

MOUNT HOUSE RECORD.

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Editorial.

In chronicling school events one cannot, unfortunately, if strictly veracious, imitate the sundial on which was inscribed the legend: "I record only the sunny hours," and this term one must admit at once that there are those amongst us who have been heard to murmur, "thank goodness it's a short one!" And why? The answer can be summed up in two words, which, however, in themselves speak volumes—"Measles!" "Chicken-pox!!" Whilst bemoaning our unhappy fate in moments when the school had almost ceased to be a school, and mere remnants of forms plodded over their allotted tasks in depressing quietude in the class-rooms, we tried to solace ourselves and those parents and pupils who alike were groaning with us over this visitation, by the thought that, at least, there was *novelty* in the situation! Many a time and oft has a stray germ of measles or chicken-pox, or some other species, ventured into our midst during the last five years, but hitherto the foe has been vanquished with ease and the victims might have been counted on the fingers of one hand, and often even then there has been a finger or two to spare! We always felt, however, that our turn must come, and this time indeed the enemy triumphed. Whilst Mount House wrestled with measles and influenza, the Red House grappled with measles and chicken-pox. But as I write the campaign has ended, quarantine is over, the term is drawing cheerfully to its close in both houses, and we look forward to making up for lost time next term when school re-opens, on April 29th.

It is with no little trepidation that the Editor ventures to insert the article entitled "An Appreciation"—fearing a wiggling from headquarters for weakness in yielding to the repeated requests of the author thereof! It is sometimes cheering, and sometimes the reverse, to "see ourselves as others see us," but in this instance we think the kindly words of an old friend come at a very opportune moment, and will prove a stimulating tonic to those in authority after a singularly trying and anxious term.

Football has, of course, suffered much this term in both houses owing to the prevailing epidemics, and, though a few games have been played, on the whole there is little to be said on the subject beyond "better luck another time!" Incidentally the field has had a much needed rest.

One cannot close the Editorial without alluding to the war—which is still with us, alas! and is of as great a magnitude as ever. We look forward hopefully to the future, and, as regards our own little share in it, are proud, in spite of the loss to ourselves, to give up to the service of the Country two more valued members of our staff, in the persons of Mr. Bowers and Mr. Clay. Both will be greatly missed when they leave at the end of this term to join the army, and they take with them the good wishes of all in the school.

Bird Life in our Grounds, 1914.

My notes for 1914 have not been as complete as in previous years, and it is never safe to rely only upon one's memory. I did however keep a record of the tenants of the various nesting-boxes, and have several other scattered entries of interest.

Carrion Crow. A very noisy pair established themselves during all February and March in the highest trees at the top of the Whiteford woods, and were to be heard and seen every day. On February 24th a rival pair appeared on the scene and there was "heavy fighting" all that afternoon, after which the original birds were left

in possession. The crow is an early builder and, unlike the rook, always nests apart from his fellows; but he returns year after year to the same place, and so many of the old nests can often be seen near together that it looks at first like a small colony. I had no doubt that these crows intended to make a new settlement, but they bear such a bad character for thieving and murdering that they are always considered vermin, and eventually I think they were shot or trapped. Anyhow I did not hear them after March 26th.

Curlew. Every year so far I have been fortunate enough to hear Curlews passing on their spring journey to the moors to breed. These movements always are noted at the end of February and the beginning of March. In 1914 I heard them first on February 28th at 11-30 p.m., then on March 8th at 7 p.m. (s.w. wind) and again on March 10th at 7 p.m. They always appear to travel on a wide front and cry incessantly to keep in touch.

Greenfinch. Never seen or heard here in midwinter. Reappeared Feb. 23rd but did not come in any numbers till March 25th. Several pairs seemed to be breeding just beyond our western boundry and were often heard and seen, but no nest found here.

Chaffinch. As usual the most persistent February singer and very numerous. Seems to find an inexhaustible but almost invisible supply of food from the centre of the field all the winter—apparently the seed of *persicaria*. Before the end of March Mr. Bowers reported to me that a pair of birds seemed to be building in a bush just in front of his bedroom window, and were always there. They were not to be seen when I went to look, and if a nest had been begun it was only a very few loose fragments. Well on in the summer term he mentioned to me that these same birds clearly had a nest of young ones in the spot he had indicated before, and this time I found that there was a nest of young chaffinches which flew when I examined them. Unfortunately I have lost the date, but like many other birds they had evidently “pegged out” a claim long before they seriously intended to build. A young chaffinch was caught in the schoolroom on June 28th.

Bullfinch. Only one (a cock) seen June 30th by summer-house.

Spotted Flycatcher did not nest here, but very close by. Saw them first May 14th by the Red House, and next day one was chasing a butterfly without success—a fact rather worth noting. As early as May 30th I watched a family of flycatchers being fed in the bushes behind the nets, and particularly noticed the loud clicking of the mandible made by the young while waiting impatiently for food. The old birds were about all June and I hoped for a second nest.

Swallow. For more than four weeks from May 31st a pair were continually in and out of the gymnasium, but disappointed us in the end. They could hardly have been nesting elsewhere before July, and their behaviour was difficult to understand.

House Martin. About 20 seen flying round the house as late as Oct. 31st.

Swift. 1st seen May 1st. As plentiful as usual.

Goldcrest. Hardly a goldcrest to be heard or seen in the first three months of year. In May I saw them now and then and more so in June, but no nest. The autumn immigration was very noteworthy; they were plentiful about the last week of September and began to decrease again after October 21st.

Wagtails. I have notes of 2 grey wagtails flying across the field Feb. 18th and a male pied wagtail there on March 16th. Neither species was once seen in the breeding season but both reappeared and were plentiful in October and November, especially in the first half of November. As usual the pied showed a marked partiality for the roof of the gymnasium, and the grey for that of the greenhouse or the front drive—occasionally the terrace. One pied was picked up damaged in October.

