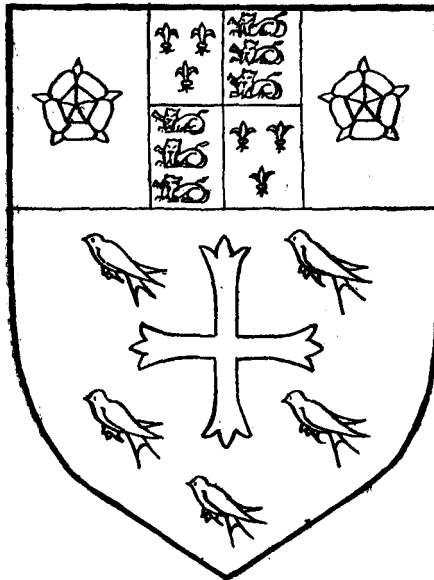


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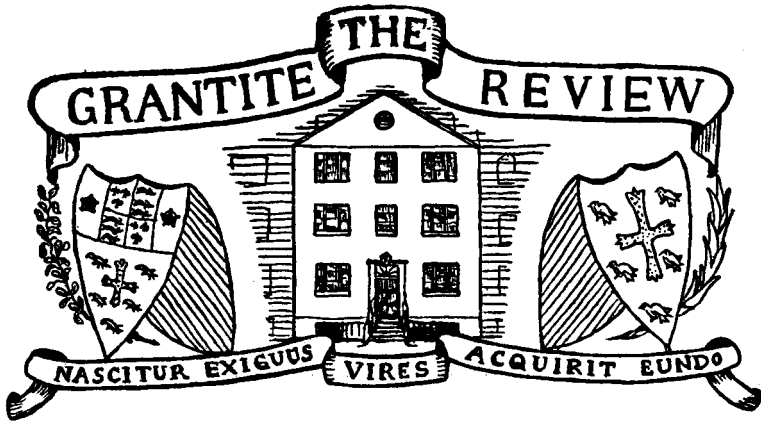
THE GRANTITE REVIEW



LENT TERM,
1945.

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EDITORIAL.

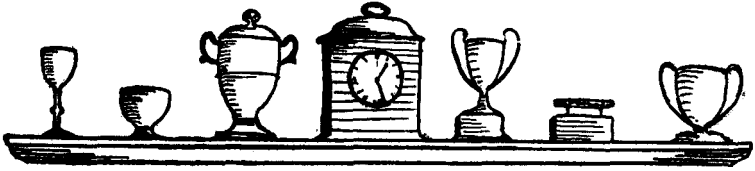
One of the joys of evacuation is our acquaintance with a country town. Bromyard is a sheltered little place at the bottom of the Frome valley, the Downs to one side and the Herefordshire cider country to the other. The habitual emptiness and silence is broken once a week : on Thursday there is a market for farmers. The link with the world is a railway whose elderly engines and wayside halts and portly stationmasters with clay pipes in their mouths are reminiscent of Emett. It is said that it is one of the steepest bits of line on the G.W.R.

We know Bromyard best for its tradesmen ; there are two rival hair-dressers. How often have we discussed the merits of these two men ! The air of ageing paternal authority in A. ; the brisk chatty efficiency of B. A. is unscrupulous with the clippers and provides one with the *Farmer and Stock-breeder* while waiting ; B. likes short hair but has two daily papers. When A. put his price up from eightpence to ninepence for a haircut, one could discern a twinge of pride on the lips, an intenser atmosphere of competence about the work of B. The news went round the House that B. had won. But we were wrong, and two weeks later a printed notice appeared in B.'s to say that war conditions had compelled the firm to increase its charge.

The efficiency of the police at Bromyard is beyond question. The force is seen perhaps to best advantage at the head of those National Savings processions in which Bromyard takes so obvious a delight—there is hardly anyone left to watch. The force is not only efficient but cheerful. Evidence of its sense of humour is in the case of the cyclist without a lamp on his bicycle, who on hearing a voice from the darkness say—" Oh ! where's your lights ? " replied with an inspired presence of mind—" Oh, I'm so sorry. Has it gone out ? " The good policeman remained silent.

The patience of Bromyard men and women is remarkable, or so we are led to believe. It is a stratagem of Mr. C. the cobbler, when an irate customer reminds him of a promise of a fortnight ago, to reply with a Herefordshire accent : " I was just going to do them, but this gentleman here has been waiting all morning." He points to an unshaven figure sitting chin on stick at the back of the shop. Perhaps he employs him for the purpose. Mr. C., like one or two others of the older generation of Bromyard, habitually rides a tricycle.

We have built up a pleasant little circle of acquaintance in Bromyard. As we pass down the High Street to buy our mid-morning bun we are able frequently to nod, to exchange smiles, or to pass the time of day. It is one of the joys of evacuation.



HOUSE NOTES.

There left us last term :—R. H. Adrian. We wish him the best of luck.

* * * * *

We welcome this term :—D. M. V. Blee and R. R. Davies.

* * * * *

In Inner there are :—J. O. Eichholz, R. Bruce, K. M. Thomson and R. D. Jones.

* * * * *

In Chiswicks there are :—H. Kleeman, G. J. H. Williams, J. W. P. Bradley, J. A. Davidson, D. C. F. Chaundy, J. M. Chamney and W. J. Frampton.

* * * * *

The Head of Hall is J. C. Barrington-Ward and the Hall Monitors are M. G. Baron and I. M. Bowley.

* * * * *

Our teams won the Senior and Junior Long Distance Races. J. C. Barrington-Ward won the Senior Race and D. L. Almond was equal first in the Junior.

