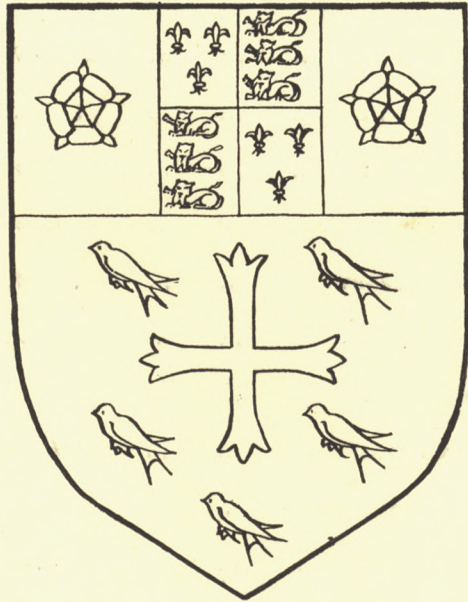


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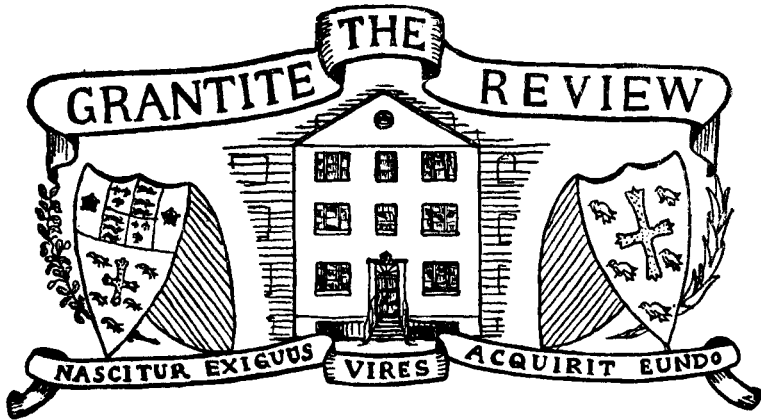
# THE GRANTITE REVIEW



ELECTION TERM,  
1943.

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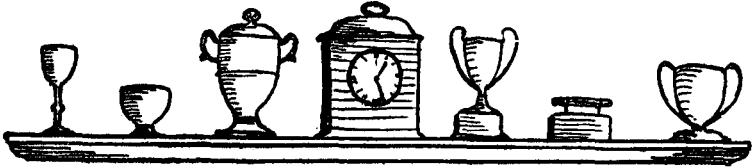
### EDITORIAL.

During this term two events have made their mark upon life up Grant's. The first of these is the great victory in Tunisia, which has at last justified the claim that Britain is indeed the powerful country which we have for so long liked to think her. The second is a more personal one. It is the announcement that Grant's will move to Buckenhill at the end of this term.

For the war the African victory must surely be the turning-point; for Westminster it may be said to be the climax of our long evacuation. Already one may hear talk about "when we get back to London," conjectures whether or not the original school dress will be continued, or discussions as to which of the former traditions should be revived and which discarded. And this is all to the good, as so few people fully appreciate what great difficulties and problems a return to London will probably entail. One is apt to forget that a move from a strict and traditional life to the freer conditions inevitable in evacuation is in many ways easier than the reverse. When the School moved to Lancing, there was consciously in the background, behind the adjustments necessary for the running of the School, the question of how these changes compared with Westminster in London. And it was only that year's new boys who had not seen Westminster and who could therefore make no comparison. But when the School returns at the end of the war, there will certainly be no boys who have known anything but evacuation; up Grant's, in fact, the last two boys to have been in London are leaving at the end of this term. The result will be that there will be none of them left to judge whether one custom should be continued or whether another rule should be abolished, in the light of whether that rule or custom had proved advantageous before the war. The life which we lead in the country is so free that it would seem that many rules which were enforced five years ago will, on our return, be thought unnecessary and allowed to die a natural death. The ideal then at which the School should aim is that our return will be as natural a process as our evacuation. As we have brought Westminster ways into the country, so we should take back to London some of the things that the country life has taught us.

The news of our move to Buckenhill came at first as a blow to everyone. We had grown to love Fernie as a home, even though we had had constantly to put up with all its disadvantages. But Fernie's distance from the rest of the School made us too insular; yet it was this enforced independence that enabled us to achieve a great spirit of happiness amongst ourselves, and to lay the foundations for a freer system of running the House.

It is clearly to the good that evacuation should bring such a freedom, but at the same time it must not bring any relaxation of essential discipline. We have found out that it is quite possible (and, in fact, that it is the only way) for a house to be really efficient and happy if it has a bare minimum of good, sensible rules—rules which are clearly for everybody's good and which are, by virtue of that, respected and obeyed. This term a visitor to Fernie, who had himself just left another public-school, remarked that the happiness of the House and its method of running were utterly different from anything that he had known at his own School.



### HOUSE NOTES.

There left us last term :—J. R. B. Hodges, A. H. Williams, D. J. E. Shaw, A. M. Davidson, P. Y. Davidson. We wish them all the best of luck.

This term we welcome as new boys :—R. E. Nagle, G. G. Skellington.

In Inner there are :—D. I. Gregg, S. P. L. Kennedy, B. G. Almond, B. R. Corcos.

In Chiswicks there are :—W. J. Reed, R. J. M. Baron, J. O. Eichholz, R. Bruce, H. Kleeman.

The Head of Hall is G. D. Glennie, and the Hall Monitors are K. M. Thomson and G. J. H. Williams.

Congratulations to D. L. Almond on gaining an exhibition in the Challenge. Also to :—S. P. L. Kennedy on his Pinks, B. R. Corcos on his Half-Pinks, and J. O. Eichholz and G. D. Glennie on their Colt's for Football.

Also to :—W. J. Reed on his Half-Pinks for Tennis.

Also to :—B. G. Almond and B. R. Corcos on their Seniors, and J. O. Eichholz and G. D. Glennie on their Juniors for Athletics.

We lost the Long Distance Race Cup to Busby's, but S. P. L. Kennedy won the race.

In the Relay Races we won the Open Halves and the Open Quarters, coming third in the total for the Relays Cup.

D. I. Gregg is the senior Sergeant in the J.T.C. Grant's were second in the Inter-House J.T.C. Cup.

The House produced "Laburnum Grove," by J. B. Priestley, on June 17th, an account of which appears elsewhere. We were very grateful to Mr. Snelling for some invaluable help.

It will interest Old Grantites to know that the newly-formed Under School will be at 2, Little Dean's Yard, until the end of the war.

This term Gram. Soc. has only functioned once or twice, as so much time had to be given up to rehearsals. We are very grateful to Matron and to Mr. Williams who gave the House some new records. (We feel sure that Mr. Williams' gift came as a thank-offering for our converting his son from swing to good music!)

In Lit. Soc. we have read the following plays :—" Othello " ; " Tons of Money," by W. Evans and Valentine ; " The Man who was Thursday," by G. K. Chesterton ; " Tilly of Bloomsbury," by Ian Hay ; " The Importance of being Earnest," by Oscar Wilde, at which we were very glad to have the Head Master reading the part of Ernest. We hope to read before the end of term :—" Richard of Bordeaux," by George Faviot ; " Journey's End," by R. C. Sherriff ; " The Moon in the Yellow River," by Denis Johnston.

\* \* \* \* \*

During last holidays a combined cast from College and Rigaud's gave two excellent performances of " Henry IV, Part Two," in College Hall.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Housemaster and Mrs. Murray-Rust are again having farmers at their cottage at Stalbridge this year.

\* \* \* \* \*

We are all very sorry that Mrs. Baines who has been our Matron for five years has to leave us at the end of this term. We want her to know how grateful we all are for everything that she has done for Grant's. She was with us in all our moves and in the London blitz and she has become a friend to a great number of Grantites and Old Grantites.

We wish her the very best of luck in the future.