Sparrow-hawk. On Sept. 6th the parrot in her cage was placed on the Terrace to sun herself after a bath. I was in the drawing-room with the window wide open. Suddenly there came an ear-piercing scream from Polly. I was out of the window in a moment, just in time to see a sparrow-hawk swerve off within a foot or two of the cage

and disappear over the trees; evidently coming suddenly round a corner in the usual fashion, it had spied the parrot and dashed straight at her. Polly was all in a flutter and very appropriately ejaculated a plaintive 'Father'! as an appeal for protection, followed by the inevitable "Poor Polly"!

Raven. Fairly frequent as a passing visitor singly or in pairs.

Tawny Owl. Heard and seen throughout the year especially towards the end of it. Undoubtedly nested, I think unsuccessfully, close by. On Dec. 24th an owl appeared to fly out from box 9. As an additional attraction for 1915 a far more commodious and well equipped box has recently (Feb. 26th.) been hoisted into the thick ivy at the top of the same tree.

Pheasant. Nested in Beechfield; several cocks seen at intervals.

Long-tailed tit. A pair very busy in the lime trees by the Common Room on March 22nd and again on March 26th and April 2nd.

Willow Warbler. April 1st first appearance.

House Sparrow. White winged individual last seen March 17th. The ivy on the front of the house was cut back just before the nesting season with rather disastrous results, many of the evicted sparrows seizing upon new nesting boxes and turning out more interesting tenants. Mostly hatched out early in May.

Hedge Sparrow. Only one nest on east side of field found. Three young reared. Began singing afresh on Nov. 20th.

Mistle Thrush. As usual nested just beyond our East and North boundary walls, but not on this side. On Dec. 20th I heard one singing here and also down by the Hoe, but no more till 1915.

Blackbird. Nested as usual in half a dozen places, but nothing noteworthy. Out of breeding season rather scarce till a cold snap on Nov. 16th brought plenty of blackbirds and thrushes. Began to sing Feb. 26th.

Thrush. Several broods reared successfully. On March 23rd a nest in a poultry run had 2 eggs in it; a brood was

brought off safely there, and on May 30th I found 2 eggs in the *same* (slightly renovated) nest, and the same bird in occupation. This bird I believe to be the same individual whom I have noted in 1912 and 1913 as being so tame. One thrush was content to lay 3 eggs only.

Marsh tit, great tit, coal tit. All pretty frequent but irregular visitors, and not to be tempted by nesting boxes.

Tree Creeper. Only a very few casual appearances.

Robin. Not many grounds could show more robins to the acre than ours in the winter, and one and all extremely tame. As before, the can in a laurel by the stable was very early occupied. It was quite finished by Feb. 23rd. The first egg was laid on March 5th, but on March 19th after a violent wind I found the can blown down with 4 eggs in it. I removed the whole nest and replaced the can more firmly. By March 25th a second nest had been nearly finished in it. About this time I placed a kettle in an ivy-covered stump 30 yards away, and to my surprise the almost completed nest was deserted in favour of the kettle without any delay; here a family was fledged without mishap early in May. The history of another Robin was more tragic. A family was being reared in a nest tucked away in a yew facing the kitchen garden. Knowing the danger from prowling cats I coiled some wire netting loosely round the tree in the hope of safeguarding them, but to no purpose for on May 14th the whole nest had been torn out. The very next day the Robin began to build again in great haste in the trellis-work by the changing-room, and actually by May 22nd she was sitting on a new lot of eggs. Alas! on May 25th the cat killed her on the nest.

Wren. Strangely enough on May 22nd I discovered a wren's nest with 5 eggs only a few inches above the robin's which had been pulled out of the yew on the 15th. The nest, if not the eggs, must have been there at the time of this tragedy, and it is extraordinary that the wren did not desert. The nest had previously escaped my notice being exceptionally well stowed away amid a chance collection of debris. The cat had evidently marked it down, and returning later on destroyed the family one night. One

nesting box, No. 21, was occupied by a wren. 5 eggs were in it when examined on May 22nd, and by the 30th they were hatched. After they had flown I removed the whole nest for a close inspection, as the box—a moveable one—had become tilted forward necessitating a very unusual shape of nest if the eggs were not to roll out. On June 19th however I saw a wren go into the empty box to roost, and by the end of the month a second nest (unlined) had been built in it, but was used only for roosting purposes.

Blue tits. As well represented as usual. In box 8 there were 7 eggs on May 13th, and on the same day in box 13 I found 6 eggs and 2 young just hatched. Box 15 was decidedly later and it was not till May 24th that all the six eggs were laid: they were then quite uncovered. On June 3rd I noticed young blue tits out in the field from box 13. Another pair nested in the old hole in the wall along the Broad Path; these were taking in food on May 15th.

Nuthatch. Perhaps the most distinctive bird on the premises, always about, always busy, and (like a scout) always whistling. They remained faithful to box 17. I examined it on May 13th, and again noticed that as I went up the ladder and removed the lid the parents made no protest whatever, though they kept close to me in the tree. This is the more curious as they never fail to greet any bird intruder with a tremendous clamour. There were five young birds about two days old. They flew on June 4th. Previous to this a pair of sparrows had persecuted them incessantly, and in spite of the fact that I shot the cock bird he was immediately replaced by another. I again observed that the nuthatches removed all the leaves on the twigs near the nest; it is possible that the intention may be to leave an uninterrupted view of the approach of danger; certainly the parent bird when away foraging never seems to miss seeing any unwelcome visitor. This box was constantly revisited throughout the year by nuthatches and the stucco-work at the entrance overhauled and renewed.

Starling. Last year, it may be remembered, I noted that boxes 7 and 9 each had two broods reared in them. In 1912 box 7 had two. In 1914 three boxes had the distinction, and the nest in the roof of the stable was also

twice occupied. But there is an interesting point connected with this which I have not yet settled but which might be determined by closer observation and ringing. I am by no means sure that the second tenants in each case were not another pair of birds, who having failed to secure a good site at the beginning of the season had been compelled to wait their turn. My reason for suspecting this state of affairs were four: (1) There appeared to be considerably more starlings about the place than there were nesting sites for. (2) Perhaps in consequence of this competition the first eggs were laid and the broods fledged from a week to ten days earlier than usual. Thus the young flew from boxes 1 and 7 on May 11th. (3) By May 25th I found 3 eggs in box 1, 4 eggs in box 7, and 5 eggs in box 9. These proved to be the complete 'clutch' in each case. It was extraordinary that the interval should be quite so short if they were the same occupiers as before, for young starlings are by no means capable of looking after themselves directly they leave the nest. (4) My strongest reason for advancing my theory. In this brief interval I witnessed more than one pitched battle among adult starlings around the nesting boxes. Once two fought with such extreme ferocity and intentness that I expected to see murder done. One had been worsted and the other stood over him giving him a succession of deadly stabs with his bayonet-like bill, till after perhaps a couple of minutes both came rolling over and over down the slope to my feet; there one suddenly sighted the common foe and at the note of warning both flew off apparently none the worse. The same day however I picked up a pretty badly damaged starling by the stable, who had probably come to grief fighting. These fights must have meant at least a disputed occupation of the nest. Possibly the combatants would both be new claimants to it, but more probably the old tenant even though not wanting to rear a second family would not be at all prepared to give up his homestead for roosting purposes without a fight. Another interesting thing I noticed was that at box 1 a starling pulled off green leaves from a neighbouring lime tree and placed them in the box—presumably to freshen it up.

As regards the winter visitors, very large roosting flights have regularly passed directly over Mount House

travelling S. E. in the morning and returning N. W. These I first noticed on Nov. 18th—7-30 a.m. for the out journey and between 3-45 and 4-15 for the return.

Confessions of a Knitter.

BY A RECRUIT.

I am a knitter. Yes, I am now one of the noble army who from time immemorial, mainly so far in the female line, have comforted their chilly brethren against the rigours of cold blasts, and who in the present day are working against time in a mighty host—old men and maidens, old ladies and boys, with many more who might not perhaps come under any of these heads—in the patriotic desire to keep pace with the demand for all sorts of protective clothing for our brave fellows who are enduring the trials of winter in the trenches.

Beyond the glory of aiding and abetting this effort to the best of my power, I have no desire, however, to assume a heroic attitude—the object of this modest contribution being to record the emotions and reflections of one of the latest recruits in the gentle craft of knitting, during the production of his first scarf. I may, I think, fairly use the expression “gentle craft” in connection with knitting; for I am convinced that old Isaac Walton, after such experience as mine, would willingly allow knitting to be bracketed with Angling as the contemplative man’s recreation. Indeed I may moreover place this second gentle craft, in the opportunities it gives for serious meditation and deep thought, on a level with those quiet moments which daily fall to the lot of a mere man—the time of *shaving*. It is strange that at moments when the mind might be supposed to be absorbed upon its special business, when the eyes have to be alert in connection with the knitter’s needles, the angler’s float, or the razor of the shaver, it should wander far and wide over ground entirely unconnected with the said business. Yet so it is. I know well that the skilful lady-knitter finds this manipulation of her needles no restraint whatever upon her attention to other matters, and I can only wonder thereat.

I fear that I belong to a very different order. I am conscious that my 'action' is by no means correct; yet am I disposed rather to glory in my departure from the orthodox. For I hold that there are some advantages in my methods: it is not only a matter of finger practice with me, but the elbows are brought into play, while the biceps too can feel that it has some small part in the creation of a useful article of clothing. Thus a larger portion of the human frame is called upon for aid, and consequently more genial warmth should be discovered in the comforter, helmet, gloves, or socks that may be the outcome. This only in self-defence.

The fabrication of my scarf has not been a matter of unbroken joy. There are few episodes in life which are altogether free from some kind of disappointment, though it may act only as a set-off to the general feeling of quiet content; and it has been so in this case.

After struggling through the first few rows, which in spite of my efforts to give them the appearance of what we generally understand by rows, persisted in assuming the representation of a spiral staircase round the needle, the work slowly advanced until by hook or by crook some thirty rows or more were finished. Alas, there had been many a slip, as was all too evident, nor was this satisfactorily atoned for by the unusual thickness of some other portions. This, however, I assumed, was the lot of all beginners, and my spirit was not deterred. Yet there was one eccentricity which I could in no way account for. In some mysterious manner the number of stitches was continually increasing: I had begun with 48, and now there were 82! This difficulty was quite beyond my powers of solution, and I was compelled humbly to refer the question to the kind expert who had set me on my task.

In the most considerate manner possible she suggested various ways in which I might have fallen into error; but said that the most satisfactory manner of rectifying the evil was to unravel the whole, and begin again! With an inward groan I assented, and in five minutes my laboured stitches had reassumed the form of a ball of wool. The wonder that I could possibly have woven by my own hand anything that could so rapidly unweave itself, with the

mere help of pulling, gave me the necessary heart for starting again. So with eagerness the work was resumed, and proceeded with more success, while the worker's mind began to range over a vast area of thought, and ideas seemed to shape themselves of great discoveries for his country's benefit, such as the invention of a method of destroying submarines, or of a ship which might defy mines and torpedoes. Meantime the nascent scarf gave promise of the thing that was to be, showing its fine width, if the length was as yet inconsiderable; and the nerves of the worker allowed him to observe points of interest in the attendant ball of wool. Verily the said ball appears to me to be possessed of a nature which is sufficiently remarkable. It is in truth ever loyal to its part of supplying remittances of the necessary material; but, perhaps finding its simple duty somewhat monotonous, it gives evidence of being moved by a spirit of investigation, while at the same time it is not devoid of humour. For instance, it is not content to lie inactive on the floor while all the fun goes on at the other end of the string, but with noiseless progression it gradually moves away, being evidently interested in what may be going on outside the door. Doubtless a relish is added to this little game by the knowledge that no amount of pulling will bring it nearer, but an expedition will be involved for its recovery. This is usually when you are sitting alone in a room, but its curious ways are more varied when others are present and sitting near; for, after a few moments it will invariably become involved in a neighbour's leg, and return to the charge when removed. Another favourite manoeuvre, if you happen to be using a low armchair with a fringe to it, is to work backwards, dive beneath the fringe, and make it necessary again to rise and grub about for it. Again, when it has become so much reduced in size that these wanderings become impossible, it seems to become abnormally light, and will continually rise in the air, hanging on to the thread, and endeavour to insert itself into your coatsleeve.