* * * * *

We lost to College 2—0 in the semi-final of Seniors, and 2—1 in Juniors.

* * * * *

Congratulations to :—J. O. Eichholz on an Open Exhibition at Hertford College, Oxford.

and :—R. D. Jones on a Westminster Exhibition at Christ Church, Oxford ;

and to :—J. W. P. Bradley on his Half-Pinks,
G. J. H. Williams and R. A. Lapage on their Seniors, and

J. R. B. Smith on his Juniors for Football ;

and to :—J. C. Barrington-Ward on his Half-Pinks,
J. W. P. Bradley on his Thirds,
W. J. Frampton and J. C. Barrington-Ward on their Seniors,

F. R. H. Almond on his Colts, and

J. A. Davidson on his Juniors for Athletics.

* * * * *

The Head Master announced this term that in addition to the making good of bomb damage the School's building plans involve the rebuilding of Grant's. It will not take place till a number of years after the war.

BUCKENHILL.

The cold spell at the beginning of term was much enjoyed by most of the House. The surface of a small pond near Buckenhill was cleared of snow and branches of trees, and it made quite a good skating rink. There are no good tobogganing slopes within a convenient distance of us, and so instead the ponies towed us across the snow.

Up to the time of writing there has been very little illness. There was an outbreak of measles, but luckily there were only two people in the House

who had not had it already. There have not been many colds or cases of 'flu. We are glad to have back with us, as Matron, Miss Macrae who has now fully recovered from her illness.

M. G. Baron has been re-elected Editor of *The Mouthpiece*. The other editor is R. E. Nagle.

Before this term, the Masters used to have picnic lunches on whole-school days. They have now taken to having lunch with the Buckenhill Houses.

As to the exigencies of the water situation, this term there has been no lack of water, the ram has been working to capacity and the only crisis arose when on two occasions the outlet from this got blocked and the ram-house rapidly started to fill with water.

FOOTBALL.

Seniors were played last term and we met Busby's in the first round. The match was played on Bromyard Grammar School ground, where the surface was good, except in the goal mouths. Just after the beginning of the match Eichholz put in a lovely shot from the right wing. Not long after Almond, D., scored. Then Edwards (B.B.) lobbed in a shot, which our goalkeeper, Davidson, tried hard to save. Smith then scored our third goal. In the second half Almond, D., scored again, bringing the score to 4—1. The game was played vigorously by both teams. Anderson and Wilkinson were the mainstays for Busby's but would perhaps have been more useful in orthodox positions.

In the second round we met College. Only three members of their team had not played in the first eleven, but we only lost 2—0. In spite of the fact that they had nearly all the first eleven defence against them the forwards often broke through. The left side of College attack was looked after by Bruce, while Hodges was successfully tackled by the insides. The backs and goalkeeper were clearing well. By half-time no goals had been scored. For most of the second half we kept them out of our goal; but towards the end of the match the team got tired and two goals were scored against us.

The team :—Davidson; Williams, Frampton; Bruce, Bradley (capt.), Barrington-Ward; Eichholz, Smith, Almond, D., Lapage, Almond, F.

Juniors were played at the beginning of this term, and we met College in the first round. Unfortunately we had to break up our forward line to put some strength into the half line. Frampton was ill and we missed him as a back. At half-time the score was 1—0 to us. (Smith).

In the second half the two sides had an equal share of the ball but College scored two goals, bringing the final score to 2—1 to College.

J. W. P. B.

ATHLETICS.

It has been decided to finish the Sports this term in order to leave the Election Term clear for Cricket and Water and consequently we are returned to the mercy of the wind and rain of late winter. In the heats which we have already run—the mile and half-mile—Grant's has had some promising successes. The Long Distance races, both senior and junior, were run on March 1st and were won by Grant's with a margin of eleven and eight points respectively. Looking ahead, it seems that our chances of gaining the Standards Cup are pretty even: we are very strong, almost too strong in the Under 16 age group, while in the Open, in Barrington-Ward and Bradley, we have two very useful milers. Some of the younger boys also seem likely to contribute their fair share of points. It is noteworthy that in the school long distance "eight," which ran against Felsted on February 17th, there were four Grantites.

W. J. F.

GRAM. SOC.

A number of circumstances have combined to bring the activities of Gram. Soc. to a stop. The meetings, which were held on Sunday evenings in the dining room, have by necessity been held at a time clashing with a number of good popular broadcast programmes, and, in addition, the room is very cold in winter owing to fuel economy. At Fernie Bank the dining room was warm and comfortable, and Gram. Soc. provided all the pleasant conditions that made it so popular. Here at Buckenhill this could not be the case, and, whereas boys could be expected to leave a warm room *or* a radio programme, yet they could hardly be expected to leave both in favour of Gram. Soc. in a cold room.

It is very much hoped that the cessation of Gram. Soc. activities will be short lived. When the House is finally settled in its rightful home we hope that the weekly gatherings in a warm room will be resumed, if not on Sunday then on some week-day.

K. M. T.

THE DAY'S WORK.

A correspondent suggests that a time-table record of Buckenhill life might be of interest to O.G.s who find it difficult to picture how we fit things in. Here goes, then; it is certainly enough unlike London to be past the imagination of pre-Herefordshire generations and there are sufficient differences from Fernie life, perhaps, for it to interest those who knew that.

First then for weekdays :—

Getting-up; bell at 7.30 a.m., actual exit from bed in certain cases rather later. London generations will realise that this process is likely to work on fine margins, whereas those who shared in the proud and almost unbroken record of punctuality for breakfast despite a previous journey of a mile and a half from Huntlands will look with righteous disdain on these sybaritic tendencies. Rise and shine, indeed!

Breakfast at 8 o'clock. Grant's have a grace, the other Houses do not, and, as these have to traverse a sort of Polish Corridor through our dining hall to get to theirs, there has to be a short period of frontier-closing during which some of them get stranded temporarily on the wrong side of our door. At this as at other meals boys take it in turn, alphabetically right through the House, to help in the serving. No one may indent for a second helping until the first has been served all round, but the servers, by tacit consent, may take both their helpings in one—to a stranger they must appear a bit greedy from the sight of what they may bring in for themselves!

After this the routine varies according as it is a whole school day or a Play; on the former the majority of the School works at Buckenhill whereas on Plays it is at Whitbourne. On all days those doing Physics or Chemistry will go to the labs in Bromyard and there are always one or two exclusive groups (like biologists, mathematicians and an occasional individualistic historian) who may work at the opposite centre to the rest.

On *whole school days* the next obligation is *school* at 9.45, though it often starts rather nearer to 10 o'clock because of those coming from Whitbourne. But before that a certain amount of things (in addition to any prep put off from the previous night) have to be done. The hens have to be let out and fed; if the weather requires it, fires have to be laid and lit in Inner and Chiswicks, which are used as formrooms; very rarely but very readily the inmates of both these rooms, in periods of more than usually acute shortage

of domestic staff, take it in turns to emulate Mrs. Mop and to "do" themselves in the way of sweeping and dusting.

Four periods of school, with a fifteen minutes break, until 1 o'clock; then *lunch* at 1.15. One grace is said for both dining halls at the beginning and used to be at the end until unevenness in the lengths of time taken in the two rooms urged separate graces then; since when both rooms have tended to finish almost if not quite simultaneously. On Mondays and Fridays the Head Master, who goes alternately into each room, and other masters, who divide up between them, also come in to lunch. At 2 o'clock on these days there are *Latin Prayers* followed by two periods of school and half an hour's P.T. until 4 o'clock when the Whitbourne houses return home. Tuesday is a general parade day, the J.T.C. parading at Buckenhill, the A.T.C. at the labs and the Scouts alternately at Buckenhill and Whitbourne. On Mondays and Fridays those from Whitbourne bring packet lunches but on Tuesdays a separate, orthodox, meal is provided for them in the Big Schoolroom.

On *Plays* most of those from Buckenhill have to be in school at Whitbourne by 9.35. One bus runs which takes masters and a total of 26 boys. Nine of these places are allotted to Grantites and are shared out so that no one always has to bicycle, the method by which the remainder have to go. Those catching the bus have to walk rather over a mile by 9.15, those bicycling take on an average 35 minutes for the ride. The hens have still to be dealt with, even on *Plays*, before setting out. School consists of four periods with only one five minutes break and ends at 12.20 when, by bus or bicycle, boys from Buckenhill get back there in time (usually) for 1.15 lunch. In the afternoon Grantites either take part in whatever *game* is in season or else do a *job*. These jobs are things which have to be done if the household is to be carried on and are of considerable variety—carrying coke, digging refuse pits, doing road repairs, chopping firewood, sorting potatoes and indeed anything that may crop up from day to day. Everyone in the House has an obligation to do at least one job a week unless there are very exceptional circumstances as in Sports weeks. It may be mentioned that in the course of the day other "routine" jobs are also done. Some are done by all in turn—a coal distribution every afternoon by Hall, a weekly quota of firewood-chopping by Inner and Chiswicks; others are done by groups of volunteers as at Fernie, but before long the hens will be the only one of this sort of job to survive. These volunteers are to a certain extent rewarded by having a "holiday"—an afternoon free from any obligation—every week whereas other Grantites get one every fortnight.

On all days there is "*tea and a bun*" at 4.15 after which boys are free until *supper* at 6.30; there being absolutely no restriction of an occupat nature involving organisation and supervision of their doings. After supper there is *prep* until 8.45, then *prayers* (in the case of Grant's in Latin on Tuesdays and Saturdays, continuing a practice started at Fernie when it was not possible for the whole School to have this) and *lights-out* at 9.30 or 10 o'clock according to size. On Saturdays, however, there is no prep and *Lit. Soc.* takes place.

On *Sundays* breakfast is at 9 o'clock and boys attend the ordinary Church service at 11 o'clock except on occasions when they get a much appreciated service to themselves at 10 o'clock conducted by the Head Master. Lunch at 1.15, tea (sit-down, with more than a bun!) at 4.30 and supper at 7 o'clock are the only other obligations and, apart from these, boys are free to do as they like. They wear a variety of "Sunday best" for Church and then relapse into sartorial freedom for the rest of the day.

* * * * *

That, then, is the day's programme; designed to combine with a variety of necessary obligations as much genuinely free time as it is possible to fit in.

T. M.R.

BRAINS TRUST.

Do pigs have wings? Do cannibals eat jam? Do farmers have brains?

These, and many inconsequent questions like them, kept racking me as I lay in my uneasy, nightmarish sleep under the shadow of the Abbey.

But especially . . . *Do farmers have brains? Do farmers have brains? Do farmers . . .*"

So silly of me for, at any rate to this question, the answer was obvious. Of course they hadn't—why should they when all their associations were with the common soil, the dull animals of the farm, the country yokel; all they had to do was to put things into the ground and sometimes take them out again and to fill in any spare time with milking the cow. Brains indeed . . . !

* * * * *

Some years later; and this time the nightmare, with the same reiterated question, came back at Fernie. But I wasn't quite so sure of the answer now—at any rate not of the same answer. Some of us had known Mr. Hobbs of Lancing College Farm; all of us knew Mr. Payne and Mr. Ballard and Mr. Powell of the Poplands. Somehow or other none of these fitted in with the scornful impression I had conjured up in London of a witless, clodhopping, agricultural drudge. I had learnt a bit since then . . .

* * * * *

Once more—and never to be repeated—the nightmare recurred. It was on a recent Saturday night and a few of us had that evening trudged down to Bromyard to supply at any rate some audience for a local experiment in the form of an agricultural "brains trust." Partly I felt curiosity—that question which had haunted me might be further answered; partly it was loyalty, for the Head Master was to be the Question-Master and he could be relied on to supply the brains, while his team of farmers . . . ?

We needn't have doubted. The hall was crowded, even on an evening unattractive from snowfalls and icy roads. From the very start the audience, to its own acknowledged surprise, sat in rapt amazement at the facility and variety of the answers which came without hesitation from this team of farmers to questions social, questions political, questions commercial, questions veterinary, even questions educational, but all of them questions agricultural. The team was drawn from a wide area around and to many of the audience probably Mr. Baldwin was the only familiar member of it. We would have been prepared to credit *him* with brains; after all even a potential M.P. must have some! But within a moment of the first answers we realised that we were in for the enjoyment of hearing keen and experienced wits from all of them, tackling with easy certainty the conundrums showered on them.

* * * * *

Do farmers have brains? We should say they do! Bromyard, at any rate, knows it; perhaps that unimaginative, shortsighted metropolis of my first nightmares will also know it in time.

T. M.-R.

MY FIRST EXPERIENCES IN A WHALER.

It was a beautiful morning, the 8th of May 1901 to be exact, when my brother and I arrived at a tavern along one of the dirty quays of Bristol. With only a very little money in our pockets, we decided to have a drink and a chat with someone, and, while we were enjoying ourselves talking, three burly men entered and, on calling for silence, asked for sailors to serve with them in their whaler, "The Toiler." Well, as we had only a guardian who didn't care about us in the slightest, we signed on with several others with whom we had become so recently acquainted. We were given a promise of good food and wages in return for which we gave a pledge of loyalty. We were then told that a launch would take us out to the boat

at 9.30 a.m. the following morning. We finished up our drinks and started on our way back.

Next morning about 7 o'clock we started back for the town with such kit as we could scrape together and with some sandwiches to keep us going in case we felt hungry. After about an hour's tramp we returned to the tavern at 8.30 a.m. and at 9 o'clock we were hustled into the launch and pushed off without waiting for the others as they already had a full crew. There were many "greenies" on board, and even on the way out some were sick: but at last we came in sight of the ship. All we could see was the three masts and a brick arrangement called the Tri-works.

Well, at last we got on board and were shown our cabins. Then we were ordered on deck for a general look over and roll call. Our stations were then told us; I went "Forward" with my brother under a huge burly black officer. We then went down to the mess which was incredibly small. The food was not bad, but it gave us an idea of things to come. We all turned in at 10 o'clock (as we only posted a watch of three) and slept soundly till about 5.30, when we were woken up sharply by a bellow from the darkie officer. We had some hot swash, called cocoa: and then bacon and dry bread, coupled with the words "hurry up about it," as the ship was about to get under way.

We were very lucky as we had been in service before on trans-Atlantic vessels, so we got down to work with ease, but some had never been to sea before and their sufferings were great, especially some of those who had to do very hard work.

After a month at sea we had all got used to it and were settling down, when our first upheaval came. . . . It was a beautiful summer's morning, about 5 o'clock, when all hands were called on deck for the great moment we had been waiting for, and practising for, during the last week. Yes, we had sighted three "Cachalots" or "sperm-whales." The routine proceedings were carried out in a quiet and orderly manner as they had been during the practice of the day before.

I was in the stern sheets of my little boat, waiting anxiously the orders of Lieutenant O'Connor, a huge burly officer. There were also two Portuguese harpooners with their new "irons" in their hands poised for the moment to strike. The sail was up and we glided softly towards one of the monsters. We seemed to go straight for the cachalot until it seemed that we could not miss him; but orders were snapped out and the sail was reefed and the rudder swung right over to Starboard and the monster glided by. . . . but immediately the harpooners in the bows plunged their weapons into the seething mass of blubber. Then the struggle started. First of all the monster charged ahead, and the rope ran out. . . . one bale went. . . . the second. . . . and the third and last was in use; luckily he doubled back and then "sounded." Now we were sure of our prize, and when it surfaced the harpooners were ready with their deadly lances. In they went with skill and remarkable precision in the circumstances. The animal then began to fight its last fight. Enraged by pain it lifted up its tail and threatened to smash the boat and its occupants for ever: luckily we just escaped.

It then began to regurgitate huge lumps of cuttle fish. At last it settled down in the water and gave its last sign of life in a feeble flick of its huge tail and floated on the surface lifeless.

The ship then came alongside and although we thought it finished, we were much mistaken. It was now 12 o'clock; we had a meal and were called once more on deck. The process of cutting up had just begun; after two hours of sweat and toil, the head was cut from the body and pulled up on to a special erection. By the evening the job was well in hand; the decks were flowing in oil and the scuppers were full: the men were bathed in it. The pure spermaceti in the flesh was placed on a tray under which was a can, and this was placed on the Tri-works to be heated. The heat caused the oil to be extracted and thus saved in the can. At last the body and head was given to the sharks and suchlike fish. About 500 barrels of pure spermaceti oil was the prize of an extremely hard fight.