\* \* \* \* \*

Our Matron next term will be Miss Macrae, who was the Matron up Grant's from 1935 to 1938. She is also to be Matron for the whole of Buckenhill and we are glad to welcome her back to Westminster again.

#### FERNIE BANK AND BUCKENHILL.

This is our last term here, but to all appearances one would never know it. Life goes on just the same : we keep two pigs which have to be sold to the Ministry of Food at the end of term, and the hens still carry on—not too badly but we feel sometimes that they don't realise that there is a war on! And the rabbits continue to multiply at a stupendous rate, though the birth-rate is to some extent counteracted by a number of them escaping and running wild. The only part of the Estate that we have not kept up to its usual efficiency is the kitchen garden, as our numbers are too few to tend it properly and it would not be worth while for just the one term.

We are sorry to go and there are many friends that we will leave behind us. Their kindness to Grant's during the whole time we have been at Fernie is more than we can ever thank them for enough. Mr. and Mrs. Payne, of Huntlands, have given up three of their rooms for our use as dormitories and throughout they have gone out of their way to do all they can for the boys sleeping at Huntlands. Mr. and Mrs. Wrigley, of Gaines, allowed us the use of their tennis courts and their lake for bathing, and not content with that they lent us a " pick-up " for our Gram. Soc. Mr. Ballard, of Parson's Hill, we got to know in the early days of Home Guard, and since then he has been a great friend of all Grantites, past and present. To these and to the many others who have helped so willingly in making us comfortable at Fernie, we take this opportunity of saying good-bye and of thanking them again most sincerely.

The move to Buckenhill was necessitated purely on grounds of economy, since the Governing Body considered that the closing of Fernie was in the best interests of the School. Though we shall be sharing Buckenhill with the two houses already there—Busby's and the united Homeboarders and Ashburnham—we will in no way be amalgamating with either. We shall have a separate dining-room, separate day-rooms and separate dormitories. The Housemaster will, of course, be coming with us, and Mrs. Murray-Rust is going to cater for the whole of Buckenhill. Also Miss Macrae will be Matron for all three Houses. Although we shall dovetail into many of the existing arrangements, we shall be keeping our own identity as Grant's.

## HYDRAULIC SAGA.

"You turn on the tap and out comes the water." We who came to Fernie in 1940 had had no other experience ; an odd air-lock or so sometimes at Lancing but never any question of there being water in the tank—it was always there of course.

That didn't work here ; so the pioneers, with much professional assistance from Mr. Edmund Williams who saved us more than once, set about mastering (as they vainly thought!) what is now called the top engine. This extracts water from a well under the house and, as it is drinking water, all seemed well. The first setback was when this well ran dry—it was sufficient for a normal household but not for a schoolhouse. Momentary panic, first dustbins and then a water-carrier fetched water from Tibs until Mr. Wells rigged up a contrivance by which water was pumped by a semi-rotary pump from the pond into the overflow pipe of the main tank ; before long the pond started to run dry! But there was a disused well, with apparently plenty of water in it, down by the "old house" with pipe connection up to Fernie ; so the semi-rotary pump went down there and relays of pumpers worked very hard to keep us supplied . . . until it became apparent that for all the water extracted from this well none was coming into it, for its source of supply must have failed and it only contained surface water! This was a bitter blow as a second engine, which our predecessors had taken away for repairs, had been returned and we had meant to instal it at this lower well and save all the hard work of pumping.

But we reckoned without Holloway ; he had discovered brick chambers built into the stream the best part of a quarter of a mile away and, while enquiries as to the cost and practicability of installing a ram were going on, he was deducing that these must once have formed part of a water supply to Fernie and must be linked to it with pipes. The ram project fell through ; Holloway discovered the pipeline by digging for it ; and he so much impressed Mr. Williams and the Bromyard water engineer with his ideas that in a very short time the second engine was down by the stream, the pipes from there were joined up to the house supply pipes and the situation seemed saved. For there would never be shortage of water to draw from as long as the stream ran at all—a dam ensured a constant level in the brick tank. We could go on getting washing water once a day from the stream engine and drinking water once a day from the top one.

Nevertheless, since then we have had an unceasing fight for our supplies ! The top pump has never yet broken ; but the bottom one has once had to be entirely replaced after a sudden frost had done its worst, and more recently it had to be taken away for overhaul after a flood had filled the storage chamber in the stream with mud which got sucked up instead of water, with disastrous results. During these major setbacks we have had to rely on the top well only, which necessitated restrictions for a time, but we learnt how to adapt our water consumption so as never to be unduly short. Then both engines have had seasonal breakdowns due to plug trouble or carbonisation or belts slipping, and have had numerous other mechanical breakdowns which caused temporary anxiety until they were diagnosed and cured. If it was the bottom engine at fault, it might mean going up and down the hill to the stream five or six times to see whether it was yielding to treatment!

Baron (R.) has been the Chief Engineer, with Williams (G.) and Glennie as his partners. Their shared responsibility for producing the goods has entailed the sacrifice of much of their time just on the routine running and maintenance of the engines ; and when things went wrong, they have spent literally hours of extra time on them. They have got black ; their clothes have got black (ask Matron!) ; but, however much has been put on them, their tempers never seem to have got black ; and they have said that they would not exchange their job for anything and will even miss it next term! However that may be, we have all cause to be grateful to them to an extent that few of us probably realise ; we may have had to miss a bath now and again, but we have never been actually without water for either washing or drinking.

## ATHLETICS.

In view of the restrictions placed on cricket, the activities of athletics this year were increased as compared with recent years. In this respect "standards" were re-introduced, although it proved impracticable to hold races purely for the individual.

The nine-mile Bringsty Relay Race and the Long Distance Race were run last term. In both of these Grant's was severely handicapped by the loss of two or three good runners who left about a fortnight before these races.

Nevertheless our team did not enter the nine-mile Relay without some confidence, strengthened by the two successive victories of the last two years. The hat-trick was not to be ours, however, for we lost the lead early in the race and never succeeded in overtaking either Ashburnham and Homeboarders or King's Scholars. These two Houses had an exciting race, which ended in a spectacular win for Ashburnham and Homeboarders, who overtook King's Scholars in the last 100 yards. Grant's, though well behind the winner, was an easy third.

In the four-mile Long Distance Race we secured the 1st, 5th and 15th places, and were equal second, Busby's being the winners.

The remaining events—standards and relays—were held this term. The standard heats were run throughout the first part of the term. Once again we were handicapped, this time by the illness of three useful runners—one from each age group. Ashburnham and Homeboarders turned out to be our rivals; they defeated us by a narrow margin for the right of third place, and in the relays we in turn defeated them, leaving Busby's and King's Scholars well in the lead.

Two races in the relays deserve special mention, as being those which we won, the first and last of the afternoon. The first, the open half-miles, was started by B. G. Almond, who obtained an invaluable lead, which was ably held and increased by R. J. M. Baron, leaving the last runner a simple task in winning by a 100 yards. The last, the open quarter-miles, was a closer race; Gayer (Busby's) being barely fifteen yards behind when Almond breasted the tape.

The under 16½ group were a disappointment in their relays; but the under 15's ran well on the whole, in particular in the quarter-miles, when, a much younger team, they were narrowly beaten by Busby's.

S. P. L. K.

## ABBEY.

On April 11th, the first Sunday of the holidays, about forty members of the School, among them nine Grantites, attended the morning service in Abbey at the special invitation of the Dean who gave them the two blocks of seats in the Choir which the School used to occupy before the war. Some of the staff, including the Housemaster and Mrs. Murray-Rust, and many Old Westminsterers and parents and other friends of the School were also there.

The lessons were read by the Master of the King's Scholars and the Head Master, and Canon Fox, himself a member of the Governing Body, preached the sermon, in which he welcomed the School "home," even if only temporarily, and drew a parallel between the lesson from Exodus and the School's present "exile." We were much struck by the fine singing of the choir, composed as it is for the present of men's voices only.

We gathered after the service in the Head Master's house in which the Rev. M. Petitpierre, an Old Westminster who is in charge of Toc. H, now lives, and then went round the School buildings, some of us for the first time, under the well-qualified guidance of Mr. Carleton. Even among the sad remains of School he made us laugh with anecdotes of Westminster history, especially with one of some Japanese diplomats who, having remained silent during their entire tour, enquired, when shown the bar across School from which the curtain dividing the Upper and Lower Schools used to hang, whether the curtain hung "vertical or horizontal"!

To round off this memorable morning, Mr. Murray-Rust took the Grantites up House. As we passed the door of one of the private rooms, we heard a burst of laughter. On investigating further we found that the old custom of holding a sherry party up Grant's after Abbey on Sundays had been revived for this occasion ; we were unfortunately not invited to join in!

I think that the short time spent among the real School buildings was just what was wanted to make us feel that, despite evacuation and despite shorts and open shirts, we are still Westminster, essentially a London school. There are others, I know, who feel this as strongly as I do. It is our duty, then, and our pleasure, to thank all those who made this visit to Westminster so great a success.

B. G. A.

## TEA AND DRAMA.

This mixture made up the ingredients of the party to which Fernie invited the whole School, the masters, their friends and children, and also some of those "local inhabitants" to whom they owed so much. The drama was Priestley's "Laburnum Grove," to be given in the open air, "weather permitting," and indoors to a reduced audience if it rained ; and the tea was—well, something for the audience to push into their faces afterwards.

Every day was wet before *the* day ("surely it must clear up to-morrow"—but it never did) and every day has been wet since ; but *the* day was perfect as though a kindly Providence really wanted a nice large audience to come and see (many of them for the first as well as for the last time) Fernie looking its best and the real home that it has been to us for these three years. For this was to be our "house-moving" party.

The play had its teething troubles while it grew up, but the one occasion that really mattered went off like clockwork, certainly to the relief but also to the well-earned satisfaction of the producer (B. G. Almond), of the stage-and-business-and-everything-else manager (R. J. Baron) and of the rest of the company, both on and off the stage.

The setting was the lawn in front of the house, the stage being a recess bounded by a cedar tree on one side and a vast conifer on the other. The footlights were represented by a fringe of grass left unmown, there was no scenery and the only properties were the bare necessities for the interior of a dining room. The absence of a curtain was got over by the entry of a stage hand (with hair suitably brushed for the occasion) carrying a placard announcing the beginning or end of such and such a scene, bowing to the audience and moving off to the side. Yet the actors may claim to have been successful in putting across the required atmosphere of crookdom-cum-suburbia. Reed played the householder, conventionally suburban and proud of it, of whom it was either bluff or double bluff the whole time as to his being a crook as well. And Almond kept peace and plenty going for him in his house as his appropriate hausfrau. The casually plausible man-from-the-East, Eichholz, and his hectoring wife, Thomson, were the unwanted (and definitely unpaying) guests who were only too ready to clear off when trouble seemed brewing. So was that hopelessly futile, weak-kneed, hound, Harold (played by Glennie) ; only he was really worse and did not mind breaking the heart of his fiancée, Elsie, on the way. Kleeman was Elsie, and, though *quite* old enough at twenty to know that Harold was the man for her, she was ready later on to recognise his deficiencies, especially when it meant a bit of travel for her.

Through this family circle darts (not, apparently, for the first time) that flashily dressed, pseudo-greenhouse enthusiast, Williams. This apprentice in forgery seemed to relish his part and was suitably indignant when it was suggested by Baron (from Scotland Yard) that he was a party to a felony. Anyhow Baron was properly hoodwinked and the criminals staged a happy get-away in spite of a last minute fright from the local constabulary in the person of Corcos, who after all only wanted a subscription and, in the general relief, got one to the tune of a genuine fiver.

T. M-R.



## THE MOUTHPIECE.

The last two terms have seen a marked increase of literary activity up Grant's, which is mainly due to the re-establishment of the *Mouthpiece*, a junior House publication. The *Mouthpiece* was originally instituted at Lancing by M. D. Ingrams. Since his departure, however, the *Mouthpiece* had been allowed to die out until the end of last term when it was re-started. Since then four numbers have been produced at approximate intervals of a month and it is hoped to publish one more before the end of term.

The magazine itself is typewritten and enclosed in a dark blue cover. It has been found possible to produce twelve copies of every number by using carbon and of course the thinnest possible paper. The general plan of distribution is that one copy is allotted to each day-room of the House and the remainder are divided amongst contributors.

So far we have published a very varied collection of literature, ranging from gripping murder dramas to humorous and somewhat Utopian descriptions of the Home Guard. Besides fiction we have also had a number of intellectual articles, mostly on music, which were both interesting and instructive. One bright lad has undertaken to write the history of the Royal Tank Regiment in instalments!

This, then, is the *Mouthpiece*, a magazine not formed for the purpose of rivalling the *Grantite*, but for encouraging the literary inclinations of the younger members of the House. It does not owe its success to any one person—the credit must be assigned to the House in general, Hall in particular, for the whole-hearted co-operation it has given. It only remains to wish *Mouthpiece* the best of luck and to confer upon it the official Westminster toast of "Floreat."

G. D. G.

## HOME GUARD.

The Westminster detachment of our company is trying out an experiment by being trained as an intelligence section. This will involve the repeated practising of old tricks of reconnaissance, concealment, message writing and carrying, and so on; and maybe the discovery of some new tricks. But it will be spiced up with the knowledge that operationally the detachment would actually be the first people entrusted with "information" responsibility and all that would depend on it. It is a job for which the training is not spoilt by an inevitable fluctuation in numbers—a trained intelligence section can be worth its weight in gold to a commander whether it be of two men or of twenty so long as it knows its job; and it is a job for which there is always much more to be learnt before anything like perfection can be claimed in any of its many aspects.

Although the present Fernie and Whitbourne groups will be more widely separated next term, they will both carry on with this same job, sometimes each group by itself, sometimes no doubt arranging to meet for training in the intervening country.

Other activities have included a "whole-night" exercise in which our company and another were to test out the Bromyard company's defence in or adjacent to the town. Starting at midnight the Fernie group were lucky in having transport in a grossly overladen car to the company rendezvous the other side of Bromyard. The roles assigned to the Westminster detachment were first a preliminary reconnaissance and then the provision of feint attacks on either side of the company's main line of approach. The town turned out to be entirely free of "enemy," but this had to be tested at the time and the attackers had a quite realistic experience of the progressive occupation of a town which might have contained ambushes or might have been the object of counter-attacks or, at any rate, of enemy "patrol activity." Recce patrols were established where the main (in fact the only) enemy troops were; a plan of attack was made; and this had got, in the breaking light, to within a very short distance of the defence when, to the disappointment of all,

cease fire was ordered an hour earlier than the time fixed for the completion of the exercise.

Instructions for a new and greatly improved proficiency test having been issued by the War Office, both Westminster detachments offered themselves as the first candidates from the battalion and by now the test would have been completed and the result known had there not been a postponement due to a "technical hitch in (much) higher quarters" of which the effect was that there were no examiners available! Something further, it is hoped, will happen sometime, for the test is extensive and a good deal of hard work had been put into preparing for it.

T. M-R.

J.T.C.

Towards the end of last term the J.T.C. had their first field day for a year. Though, as so often happens in such exercises, the main object was not achieved by either side, it taught us many things about attack and defence, while the signallers did magnificent work in keeping up communications. This term we are to have another field day in which it is hoped that regular troops will be taking part. These troops are also to give us a demonstration on infantry tactics.

On June 4th we watched a very instructive demonstration by a troop of the Royal Artillery, which was arranged by an old Westminster, Captain Dowding. Bromyard happened to be on their route and they stayed the night at Buckenhill. They brought with them four 25-pounders, motor-cyclists and a quantity of small arms. The troop commander gave a clear description of the gun's performance and then he compered a demonstration which included the camouflaging of the guns, a "crash action" and the firing of a good deal of blank ammunition. Then we were allowed to inspect the guns to our hearts' content, though cadets who gazed down the barrel from the business end soon learned that this was "not done"!

In the House Squad Competition Grant's came second to Homeboarders and Ashburnham. The latter squad was particularly efficient and they deserved the credit of winning the cup.

D. I. G.

A.T.C.

The House contingent this term consists of seven, which is the largest it has ever been. We have a drill parade on Tuesday morning and lectures in the afternoon. The Training Officer of Midland Command, A.T.C., paid us a visit, and he seemed favourably impressed.

We have already visited one R.A.F. Station and it is hoped that we shall visit another before the end of term.

Cpl. Baron attended a navigation course at Cranwell last holidays, which he enjoyed very much.

We were lucky in having a visit from Wing Commander Rivett-Carnac, D.F.C. and Bar, who lectured to us on his many operational experiences since the outbreak of the war.

In August four of us are attending the summer camp for which we are joining up with Shrewsbury.

R. J. M. B.

ENIGMA.

The room was dark and shuttered. Looped ropes hung from the beams. There was a deathly silence. Suddenly a grating creak sounded from the far end as a large door swung open and a man entered silently carrying a small metal object in his right hand. "Hands up," he said.

He blew his whistle and the day's gym began.

### THE FERNIE SPOTTERS' CLUB.

The Club is flourishing this term and at last we have received some official publications on Aircraft Recognition. These magazines arrive monthly and contain photographs of the latest 'planes. At the end of last term we borrowed some official models from the Buckenhill Club, and these were displayed at all angles from the ceiling. Some of us have already passed some of the Proficiency Tests, and another Test may be arranged later on. A postal competition is to be held with a Spotters' Club in Worcester. Next term we hope to be able to share the Spotters' Room at Buckenhill, as their Club has much better facilities in every way than ours.

R. J. M. B.

### " I THINK THAT . . . "

There appeared in a recent number of the Granite a collection of the House's opinions on a variety of questions. This term I have thought of a few more topics, most of them connected with the School, and here are people's opinions :—

1. Should the School, on its return to London, continue to wear the original School dress?—Yes, 22% : No, 78%.

2. Do you consider the School Certificate to be a good test of knowledge?—Yes, 70% : No, 30%.

3. Do you think that Westminster as a School suffers from its lack of games?—Yes, 87% : No, 13%.

4. Do you think that a " General VI " form is necessary (especially for those who pass the School Certificate too young to know what subject in which to specialise)?—Necessary, 65% : Unnecessary, 35%.

5. Technically it would be quite possible to rebuild School exactly as it was before being burnt. Do you think it desirable to have an " artificial " School?—Yes, 65% : No, 35%.

6. If you were eligible, would you join the W.R.N.S., the W.A.A.F., the A.T.S., or would you be a Nurse?—W.R.N.S., 52% ; W.A.A.F., 22% ; A.T.S., 4% : Nursing, 22%.

### ARE YOU AS STUPID AS YOU LOOK?

or

### WOULD YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO?

PROBLEM 1.—You are bicycling down to Huntlands. On the way you meet the Housemaster disguised as a five-bar gate and carrying a Sten gun. Would you . . .

(i) *Open him?* (ii) *Shut him?* (iii) *Change gear?* (iv) *Pretend you haven't seen him?*

PROBLEM 2.—During a House Choir rehearsal, the pitch drops. Would you . . .

(i) *Start singing?* (ii) *Stop singing?* (iii) *Pick it up and dust it?*

PROBLEM 3.—You are just approaching the bottom of the Buckenhill Drive, when you discover that your back wheel fell out at the bottom of the first hill. Would you . . .

(i) *Go back for it?* (ii) *Take it to Aldridge?* (iii) *Ask Mr. Earp on Tuesday?* (iv) *Ring up the Vicar?* (v) *Put the front one in the back and carry on?*

PROBLEM 4.—You see Mr. Rudwick riding to Whitbourne on a sewing-machine. Would you . . .

(i) *Get out of the way?* (ii) *Ask him for a justification for the belief in the immutability of Planck's constant?* (iii) *Offer to take it in part-exchange for a double-g geared coffee-mill?*

## MEDITERRANEAN JOURNEY.

In the summer of 1937 I went with my family on a cruise through that Mediterranean area which is now the jumping-off base against Italy. In those days we would never have dreamt that in only three years its peace and quiet and beauty would be so shattered by war.

Even so, coming events were foreshadowed. Lisbon, our first port of call, was then, owing to the Spanish Civil War, what it is now—a "neutral" port with an artificially large international population; and early on we were dogged by a Franco armed trawler which only disappeared when a destroyer escort of our own picked us up off the Straits of Gibraltar. As we passed through these we noticed on the Spanish mainland what appeared to be a large-calibre gun pointing at the Rock: this caused a great amount of speculation as at the time rumours were about to the effect that "Gib" was at Franco's mercy.

We went on to Malta—since awarded the George Cross for showing that it could take a good deal more than one large gun and still not be at anyone's mercy. We were all impressed by the island and especially by its people, and it reminded us in some ways of England. The town of Valetta was English in itself, with the same features that are common in English towns. The population, too, could speak some English and they were proud to be members of the Empire. After a day's tour of its sights we were entertained on our return to the ship with Maltese merchants selling clothes and with boys who would dive for silver (pennies did not interest them!)

From Malta we went on to Athens, where we were rather bewildered at first, though the Greeks could understand the ancient Greek which some of us were able to speak. We were lucky, however, in meeting one who knew English well and who showed us round; he had charge of the American excavations and showed us the statue of a goddess, less head and arms, which had only been dug up within the last few days.

Turning back we made for Naples where once more we were lucky in having two Italian friends to show us round. In the harbour we saw a part of the much-vaunted Italian navy and also the Duce's yacht. We hired a taxi to take us to Pompeii. It is hard to imagine what this is like without seeing it for oneself. The houses and streets were certainly in ruins but they looked amazingly fresh and clean after their centuries of burial. From here we went on to Vesuvius and climbed to the crater. This was a most awe-inspiring sight. Every few minutes there was a dull rumble and small stones were flung into the air, while we could see the red hot lava rolling along the ground. The air was filled with sulphurous fumes and one had to be careful where one stood for fear of treading through the crust of hard lava and getting burnt feet. What Vesuvius did to Pompeii, the Allied Air Forces are having to do to Naples, only more effectively and less tidily.

After Naples we went up the coast to Spezia, Italy's large naval base. Here I saw my first aeroplane crash. A new Italian 'plane was stunting and showing off to us English. It climbed and came down in a power dive, failed to pull out and crashed into the sea about two hundred yards away from us. The ship's launch rushed to the rescue but no survivors were picked up. An Italian naval launch came up and our boat was turned away without a word of thanks!

Our last memory of Italy was a car ride to Pisa and a climb up its leaning tower, which looks to be hanging at an astonishingly dangerous angle and certainly feels so when one is up it. Pisa is an important railway junction and may come in for a bad time, but one can only hope that the medieval group of buildings, of which the tower is one, standing well away from the modern town, may survive intact.

And so back to the ship and home to England. At the time—another delightful holiday spent. Now—a sense of my good fortune in having seen the Mediterranean's beauties, natural and man-made, before the inevitable scars of war may spoil them for some time to come, if not in some cases for ever.

## THE SILVER BROOCH.

The noise of the guns was terrific, as the barrage was now at its height. Only another ten minutes and then they would put up their sights and the attack would begin. The semi-darkness of the desert dawn was lit up by flash after flash, and by this almost continuous light a young Second Lieutenant kept looking down at his wrist watch. Each flash revealed his youthful face under the steel helmet which he had tilted slightly backwards, while his tense expression showed that the awaited moment was now not far off. Behind him, lying down under cover of a sandy ridge, were the men of the platoon which he commanded. Not one of them spoke a word, for the last minutes were being devoted to priming grenades a final inspection of rifles and ammunition and the charging of the Bren magazines.