But let me not appear to be regarding my young friend as anything but a loyal, though playful, supporter all through, in the work I have managed to achieve. I cheerfully recognise that it has served me well in every

way, renewing its pranks from time to time, yet with line ever unbroken. Nor must the gentle little tugs of encouragement from a distance be forgotten, administered after the manner of Ariadne with her silken thread. I feel a better and a stronger man for its companionship. Theseus-like, I certainly could not have braved the maze in which I found myself, nor have persisted to the end in my adventure, nor felt the same triumph in its successful accomplishment, without the never-failing aid of my fellow worker.

Now it remains for me only to wish God-speed to my scarf, which is departing on its mission. It perhaps cannot be highly assessed as a thing of beauty; but I trust that, on the score of usefulness, it may not be found wanting. Its very imperfections perchance may prove a recommendation; for, when its ample length encircles the throat and body of soldier or sailor, if the question of fastening should be a matter of any difficulty, the little holes here and there at one end (where I began), which have caused me many a heartfelt qualm, will come in nicely for a button. Again, there are in one or two directions some small areas too closely knitted, or for mysterious reasons, somewhat too thick; but I comfort myself with the thought that, should two of these become folded one over the other, the united thickness might possibly mean the saving of a life when splinters are flying!

Lastly, let me imagine the emotions of the recipient of this comforting, if inelegant, reminder of his friends in old England. I fancy him depicting in his mind's eye a shy maiden of limited summers, who has spent many an hour in its construction, while her heart goes out to him in his weary watches. May not such be his idea, and will he not chivalrously waft his grateful sighs to her across the water? I am sure that I should have done so, were I in his place.

Yet, what matters? old men and maidens, are they not equally animated in these days by the same true, keen, undying admiration for the men who have gone forth, and are going, at their country's call, fearlessly to take their part in this gigantic struggle, which is being waged—let it be said in all reverence and humility—between

the servants of God on one side, and the Devil and his angels on the other? Shall this scarf be robbed of every shred of poetic accompaniment because it owes its being, not to the nimble fingers of a maiden, but to a plain blunt man whose heart's desire to do his own bit at the front for his Fatherland has been met with a smile, and the unanswerable verdict of "Too old, too old." So let it be.

Go then, my scarf; go, and do your duty. And let the brave man know, whose shoulders you enfold, that the fire of patriotism, in sympathy with him, burns strong and true in the heart of the man who made you.

Poetic Measles.

The following effusions, lettered A, B and C, are the outcome of an idea that perhaps some little enjoyment might be got out of an occasion which, as a rule, is more depressing than otherwise; but the opportunity of contributing lines upon the subject has been limited to a very small number. If any member of the school should feel hurt at not having been asked to let off his poetic frenzy, he can favour us with a poem for the next issue of the Record.

All are invited to give their views as to the authorship of each piece, but without discussing the question in any way beforehand with their fellows. A small prize is offered for the most successful guesser. It is requested that the guesses may be sent in writing to the Editor, the name of the candidate for the prize being at the same time given. If each piece is carefully read possibly some clue may be found as to the *status* of the writer.

We trust that the author of piece C will pardon us for taking the censorship of such matters as punctuation into our own hands. *Ed.*

A.

FIRST DAY OF TERM.

The holidays, with all their joys,
 Are past; now turn we to the boys
 And face the term again.
 So come, ye masters, buckle to,
 There's work enough for all to do,
 And do with might and main.

In times like these, when all the air
 With martial ardour is aflare,
 'Tis not for us to slack, or spare
 The powers of head or hand :
 Now is the time for steady work,
 Let none their share of duty shirk ;
 We'll work for Fatherland.

We cannot all to Flanders roam,
 If needs must be we stay at home ;
 Never shall it be said
 That *we*, apart from all the rest,
 Were not prepared to do our best,
 We to the call were dead !

No, " now's the time, and now's the hour,"
 Now, while the clouds of battle lower,
 Now to abet great England's power,
 With energy undying ;
 Now will we work as ne'er before.
 Duty is ours—no less, no more—
 We'll keep her old flag flying.

SECOND DAY.

The first day, ' business very firm,'
 A grand beginning to the term,
 All symptons promise well ;
 The masters keen, the boys all fit,
 I like the healthy look of it,
 But no man can foretell.

In nature, when all things may look
 Complete and trim in every nook,
 You'll find in pages of the book
 Such blots as stoats or weazels,
 Creatures that mar the lives of others,
 Posing as foes and not as brothers ;
 'Tis even so with *measles*.

And now, alas, 'tis ours to purge
 The house of this incipient scourge,
 Since there has been reported
 A 'case,' by which I freely own,
 When wily germs are duly sown,
 Our efforts may be thwarted.

But no—myself have seen it done—
 It *can* be limited to one ;
 No place is this for such a Hun
 His wanton bombs to fling.
 No threat our energies shall stay,
One ill sufficient for the day ;
 We'll work like anything.

TWENTY-FIRST DAY.

The fates are hard upon the brave,
 Nor seem too keen concern to save
 A well deserving school :
 Yet he who plays the part of snail,
 And fails to keep erect his tail,
 Would earn the name of fool.

The germs have played their little game,
 Our work is rendered very tame,
 The school is but a school in name,
 The numbers truly thinner ;
 Where ninety boys before had been,
 Some thirty now at work are seen,
 And fewer still at dinner.

But yet, you wily germ, hold fast,
 He laughs the best who laughs the last,
 We'll see who here is master ;
 We'll see, you silly hare-like elf,
 When history repeats itself,
 The brave old tortoise faster.

We, like our native land to-day,
 Though marking time, will fight our way,
 And keep the enemy at bay,
 Till time for striking home.

Are we down-hearted? No, not we.
 Soon will we show for all to see
 That, when component parts agree,
 Or empire, school, or family,
 The right side triumphs, rising free,
 Strong, and still stronger yet to be
 For trials overcome.

