Ferguson won the 220 yards handicap, the 350 yards handicap and the 600 yards handicap under 15, also the High Jump open with 4 feet $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Homfray came in first in the Junior Steeplechase, and Hitchins won the Long Jump with 13 feet $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches.