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# THE ELIZABETHAN

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## CHRISTMAS AT WESTMINSTER



After the painting by Jan Griffier (1645-1718)

*The River Thames during The Great Frost (showing King's Scholars and the Abbey)*

ONE of the most attractive of the school Christmas cards printed before the war was a reproduction of a picture of an ice fair on the Thames by Jan Griffier (1645-1718). It shows (as will be seen above) the river at Westminster. On the left is the Abbey with a group of King's Scholars in front of it; on the right is Lambeth Palace; and away in the distance the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral can be dimly discerned. The picture was at one time thought to depict the ice fair of 1683, but that can hardly be so since Wren's dome had not been begun at that date, and it is more likely a painting of the ice fair of 1698, when a coach and six was driven from Westminster to London Bridge.

The last great ice fair was held in 1813-14, for the demolition of Old London Bridge in 1834 increased the tidal flow of the river and since that date the tideway has never completely frozen over even in the hardest winters. The late Canon J. H. Simpson, however, used to relate how he and other boys had walked over the dry bed of the Thames during the unusually severe winter of 1838 when, owing to the river having frozen higher up, very little water was passing down to the sea. The river bed was studded all over with small icebergs from six foot to eight foot high and the boys were able to run out to the deepest part of the channel which passed close to the walls of Lambeth Palace. Even compara-

tively recently in the winter of 1929, when the Thames froze at Oxford and at many other places down to Teddington, icefloes came floating down the tideway and became a menace to light racing boats.

The 1683 ice fair did not begin until January 9th and the 1929 and 1947 freeze-ups also came in January and February. Indeed, try as we may to think of Christmas as a time of frost and snow, we are defeated by statistics. But extend the period a little and you can find plenty of Christmas scenes. No one now alive can remember the roaring log fires in College Hall and College Dormitory depicted in the Ackermann prints and Sargent watercolours, but at Bromyard and Whitbourne during the war the clock was put back to those far-off un-central heated days ; and similarly, although it is well over a century since there was skating up Fields on the pond near the picturesque building known as the Five Chimneys, those who were at Lancing during the first winter of the war will remember skating on the pond by the Farm inhabited by Grant's. They will also remember the last-minute postponement of term in January 1940. Intense cold and heavy snow has made re-assembly impossible and a telegram was despatched to all parents informing them of the fact. "Lancing frozen stiff," it said curtly, and an extra week was added to the Christmas holidays.

It was a repetition of an episode of nearly seventy years ago. "January the 19th, 1881," wrote Dr. Scott, the Head Master, in a notebook now preserved in the school, "was the date of return of the

boys ; but the violent snowstorm and the intense cold of the 18th had frozen the water in the pipes up School so that the circulation could not be maintained ; and the supply pipe feeding the boiler was also found to be almost choked from internal corrosion. It was therefore hopeless to warm the great schoolroom and with the Dean's permission the meeting of the school was postponed to the Tuesday evening following—January 25th. A few boys had arrived from long distances, and for those morning school was held each day in the Library. Two young boys named Pryce, one in College and one at Mr. Jones's House, arrived by a belated train at Euston Square and had to leave their luggage at the station, no cabs being available, and walk the whole way to Westminster carrying a small portmanteau between them. They could make no one hear at near midnight, at either Mr. Sloman's or Mr. Jones's House, but were taken in, fed and lodged for the night at Mr. Turle's, who heard them outside."

Several times during the last century the Christmas holidays were extended, not by the weather but by Royal Command. When King William IV attended the Play in 1834, he "expressed himself well pleased with the performance and generously contributed £100 for the Cap and asked for an extra week's holidays," and the visits of the Duke of Cambridge four years later and of the Prince Consort (accompanied by the Prince of Wales) in 1858 produced the same happy result. His Majesty King George VI followed this well-established precedent when he came to the Play in 1937.

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## CHRIST CHURCH ELECTION for 1952

Recommended to Scholarships at Christ Church  
are :—

G. Barton, K.S. (Science)

I. L. Hunt, K.S. (History)

and to Exhibitions :—

A. M. Howard, T.B. (History)

J. Porteous, K.S. (History).

The last occasion when only four awards were given was in Election 1947, when there was only one Exhibition. It is three years now since the Hinchliffe Scholarship was awarded—in Election 1949—to C. C. C. Tickell, K.S.

