



THE
GRANTITE
REVIEW

The Editors of this magazine are James Rose, Ian Patterson and Michael
Holmstén.

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SWIMMING
WATER
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IMPRESSIONS

Editorial

“This house is no home; just part of the squalor of life. Shall I go home to oblivion?”

“Does no man know his life’s begun until the day he dies?”

“Alone once more/I watch/dusk creeping on:/ So soon must all men die.”

“It couldn’t be long now, she thought, and stumbled back into sleep as the drugs began to take a hold.”

“. . . to turn/ in grief, repentant to their God,/ or stagger, blackened to oblivion.”

“His blood was red on the snow/ . . . And there they found him, the deserter. A black hood on his head.”

As well as these choice quotes the pages of this magazine have witnessed the suicide of a madman a tramp entombed in molten slag, a man drowned in an estuary: the catalogue of morbid thoughts is almost without end. It seems a characteristic of the adolescent mind that when, of its own free will, it turns to writing it turns to face death and the emotional problems of living a mortal life. There is a sudden and, perhaps, shocked realisation that life is not the dream of childhood, not the gliding, passive and, sometimes, selfishly active existence once enjoyed.

“How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable seem to me all the uses of this world,” says Hamlet, the introspective adolescent *par excellence*. Values have changed, the mind is walking on shifting sands, so the adolescent becomes by turns morbidly introspective, looking for something firm to rest on, and wildly hedonistic, all of which, but mostly the former, shows in his writing.

Although the themes of murder, death and suicide are not exclusively adolescent, authors who deal with them appeal to adolescents in a curious way: notably A. E. Housman.

“And Maurice among the hay lies still/And my knife is in his side.”

“Ned lies long in the churchyard and Tom lies long in jail.”

“O Queen of air and darkness/I think ’tis truth you say,

And I shall die tomorrow,/ but you will die today.”

Finally:

“And noose me in the knot, and I will rot.”

This sort of poetry was much admired by the young people of the time, hanging being more usual an occurrence than it has been in recent years and drugs and suicide a little less fashionable. Poems also like Morris’ “Haystack in the Floods” have that romantic, but slightly sick fascination which people of a certain age enjoy. None of this poetry, however, is introspective: introspection too soon becomes boring to the reader, who may find the style and subject-matter an embarrassing reminder of his own efforts. Better writers, and I am considering only a very modest level of literary achievement, pass through this phase and learn to handle it with care and skill.

One of the difficulties of trying to produce a literary magazine of this sort is that unbridled introspection, the first form of extra-curricular writing for many, must, for the purposes of the magazine, be discouraged and it is a point perhaps worthy of investigation whether the damming of this trickle stops at source a literary stream of unknown potential.

House News

P. K. H. Maguire is Head of House.

The Monitors are P. G. Hollings, A. H. C. Vinter, J. D. R. Rose, P. A. A. Dudgeon, W. E. K. Macfarlane and I. K. Patterson.

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T. F. Hart is Head of Chiswicks.

The Chiswickites are R. E. Jones and C. W. Galloway.

* * * * *

J. P. Emerson is Head of Hall.

The Hall Monitors are C. R. Bland, M. J. Abrahams and M. B. Adams.

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Mrs. Quicke, almost certainly the first matron to walk the mantelpiece, is leaving us this term but she hopes to live in London and we hope she will be a frequent visitor to the house in the future.

* * * * *

The following colours have been awarded:—

Water *Thirds* to R. E. Jones and A. H. K. Postan.
Colts and *Seniors* to J. P. Emerson, W. M. Holmstén and T. H. Phelps Brown.
Seniors to A. H. K. Postan.
Juniors to A. G. Walker.

Cricket.. .. *Colts* to R. L. Paniguián and D. H. G. Lascelles.
Seniors to M. E. Lonsdale and R. L. Paniguián.

Football *Pink and Whites* to P. G. Hollings and R. G. H. Kemp.
Colts to S. Harling.

Athletics *Juniors* to G. D. Jones.

Swimming *Pinks* to R. G. H. Kemp.
Colts and *Seniors* to M. B. Adams.
Seniors to M. J. Abrahams.

Fives *Pinks* to M. E. Lonsdale.

Tennis *Colts* to M. J. Abrahams.

* * * * *

VALETE :

P. D. Craze, R. J. Green, N. McI. Johnson, S. R. Oldschool, A. H. Tizard, T. B. Williamson, R. Mackenzie and M. E. J. Smitham.

SALVETE :

R. C. P.A. Banks, A. R. Elliston, G. H. M. Niven, R. W. Orgill and G. D. Royce.

House Diary

SOMEHOW it seems unnatural that the Play term should begin in the Summer. Suntan-saturated Grantites return to their alma mater in all expectation of feeling Winter's chill breath in the bathroom. Instead, they found the house and the weather had forestalled them, for it was hot and the radiators were on. Surprise though this was to many, a few had faith and were rewarded when Autumn came down, like the Assyrian, on the house and the temperature of the radiators came down in sympathy.

This return to familiar conditions was heralded in unfamiliar ways. Under cover of darkness stealthy forms had been creeping out of yard in tracksuits for several days before the great race was proclaimed. And under cover of darkness this esoteric ritual took place. Few could understand why, or even how, such a varied assortment of size, shape and dress could sprint, lope or pant in night attire, duelling garb or swimming undress around Dean's Yard. All that the uninitiated could hope to comprehend was that, of the two teams competing, one carried its sacred broom to victory. But while we are still in the dark about this, we have heard that the novel idea of a Westminster in rapid self-propelled motion proved so appealing to those in authority over us, that a debased version of this rite can now be witnessed in the country-edge around Grove Park.

It has been suggested that the lack of enthusiasm for such exertion stems from a contempt for its low energy-output requirement; the indefatigable Granite saves his energy for the really demanding exercise, which calls for maximum physical and mental effort found exemplified in the renowned House Dance. That this new tradition is fast taking a hold on the house, we can see from its second coming: it also celebrates an anniversary of the siege of Gibraltar.

A less welcome second coming is the return of Leave Passes to moderate our weekend habits. We believe to be well-nigh unfounded the rumour which places the foundation of these habits in the corrupting influence of scugnizzi, whose entertaining escapades have enlivened our Monday night prayers. But while Father Borelli is becoming a tradition, the Play Supper is undergoing radical transformation. In place of the skits, from which it took its ancient name, we will be seeing three plays, produced and acted by members of the house.

To counteract the disordered atmosphere invoked in this brief summary comes the decision to repaint the studies, an action which will bring light to many lives and bring the average Granite back to the rough and ready middle course he steers through all House Diaries.

Thirteen

AUTUMN crackled underfoot and the lead sky hung dull on the rust-world. The boy walked.

In winter you tramp, in spring you skip, in summer you run, but in autumn

you walk, scuff the leaf-drifts, unearth gold from under the mud-brown piles, snap damp twigs and stumble on shiny chestnuts pressed into the mud.

Autumn is a time for walking, a time for looking at trees from the ground upwards, now too wet to climb to the summer vantage-points, secret haunts at last revealed through the half-brown, half-fallen foliage.

The boy walked, enjoying autumn, enjoying the green moss smell, the moist leaves' live-earth smell, the twigs' and branches' wet-wood smell, enjoying the rustle and swish of russet, the wash of churned gold and brown behind, the unspoilt sea of bronze ahead and beyond.

The boy walked, lithe thirteen treading in his feet, swaying in his limbs, tight in chest and fair-blowing hair. This was his time, that of walking and remembering: remembering the summer days that had run laughing with him, the twilight summer evenings that had drawn him delighted and running over dim-blue fields and through the thin trees. This was the time of walking and looking forward to the log-blaze, Christmas-tree and snow so achingly near, to the dream of next summer's voyage to the edge of the world, to hills and woods unexplored, trees unclimbed and copses unthreshed. This was the end of the old year and the hope of the new, the in-between time, and it was his time.

But age grows on boys and as he walked he felt it creeping behind him and knew that by next summer it would have overtaken him. He knew that next summer he would not hear the call of a dark wood on the hill in the breathless twilight that draws one from safe house after supper, he would not travel to the end of the world, the trees would remain unclimbed and the hills unroamed: next summer would be empty of the light magic and now-lost enchantment—it would be a summer of People, drives in the car and high tea: he would be too old for pure joy and beauty.

The boy brought his feet to reluctant rest. Looking behind him he saw his fresh wet wake reaching into the distance, towards the house lights just visible; turning back the way he had come he felt youth and magic ebb from him, and in the distance he heard the People.

Poem

I OFTEN would have cried for you,
If I still knew how.
One day the wind was blowing so strong and cold
As though from the ice cap it
Had skipped to England,
Bypassing any softening influence.
So as I waited it drove the point home;
She's not coming, and torturing me with this wind.

The wind ignored my clothes, and the wool,
It cross-examined me, softened me up.
How could she do it if there were any love in her?

The wind nearly did make me cry,
Except I was too self conscious.
I tried to cry,
But how could I
Admit self pity and
Child like frustration.

You Must Be Very Old . . .

WHEN the rain is beating against the leaded windows, bent aslant by the wind, as it bends the trees and the dark sky, when the few dry leaves are picked up, swirled and thrown to cling to the old stone wall before they drop and are beaten into the mould, when the nights are long and none venture abroad, then the cage is opened and the stories are let out to flutter in dreams around the comforting flames of the fire. The old man gnaws his tobacco-pipe and recalls imagined history; old books, books of his childhood are dimly remembered, bringing with them the scents and sights which have lain sleeping in his memory for three generations. The flames leap around the haunting image, the illustration whose thin black and white lines would entwine themselves into strange unnatural shapes to torment him as he lay trembling in the night, while the rain beat against his window, and the wind cried that it could not come in. Rising and falling with the flames in the hearth, twisting and threatening with woodcut illustrations, fragments of story emerge like butterflies and spread their wings, a tenuous hold on the air after so many years of sleep. Autumn and spring, summer and winter join hands and their colours evoke each other as the mysterious Djinns and Genies of Arabia slip away, leaving princes, broomsticks, grey mountains and dark forests where before was only a spired, pinnacled desert horizon. White palfreys and jewelled palaces, the white hands of a drowned princess, the dark, secret face of a thief mocking from the rim of an oil-jar, all twine and twist into many half-remembered, kaleidoscopic pictures.

The rain beats at the window and runs in steady streams down the small glass panes. The wind rocks the stone security of the house and the flames rise and fall less. The old man has left his taut-skinned, thin-boned body and is floating free before the hearth. The green cool of green thoughts arises as he rests alone by a summer river. A tree lets fall light-flecked shadow, and the water runs steadily past beneath his eyes as he holds his chin in his hand. "The road winds ever on and on . . ."; he knew, but lingered in the light, savouring the dry smell of hair-thin grasses, and letting the grass-hoppers jump about his elbows.

Embers glowed red, and the black and white cat rose from her corner; she stretched herself, arched her gentle back in a lethargic way, and sneezed twice, rather deliberately. Twitching her whiskers she put her head on one side and looked at the old man's frail body. A thin line of tobacco smoke crept timidly from the old pipe but the figure did not move. She sneezed once again, sat down and softly flicked her tail. The rain was less steady now and the wind was dropping. Upstairs a child was asleep, and a man put his arm round a woman's shoulder and smiled. The fire was dying, thoughts were turning to winter; black elms and feet painful to walk on. "Old men forget"; the ancient body sneezed and opened its green eyes. He smiled at the cat, and they were silent together while trees bent low before the wind.

Nondescription

IS it in castle or monastery?

No, not in either.

Has it a name?

Not to men, though they live in its shadow.

Has it green gardens and fountains of roses, blooming in court-yards of warm kentish sandstone?

No; for these pass.

Is it of Orient, scented with spices?

Yes; it is something like that.

And has it then jasmin and peony, silky bamboo and willow, sighing to still waters and shimmering dragon-flies?

Yes, but they are just part of it. The rest is not there.

Is it then wild and rocky and blasted with storm-whipping wind, driven and shattered by rain, to rise again, battered, to blossom to blue skies and seas thick with sea-birds aflame with the dawn?

Yes, even these it is, simple with celandines, marguerites and daisies sweet in the morning and sea. It is even these and more besides, a revelation to those that have found it and sorrow that many are blind to its wonders.

Has it nation?

None, for its stature is too great for one.

Does it owe its existence to the work of one man?

None, for its stature is too great for one.

Is it then fancy which gives it its grandeur?

No, that is there without fancy or men. It is beauty and grandeur and all that goes with them, fantasy, colour and rhythm and form—the purest of arts and harmonies pleasant. It is joy and amusement, gaiety and wit. To those that can know it, it is Nature herself.

Francois Reboud

IT was on my third day in Kingston that I saw the beggar. The burning Jamaican sun streamed down onto the terrace of the bar, where I was sitting, sipping a long, cool drink. The beggar came shuffling to my table with his arm outstretched expectantly. The waiter had just brought me the change for my drink, so I gave the beggar a twenty cent piece. As I put the coin on to his upturned palm, I looked into his face. I suddenly realised why this person seemed so out of place begging. He was not a native of that part of the world at all. He looked as though he came from Germany or one of the Nordic countries. His long blond hair reached almost down to his shoulders, and made him appear even taller than he actually was. His unshaven jaw jutted out in an arrogant, aristocratic manner and his curled upper lip practically touched his aquiline nose. His eyes were a china blue and even as I gave him the money, they stared far over my shoulder into the distance. His hand closed over the coin and he shuffled over to the next table.

Later that afternoon, when I was still in the office, staring idly at the slowly rotating fan on the ceiling, the thought of the beggar returned. Something inside told me I had known this person at some time in my life. I searched my memory for some clue and suddenly I realised who he was. His name was François Reboud. We had been students together at the Sorbonne. I had hardly known him really. His parents were very rich and he had a car as well as a large allowance. He used to take his girl friends to all the expensive restaurants, while my friends and I used to go to the small artists' bistros in Montmartre. Now it had all changed utterly.

On the following morning, when I had finished typing some report or other, I left the office and returned to the bar where I had seen the beggar on the day before. I sat down at the same table and the waiter brought me my drink. I sat for a while, gazing at a huge neon advertisement for Coca-Cola and listening to the hubbub of shouting Jamaican stall-keepers. Soon the monotonous voice of the beggar wafted towards me, carried on the breeze. As a policeman doing a regular round, the beggar waited hopefully at each table in turn. The ragged figure, in faded jeans and torn shirt, shuffled up to my table. I took a five dollar note out of my wallet and as I pressed it into his outstretched hand I said:

“Remember the Sorbonne, François?”