"Every man put on his equipment," shouted the officer over the din of the gunfire. At once shoulder straps were unbuttoned and his men struggled into their haversacks and pouches and tightened their belts.

"Only seven more minutes," he said to the Platoon Sergeant who knelt beside him. He felt far calmer than he had thought he would—perhaps his responsibility for his men helped him in this; besides he had so much to see to. But this reality was quite different from practice—no hot-blooded commands nor stirring speeches like those which he had heard so recently in battle-schools. His orders had been quite straightforward and short. He carefully went over them in his mind to make sure that he had forgotten nothing. "Our platoon is to attack the three enemy posts four hundred yards to our front. At 03.30 hours, that is in roughly two hours' time, the barrage will stop and fifteen seconds later we will go forward. Number One section will take the right, Number Three the left and Number Two, with myself and the Platoon Sergeant, will take the centre. Wire's been cut. Consolidate a hundred yards beyond the centre post. Everyone will carry out his duty so that the enemy is destroyed. Meanwhile you can lie down and rest." Was there anything that he had forgotten? No. He seemed to have remembered everything. How much longer was there now? Only just over four minutes.

He looked back at his troops who were now chatting quietly together. He wished that he could share their cool feelings, but then they had been through all this suspense before. Nearly all of them had already seen action, whereas for him this was the first and supreme trial. He wondered if his men knew that he was as yet untried; were they, perhaps, expecting him to show fear in his first action? No. He satisfied himself that he was not afraid; it was just that empty feeling of apprehension inside him. But he knew very well that they would not all get through alive.

He looked at his watch again—three minutes to go.

This waiting did not drag by nearly as much as he had anticipated. There was so much to think of, so many people to pray for, in case—well, just in case he did not get through. He wondered what his family would be doing, back at home. It would be afternoon there, a dull November afternoon and probably raining hard! How he had loved to come home wet through and then have tea beside a blazing fire. Home! And there was his fiancée. Saturday was her half-day from the hospital so probably she would be taking her spaniel out for his walk.

One more minute only! Feeling in his tunic pocket, he drew out a tiny silver object which, with a smile, he turned over in his hand. It was a wee silver brooch. How long ago it seemed that he and she had met together for the last time. He thought of the crowded station where all around them other soldiers were saying their good-byes. How he had felt as if he was going back to school again, only a hundred times worse. And then he had noticed the tiny, silver brooch on her dress and she had unpinned it with a laugh and given it to him. And then with a serious face she had made him promise to wear it whenever he was in danger. And then the sudden whistle, a last good-bye, and the train had glided away. How he had blessed the thought of her every time that the desert loneliness had seemed to overwhelm him! He hoped that it would not be long before he got back to her—but would he? Suppose he got wounded, killed or frightfully maimed; suppose . . . Oh! God!

He *would* win through somehow. And she would be so proud of him when he came back.

He looked at his watch. "Prepare to advance! Only twenty-five seconds to go." His men arranged themselves in their sections and fixed their attention on their officer. They, too, had been thinking of their homes and families; now they were watching their young leader. They all trusted him for they knew and liked his quiet but sincere manner. They knew that he would not fail them.

Suddenly there was silence. The guns had stopped firing and now they would be setting their sights for targets further behind the enemy's forward positions. He wondered vaguely how many enemy would be left to oppose them.

"Eight seconds to go," he said quietly, for now there was no need to shout. He looked once more at the little brooch and then with a sigh pinned it on to his tunic.

"Five seconds,"—he drew his revolver from its webbing holster,— "four—three—two—one—zero! Away you go Number One; follow on, Three. Good luck! Come on, Two." So saying, he began running towards the enemy, the section following him closely, bayonets high in the air.

"Curse the wire, some it's not been cut. Here's a gap. Don't bunch whatever you do." He felt that he had never run so fast before; nearer and nearer they ran and still not a sign from the enemy. Surely some of them must have been left alive! And there had been no firing from either of the other two posts.

Still not a sign from the enemy and they were only fifty yards away now. Surely there must ..... and then it happened all at once. A short, decisive burst of machine gun fire suddenly cracked out. Some poor devil in the section cried out that he was hit. They were held up.

"Lie flat everyone," the officer shouted, just as a second burst swept viciously over the sand.

"Is it the right thing to do?" he kept asking himself in an agony of mind.

"Open up with your Bren," he ordered the section commander, "it's the only thing we can do.

But before the Bren gunner could fire, a figure suddenly sprang up and, dashing towards the enemy, hurled a grenade right into the post. There was a shattering explosion, but not before the figure had spun backwards hit by a spray of bullets from the machine gun. The section jumped up and charged the post but they found no survivors. The grenade had done its work.

The officer sent forward his platoon to consolidate their gains, as the other two sections had now sent up success signals. Evidently the enemy in those two posts had either surrendered or else had not survived the barrage. He called for the Sergeant to take over the platoon while he saw to the man who had thrown the grenade. He could not find him anywhere, until it occurred to him that *he* might have been the one whose bravery had saved their lives. He ran back to where the still figure lay. Yes; it was the sergeant, but he could not make out whether he was still alive.

By now stretcher bearers had caught them up. He called them over to him and ordered them to attend to the sergeant while he directed others to the place where their first casualty had occurred. Then he knelt down by the man's side while the stretcher bearers tried hard to stop the bleeding.

So far the officer had not thought of speaking, for indeed he did not know whether the sergeant was even conscious. But he felt that he ought to tell him how grateful they were for what he had done.

"Sergeant," he began quietly, "Sergeant." The wounded man looked up at him; evidently then he was conscious. "We all owe our lives to you. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. You're not badly hit, are you?"

There was a slight pause, but when he spoke, the Sergeant's voice was firm, and, though quiet, it could easily be heard even over the gunfire that had begun again.

"Yes, Sir, I think I'm very badly hit. I've not got very long now. But I'm glad you all got through safely." The young boy looked down at the

middle-aged man, trying hard to find words that would express what he wanted to say. But before he could speak, the sergeant continued.

"You see, Sir, I knew you'd never been in action before and then when I saw you with that silver brooch I knew that there was someone worrying about you. So when we got fired on I saw we were in a pretty tight corner and there was only the one thing for it."

The boy murmured his thanks again and in vain tried to find words which no human tongue has yet uttered, for immortal deeds defy all mortal words.

A stretcher bearer touched him on the arm and he rose to hear what the man wanted to say. "He's not got much longer, Sir. Hadn't you better ask him if he has any messages for his family?"

Kneeling down again he put this question to the dying man. But looking up, he shook his head and replied, "No, Sir. I've got no family. My wife went off with another man years ago. That's the reason I joined the Army; I've been a regular ever since. So I'm glad you're all right; you'll get back to your girl—you're not married yet, Sir, are you?—and you can tell her the brooch was lucky. Good luck, Sir—to you both."

Carefully the stretcher bearers lifted him on to a stretcher and carried him back. He died very soon afterwards. The officer walked slowly back to his platoon.

Weeks later his platoon (though it had many different faces) marched proudly into Tripoli behind their pipers. You might have wondered why their young officer so flagrantly defied the King's Regulations for he wore on his tunic a little silver brooch. But if you had asked any of his men about it, they would have told you the story and why it was that he always wore it, as a keepsake of her—and in memory of him.

## BLOOD TRANSFUSION.

One of the most striking things about the Tunisian campaign was the very low rate of death amongst casualties. Compared to the last war the figures are truly astonishing, and to a large degree they are due to the efficient use of blood transfusion by the British. In their methods the Allies are far in advance to the Germans who do not perform transfusions to anything like the same extent, even though their propaganda claims that they have such an efficient medical service.

Last holidays I worked for a fortnight in the South-West London Blood Transfusion Depot and, though my work did not involve anything technical, I saw and learned many interesting things. The depot where I worked took the blood from the donors and issued it to hospitals within a large area. They also sent to Cambridge large supplies of "plasma" (the water of the blood) to be dried. After it is dried it is sent back to the depot where it is stored ready for use when we begin the Second Front.