## FOUNDATION DAY

ON the morning of November 17th, the date of the accession of Queen Elizabeth, the Psalm, Lesson and Hymn used in the school's morning service were all taken from the *Commendatio Benefactorum*.

The occasion was also marked by a short ceremony in King Henry the Seventh's Chapel. The King's Scholars sang Compline in the Chapel and then moved into the North Aisle where they sang parts of the Latin Commemoration Service by candlelight. After the singing of Psalm 148, the Captain and Second College Monitor laid sprays of roses on the tomb of Queen Elizabeth, one spray from the King's Scholars and the other from an anonymous Old Westminster, whose gift we should like to take this opportunity of putting on record.

# THE POLITICAL and LITERARY SOCIETY

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## POLITICS AND THE THEATRE

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OF the five guests whom the Society has entertained recently three may be said to belong to the world of politics and two to the world of the theatre. To forestall any possible criticism that this represents a somewhat restricted field of choice, it should perhaps be made clear that at the beginning of the term we were visited by Mr. Wilson Harris, who talked to us about newspapers, and as we go to press we are keenly looking forward to hearing Mr. Ralph Edwards speak on "Museums—Their Uses and Abuses." Nevertheless, even if these five had, in fact, been the only speakers to visit the Society this term we should still have had little cause for complaint. There has certainly been no vain repetition; that there was no danger of this may appear obvious when the names of our guests are mentioned.

The first was Mr. E. A. Fellowes, Clerk Assistant of the House of Commons. As befitted a servant of Parliament he left us completely in the dark as to his own political allegiance; yet he did throw a wealth of light on parliamentary procedure and he succeeded in showing that Party does not count for everything in Parliament. Indeed, it was possible to gather the impression from what he said that the House of Commons did its most valuable work when it was not working on Party lines at all. This view would probably not have been accepted by the other two politicians who, in contrast to Mr. Fellowes, may be termed professionals. Apart from this, however, there was very little in common between them; the political ideas of Mr. A. J. P. Taylor are scarcely those of Mr. Malcolm McCorquodale. Mr. Taylor talked to us most persuasively about Communism. Like all the best historians he was not content to paint in black and white. He did not seek to make us condemn or to make us applaud; but rather to make us understand. He was not afraid to show how lamentably wide of the mark were the efforts now being made to overcome the problem. One could not expect to remove Communism simply by removing poverty. Communism had a political and a spiritual cause as well as an economic one.

Mr. Taylor did not really come to propagate the ideas of any political party—although he did at various points do a little quiet recruiting for the

Socialist cause. Mr. Malcolm McCorquodale, on the other hand, came amongst us quite openly as a missionary of Conservatism. The Conservative Party, he was at pains to emphasize, was the party of the individual. It had, in fact, derived its ideals on the vital importance of the individual from the Christian religion. There was nothing unduly distressing in the fact that its leaders were drawn so largely from the public schools. It was the privilege and indeed the duty of those who had received a public school education to take upon their shoulders the running of the country. The title of Mr. McCorquodale's talk was "Modern Conservatism."

Sir Kenneth Barnes, Principal of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, is perhaps the patriarch of the theatrical profession. His claim to that title, based as it is on forty-two years' work at the Academy, is at any rate one which cannot lightly be dismissed. Sir Kenneth was up Rigaud's from 1892-95; but even if he were not an Old Westminster we should still have rejoiced to welcome him on October 29th for there is surely no one more suited to talk on "The Stage as a Career." The advice which he gave us did not differ materially from that which *Punch* gave many years ago to those about to marry. And however discouraging such advice may have been to some, yet the charm with which it was delivered did ensure that nobody should feel resentful at seeing so exciting and exhilarating a career painted in such sombre and forbidding colours.