His whole body became rigid and his pale blue eyes focussed on mine. For a moment a flicker of recognition passed over his face, and was gone. Without changing his expression he shut his claw-like hand then opened it again. The crumpled note fell to the ground and was blown into the cobbled street by a gust of wind. He moved on to the next table.

I stayed a few more days in Kingston before flying to Buenos Aires. I didn't see the beggar again.

The Tap-Dancer

THE drip, drip, drip of the water creeping down his back, as it slid like an eel from the collar to the waist brought his head down on his shoulders, neckless. His leather-covered feet splashed the puddle to the gutter, missing lamp-posts, bits of paper and slimy cigarette ends, floating in the mirage of the buckled broken surface of the pools. The rain came slanting, relentlessly engulfing all that was aware of the soft stale smoke of the city. He walked oblivious of the flashing neon signs which shimmered in the rain, of the lights which fell by the water drops showering the road with stars. People brushed him by, rushing feet and tiny voices bustling round his dragging dreary footsteps till he stopped, started and sidled in.

The low red ceiling had caught his rapt attention. He gazed, unaware of the lovers in the chairs, the businessmen, the lights, the candles on the tables and looked with fascination at the spotlight on the floor, with the murmur of the voices and the rhythm of the band, at the tall, dark figure stamping and repeating step for step the very motions that he thought and the lights slowly faded on the tap-dancer.

Dreams of Lethe

I TREMBLE in the forest as a creeper slaps my face;
I came to find a deep pool in a daylight-filtered place,
Moss grows there in green silence and nothing is unkind:
But the cold marsh mocks my quest and laughs to see me blind.

The trumpets of the dawn awake me with their blast,
Night's mists dissolve and shapes regain the shapes that cannot last.
Disguised as solid figures, dreams follow from their halls
And I laugh at their vain pursuit until the darkness falls.

But night can cloak the memory of daylight tyrants deeds,
Whose iron swords, with rusted blood, rot deep among the reeds:
Black bat-hung trees remember where the air is rank and rotten:
I lie dead beneath their leaves and long to be forgotten.

Her New Society

GRADUALLY the world came out through its black cotton-wool, and she became aware, with a sense of warmth and security around her. She was lulled by the slight motion in the bouyancy of the barge and the warmth of the sun through her window, shining and rippling into her face, making her eyelids glow a soft red onto her lightly closed eyes. Everything was fine until she began to remember. But she drifted off to sleep again, as the clouds came over the horizon and blackened the sky.

She turned fitfully and began to sweat so that her night-dress clung to her and the sheets became tangled at her feet. She awoke more suddenly now, the sense of security all gone. Yes, they thought she was ugly, and a bore. Not a bore perhaps, but dull. She knew her opinion of dull people, predictable lives, no qualms, and the hypocrisy as you pity them. Surely she wasn't a bore. She wasn't ugly. Her face just seemed a little unformed. One that looks as if it has come from the womb before being fully formed. It seemed that another layer of flesh would have obscured the face altogether. She must have more to offer than they think. She raised her weakening hand from the soiled sheets to push back her matted hair. The hair she had been proud of as a little girl. She quietened for a moment thinking of her childhood. There was security no criticism, no keeping up with society. She had beautiful hair they said, and was a pretty child. Her nicotine stained fingers brought her back. She was plain. She stumbled back into sleep.

Mirage in N.W.1.

THE traveller on the upper deck of a bus gazes blankly as rows of shops drive by. They offer him antique furniture, delicatessen food and little else. He is in the old crafts centre of London, Camden Town, once famed for cabinet making. The vehicle slows to cross a steep bridge cast in iron.

A sudden impulse makes him forsake the bus for the tension and fumes of the warm street. He walks back through the surging crowd of shoppers. At the bridge he peers over the side as a child would. Before him is a narrow strip of water lined by warehouses. The water changes its level abruptly, so it could not be a river. The place beckons him on.

He passes through an iron gate whose chains seem to drop off in his hands. He walks past the lock. People stare at him from the tops of buses. Two locks side by side with white coping. Vast oak booms that are black, white. Rusty winders and shiny capstans. The water rushes to keep its levels. The gravel below crunches in step. Ruined stables are on the left, where barge horses must have rested on arrival in London. No use now. A gaggle of faded blue tugs floats wistfully in the fresh water. No use for them either.

From the bank he notices a water square with timber-laden wharves. Scum accumulates at the back. A green bridge carries the towpath at a skew angle over the water; its cobbles battered by hooves; its iron fabric creased by rubbing tow ropes. On the other side he is at the base of a stained four-storied warehouse. Let into its side is a dark cavern supported by rotting baulks. The great main line rumbles ahead on a steel bridge. Here the path comes out into the water, leaving a narrow passage for traffic. Where its surroundings are dark the water is dark. It draws colour from the walls and buildings. Moving into the shade of another bridge he shivers.

The water mysteriously turns through a right angle past a little basin. Turning this corner, the traveller sees the canal disappear into the distance, surrounded by trees and green things. It could almost be countryside. He steps out to absorb the fresh air. His effort is thwarted by a vast spiked gate set across his path. Firmly padlocked.