D. M. V. B.

The time had come for one more V 2 to be launched, the climax of months of careful planning and training of the operators. During the morning the V 2 had come by road from the storage depot to its present position. Everyone who stood around tensed their nerves for the dreadful deafening sound which shortly would rend the present peace. The chief raised his arm : all knew that on its lowering one more piece of the devil's handywork would go into action, yet they faltered not. Crash! A white speck followed by a brown and white trail swept upwards accompanied by a devilish roar.

The bow soared up. The "seconds" of the School Orchestra had begun another concert in Worcester.

R. E. N.

ENGLAND AND OPERA.

Opera in England is a highly controversial subject. There is no shortage of people ready to decry and even scoff at it. There is a lot to be said against opera in this country from opinion such as, "Opera is not suited to the English temperament," down to "Opera sung in English is a farce." The first criticism surely needs no comment; musical appreciation does depend a lot on individual temperaments, but to say that a nation as a whole dislikes a certain type of music is obviously absurd. As to the other criticism, while much can be said for and against, it is again very much a matter for personal likes and dislikes to decide. It is impossible to satisfy everybody. Some would rather understand what is being sung (although this is not always possible, even when a performance is in English), while others think that the absurdity of some English translations ruins the whole opera. My view, which I think is shared by many other opera-goers, is that the main idea in going to an opera is to listen to the music, to which the words are subordinate.

To give the devils their due, translators usually do their best, and not many of the mockers could do better if they tried. In order to appreciate "Anglicized opera," you must just try to ignore the absurdities and conventionalities for the sake of the music. One instance that always impresses itself on me particularly occurs early in the first act of "The Barber of Seville," one of the most universally popular of comic operas, and deservedly so. Count Almaviva is trying to quieten the musicians who are about to serenade Rosina. To do so, he sings such words as "Softly now, softly there; never a word, never a word." He elaborates upon these words at some length and anything but *sotto voce*. Another example occurs in "Madam Butterfly," when Pinkerton asks the American Consul if he will have "Milk punch or whisky?" These words are prosaic enough in English, but, apart from this, they are almost the same in Italian. Also in "Madam Butterfly" a few snatches of the American National Anthem are interpolated, although one feels that these may have been omitted in Italian war-time performances.

In England the demand for opera singers has never been very great, although it has presumably increased with the advent of war. Therefore, from the singer's point of view, there is little to attract them here. But on the Continent, and especially in America where enormous salaries are offered to accomplished singers, there are considerable prospects of a successful career. This state of affairs, which could perhaps be remedied by State subsidies, results in many of our best singers leaving Britain to shine in foreign opera houses.

But perhaps the most convincing answer that can be made to any criticisms of opera in England is the enormous success of opera seasons in London and the Provinces now. This success is quite different to that of Covent Garden before the war; this is opera for all and not just for the elite; people do not go to the New Theatre to be seen. And the packed houses wherever the Sadlers Wells or Royal Carl Rosa companies are giving performances

are an indication of the existence of an opera-loving public in Great Britain, quite sufficient to keep this "artificial art" flourishing, after the war as well as now. In June this year, this public will decide whether or not an English School of Opera will be founded, with the first production of Benjamin Britten's new opera, "Peter Grimes," by the Sadlers Wells Company. Let us hope that this opera will be an unqualified success, and that it will stimulate public interest in opera in Britain once and for all.

R. D. J.

CATISTICS OF A HIGH-POWERED WISHFUL THINKER.

Mr. Applegreen and I gazed at the tree, whose branches were gently waving to and fro in the breeze, and on the very highest and thinnest branch of all we saw Mr. Applegreen's cat also gently waving in the breeze. As an extra violent gust of wind caused the twig to which it was clinging to crack loudly, the cat mewed and Mr. Applegreen moaned in sympathy. However, I restrained a chuckle with difficulty, because that cat was not a favourite of mine.

I lived next door to Mr. Applegreen, and every night his cat would come to my dust bin for its supper, leaving the remains strewn around my back yard for me to sweep up in the morning. I was, therefore, so pleased when I opened my back door one morning to be met by the sight of my backyard sparkling with coal dust, dirty water and clothes lines, with not a sign of potato peelings, that I slipped on the door step and sat down in the coal dust and dirty water. As I got up, I saw Mr Applegreen, looking over the fence and gesticulating wildly at me. "Have you seen my cat? Have you seen my cat?" he yelled. "No, thank goodness," I replied, but luckily he was too distraught to notice my tactlessness. He simply seized me by my braces and swung me over the fence. "You're coming to help look for him, anyhow!" he muttered, and dragging me to the centre of the garden, he turned me round and round, apparently using me as a direction-finder, for he kept asking me whether I could hear his cat anywhere, and remarking how bad his hearing was.

When I was so dizzy that my knees were sagging, I admitted that I could hear a cat mewing. Mr. Applegreen stopped whirling me round and asked where the mewing was coming from.

"Well, it seemed to me," I replied, "that it was coming from right over our heads." We were standing beside a tree, the only one in the garden. Mr. Applegreen and I gazed at the tree, whose . . . but that's just where I started this article.

"Oh dear," sighed Mr. Applegreen, "we'll never be able to get him down. I haven't got a ladder, and no one could climb right up there even if I had one. My poor cat will have to remain there until he falls down and gets killed. I think I'll go and start digging a grave." But I had an idea for getting rid of the cat quicker than that. I suggested that if we cut the tree down, the cat would be saved. As a matter of fact, I was quite certain the cat would be killed, but Mr. Applegreen thought it a splendid plan and rushed off for an axe. He had hardly taken a dozen hacks at the tree, when the haft of the axe splintered and the head, having neatly parted my hair down the middle, although I usually part it on one side, buried itself in the ground some distance away.