One of the remarks which Sir Kenneth made was that the greatest need of the English theatre to-day was for new playwrights. As if to prevent any undue depression on this point the Society's next guest was Mr. R. C. Sherriff, the author of Grant's play which is reviewed elsewhere. His sketch of his new play—which will not be seen in London until Sir Ralph Richardson has returned from Stratford—left us convinced that the English theatre possesses at least one dramatist whose talent is neither incoherent nor exhausted. Perhaps the most memorable thing about Mr. Sherriff's visit was the superb air which he carried of the casual amateur. By the time he left he almost had us believing that *Journey's End* had really been written for a rowing club at Kingston.

# A WESTMINSTER NOTEBOOK

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NOT only has Mr. Fellowes, who spoke to the Political and Literary Society earlier this term, instructed and amused the present generation of Westminsters for a single evening. He has also been the happy means of providing for the amusement and instruction of, we hope, generations of Westminster in the future. At a dinner, which I understand that he gave at the House of Commons, the Captain and another King's Scholar discussed with the Deputy Serjeant at Arms the position of King's Scholars at the House.

Since the war this has not been altogether satisfactory, as the King's Scholars have always had places given them in the queue of those holding embassy tickets, and this is now sometimes as much as fifty strong. A few days after this dinner the Captain received a letter from the Deputy Serjeant at Arms saying that instructions had been issued that up to six King's Scholars daily might be allowed into the Strangers' Gallery, having priority over all except holders of "original tickets." This will be a great improvement, as now King's Scholars will be able, as they were before the war, to listen to some really important and worthwhile debates.

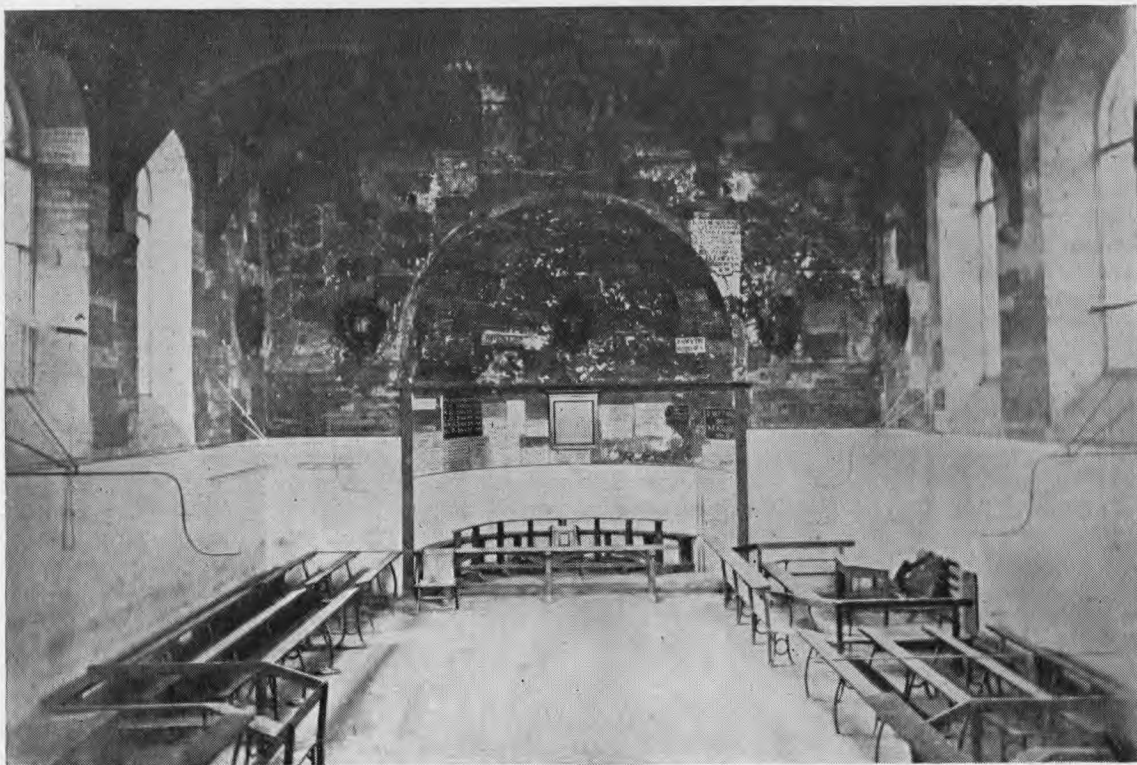
SCHOOL is becoming something of a national institution these days; on many an evening Westminsters are startled to see vast numbers of people, often with weird musical instruments or extraordinary uniforms winding their way Schoolwards, pausing now and then to ask the way to the "Westminster School Hall." It is a welcome sign of the times, and a stimulating reminder of our cosmopolitan situation that this should be so; we are sure that many a Westminster's heart must have sensed a pang of sympathy for the recent "carol rally" which took place up School for the benefit of blind children.