Wanderlove In The City

IN the Autumn, when drizzling rain had made
The pavements slippery with leaves,
My provincial love came from the misty North
To gaze, as we tramped through Finsbury and Finchley
At the grey setting of the city.

We walked our way through Summer's last sad fling
To Winter's early fogging
Through Camden Town and Belsize Park
And in the choking yellow-grey she said to me,
"It's just like home."

In Regent's Park, cut and dried by January
They looked at us and thought their thoughts,
As we went walking close for warmth
To see the cages, creatures close confined.
They freed us from our loose confinement.

Spring came in St. James' and now
Kensington's dry pavements scorch my feet.
Kew is soft and warm and brightly coloured
With the flicker of the water sprays,
But my provincial love's gone home.

She left behind some few last things:
Her soft green headsquare with the leaves
And the nostalgic grey setting of the city.

Boy In The Evening

THE boy on the bank leant against a tree as he looked at the couple. They were coming out of the wooded path on the other side of the river. There were plenty of tree roots on the path, making it rough. The boy knew and laughed when the man nearly tripped and fell, then had to stop anyway to adjust the pack on his back while the woman waited and looked around.

“Not hikers,” the boy thought and went on looking. “But camping all the same.” He stared at them noticing their clothes, old good clothes and shoes not boots. Then pretending not to have seen them, his eyes followed a floating twig downstream through the deep, slow pool, fast over the rapids to the green, iron footbridge. Up by the bridge a car was parked well off the road.

“So that’s how they got here. Not hikers, just campers from anywhere.”

The sun was setting and the midges from the river gathered in little cloudy patches along the bank and around his head. Fish ate them as they dabbled at the river’s surface and then the boy knew about the campers and felt the giggle from his stomach break out from his lips and throat. He heard it in the air and smiled once more because he knew they must have heard it too. Slowly, for he had lots of time, he picked up his stick and strolled along the bank towards the bridge, decapitating nettles thoughtfully on his way.

He came to the bridge and propped his stick up against a girder and scrambled down the bank to the river’s edge. There he selected two large stones, but could only lift one and this he humped up the bank, now and again supporting it on his knee. With a final heave he raised it to chest level and dumped it with a clang on the broad iron parapet. Now he pushed the stone along towards the centre of the bridge, the whole structure vibrating and rattling. Carefully he positioned it to fall into the deepest part and with a serious face he placed both hands on the smooth surface and pushed. He watched it fall, marvelling that something so heavy, so massive could float in air, however briefly, before the full-bodied kerrumph and the bubbles all fizzing and drifting downstream.

“Soon,” he thought “soon, but not yet” and went to fetch the other stone, which was not nearly so satisfying.

The dusk grew speckly black among the trees on the other bank and he fetched his stick and it was cold and damp. Slowly, for he had lots of time, he paced across the bridge, looking down at the river through the planks and thinking. He felt in his pocket, smiled and gave the bridge one last ringing tap with his stick. Turning left along the path the couple had walked a while ago he began to run quietly on the pebbles and tree roots, which his feet had felt so often. He came to the point where they were when he had first seen them and moved cautiously off the path, away from the river onto the springy ribbed turf. He traced a wide arc and dropped onto all fours when he saw the tip of the green tent beyond a patch of bracken, chest high. He listened and heard nothing but the river’s roar and the birds going to bed.

“Them too,” he thought, and smiled.

He moved further round to look at the whole tent, a medium sized ridgepole, storm set, the guy ropes crossing and the mouth facing away from the bracken.

“Pessimists” he thought. “But not me, it’s so much easier this way.”

There were sounds from the tent, but very self-contained. Under their cover he moved over to the bracken path and sidled round it to the back of the tent. Out of his pocket he took a tangled mass of string and, as he unravelled it silently, he listened to the sounds of the tent. He knew and smiled. Gently, when the time was right, he tied a slip-knot loosely round the place where the guys crossed low near the ground. Slowly he paid out the string behind him to the other side of the bracken. Licking his lips and drawing in his breath, he looked round, saw his stick lying by him, saw a bush at the edge of the wood not twenty yards away and pulled hard on the string. It taughened, the slip-knot ran down, gripped the guys, which pulled out slightly and then slipped from their pegs in one successful movement.

The boy dropped the string, grabbed his stick and ran for the bush. He did not see the green canvas billow out and then collapse, but heard the feminine cry and the masculine blasphemy and the sounds of muddled confusion. From the safety of the bush his hopes were dashed, for no faces red with embarrassment and anger poked out from under the green bumpy covering, no thrashing naked bodies writhed in his trap. Instead stillness, then a laugh and then two. He heard it in the still night air and smiled once more, because they knew he must have heard it too. Anyway he let down the tyres of their car on his way home.

They Were Even Talking About It In Theydon Bois

“AS usual George you’re absolutely right and you do seem to understand these things. It’s comforting to know it couldn’t happen here.”

“I am glad you see the thinking man’s point of view, dear; it’s really very simple: just a question of priorities: ours and theirs. I think we’re both agreed on whose comes first.”