I will try and describe what happens to you when you volunteer as a donor. After you have registered yourself, you go to a woman technician who takes a sample of your blood in order to find out to what blood group you belong. There are four different groups, denoted by the letters O, A, B and AB. Of these the first is easily the most common (about ninety per cent. of the population belong to it). A Group O donor is also the most useful for he can give blood to any patient, no matter what group the patient belongs to. Otherwise it is fatal to mix the groups.

After this important information about the donor's blood has been found, he is liable to be called upon at any time to give blood. I have been told that the actual taking of the blood is quite painless, though the donor probably feels a little faint for about twenty minutes afterwards.

In the liquid part of the blood—or plasma—float a vast number of minute cells or "red corpuscles" whose function is to transport oxygen all over the body. It is these cells alone that govern what group one belongs to, as everyone's plasma is the same. It is only quite recently that it has been dis-

covered that it is not the corpuscles but the plasma that must be replaced when a person loses blood, as the plasma contains chemicals called "proteins" which are vital for a patient's recovery. But if the whole can be replaced so much the better, though this is seldom possible as the cells die after about twenty days of storage.

If blood is exposed to air it quickly clots, this being Nature's method of closing a wound. But if clotted blood is given to a patient the result is fatal, as directly the clot reaches the heart the patient dies. So the blood has to be kept liquid by mixing it at once with a "citrate solution" and this prevents it clotting. As this is not always available, the liquid can alternatively be separated from the cells by *letting* the blood clot. Then the clot, which is really a mass of all the cells, floats in a liquid which is similar to plasma, though it lacks a few chemicals which have also gone down with the clot. This liquid is called "serum." At the depot where I worked, however, they only prepared plasma.

Nowadays not much plasma or serum is kept liquid, as it is then more difficult to take about. Instead the plasma or serum is dried in a vacuum at a very low temperature, a process that is highly complicated. After being dried, plasma or serum is a cream-coloured flaky powder, and in this form it is sent to the battle-fronts together with bottles of distilled water which is used to "reconstitute" it.

In all that was done at the depot they took very great care to keep everything sterile and free from germs, and all blood was tested before being allowed to be issued.

#### THAT FIRST BOMB.

Throwing one's first bomb is an event not easily forgotten. It is only when you are experienced and have "discharged" numerous 68's, thrown a veritable clutch of Mills bombs and have unflinchingly stuck "stickies" that you can afford to treat the whole procedure with a slightly superior attitude and with an air of "these things are quite harmless provided nobody else loses his head." But not so with that first bomb!

One always starts one's career with a Mills, chiefly because, with this bomb, there is rather less chance of ending it. The Mills, or 36, has the advantage of being comparatively light and therefore easy to throw as far from oneself as possible; but its disadvantages are that it bursts into a profusion of splinters and (worst of all) that it has to be cleaned before use.

Over in one corner of the field a small group of prospective bombers is engaged in this very task of cleaning. The wooden box is opened and within lie twelve egg-shaped, green-brown, bombs. Why they are painted nobody has yet explained to me, though some say that the paint is to prevent rust; still it *is* hard to believe that a rusty bomb is any less lethal than a green-brown one. My own theory, and a far more likely one, is that the War Office one day decided to camouflage all bombs with green paint to make them match grass, but that someone very rightly pointed out that this colour was unsuited to desert warfare—therefore they must be all brown; hence the compromise in colours!

Anyhow, cleaning is now over and the first two individuals to throw saunter towards the bombing pit with as unconcerned a look as possible. In this, which is simply an oblong hole in the ground, the bombs are "primed." For the benefit of those with no military training, "priming" merely means the insertion of the bomb's very entrails, a deadly device known as the "igniter set" which explodes the bomb four seconds after the safety lever is let go. Priming done, the bomb is ready to be thrown.

You stand sideways to the target and clench the bomb tightly in the right hand. Out comes the pin, and you feel that same sensation which one has when diving off the top board for the first time. Then one clean, over-arm sweep and "thank Heaven! the d—d thing's gone." You look over the top to observe the accuracy (or otherwise) of your throw as four seconds elapse before the grenade explodes. After one second you feel that it *is* rather foolhardy to look over the top and so with dignity you withdraw your



head ; you feel somewhat foolish when a good second afterwards the bombing officer says " down!" One cannot help realising how absurdly stupid the ostrich is to cover his head and yet expose his rearward quarters, but this profound train of thought is interrupted by a satisfying explosion and a shower of dust over one's head. Inwardly one is extremely relieved and gives expression to this feeling by some such fatuous remark as " well, that certainly went off " or " nothing much wrong with that one."

You scramble out of the pit to inspect the crater, satisfying yourself that you would have killed your target. Of course with grenades it can always be argued that a splinter would have hit *one* of the enemy, and thus for bad shots bombing holds out much more attraction than shooting does. Lastly if one is lucky there are wicked-looking fragments and other jagged pieces of metal to be found. These are retrieved and treasured and are duly taken home to younger brothers or girl friends with dramatic stories.

But then we experienced ones gave up collecting souvenirs long ago!

#### ANOTHER VISITOR TO FERNIE.

" Have you finished that article yet," said the Editor tentatively.

" Er, no, not quite," I stammered untruthfully, for I had of course scarcely considered even beginning one.

I say *scarcely* for I had, one afternoon, sat down in Chiswicks, and, taking advantage of the fact that the other inmates were out, begun to think of a subject to write about.

But the idea was short-lived, for I began gazing out of the window down upon the valley, where a few sheep, seemingly oblivious of the drizzling rain, were contentedly cropping the grass. As they made their way slowly up the valley, I wondered vaguely how long it would be before they vanished round the bend. Just then a rook came swooping gracefully past the window, glided down over the sheep and then, rising again, cleared the trees above the valley.

It soon disappeared out of my sight, and, in an effort to find it again, my eyes fell on the Arkerdine Hills, which can look so tempting in the sun, but now only seemed to assist a great grey cloud, which stretched as far as the eye could see, in casting one great shadow over the damp grass and dripping trees.

To the right of the hills it was too hazy to see much, and I had to imagine those vast pylons at Droitwich, which stand out quite clearly on a good day. Not so now with the rain coming down in ever increasing quantities.

Outside it was all too depressing, I reflected, sitting back in my chair, and rubbing a pencil between my hands. But the pencil merely served to remind me that I had intended to produce some sort of an article ; so I began half-heartedly to think of a suitable subject.

My thoughts were abruptly cut short, however, by a shower of soot, which came down the chimney and smothered the fireplace and part of the carpet. Cursing the rain for causing this avalanche, I left my chair and began brushing the carpet clean. But no sooner had I stepped back to admire the effect than I caught sight of a pair of boots coming out of the blackness of the chimney, bringing with them another cascade of soot and a pair of trousers.

Some puerile practical joke, I decided, as I approached the grey flannels by a skilful right flanking movement. However, on prodding the booby trap with a poker, not only did I encounter something solid, but, to my utter amazement, a bass voice implored me to respect its shins!

I sank back into the nearest armchair, entirely bewildered, but nevertheless fascinated as a coat followed the trousers, and finally a rather sooty figure stood complete before me.

" Can I help you, "I said uncertainly, addressing this middle-aged man as he sat himself in an armchair and produced a clothes brush to remove a few odd specks of soot.

" On the contrary, I came to help *you*," was the reply. " That pencil of

yours acts as an Aladdin's Lamp, and I, wherever I should be, am compelled to answer its owner." I must have looked rather astonished, for he smiled and added that I could rest assured he would not hurt me. "After all," he continued, "I have visited the Earth before; everyone regards the story as a fairy tale, but it was quite true. Now what would you have me do?"

"Well, I was just about to compose some sort of poem—for the *Granite*."