The occasion was, apparently, splendid, though accounts must be second-hand, since nobody from the School was able to penetrate the dense throng of five hundred people who came to watch and sing. Six bell ringers clad, appropriately enough in such surroundings, in Elizabethan costume mounted the bright Elizabethan stage-set which had been put up for Busby's performance of *Julius Caesar*. From seven o'clock to nine the carolling and ringing went gaily on, and everyone, apparently, much enjoyed the occasion. May all the activities, to which we lend our *milieu*, be as successful and as worthy in their aims.

A NEW School Society has been formed under the Presidency of Mr. Carleton. It has, I am told, not yet been named. The idea seems to be that it should invite "outside" authorities to lecture on the visual arts. The secretary of Pol. and Lit. Soc., with whose interests it might possibly overlap, has happily accepted an invitation to join the Society. I understand that later, when the Society has found its feet, there will be discussions, and possibly exhibitions. Architecture, painting, sculpture, porcelain and metalwork will all be objects of the new Society's attention. In the words of one of the two secretaries, "it intends to provide for those amongst us—hitherto neglected—who have any zeal for things old and interesting."

ONE of the most striking features, to the observant, of contemporary Westminster must be the large number of cats which inhabit Little Dean's Yard and its environs. The fearsome "Tigger" owned by Mr. Young at No. 19, the ebullient young ginger tom which romps daily upon the steps of Grant's, together with the other black and tabby animals which slink and scuttle about the School buildings, have become an accepted and even valued part of our daily life. This luxuriance of the School's *fauna*, however, like so many of Nature's phenomena, seems to resent any human attempt at artificial aid. For when Mrs. Hilary's quarters in the old sanatorium became infested with mice, the Captain of the KSS felt that a feline influence was called for, and procured a young male tabby from the "Dumb Friends' League," at Chelsea. The King's Scholars rapidly developed an affection for this engaging animal, in contrast to the mice, who decamped with all haste. But alas! either *wanderlust* was too strong, or school life too hectic for feline susceptibilities. "College Cat"—it had not even stayed long enough to receive a name—has gone, and nature's law prevails once more among our feline population, as no doubt it will shortly prevail among the rodent population of Mrs. Hilary's kitchen. The moral perhaps is obvious—"when it rains cats and dogs, put away your watercan."

THE work of reconstruction, which has recently given us back the Busby Library, has been taken a stage further with the instalment of a fine new ceiling of moulded plaster, for the "ante-room" to School. Some temporary inconvenience was



THE SHELL: OLDEST PHOTOGRAPH OF SCHOOL

caused, to those leaving and entering School, by the scaffolding, which was put up, but apparently the whole operation went off very smoothly. Workmen, at any rate, have no amusing or distressing incidents to record concerning it. We may be thankful that at last this very extensive labour of construction is giving results. It is hoped that the school gymnasium will be completed by next term, and a new classroom leading off School, commanding a very pleasant view of Canon Marriott's garden, has been in use since the beginning of term. The time when all Westminster will be able to drink, with some genuine hope of the fulfilment of their wishes, to the "departure of the workmen," seems now to be drawing steadily nearer.

FOR the last three years Busby's have been unrivalled in the production of house plays, but this term they have had to face a challenge from Grant's. They have, therefore, been rather more ambitious and turned their attentions to Shakespeare. Perhaps, even more resourceful, has been their construction of an Elizabethan stage and set, up School. They already have a reputation for solid and well-built scenery, but this, they say,

is even more solid and well built than ever, although some of them have a few doubts about the balcony. The whole set has been designed by K. M. Carmichael to the model of a well-known stage of the period. The gallery and apron have been built by the School Maintenance Staff out of their new scaffolding.