“Of course we are, dear: and we’re from the stock originally and that’s what counts. But you know, George, the thing that really bothers me is . . . well I know we’re kith and kin and all that, but Smith . . . Smith, well the name’s hardly got an aristocratic ring to it.”

“Oh, I’m right with you there—but all the same is it really necessary to drag in class-distinction on top of everything else? We must be liberal-minded about this. But of course that’s exactly their problem out there—it’s just more clear cut, that’s all: sixteen to one is pretty stiff odds against our people.”

“It’s very sad isn’t it though, that they couldn’t stay on the other side of the brink—still they say it was an inexorable quirk of fate or something. Though

Heaven knows Wilson's done his bit to avert the tragedy. Another teaspoonful? Heaped? You know, dear, there's one thing that bothers me."

"Well?"

"It's not that I'm a prig or anything . . . far from it, but from the woman's point of view . . . there's that accent of theirs; you know it makes them seem more like foreigners—marks them apart. I mean, look what happened to the Americans: completely past hope now!"

"You've got quite a point there. And you know, I've got a sneaking suspicion they're not really attached to the Mother Country. Why would they go out there in the first place? And more important why don't they want to come back now? Smacks of treason—insult to the name of the Queen and her dignity, don't you think? And what about the effects on the other countries in the Empire? Let's be honest, the world's map is only spattered with pink these days. I think they've been jolly unsporting about the whole thing. And I'm sure the colour sections haven't been allowed to tell us the whole story—censorship, you understand . . . Julia I—"

"Yes, dear?"

"We don't actually know anyone out there, do we?"

"Not any more, dear. The Simpsons were posted to Malta."

"Well in that case we should come down pretty heavily on them; no punitive measures, just something by way of a warning. You know, non-recognition, legislation moves, tobacco and sugar boycotts, oil embargo . . . that sort of sanction. That'll show them. We may be thousands of miles away but that doesn't stop us from understanding their native problems—and what's going to hit them most. After all they can't attack us can they?"

"No dear. I think you're absolutely right."

Northumbrian Evocation

THE rain drives down over the beach and across the feathery dunes, the sand turns brown and sticky. The sea turns warm and looks no different from the land. Still it crashes forward, grinds back upon itself and leaps forward to echo and crash round the curve of the coast. The sea moves more than the land. Grey-brown clouds gather low on the horizon and their faces sweep high up into the curious orange sky, while cobbles sail for shelter. But the rain sweeps on from the coast to the hills, where it soaks the sheep in the heather, slips down their hillside track. It drips from the leaves into the roofless ruin and waters with its pattering the healthy waist-high nettles in the dung of the hemmel. The shaggy matted cattle graze and throw their horns against the sky until the clouds race for the Border, Carter Bar, Ad Fines camp. Desolation and decay.

Jackdaws

BLUE-GREY dusk hung over the idle slapping lake, the trees scarcely outlined against the hills behind.

Across the lake faint yellow house-lights peered sadly, unseeing, at the girl who stared at them: home, safety, and perhaps a little disappointment.

But home's call is never unnoticed. She ran down the slope towards the water, eyes still on the lights dim on the other side. Breathless, untying the little boat, oar-fumbling into wet rowlocks until at last sliding out from under the trees onto the dark calm water.

The jackdaws were coming.

First there was a black wheeling shape across the sky-wash, then two, three, a thousand. Their cries thrilled through the willows, echoing across the water as the light faded. The black swirling masses grew, the cries louder, more intense.

Oars hung motionless, dripping over the water, as the girl's eyes turned upwards to the ever-shifting cloud. Every year since anyone could remember the jackdaws had come, at the beginning of August, to congregate at twilight over the lake every night for a month.

The sky was empty, the last shapes calling in the distance as darkness lowered the sky. Pinpoint summer stars pricked the deep blue.

The bark of a dog far across the water roused the watching girl, her mind turning to the house and its meaning. Pull. The boat slid. Pull. Water hissed behind, trees on the shore faded and merged together. Pull. The faint sound of a door shutting in the house, now nearer. Pull. Pull. Pull.

At last. Grind, bump, the bow on the hard stone jetty. Damp painter hastily through the iron ring and away, running to the door and the smell of food. People talking, turning, looking.

“Did you see the jackdaws? Did you see them?” Breathless.

“Yes, dear. Change your wet shoes, supper's ready.”

MUSIC

IN last term's Music Competitions, the results of which contained not a few surprises, both for the successful and the unsuccessful, Grant's did not achieve the results which might have been expected. This was especially the case in the Solo section, where the House suffered several disappointments.

In the other sections, however, the story was different.

In the Vocal Ensembles, the House entry of three separate groups of singers, contrasted with each other in style, combined to place Grant's second in this section. Holmstén, Lamb and Milne gave a most refreshing and individual performance and deserve special mention here. However, in spite of this achievement, the House was placed fifth overall in this main part of the Competition.