"We've had it now!" hiccuped Mr. Applegreen. "I could not get another axe now, so my cat will have to stay up there." But I was determined that the tree was going to come down, so I did some hard thinking. "Have you ever heard of Felix the Cat?" I asked. "He was a forerunner to Mickey Mouse. Whenever he wanted to do something, and was wondering how to do it, a question mark would appear over his head and he would use it to achieve his purpose. For instance, he would use a couple of question-marks as wings when he wanted to fly, or knock one into the wall to hang a picture on. Why couldn't we do something on similar lines? There is not much difference between an axe and an axiom, so if we think hard of an axiom we might get one, and we could use it to cut down the tree."

"That's all very well," said Mr. Applegreen, "but I don't know any axioms." I replied that I knew one, and that I would think hard of it. I asked him to grab the axiom when it appeared, in case it disappeared again. Then I started up. "The shortest distance between two fixed points is a straight line. The shortest distance ———." Mr. Applegreen made a dive at something above my head. When we had got to our feet again, we examined the catch. It was a length of rigid spider's web about two feet long, and so thin we could hardly see it. Mr. Applegreen said that he had not expected the axiom to look quite like that, but after a few moments I realised what had happened. "We've got the straight line instead of the axiom. But we can still use it," I said, and picking up the axe head, I jammed the straight line into it with a bit of the old haft. Then I gave the axe to Mr. Applegreen. But he had an objection to raise. "This won't be nearly strong enough," he said, "it will bend directly I use it. I'm surprised it even holds the weight of the axe head." "It will neither bend nor break," I replied, "because if it did it wouldn't be a straight line anymore." So Mr. Applegreen started chipping away again. The tree soon began to shake, and the cat mewed in terror. All will soon be over, I thought. But I was wrong. The cat must have been listening to our conversation, because, as the tree fell and he began to hurtle through the air, wondering what to do, a large question mark appeared over his head, and scrabbling at the dot to keep a grip on it, he swung gently down to earth. In fact he used the question mark as a parachute. On completing a successful landing, he made a bee-line for my dust-bin, I suppose because he had missed his supper the night before. So, as happens to most villains, I had been foiled again. However, I obtained one doubtful benefit. Out of gratitude for my having saved its life, the cat has hidden the potato peelings under the coal dust in my back yard ever since. As I said before, this is a very doubtful benefit.

J. C. B-W.

BIKE SLAVERY.

Oh many's the afternoon I've spent
 With nut and bolt and pliers and spanner ;
 And over up-turned wheels I've bent,
 Back-muscles strained to full extent,
 Frayed nerves dispelling charm of manner.

Oh many's the damp and earthly ditch
 With little crawling things and scratches,
 And pins-and-needles, cramp and itch,
 In which by night I've traced some hitch,
 Or looked for screws by lighting matches.

Oh many's the three-speed gear I've mended
 In diverse circumstance and juncture.
 For Law or Medicine once intended,
 A new career's been recommended.
 I mend a very pretty puncture.

J. O. E.

THE LOWER DRIVE : A CONTRAST.

Just over half a century ago the drive was a beautiful drive ; a drive of your dreams, made of asphalt, or gravel, or whatever the drive of your dreams is made of ; it was kept in perfect order by a regular army of workmen, and was lined on either side with stately trees—this, although you may not believe it, is quite true. Now, look down this drive in your imagination—see! over the crest of the hill a coach comes into view ; it is a splendid coach, all gold, and it glitters in the sun ; the horses, with their bright red pompons and grand harness look like horses from Heaven ; the coachman is seated on his high box in front with the whip cracking in his hand, and, behind, there are two footmen lustily blowing horns ; the whole outfit comes thundering along—a marvellous sight—but the picture fades, and now turn to look at that which follows.

Nowadays, the drive is an ugly drive ; a drive of your nightmares, made of mountains of flints, or mud, or whatever the drive of your nightmares is made of ; its condition gets worse and worse every day, thanks to the regular passage of farm carts, cows, and cyclists, and it is surrounded by mires—this, although you may not believe it, is also quite true. Now, look down this drive in your imagination—see! over the crest of the hill comes a farm-cart, all muddy, and it creaks as it moves ; the horse with its shaggy mane, and its one rein looks like a horse from Hell ; the driver is seated on top of the manure with a bit of straw in his mouth ; and behind there are two cyclists lustily ringing their bells ; the whole outfit comes groaning along—a dreadful sight—but, alas, the picture does not fade so easily ; it is HERE.

J. A. D.

THE MASTER.

One day I was walking in the Covent Garden area of London when I noticed a small back street on my right. Quiet back streets always attract me and so I began to walk down its narrow pavement just to see what I might find and perhaps to recapture something of the atmosphere of an earlier London.

I had only walked 100 yards or so when I noticed a small shop with a small glass front on which was written in hardly-decipherable letters, "Johann Stradivarius, violin-maker." I looked again, "Johann Stradivarius, violin-maker" ; yes, there were the words true enough. "That can't be the Stradivarius," I said to myself, "his family died out years ago, probably some old man who thought it would attract people. Well, it's attracted me."

I turned the handle of the door, and with the conventional sounds the door opened. The shop was small, dark, and the smell of age was present ; around the walls hung violins, and, unexperienced as I am, I could plainly see on them the hallmark of a strad. I was moving round in the confined space of the shop, looking at the violins, when a voice from behind me made me turn round. "Good morning, signor. What can I do for you ? I am at your service." The voice was that of an Italian who had spent many years away from his native country, and the speaker himself was small in stature, his face worn with age, and a white beard to complete the picture.