"The *Granite*," he sniffed, "then I should find it easy to write a suitable poem for you. Just lend me your pencil, will you?" I handed it to him in answer to his request, and he began scribbling hastily on the nearest piece of paper. "Here you are," he said, after a few moments. Before I fully realised what had happened, my benefactor had made for the chimney and I was soon losing sight of a pair of dangling boots, returning as they had come.

I was somewhat flabbergasted by his hasty departure, especially as my pencil had gone too. "But," I reasoned, "he must come out of the chimney eventually." So I opened the window and jumped out on to the balcony, from where I could command a good view of all the chimney stacks. Before long a great rook caught my eye as it perched on one of the chimney-pots.

I felt disappointed. Then I remembered; I had seen a rook just before my late visitor had arrived. Was it possible that the rook and he were one and the same? I can't say, but I waved at him, and I thought I saw a little twinkle of his black eye as he opened his wings and was soon lost to sight.

At that moment I realised that the rain was coursing down my face; so I scrambled in through the window, and gazed rather disconsolately at the scrap of paper in my hand.

My hopes were raised as I feverishly unfolded it, only to be immediately dashed as I read:—

"Dear Poet,

"Excuse me for taking your magic pencil. Too lazy to answer your every call, I've taken it with me.—G. KNEE."

"What on earth," I puzzled, "G. Knee." I may add that it took the Editor to answer the riddle, and I call it a poor pun for a G. Knee, I mean a genie.

But would you believe it; even then the Editor scoffed at my story—a "good excuse," he called it.

### LOVE'S LABOUR LOST.

A young cyclist was riding along the bottom of a wide valley on a main road. It was a sunny day in early September and the sun shone through a cloudless blue sky. On his left the hills rose steeply, covered with a wood of firs and silver birches. On the other side was a field with a flock of sheep.

The road suddenly turned sharply to the right, up a long hill and past some orchards. In five minutes these were left behind and replaced by pasture land. In one field he saw some white specks, and the idea of mushrooms made him pull up quickly and dismount.

After half an hour he had filled his saddle-bag quite full. Just as he was starting off, however, a policeman stopped him and said, "I saw you in that field, sir. You should have seen the notice forbidding anyone to enter it because of the spreading of foot and mouth disease, so I must ask you for your name and address. You will receive a summons in due course for disregarding the order." The cyclist asked anxiously what that might involve and the policeman told him that if he got away with a two guineas fine he could consider himself lucky.

When he returned home, he told his wife that he had a surprise for her and pressed the saddle bag into her hands while he warned her how expensive the contents might turn out to be.

"Why, George," she said, "these are only puff balls! Doesn't it show how stupid men are!"

## CORRESPONDENCE.

[In addition to the usual correspondence, letters have been invited from Old Grantites who are at other Universities on Service courses.]

Dear Sir,

Another term has come and almost gone, and yet another Oxford letter is due. The sole claim to distinction that this particular letter may ever hope to have lies in the fact that it is the first (and, in virtue of the impending move to Buckenhill, the last) to be written at Fernie Bank itself.

As to Oxford, everything continues much as before. The usual chorus of complaint may be heard during and after any meal, and it is rumoured that one day the chef was indeed fortunate to escape with his life when a particularly irate undergraduate . . . This term has cost us two Davids, David Mitchell and David Shenton. Very little indeed has been heard of the former, but the latter recently revisited Oxford, looking very smart indeed as a fully fledged private in the Coldstreams—the crease in his trousers reminded one that there are still such things as razor-blades. On the credit side of the ledger, we have Brian Hodges who is up here as an R.A.F. cadet. He leads a fairly quiet and sober existence but has been known to break out every now and again. He can mix a pretty cup of Ovaltine, and believes in a hearty tea. These two assets make him deservedly popular, and any visitor would be well advised to call on him in the enforced absence of David Shenton. Last, but we hope not least, is your correspondent, who in the rare moments when not scientifically engaged, has just sufficient leisure to think to himself that it is time you had a new

OXFORD CORRESPONDENT  
(P. N. RAY).

EXETER ; (RADIO COURSE FOR STUDENTS AWARDED STATE BURSARIES).  
Dear Sir,

I felt worried when I was asked to write a second Exeter letter. Last time I escaped bringing myself too much into the picture by describing Mardon and other places familiar to Grantites. Now, as I have no alternative, I will be rather more personal.

I am one of about twenty Radio Bursars assigned here. To all intents and purposes we are students of the College, the only difference being that we are more under government supervision, as they see fit to support us financially. The other Bursars are a nice, stimulating set of people. They all come from secondary or mixed schools and consequently there is much of interest to discuss with them. I do not know whether it is so at other Universities, but here the Bursars have great character. Should a Bursar require anything for his work heaven and earth are moved until he gets it! Moreover, he has under his care powerful and costly apparatus—apparatus which if used by the less careful of us, is apt to produce large quantities of light and smoke. Other things happen too : one day your correspondent was walking down the High Street in shirt sleeves and head-phones and carrying a large biscuit-tin, out of which came several wires and a long aerial. He was stopped by a ponderous old gentleman who charged him in quite frightening language with signalling to the enemy. However, your correspondent just took a poor view of him and continued his job.

It will interest Grantites to know that Mardon is being closed at the end of this term as it is to become a Services hostel. The students will probably move to Reed Hall, as the London School of Medicine for Women, who occupy Reed at present, are returning to London.

Before I bring this letter to a close, I would like to take this opportunity of sending Grant's the best wishes for their move to Buckenhill, from

YOUR EXETER CORRESPONDENT  
(F. G. OVERBURY).

GLASGOW ; (R.A.C. COURSE).

Dear Sir,

As there must be many people up Grant's who are contemplating starting out on a University course, I will describe my experiences at Glasgow University, where I am on a R.A.C. course. If people have visions of a "tough-

ening up process " and similar barbaric treatment, let me put their minds at ease. The nearest that I ever got to such treatment was watching the recruits at the Primary Training Centre! This is where one has to report for "documentation" (in other words—signing the same form as often as possible), before going on to the University.

Life here is extremely enjoyable, though the authorities do see to it that work takes up nearly all the time. We are given a complete basic infantry training in so far as weapons and tactics are concerned, but fortunately assault courses do not come till later on at one's O.C.T.U. However, we do get a stiff dose of P.T. most mornings. Altogether about half our time is taken up with S.T.C. work, and of this one morning a week is devoted to artillery. This may consist of anything from a lecture on the delicate sighting apparatus to pushing twenty-five pounders around.

There is one aspect in which I think we have been very fortunate, and that is that all the N.C.O.s who have been in charge of us have been extremely nice. This helps to make life on a University course even more pleasant, as I hope is not only so in the case of

YOUR GLASGOW CORRESPONDENT  
(D. J. E. SHAW).

BIRMINGHAM ; (ROYAL ENGINEERS COURSE).

Dear Sir,

In pre-war days, Birmingham was one of those cities that one used to avoid, when traveling north to Scotland, or west through Shropshire to the Welsh mountains. People one met, when pressed, used to give graphic accounts of a grim town with cobbled streets, dominated by great industrial plants that poured their layers of dense smoke out over the dirty rows of depressing badly-designed homes.

When we arrived one summer afternoon at Snow Hill station in great-coats and gloves, it was a very different sight. Naturally the city had its blitz scars, like most others, but I saw no sign of the Dickens' state of life my informers insisted existed here.

I had already been told that Birmingham had the finest engineering department in the country, and it was not difficult to appreciate. Experiments passed over as too elaborate and difficult at school seemed commonplace, and there were new fields of view in the form of the Concrete lab, the material testing machines and the power house.

The Saturday night Hops are at the Union, and though it is only natural that most of the undergraduates keep to their own circle of friends, there are others who come, and you are never at a loss for a partner if required. A few of the fifty sappers are in digs, but the rest, with 58 undergraduates, live in the only men's residential quarters, Chancellor's Hall. There is one women's hall, and the rest of the students live in digs or at home. Some of us are in single rooms, and the rest in pairs, fours or sixes. The Common Room and Silence Room are again reminiscent of Mardon.