B.

I'm fond of work and fond of play,
 I do my best from day to day ;
 I like both holidays and term,
 Holding the balance true and firm
 Between the two. And here we are,
 Looking ahead, around, afar,
 To see if haply we can tell
 If things will badly go or well.
 All looks just right, except for this—
 An awful big exception 'tis—
Measles have come (or *has*, which is it?)
 To pay an uninvited visit ;
 So work and play, it must be said,
 Are now just knocked upon the head,
 And boys in dozens disappear.
 O my, I'm feeling very queer.
My turn has come ! I'm feeling worse,
 So I must terminate my verse.

* * * * *

Back ; and I'm feeling all the better.
 Though still I have to wear my sweater,
 We've turned the nuisance out at last,
 The sun has come, the clouds are past.
 Once more we feel our legs, aha !
 For books and games once more, Hurrah !

C.

I'm asked to write a poem, so here goes.
 It may be that I'm good at it, who knows?
 I can but try at least, and I will say
 What passes in my mind on this fine day.

Now *measles* is the subject ; let me try
 To say what goes on now before my eye.
 I see in my poor form just one or two :
 The master hasn't very much to do.

Unfortunately, I have had the thing,
 So that a rest from work it cannot bring ;
 But soon perhaps it will just lay its hand
 On all the *masters* ! Ha ! That *would* be grand.

School Notes.

We are very sorry indeed that the time has come for Mr. Bowers to leave us ; but we offer him our heartiest congratulations on the recovery of his injured knee, which alone prevented him from joining the Army last August.

Mr. Clay too feels that the Country claims his services, and so will not be with us next term. In him we lose not only our games master, but a most excellent scoutmaster. He has shown a zeal and keenness most inspiring to his troop, who have come on greatly under his leadership. They have shown real appreciation of the trouble he has taken with them, improving greatly during the last six months in efficiency and smartness.

Mr. Stewart writes from Johannesburg where he is now teaching in a preparatory school. The boys are great cricketers out there, but of course there is no grass. They play on beaten earth grounds, which one would imagine to be rather dusty and trying to the eyes.

After three months at Gibraltar H. Woollcombe is returning to England with the Plymouth Fortress Engineers for a month's special training before being sent to the front. Elsewhere he gives an interesting account of a Spanish bull-fight.

Birch has been promoted from cadet to midshipman. During the action off the Falkland Islands in December he was on board the "Invincible" inside a gun turret most of the time, but had to assist afterwards in picking up survivors of the "Greisenau." Many of the German sailors were almost frozen in the water and too weak to help themselves, but a certain number were saved. It must have been a terrible experience to see men drowning within six feet of the ship, and be unable to save them all.

All who are acquainted with Clifton College know that the "Long Penpole" is the principal athletic event of the year. This cross-country race (12 miles, with no less than 28 water jumps) came off on March 9th. R. B. Picken ran, and did well being 8th from the winner. He was awarded the House Cup (North's) for the year. He also won the House Light Weight Boxing Medal, whilst Moggridge i after the best contested match for years past drew for the House Middle Weight Boxing Cup. Moggridge i also obtained a prize for constructing a full-sized boat in the College workshop. Another old M. H. boy J. D. Harvey played for the College against Cheltenham and Rugby in the under sixteen racquets competition.

We are glad to hear from Bolton who seems to have made a good start at Truro.

The eyes of the world are now fixed upon the Dardanelles. We feel an especial interest in H.M.S. "Vengeance" which is taking part in the bombardment, as one old friend Page-Wood is a Midshipman on board her.

Major Vanniesbecq of the Belgian Army, whose letter we published in our last issue, promised to pay us a visit this term. Unfortunately he was taken ill on the way, and much to our disappointment instead of coming to see us he spent his leave in bed at Canterbury, returning to the trenches as soon as he was fit to move.

The Church of England Waifs and Strays Society's box was opened on March 28th, £1 17 6; The Universities Mission to Central Africa box on March 28th, 5/0½; contribution to Workshops for Disabled Soldiers and Sailors (Lord Robert's Memorial) £2 9 5; Serbian Red ❖ Fund 13/5½; Sabot Fund 4/7½; "smokes for soldiers" 3/7½.

An excellent Dramatic Entertainment was given in the Gymnasium on March 27th in aid of the Serbian Red Cross Fund by Miss Newman, Miss Coward and Miss Segar. The plays enacted were "Mechanical Jane" and "Lady Constance Poole-Gubbins." The plays were admirably staged, and the actresses most talented. The audience was delighted, and the merriment caused by "Mechanical Jane's" eccentric behaviour, which was rivalled by Lady Constance Poole-Gubbins' duplicity in the second piece, left everyone in high good humour at the end of the evening. Our talented special reporter has given an account of the entertainment elsewhere.

We must congratulate C. Picken i on winning the Shooting Cup this term with a score of 62 out of a possible 75. He has been shooting very well and has scored several "possibles."

We hope to welcome, next term, two new members of the staff, Mr. R. W. Evans (English Master) and Mr. F. S. Bridgman (Mathematical Master).

The following Old Boy was made a Companion of the Distinguished Service Order in March 1915.

Lieut. (Temporary Capt.) George Ivan Carmichael, Royal Artillery and Royal Flying Corps. For conspicuous gallantry, daring, and ability throughout the campaign. On the 11th instant he destroyed the rails at Menin Railway Station by dropping a bomb weighing 100lb thereon from a height of only 120 feet. On the return journey his engine was damaged by a bullet, which necessitated his flying at a height of less than 200 feet. Capt. Carmichael has also rendered valuable services in observing artillery fire.

He was a member of the School under Miss Tubbs from 1899-1902.

We must apologize for errors in stating the rank of the following "Old Boys serving with the Colours," in the Christmas number of the Record. *Capt.* R. V. Hunt, 125 Napier Rifles I. A., and *Sergeant* A. G. Hunt, Canadian Contingent.

On the last morning of the term Mr. Bowers and Mr. Clay were presented by Elliott, on behalf of the School with parting presents in the form of hair brushes in leather cases and small burnished steel mirrors. Mr. Bowers in thanking for them said that such kind and useful presents would be a constant reminder of the givers. Mr. Clay after expressing his gratitude, specially addressed the Scouts, begging them to keep up the standard of keenness and efficiency, and support and help their patrol leaders in every way in their power.

The prize-winners this term are as follows:—

Form VI	Jones i.
Form V	Norman i.
Form IV	Brownlow.
Form III	Rimington.
Form II	Picken iii.
Form II	(Special) Wray ii.
Form I	Bolt.

Scouting.

This term has been bad for scouting on account of illness keeping so many of us indoors, but yet it has been quite a successful term in many ways.

During last holidays numerous scouts gave up their time to serving their country by doing work at the different hospitals; and two scouts, Elliott and Burke ii., have been awarded "War Badges." Several others have arranged to continue their good work this Easter. We have had seven new "tenderfoots" this term, and they have been very keen; one of them becoming a Second Class scout. Up to the time of writing six scouts have been awarded the 2nd Class Badge, and the majority of the rest hope to pass next term.

Great keenness has been taken in signalling, and some very good results have been obtained.

January 21st Our first expedition was spoilt by the inclemency of the weather. We started out with the intention of practising the scouts' pace on the Crown Hill Road. After plodding through the mud over the measured mile we returned home to the Gym. for games and instruction in 2nd Class tests.

February 11th and 25th. We went out to the neighbourhood of Fort Efford, and several passed the mile and fire-lighting tests. Afterwards we split up into three groups and did some signalling.

March 4th. We again visited our headquarters for passing 2nd Class tests. After taking part in mile, fire-lighting, and signalling tests, two scouts set out to lay a track through a wood and across country. The track was lost after the scouts emerged from the wood, but when they were put on the track again the hidden letter was soon found.

March 6th. We spent a whole day at Plym Bridge, and were fortunate in having a lovely day. We took our rations for dinner, and after arriving at our destination at 11.30, we proceeded to collect wood for our fires. We were handicapped in having to light our fires in a quarry where the wind kept on changing. After boiling our water we each proceeded to cook two potatoes and some meat. Some

of the cooking was done very well, but some would not have done for invalids. After dinner coats and water-bottles were left under a guard, and we proceeded to find two scouts, who were supposed to be injured—one having a fractured leg and another a fractured arm, which had rendered him unconscious. It took a long time to find them, since the district was thickly wooded. First aid was administered and the patients were brought home on improvised stretchers. After taking part in some well contested games of French and English, we caught the last train home, but it was so crowded that we had to travel in the guard's van.

March 18th. We proceeded to Fort Efford, and on the way there a surprise order was given to scale a six-foot wall, and then get back again at a fixed landmark. This was done very well and showed that they were "prepared for everything." Several more scouts passed tests in mile and fire-lighting, although the material for the latter was not very dry. After arriving home some drill was got through in the field.

Football.

Football this term has been confined to about a dozen games, owing partly to bad weather, but chiefly to measles. We were unable to raise any team for matches, which has been rather disappointing, since we had the same state of affairs last term. Colours have been renewed to Elliott and Jones i., and have been awarded to Yonge, Payn and Burnard, who have displayed great talent in the games.

Our annual "three-ball" match took place on March 25th, in splendid weather. On "Whites" side were all from A to L, and "Colours" had the rest; but unfortunately several of the team players could not play. It was a most energetic and thrilling game, being well contested throughout. The score kept about level up to 14 all, when there were only ten more minutes for play, but owing to some good combination between Mr. Cox and Jones, which resulted in five more goals for the Whites, the Whites won by 19 goals to 17.

The Williams Challenge Cup Competition.

The Gymnastic Competition for the above-named cup took place in the Gymnasium on the afternoon of March 23. Unfortunately, owing to measles, during the term much valuable time, of which part would have been spent in preparing for the contest, was lost; and for the same reason several boys, through lack of training, were unable to compete. The chosen VIII, showing great keenness over the marching, free gymnastic, breathing, parallel bar and horse exercises, made a favourable impression on the spectators. At the end of the display the judges expressed themselves as being very pleased with the keen rivalry shown and the good all round work done. Jones i., the winner, and Pellew i, the runner-up, gave a very satisfactory account of themselves in each event. Payn in the free and rope exercises was very good, but was not sufficiently neat or thorough in his apparatus work to secure higher marks. Norman i. is to be complimented on his plucky and sustained efforts, and he undoubtedly ought to go further when he is older and stronger. Elliott, otherwise good, dropped too many marks over the rope exercises to do himself justice. Wimbush i., Burnard i. and Pullen ii., though showing special ability in one or more events, must learn the importance of 'showing position' before they can hope to be considered in the first flight. The Judges placed the competitors as follows:

	Marching & Exerc's	Rope Exercises	Parallel Bars.	Horse Exercises	Total.
Maximum. ..	25	15	30	30	100
Jones i. ..	25	15	29	27	96
Pellew i. ..	25	12	28	25	90
Payn ..	24	14	22	24	84
Elliott ..	24	7	24	25	80
Norman i. ..	23	10	22	25	80
Wimbush i. ..	23	7	17	18	65
Burnard i. ..	23	3	16	18	60
Pellew ii. ..	23	5	16	16	60

Boxing.

The annual competition for the Boxing Cup took place immediately after that for Gymnastics. Burnard i., Elliott and Jones i. were so evenly matched that the judges had much difficulty in deciding which of them was the best. Their boxing was of quite a high order, and they contested each round with spirit and good temper. Finally, Jones i. was given the verdict, and he is to be congratulated on proving the winner against such doughty opponents as Burnard i. and Elliott. In the class for 'bantams' Burke ii, Lewes, Norman i. and Pellew ii. showed plenty of promise too, and ought to shape well in future competitions. At the end of an interesting afternoon the Headmaster commended all concerned for the good results of their efforts, and Mrs. C. Yonge very kindly presented the Cups to the winner, Jones i.

An Appreciation.

The Editor of the "Record" would naturally feel reluctant to allow the publication of anything which might appear simply as a laudatory setting forth of the virtues of the school; but the writer of this short paper has no desire whatever to give such a tone to it—he wishes only to give his own impressions, and to state the truth and nothing but the truth. He asks, as a personal favour, that room may be found for it.

It is inevitable that a man who has himself had considerable experience in conducting a Preparatory School, and has seen the working of many others, should come, not necessarily with a critical eye, but with one that is ready to note with interest any point that may appear new to him, and anything that may win his approval or otherwise. It may be stoutly asserted that there is very little indeed in Mount House School to which exception can fairly be taken, while there is a very great deal which commands one's honest admiration.

To begin with, the premises have advantages which are often wanted in schools. The whole grounds are enclosed within a ring fence—if a substantial stone wall, seven feet high or more, can be rightly so called; the two houses are free and open to the sun, but sheltered on the coldest side by a thick belt of trees; the schoolrooms and class rooms are admirably arranged and equipped, as also are the masters' special quarters. The playing field is close at hand, and, though somewhat small, is sufficient for its purpose. The field, like the playground, is used alternately by the senior and junior schools, which in their work and general arrangements are kept altogether apart. No school can be considered complete without a large hall, available for use on special occasions, and this want is supplied by a spacious Gymnasium with a stage, while there is a carpenter's workshop under the same roof.

We perhaps may be forgiven the platitude if we say that masters are an important consideration. It is the highest compliment to a headmaster if his assistants are found to be working keenly and happily, since he is responsible for a great deal more than their mere appointment. There are men whom it is a pleasure to work under, as assuredly there are the opposite. When a chief gives his lieutenants a good lead, trusts them, apportions a fair amount of work to each and no more, and is ever ready to help and advise them, loyal co-operation on their part should be assured. This we find is the case in the present instance, and it is perhaps the most important point of all for recognition. There is moreover a *camaraderie* in the common room which makes a newcomer welcome at once, with sufficient elasticity about it to adapt itself to a considerable difference in age.

There are many ladies taking an active part in the work and management, and setting a fine example of thoroughness, as lady workers generally do; whilst their refining influence is of no small importance.

The boys, what of the boys? Little need be said of them, for the subject of this paper is the educational machinery rather than the raw material. But that material is good, and worthy of the best efforts of the staff. There is plenty of spirit in most of them, and they respond to the

call of their leaders. They are not without the faults which a schoolmaster has to look out for and correct—they are boys, *voilà tout!* The best testimony to a school is to be found in the character of its old boys, and the hold which it retains upon their affections. The reader may be confidently referred to such testimony.

As an old friend of the Headmaster, the writer would claim the privilege of adding a few words that will not come under the head of mere impressions; for he knows that the past, in the case of the said Headmaster, has not been without checks and difficulties which only pluck and determination could overcome. All has not been plain-sailing; but the energy which has met and overthrown these difficulties, combined with tact and a never-failing cheerfulness—what a heaven-born virtue is a sense of humour!—is now represented in a personal authority which all can respect. He has a keen sense of justice all round, and is firm enough when firmness is required, as many are aware; but at heart he is as volatile as those birds upon which a life-long study has made him an authority.

Here then is a community of men, women, and boys, well fitted to do good work in its little sphere for our glorious Empire and all that it stands for. Education means the training of body, mind, and character—but the greatest of these is character; and the school is working well for these objects of its existence. *In æternum floreat!* W.M.R.

Buried Masters, and Others.

At 8 o'cl. a young lady will sing.

Catarrh! O desolation!

In Plymouth weather: "I cannot swim. 'Bus, hi, stop."

The House Garforth.

Messrs. Ward and Co.

At Kabul lentils are scarce.

What a lot, O my!

Why don't she bow 'erself to the Queen?

Scafell is grand.

We'll play them at "Rondo" any day.

It is spelt with one W, many vowels, and an R.

Strange inscription: "Brama che LLC o. XX."

"Slugs" by Prof. Worm, M.R.S. (X. and Co.)

The Russian Consul, M.Ountho, uses "Chool" for chilblains.

Dramatic Entertainment.

On the 27th March two short plays were presented in aid of the Serbian Red Cross, by the Misses Segar, Newman and Coward. In "Mechanical Jane" Miss Segar as Tabitha kept the audience in ecstasies at her mistakes in house-keeping. The others of the Company deserve as much praise; Miss Coward as Mechanical Jane carried out a most difficult role most successfully; Miss Newman as Priscilla was surely an ideal spinster with a strong will of her own. In "Lady Elizabeth Poole Gubbins" Miss Coward as the Vicar's wife, who prides herself on her judgement of human character, and Miss Segar as Lady Poole, who proves by a clever piece of acting that her friend is not so great a judge as she thinks, are both deserving of praise. Miss Newman as the haughty maidservant is quite the real thing. All the actresses deserved to be congratulated and it is certain that there was scarcely anyone who would not have wished to see it all over again if time permitted.

P. H. P.

List of Old Boys Serving.

(Continued).

1st Lieut. Walter Radcliffe.	1st Reserve Batt 4th Devons.
2nd Lieut. J. G. Waddington.	Mechanical Transport A.S.C.
Capt. B. C. Sparrow.	1st Batt. 39th Garhwal Rifles. <i>Killed in action, March 10th 1915.</i>
Lieut. C. R. Bean.	1st Batt. South Staffs. <i>Killed in action, Oct. 26th, 1914.</i>
Lieut. R. G. Lucy.	2nd Northampton Regt <i>Died of wounds, March 19th, 1915.</i>
Lieut. A. C. M. Walsh.	Royal Horse Artillery. <i>Died of wounds received on March 11th, 1915.</i>
Assistant Clerk S. J. R.	Bath, R.N., H.M.S. "Princess Royal."
* Capt. W. Jefferd.	2nd Middlesex Regt.
Capt. H. C. Whipple.	1st Batt. Devon Regt. <i>Killed in action, Sept. 1914.</i>
Lieut. W. Bastard.	<i>Killed in action, Oct. 26th, 1914.</i>

* Captain Jefferd was awarded the French Legion of Honour for gallantry in action.