I reckoned his age to be anything between 80 and 100, but it was the hands that above all caught my attention, the hands of a violinist and a violin-maker. I was in the presence of a master. "I'm just looking around," I said. "I saw the name so I came in." I must admit I was somewhat embarrassed in the presence of this man, so old and so great. "Yes, it is a nice name," he said, "my father brought it to England, some 50 years ago, and I still make violins as my family have made them for generations past." "Then have you the secret of the violin ?" "Yes, if you call it a secret, but it is no secret. You can learn it from me if you wish it, I am preparing the varnish now in my inner room ; come in and watch."

I went into his inner room. I smelt something which I have never smelt before, or since. He sat down at a table, with me next to him. For the next few hours I sat there watching him, and those hands. I learnt much then, how to make and to play violins, but to crown everything he wrote on some paper what men have been striving to find out for many years. "Here is my secret," as you call it," he said, "take it with my compliments, Stradivarius is your friend." I mumbled my thanks and got up to leave. He escorted me to the door. I thanked him again, and he asked me to return whenever I liked. I stepped out into the street, holding in my hand the precious bit of paper. "A rivederci, signor," he said, raising his hand in a simple gesture. "A rivederci," I replied.

I came out of the back street, my future made, I was to be a violin-maker. But I was so gathered up in my thoughts I did not realise that I was on the main road. Before I knew where I was, I was in the gutter, knocked down by a car, the paper had gone, the secret was lost again. I was picked up and taken to hospital. I have recovered in the physical sense, but my mind is

deranged, I am haunted by back-streets. I cannot find that street, I have looked everywhere, all I can do is to walk, walk, and walk. Life has no more pleasure for me. I am still looking for the master. "Stradivarius is your friend."

M. G. B.

THE LAYING OF NUMBER ONE.

(Names in this article are fictitious).

Captain F. looked at his watch. If the train was on time, in three minutes it was due in. He must rouse Mr. C. who is buried in a Penguin thriller or asleep behind it. He did not want to, as he was tired himself, but at least he had slept in the office in London while Mr. C. had had to get up at six o'clock in order to get a very slow train up to Marylebone from the country. As it happened Mr. C. was not asleep and they both collected up their coats, hats and official bags. The train was running down the valley and just below it a wide river sparkled in the early afternoon sun. The brakes came on slowly and the train came to rest at the terminus at 2.18; only a few minutes late on its run of three and a half hours from Paddington. The two alighted at the little station with only one island platform where main line trains from Paddington terminate on the South Coast. Capt. F. and Mr. C. walked past the slightly hissing engine to the ticket barrier. Capt. F. showed his pass stating that he was the Marine Cable Superintendent of the G.P.O., while Mr. C. showed his as Staff Engineer of the Lines Department. Then they walked down a covered gangway to a floating quay, beside which was the Great Western steamer s.s. Bidston. They walked on board, the ship waited for all the people and luggage and then cast off. A salt breeze was blowing as the Bidston ploughed the water for four minutes until she bumped a similar quay on the other side of the river. A Post Office car was awaiting them which conveyed them to the Post Office. In the Post Master's office they met the captain of H.M.S. Claughton, the latest cable-laying ship of the G.P.O., the Sectional Engineer and the Post Master. Mr. C. needed no introduction to these three as he had met them there before when he had planned this cable route two years ago. Capt. F. only knew the Captain but was at once introduced to the other two. Mr. C. spoke for a short time on the plans and answered necessary questions.

Just after three o'clock they packed into a car and drove out of the town towards the coast. Before they had gone far the road turned into a narrow lane which did not look as if it had been made since the time of Queen Victoria. This lane bore traces of heavy lorries which had found it narrow for them to squeeze through. After half a mile the lane turned a right angle bend to the right and below them was the sea. About half a mile out was the Claughton, two barges and a very small motor tug. In front of them were two big lorries from which barrels were being unloaded, and three Post Office vans. The car stopped, they got out and scrambled down a muddy cliff path till they were nearly on the beach. On their right was a cable hut, a little above them six men were putting up the cable marker which for the last four and three-quarter years had been lying in the grass. Below them a trench stretching to the sea was just being finished and another six men were putting up the second cable marker. They passed on to the beach and sat on a pile of barrels which was growing as one by one they came down from the lorries, with two men to each barrel. The captain of the Claughton was taken off in the tug to supervise the loading of the necessary 700 yards of cable for the shore end on to a platform of planks supported on two barges. The beach was alive with men; some were dragging the barrels into the water while others were getting lengths of a small rope tied to one big one, while a few more were attending to a team of four cart horses.

It was some time before the motor launch began to tow the barges from the Claughton towards the shore. As soon as the barges ran aground the launch was detached and a man waded out, threw a line to the launch where it was caught and recoiled. Then it was thrown to a man on the barges who fixed it to a winch and wound it in. On the end of it was the large rope on the beach. When this big rope was wound on board the barges the cable was

tied to it and the horses at the other end. The barrels were pushed out into the water and as the horses pulled the cable off the barges it rested on the barrels. When it was landed twenty men were needed in addition to the horses to pull the cable up to the cable hut, as armoured submarine cable weighs nearly 13lbs. per foot length.