According to your temperament, so you go down each morning by bus, bicycle or foot to the University by 9 a.m. The work is divided into two-thirds academic, comprising Maths, Surveying, Civil and Mechanical Engineering, and the other third, Sapper, Infantry and physical training. Work ends between five and a quarter past, and then, save for a meal in Hall at 6.30 (which is not compulsory) you have your free time. Owing to the shortness of the course, as compared with the syllabus that fits into it, games obviously retire into the background. The physical side includes a great deal of recreational training such as boxing and basketball, besides the military side of dealing with obstacles, but the more conventional games such as cricket, tennis, squash and swimming are fitted in according to taste and time available, in evenings or on Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

You may spend your evenings at one of Birmingham's three theatres or congregation of cinemas, or it may be you are frantically working out engine trials, or pondering how many of this go to how many of the other in your R.E. organization.

More than likely you will be blanching and polishing brass, for the

inspection that may come at any time ; snatching half an hour to write a letter or to enjoy a passing glance at the headlines of a daily paper. You might even read two chapters of a book ; sew on the button that gave way, or the flash that came adrift ; then there is that hole in your socks that shows when wearing shoes, and the puncture in your bike to mend, due to Birmingham's superfluity of broken glass.

Whatever it is, the time passes all too quickly, and, as the hour hand nears the top, you brew a cup of cocoa, have your last drink ; or queue for the bus back from the place you took her home!

It is in how and where and with whom their evenings are spent, that you learn most about your fellow candidates. Some have come straight from public and secondary schools, and some have had a job for a little while first. Whoever they were before is all lost inside a battle dress blouse, and you judge each man by what is fundamentally there, even when he writes as

YOUR BIRMINGHAM CORRESPONDENT

(F. W. E. FURSDON).

NEWCASTLE ; (R.A.C. COURSE).

Sir,

I have the (somewhat dubious) honour of being the first O.W. to grace (??) King's College, Newcastle-on-Tyne, with my presence and I will try to describe some of the things which happen to a cadet when accepted for a six-months R.A.C. course. First of all you learn almost nothing which can have any possible bearing on tanks. One learns all about the calorific value of Durham gas coal and one becomes an expert at surveying the local park. The general idea behind the course, however, is to give you a scientific type of mind which will be the more suitable for receiving the technical details due to be pumped into you when you leave the University.

With regard to the military side of the course, there is a P.T. parade on each day from Monday to Friday lasting from 9 to 9.45 a.m., which really is hard. In the recently published "Combined Operations" it is stated that commandoes do exercises with logs 8 inches thick ; here we train with logs 12 inches thick, 12 feet long and with only six men in a team! There are also runs in uniform with rifles, boots, gaiters, etc., and with little sidelines such as carrying men at the double by the "fireman's lift" to relieve the monotony of a mere run through the dull streets of Newcastle. There are two three-hour S.T.C. parades a week and for the first four months of the course you are attached to the Infantry unit ; you are meant to reach the standard of the fully trained private soldier and previous experience in the J.T.C. is absolutely invaluable. For the last two months you are transferred to the Artillery unit which teaches you driving and maintenance and which is extremely well equipped for a provincial University.

The R.A.C. cadets live in two hostels belonging to the University ; one of these is situated on the outskirts of the city and is fairly modern, the other is only a hundred yards from the college but this advantage is cancelled by its being much older—the floorboards squeak very loudly if you come in late at night!

Half-term exams. are now approaching and the uncertainty of passing them is the chief anxiety of

YOUR NEWCASTLE CORRESPONDENT.

(A. H. WILLIAMS).

*To the Editor of the "Grantite Review."*

Sir,

I do not consider myself a particularly intolerant man, although we old-timers do, of course, become less and less amenable to change as the years roll on but I am shattered and shocked to find, by a mere chance, that the whole status of our House is to be changed. Nor do I like the particularly secretive method which has been adopted in announcing the change.

So revolutionary a decision : from the monastic severity of the public-school to the frivolities of the "co-ed" establishment : surely this should

not have been made without us Old Granties having been consulted and our opinion asked?

I would beg you, Mr. Editor, to use your great influence to stop this dreadful thing and to repudiate at once the advertisement which appeared in the Personal Column of the *Times* on May 31st: to wit:—

**G**RANTS AVAILABLE for 50 well-educated girls (16-17½) for training for essential service during the war and well-paid posts after the war.—Write for forms of application to Box P.1163, The Times, E.C.4.

Yours faithfully,

ARTHUR GARRARD,

Hon. Sec., Old Grantite Club.

[Mr. Garrard's fears may be put at rest. Unfortunately there seems to be no truth in the rumour that Grant's is to be shared with girls.—ED.]

Dear Sir,

(This seems a funny way to begin a letter to oneself, but in the *Grantite* such formalities have to be kept up).

The object of this letter is to repudiate the reputation which I seemed to have earned by an article I wrote for the last *Grantite* on day dreaming. I gather that several people have got the quite erroneous impression that I do no work at all in Chemistry. So I feel I must uphold my reputation for diligence in form through the medium of the paper which you (I mean "I") have the honour to edit.

The truth is that the occasion that I described was only one particular instance. To enumerate the vast number of chemical facts and formulae which I have learnt this term would be tedious, but perhaps I can prove my case by stating quite simply and modestly one or two of my discoveries.

The most striking of these is that one should never sit down anywhere till you have first discovered what your next door neighbour is doing. On one occasion I omitted to do this. To my horror I found that the seat of my trousers had been attacked by chemical action, as a careless blighter had spilt nitric acid on my seat (chair).

A second discovery of interest is that it is most unwise to ask anyone for information while they themselves are engaged in experimenting. Once I asked another budding chemist what the melting-point of tin was, but was pained to hear, not the required information, but a recommendation to go to a place where far higher temperatures are said to exist.

Thirdly, don't mix up your test tubes. On one sad occasion I spent a whole morning analysing water, nor did I find my mistake until I began to heat the other test-tube containing the imagined water. I was not a little startled by vast clouds of evil-smelling fumes.

I hope these important discoveries will help others who are going to take up chemistry.

I am, (oddly enough), yours truly,

IAN GREGG.

## OLD GRANTITES.

This term we have enjoyed visits from :—J. W. Woodbridge, F. W. E. Fursdon, P. N. Ray, J. R. B. Hodges, L. A. Wilson, J. D. B. Andrews and A. H. Williams.

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Recent news of Old Grantites includes :—

J. A. HOLLOWAY is now a Second Lieutenant in the 13th Medium Artillery. He is stationed in Kent.

L. E. CRANFIELD is in the Middle East and is now a Lieutenant.

V. T. M. R. TENISON is a Second Lieutenant in the 36th Battery, 8th Mahrattas Anti-Tank Regiment. He has been stationed in various parts of India.

E. R. CAWSTON is a Lieutenant in the Royal Corps of Signals.

R. O. I. BORRADAILE has received his commission in the R.N.V.R.

W. R. VAN STRAUBENZEE was last heard of at Wrotham.

M. W. PARKINGTON is commissioned in the R.A.F. and he is now training in Rhodesia.

J. W. WOODBRIDGE is home on leave after three years at sea in the Merchant Navy. He was torpedoed on his way home.

## NOTICES.

The Editor would welcome contributions from Old Grantites. Correspondence should in future be addressed to the Editor, *The Grantite Review*, Buckenhill, Bromyard, Herefordshire.

The Hon. Secretary of the Old Grantite Club and the *Grantite* is A. Garrard, and any enquiries should be sent to him at the Duchy of Lancaster Estate Office, Dunsop Bridge, near Clitheroe, Lancs.

Since the Editor is now responsible for the distribution of the *Grantite*, any change of address should be sent to him as well as to the Hon. Secretary.

Back numbers (1940 to the present) may be obtained from the Editor, price 1s.