NOW that College and the Busby Library have been restored the last major piece of reconstruction which remains to be done is the restoration of School. Many will hope that it will be possible to incorporate in the new designs at least a semblance of the ancient Shell—the concave recess at the north end of the room which gave its name to a form at Westminster and at many other public schools. The extremely interesting photograph which I publish above must have been taken just before the destruction of the Shell in 1868. It shows the tablet (afterwards removed to the Busby Library) commemorating those Old Westminsters who fell in the Crimean War, and it also gives a clear impression of the unsightly "horse-shoe" benches which in 1852 replaced the traditional long benches seen in Sargent's watercolour and in many old prints.

## GRANT'S PLAY — "BADGER'S GREEN"

By R. C. SHERRIFF

AT the very outset of the production of a comedy a decision has to be made. The principal fault to be found with Grant's production of *Badger's Green*, given up School on November 22nd and 23rd, was that at both performances one gained the impression that that decision had never even been faced. It was impossible to tell whether the company was attempting to act or to clown, whether the piece should be understood as a play or a romp. At one moment we were convinced that the order had gone out that no price was too high to pay for a laugh; but just as we were settling down to expect an entertainment not wholly dissimilar to that provided on the ends of all the best piers during the summer months we were rudely awakened from our chortles by surprising patches of under-playing. The result, as may be imagined, was distressing and unfortunate. Those who clowned were made to look foolish by those who under-played, and those who under-played could not but appear flat and dull by the side of their less timid colleagues. It is probably true that the most effective way to play so obvious and simple a piece as *Badger's Green* is to treat it with the respect one would accord to *Journey's End*; that is to play it perfectly straight and to refuse to fall victim to the almost irresistible temptation to treat it as Mr. Robertson Hare treats the work of Mr. Vernon Sylvaie. But it is far, far better to do that than to attempt the impossible and compromise between the two. Farce and comedy just do not mix.

Had the production been thoroughly ragged and the performances altogether unsatisfactory it would have been unnecessary, and indeed uncharitable, to make so detailed a criticism. But the fact of the matter was that in many ways it was a very creditable production. Admittedly it was a little rough in parts and one could not help noticing occasional agonized pauses which were not improved by the gallant, but somewhat unintelligent, efforts of the cast to gag. Such things, however, one expects in a House Play and on this occasion at least there were many splendid moments to make us forget the sticky passages. The spectacle of N. N. G. Maw and I. J. Fulton tripping in as two ladies of the village brought forth howls of mirth on both nights, as indeed did the wonderfully puzzled and bewildered exit of D. D. Cammell's maid in the first scene of Act II. Again it was a quaint and delightful sight to see the Captain of Cricket giving a convincing portrayal of a country rustic who did not appear to know one end of the cricket bat from the other. It may, indeed, be said that the

playing of the smaller parts was the best thing in the production—even if the bits of business, notably the tea-urn and the coat rack—drew the most applause.

About the longer parts one could not feel so happy. C. R. Hayes gave an extremely spirited, if not particularly subtle, performance as the Major and he managed to communicate his own enjoyment to the audience. To communicate enjoyment is one thing; to communicate embarrassment quite another. This unfortunately was the main impression which G. G. F. Wordsworth, in the leading part of Dr. Wetherby, created in the minds of at least some of those who watched his performance. He made the fatal mistake of allowing the audience to see that he was distinctly uncomfortable in the part—there was something almost appealing in his distress at having to describe one of the other characters as "a white man." It was possible to forgive much to a person playing such a part in the disillusioned and unsentimental 1950s—how long, one wonders, would *This Happy Breed* run to-day. Nevertheless it was undeniably disappointing to see so accomplished an actor completely defeated by a part. As was only to be expected his performance was technically sound—even if occasionally his timing was at fault—and this did much to disguise his essential failure to enter into the character he was portraying. With the two other rather casually drawn long parts J. H. M. Anderson and K. H. Hodgson did their best, but it was impossible not to suspect that they both subscribed to the recently discredited heresy that the principal duty of the actor is to be natural. So determined were they to behave as if the stage was an ordinary room that at times they dropped their voices to conversational level and were consequently quite inaudible. On the whole, however, audibility was good, as was movement—especially among the women. Finally a word of praise is surely due to the Stage Management for their remarkable feat in erecting a marquee on the stage and thus making possible the superb last scene which was as skilfully produced as anything in the play.