At a quarter to six the captain and one of his officers came ashore and took their leave of Captain F. and Mr. C. The sky was becoming overcast and Captain F. and Mr. C. went up to the cable hut to see the cable being joined to the land end ; a job which needs a skilled workman to get all the circuits connected up correctly. When this was done and tested they locked up the cable hut and scrambled up the cliff to the car. All the men had gone home except those who had been connecting up the cable and only one van remained. Just before they got into the car two long drawn-out hoots announced that the Anglo-French cable had started its journey. Two days before the Western Front had begun and this cable contained telephone and telegraph circuits for communication between the two countries. The car turned and bumped back to the town.

On board the Claughton there was silence except for occasional people coming and going and the regular thumping of the engine. Five men helped the cable out of the holds and over rollers on the foredeck till it finally disappeared over one big roller on the bow to join the waters of the Channel. On the bridge the captain was worried as the glass was falling . He had the engine running as fast as he dare for cable laying as there was a probability of a storm. He was not far wrong. During the night the calm sea turned into a swell and from that into a gale in the very early morning. In the normal course of events cable laying is only carried out in calm weather but the desperate need for this cable necessitated it being laid in bad conditions. At six o'clock the French coast was just discernible through the captain's binoculars in the growing light. About two miles off on his starboard bow was an American destroyer and to port was a small boat of some kind or another.

The captain began to make his round of the ship to see if all was as it should be. He found the men, who were paying out the cable, soaked through by waves which had broken over the deck. There was a certain amount of water in the cable holds and about a foot and a half in the bottom of the ship in the fore end. The engine and the drivers and boiler crews were intact and the donkey pump was pumping out what water had penetrated to the engine room. The captain ascended the companion way aft and came on deck to see a spout of water shoot up just behind the ship. He looked in the direction of the American destroyer from which flashes and puffs of smoke were seen to come. By now shells were screaming overhead and falling round the ship. He turned on his heel to see a nasty-looking motor craft shelling him. Then he went up to the bridge to take over the command. One of the American shells burst on the motor craft just too late although it destroyed all the superstructure. There was a whine and a crash which shook the ship from stem to stern, spars, masts, rigging, wood, twisted metal and broken glass fell on the fore deck. The engines were stopped as the engine room telegraph registered " full ahead " and " full astern " almost at once. The chief engineer went on deck to find the bridge, wheelhouse and chart room disappeared and a couple of men crawling out from under a heap of splintered wood in front of him. The rest of the crew were safe but the captain, the first and second mates had vanished. A ladder was fetched and leant up against the funnel, and a rope was tied to the whistle so as to convert this into a morse-sending apparatus for calling up the American destroyer. In the meantime all the crew that could be spared cleared the fore deck and the cable was found to be more or less undamaged. The destroyer having come up and found out the trouble set off to get help in the form of two tugs from the pre-fabricated port as the Claughton's steering gear had been wrecked.

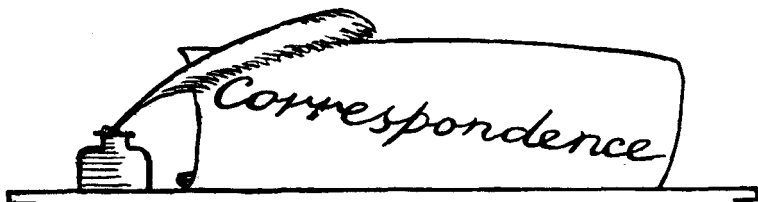
In the early afternoon the tugs brought the Claughton near enough in to unload the other shore end of the cable and it was not till the late afternoon that the Post Office Engineer was able to speak to Mr. C. in London.

J. M. C.

NATURE STUDY.

One of the biggest successes at recent Play Suppers was Chiswick's rendering last term of Haydn's "Toy Symphony." Reproduced here are the extempore ejaculations of a Nature Study expert who happened to be listening through the key-hole at the time.

Down in the forest something stirred. Hush and hearken to that lovely noise ; it sounds like the gurgle of a bubbling spring ; 'tis the nightingale! the cuckoo adds his twain notes ; what a marvellous melody! Now a rarer sound can be heard : I cannot recognise it ; ah, now I know, 'tis the quail. All these join together in superb harmony, accompanied by the rustle of leaves ; dah—dah—dah, the broom of a loose branch hitting its parent tree is very evident, and the bells of distant places of worship tinkle and ring out sonorously from afar ; the whole forest moves and sways in time with the joyful music : I cannot understand it ; what is it? 'Tis Chis!



To the Editor of the "Grantite Review."

Dear Sir,

I feel that it is high time that tribute was paid to the Editor and producers of *The Grantite Review*, for producing and dispatching the magazine so regularly ; there must be a large amount of work involved in distribution alone, and I should like to assure the Editor (and the Housemaster, too, for his writing may often be recognized on the envelope) that his efforts in this way are fully appreciated.

When prevented by circumstances from keeping in personal touch with Grant's, the value of *The Grantite* as a link with the School is, if possible, increased. I would like, with all due deference, to suggest to the Editor that, whilst in no way criticizing the literary standard of the fiction included, there be more news of the House, its doings, its plans for return to London, and, may I say it, more news of the activities of other Old Grantites. Personally, I find it extremely interesting to read of the doings of my contemporaries and I feel sure that others would too. If anyone would be found to tackle the job, what an excellent idea to include in the next issue a detailed account of a typical day at Buckenhill. It is hard to visualize!

Yours faithfully,

P. N. RAY.

NOTICES.

All correspondence sent to the Editor should be addressed to Buckenhill, Bromyard, Herefordshire.

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

The Editor is responsible for the distribution of *The Grantite Review* and changes of address should, therefore, be sent to him as well as to the Hon. Secretary.

A few of the numbers since 1930 may be obtained from the Editor, price one shilling.