Then came the House Choirs, for which a separate cup is awarded. With membership on a voluntary basis, and with rehearsals kept to a minimum, the House Choir responded superbly before the adjudicator. Our own choice, *Spanish Ladies*, an arrangement by Cecil Sharp, was intended as a contrast to the Bach aria, *Rejoice, O My Spirit*, and as such proved more successful than the more recherchés choices of other Houses. Again, though, we were only placed second, a surprise, I afterwards learned, to three of the more chorally minded members of the staff.

The most noticeable factor in House music generally is a regrettable dearth of instrumental players: it is a fact that less than a third of the House learns a musical instrument at the school, and this includes piano players. And whereas there is no lack of interest in music as such—a fact shown by a recent outstanding attendance at Junior Gram. Soc., the trend seems to be essentially towards the guitar, in its various roles and to folk music. The mention of the possibility of instruction being given this term in guitar-accompanied singing was not brought to fruition: and though this might tend to discourage individual adventure in this field, which is very much in evidence in all layers of the house, it would be of great value both to the novice and the expert in giving them a theoretical grounding which he might not otherwise have achieved.

But the whole question of instrumental playing reaches far outside the realm of House Music. Prep. Schools seem little concerned to interest their pupils in the idea of playing a musical instrument other than the piano and perhaps the recorder. This may, of course, be a question of finance, or an under-estimation of the potential ability of boys of that age group: the former reason may perhaps be excused; the latter certainly not.

No such barriers, however, must exist in a Public School. New boys should be encouraged in every possible way to take up an instrument if they do not already learn one, and shown exactly what opportunities lie open to him. There is one master in the school who virtually insists that such members of his form start learning an instrument. This attitude should surely be more widespread: School music and House music would thus benefit. But far and away the most important effect of this general attitude would be to provide the individual player with an invaluable investment for future life. And is that not, after all, the mainstay of the justification of the public school system.

SPORTS NEWS

Cricket

THE season should have been Grant's best for a long time, since we had lost only one player from our previous year's victorious team. However we missed our chances in two matches and had to be content with sharing the title with Wren's, Busby's and Liddell's.

Our first match against Busby's started off well. Green took most honours with six wickets, well backed up by Medawar and Craze. Grant's scored the necessary fifty runs for the loss of only two wickets. The match against Ashburnham was a disaster from the moment we elected to bat. Because of the weather or the large lunch they had just eaten, Grant's gave a first rate display of collapsable batting and were dismissed for 37. Maguire alone showed great determination. Ashburnham's reply was by no means confident, and had Crosse not scored 26 not out, Grant's might still have won.

In the next match Craze, having won the toss, put Rigaud's in to bat. Our bowlers controlled the game completely. Maguire bowled extremely cunningly and Lascelles, in a most spectacular manner, removed Hughes and Stanbrook with consecutive deliveries. Our batting started badly with wily spinner Neil Ross taking the wickets of our captain, Craze, and the number two batsman. Maguire came to the rescue, however, with a magnificent 37 not out, and victory became inevitable.

The match against College proved to be a mere formality. They were dismissed for 17, to which Grant's replied without the loss of a single wicket. The tension before the Wren's match was high as Wren's were alleged to be a strong side. Having won the toss, Craze put the opposition in to bat. Green, Lascelles and Maguire proved once again to be the backbone of our bowling, for Wren's were all out for 34. It is of interest to note that the last five Wren's batsmen were unable to score any runs. Grant's made 35 for the loss of one wicket, runs coming mainly from a fine stand by Lonsdale, next year's captain, and Maguire.

The Liddell's match was by far our worst performance. Nothing seemed to go right. Liddell's scored 94 against which we could only make 37 by way of a reply. At one moment it seemed as though Maguire and Paniguian, who was well settled in, might make a stand until Paniguian was run out due to an unfortunate misunderstanding.

Craze, who captained the side for two years, had less luck this year with the bat. His decisions, however, boosted us to our high position.

Next year the team will be inexperienced but there is much young talent in the house.

Grove Park

GRANT'S is traditionally a strong house at Grove Park and last summer's cricket team proved to be no exception, winning every one of the eleven matches played. The team was nicely balanced, having a residue of old established players, a few talented newcomers and an ample reserve to make up the numbers should occasion demand. The bowling was shared between the Smitham twins, the captain, Dudgeon, and Davies. Oldschool kept wicket admirably and the batting, never brilliant, was at all times adequate with Davies, Stacey, Milne, Oldschool, Smitham P. and Dudgeon sometimes scoring well. The side also fielded well and matches were often very one-sided.

This term, however, the football team has not come up to expectations. There is a considerable reserve of talent, particularly with some players fresh from Vincent Square and some new boys in the juniors. Of the seniors Macfarlane, Smitham and Hornsby are outstanding and the juniors, captained by Green, have promising players in Aylmer and Niven. But there have been too many changes in a position from game to game and the teams have not been playing together as a whole. This has led to a certain amount of frustration and despondency as games progress.

Cross-country running also takes place but not on a house basis.