The above Old Boys were all members of the School when Miss Tubbs was Headmistress.

In Memoriam.

Times, March 19th.

SECOND LIEUT. ARCHIBALD CHARLES MARK WALSH, R.H.A., who died on the 18th February from wounds received in action, was the youngest son of Colonel Walsh, C.B., and of Mrs. Walsh, of Hillmore, Bishop's Hull, Taunton. He was born in February, 1892, and obtained his commission in July, 1912.

CAPT. B. C. SPARROW—KILLED.

Captain Benjamin Charles Sparrow, 1st Battalion 39th Garhwal Rifles, was killed in action on March 10th at Neuve Chapelle. Captain Sparrow was the eldest son of the late Benjamin Sparrow, of Cleeve, Ivybridge, and Mrs. Sparrow, of 36, Portland Court, London. He was educated at Cheltenham College, and passed through Sandhurst, going straight out to South Africa, when he received his commission in the Royal Berkshire Regiment in 1901. He was promoted lieutenant in 1904, in which year he entered the Indian Army (6th Gurkhas). Later he exchanged into the 39th Garhwal Rifles, when he was made double company commander in 1909 and became captain the following year. Captain Sparrow served in the South African war, receiving the Queen's medal with five clasps, and also on the North-West frontier of India in 1908, taking part in the operations in the Lakka Khel's country, for which he held the medal with clasps.

LIEUT. R. E. LUCY.

Lieut. R. E. Lucy, son of Dr. R. H. Lucy, Plymouth, died of his wounds in hospital at Boulogne on Friday, March 19th.

He was educated at Malvern College, whence he passed direct into Sandhurst. He received his commission as second-lieutenant in the 2nd Batt. Northamptonshire Regt. (58th Foot) on January 22nd, 1913, and spent the first nine months of his service in Malta, whence his regiment moved to Alexandria in January, 1914, and on July 8th of the same year he was promoted to lieutenant and went through a course of training with the Camel Corps School at Abbassia, Cairo. He came home from Egypt with his regiment in October, and proceeded to the front the first week in November, as part of the 8th Division, British Expeditionary Force.

Dr. and Mrs. Lucy proceeded to Boulogne and remained with their son until the end.

LIEUT. BEAN.

Lieut. Charles Reginald Chamberlain Bean, aged 21, 1st South Staffordshire Regt., was killed in action near Ypres on October 26th, 1914.

Letter from Old Boy.

CATALAN BAY,

GIBRALTAR.

11th March, 1915.

Dear Sir,

I have just received the "Record" for last Xmas term and I find in it a small reminder to me that I have been owing you a letter for some time.

It is just possible that I may be able to pay you all a visit within the next month or two, as we are probably leaving here at the end of the month, either to go to the Front or possibly to the Dardanelles. In either case, it is quite likely that we shall come home to England for a month or six weeks, to be equipped before we start, and if I get any leave or find myself back in Plymouth for a short time I will most certainly look you up. We are being relieved by another of our own Companies. Since we have been here we have been very slack, except for the last two or three weeks, during which time we have been going through a course of musketry. During that time I have been on detachment duty with my half company here. Catalan Bay is a small fishing village, something like Cawsand. It is quite a pretty little place. The inhabitants are Genoese; having been shipwrecked here some time ago, they founded a colony and have remained under British rule ever since. You would hardly know that there was a war going on at all here except that 'Troopers' come through periodically and various ships come here to do their trials and gunnery practices. The "Queen Elizabeth" was here three or four weeks ago, and just before that the "Invincible" was in dock here being patched up. Football, hockey and tennis all go on here at the same time. There is plenty of riding, a pony being invaluable for getting around the work. In the summer there is polo. Last Sunday I went to see a bull fight in Spain. I never wish to see another. It is the most disgusting and degrading sight, I think, I have ever seen. The way the horses are treated is the beastly part of it. The men who take part in a bull fight are divided into three classes—(1) Bandolieros on foot with gaudy coloured cloaks to 'play' the bull with, (2) Picadors on horses who are simply there to tire the bull out by getting their horses tossed, and (3) the Matador or Toreador who kills the bull finally. When the bull comes into the ring the Bandolieros and Picadors are waiting for him. He starts by rushing at one of these Bandolieros, who waves his cloak in the bull's face and darts to one side. This is called 'passing' the bull and it is certainly very skilful and very pretty to watch. After this has gone on for some time, the horses come into play and after the bull has tossed two or three, those that are left are taken out as the effort of lifting three horses and their riders is considered sufficient to tire the bull. After the horses are gone the Bandolieros attack the bull with darts. One

Bandoliero advances with a dart in each hand and as the bull rushes he has to plant his two darts right between the shoulders and then dart to one side. The other Bandolieros are standing ready with their cloaks to draw the bull off in case of accidents. This is also very skilful and pretty work to watch. After several of these darts have been stuck into the wretched bull, the Matador comes on and plays the bull with his cloak and sword. By this time the bull is getting decidedly tired and after a bit the Matador gets him in the right position, when the bull is standing stock still, staring at him, and then he drives his sword through the bull's heart, if he can. The right spot is a small square just behind the shoulder. This is called 'a clean kill'! The first bull I saw on Sunday was missed twice by the Matador and eventually he had to kill him between the horns, which is very bad. The second bull was killed by a thrust through the lung. Not a clean kill, but it pleased the crowd. If the Matador misses he gets howled at. A full afternoon's fun means 8 bulls, Sunday's fight was 6 bulls. I saw 2 killed, then I had had enough. If it wasn't for the wretched horses one would enjoy it. The excuse is that horses have to be used to tire the bull. The one redeeming feature is that they are awful old 'screws' to begin with, but they are beaten on to their feet when they are down and made to go on as long as they can stand up. The Picador has to be plucky, as every time his horse is tossed he is thrown heavily, but he does nothing himself except jab a spear into the bull. In some bull fights, especially in Portugal, I believe, they have good horses and make it a point of honour with the Picador to keep his horse untouched. That's a very different state of affairs.

Yours very sincerely,

HUMPHREY W. WOOLLCOMBE.