Swimming

GRANT'S kept its head above water as it ploughed through the waves to yet another overwhelming victory at Dolphin Square. Although we are lucky to have many good swimmers in the house loyalty is divided between the summer sports—most of it being wasted on Water! However, *chacun à son choix* as Bobby Macgregor put it. Yet we must be fair, for come Finals day the watermen turned up in force for the relays, as is traditional, sweeping us to an easy victory.

The swimming Standards are always disappointing. There is a certain proportion of people who try hard, but many, very often in studies I may add, tend to avoid the pools. With slightly more individual effort we could easily have won. We did in fact come third with an average of 4.09 points per capita compared with Busby's 5.014 and Liddell's 4.7. Therefore those that did try, did very well.

I regret to say that our Captain, Michael Lonsdale, is too good an all-round sportsman to devote his whole time to swimming. However we did hear murmurs of encouragement from him, while Richard Kemp took over the actual organisation. The preliminary rounds were got through in the usual, fast, smooth, slap-dash way and the five Grantite representatives, Richard Kemp, Michael Lonsdale, Marcus Adams, Michael Abrahams and James Emerson, the first four all being in the school swimming team, were through to the Finals.

The Finals themselves were really quite exciting and as they were during first and second school, Mr. Murray's form came along to cheer their teams to victory or despair; or else just to fish them out, depending on the house. Richard Kemp, also a very versatile sportsman, whom *The Times* has described as "blond and beefy" while praising his football, did very well. He came first in one of his senior races and second in no less than six others. Michael Lonsdale, who was described as "small and lazy" by the *Daily Worker*, won the diving as usual. Michael Abrahams, whose real inspiration is for tennis, came second in the diving and provided stern opposition in the junior races. Marcus Adams won two of his junior races and also had two second places. We now come to the climax of the Finals, the Freestyle and Medley relays. These always provide excitement and amusement, especially when only half the team knows its position or stroke. At this stage Grant's were slightly ahead, but everything depended on these two relays. The team for the Medley relay, which was first, consisted of Richard Kemp, Richard Horsley, James Emerson and Marcus Adams. What unutterable chaos! One has to watch where one is going with four lanes, but with seven it is unbelievable! Anyway we won, Richard Horsley thrashing home a good half length ahead of the rest.

There was only the Freestyle relay to go. In it were Richard Kemp, Richard Horsley, Richard Jones, Norman Johnson, Marcus Adams and Michael Abrahams. This was certainly a very exciting relay, because in twelve lengths a team can soon be out of the race. However, this need not have worried us, since we established an early lead and steadily increased it. This was indeed a happy conclusion to the competition. The final result was Grant's first with 96 points, Ashburnham second with 74 and Busby's third. We have certainly established ourselves as a swimming house. Let us hope that it remains that way.

Water

GRANT'S supremacy in the School Regatta during the past few years came to an end last term, when Rigaud's defeated the house by one point. It was certainly a well fought contest. Indeed right until the last race on Finals day the result was undecided. Grant's as usual dominated the fours events; the Senior four: Johnson, Shearly-Sanders, Horsley and Postan had a comfortable win over a combined College-Wren's four, and the Junior-Senior four, who beat Ashburnham in the Final, never had serious opposition in any of their races.

In the sculling events Walker rowed well to win the Novice Sculls by half a length, and Phelps Brown reached the Final of the Junior-Senior sculls. Horsley and Shearly-Sanders were beaten in the Final of the double sculls by a strong Rigaud's-Ashburnham pair.

The reasons for our defeat lay in our Junior Colts and unless this weakness is remedied Grant's will have difficulty in regaining the Halahan Cup next year.

Tennis

NAMES were thickly listed on the Barnes Cup score-sheets. Names that you never associate with tennis; columns of names, infested with Grantites out for the spoils of the cup. For the Juniors it was a case of “in for a penny, in for a pound,” for most of them entered for both Junior and Senior events. Nevertheless it was a shame after such bravado to read “Walk Over,” “Toss Up” and “Fiddled” on many of their first rounds. Mendes da Costa in a brave game lost to the champion, and Miéville and Ashford did well against strong opposition. Abrahams and Harling proved themselves in both groups. In the Senior competition Hollings and Kemp did best but were ably supported by Lonsdale and Dudgeon.

In the very exciting Finals of the Senior and Junior singles the favourites both lost but it was very encouraging to see everyone trying their luck.

Impressions

“VIVAT WESTMONASTERIENSIBUS!”

“vivat westmonasteri . . .”

I had arrived?

Name again and again,

“I’m Royce.”

Construe!

We’ll soon be *au fait* with Caesar—now this is the Geography Room, room,
room . . .

“All new boys will report:

Up School, up House, up Fields . . .”

Terrors in store:

Mantelpiece-walking, a fire—postponed, lagging test, another lagging test, lagging
tests ad infinitum!

Shadows and substances, school monitors, half-pinks out of season.

“Vintage, Fattertham, Hose . . .”

Head of House; Joost de blank, blankety, blank.

Two weeks slipping by . . .

Crash!

When I recovered .