This was Grant's first play since *Ambrose Applejohn's Adventures*, in 1946. It was a very remarkable achievement for so inexperienced a company. Its success indeed may be measured by the fact that many found it impossible to believe that only two members of the cast had ever acted up School before. It is to be hoped that Grant's will not allow another six years to go by before it embarks on its next dramatic venture; for it can no longer plead that even if it were to produce a play, it would, in theatrical terms, be "a flop." *Badger's Green* was anything but that.





Dear Reader,

I wish I had  
a Peltinvain Raincoat  
like the chap on the  
end of this lead!

most sincerely,

Rufus.

# BOOK REVIEW

## INDIAN MEMOIRS

CONTEMPORARY history cannot be trusted as a final judgment upon events. Nor is it actually more likely to be so if the author is a central figure in the events which he records. Memoirs form material for history; they are not good history in themselves, for history requires a balanced and *evenly biased* judgment. Writers of contemporary history should attempt above all to recapture the atmosphere of the situation they are describing. This re-creation of scene will be of far greater service to those who in years to come may wish to evoke a rational and lucid historical image than any hasty and improvised judgment. If at the same time the writer can give considerable detail without making his work laboured and dull it will serve also to keep intelligent people informed about matters of political importance.

In the preface to his new book, *Mission with Mountbatten*,\* Mr. Alan Campbell-Johnson writes: *The primary purpose of this book is simply to tell the story from daily notes, letters and memoranda I wrote at the time.*

*For the most part I provide source-material for history rather than history itself; evidence rather than another verdict on India.*

Those who dislike hurriedly faked-up judgment of contemporary events written to catch the market of aroused interest may be certain that this book is not one of these. It is rather a live and personal account of "the greatest single development in world affairs since the Second World War." It is the story of the transfer of power in India as it appeared to an author on Mountbatten's staff, a quick thinking and persuasive talker with an eye for the dramatic in politics. Above all the story is easily readable throughout, and if at times it "is a hurried, breathless narrative" the author tells us that "that is because we all worked at the highest pressure and with an acute sense of urgency."

The central figure in this drama is Lord Mountbatten and he is shown in one of the many excellent photographs in this beautifully produced book, seated calmly at a conference beneath a specially printed calendar which reads: "4 AUGUST 1947, 11 DAYS LEFT TO PREPARE FOR TRANSFER OF POWER." It is in this atmosphere of speed and change that he is portrayed, brilliant, rapid, friendly and completely without bias in the many differences that so nearly

made partition impossible. Mountbatten, the author claims, had a single aim: peace in India and Pakistan. It is a tribute to a courageous mind that he kept this end in view through day after day of worthless argument and deliberate sabotage. Mr. Campbell-Johnson believes that when breakdown in Hyderabad became inevitable it was almost entirely due to the refusal of the Nizam to attend conferences at Delhi. He holds that in the circumstances Mountbatten could not possibly have behaved in any way other than he did.

These are the arguments put forward in *Mission with Mountbatten*. Historians will have to decide how far Mr. Campbell-Johnson was justified in his intense admiration of his leader. For to-day it is enough that the book is a pleasure to read and is honestly informative, covering with a lucidity that never loses interest of the rapid events between the time when "we got into the car he (Mountbatten) pulled up the windows, swore me to secrecy and whispered that what he was about to tell me was known to no one outside his family. Mr. Attlee, he said, had called for him the previous evening and invited him to succeed Wavell as Viceroy of India" to the moment when he records: LONDON, Wednesday, 23rd June, 1948. *We reached Liverpool yesterday, after twenty days at sea . . . back just in time to watch the Mountbattens and all the rest of the party touch down at Northolt . . . both the Duke of Edinburgh and Mr. Attlee were at the airfield to invest their homecoming with unique distinction.*" This long narrative of over three hundred and sixty pages is studied with first-hand anecdotes on Indian and English political figures and is told with a swift unconventional vigour often reminiscent of the *War Memoirs* of Mr. Churchill. In an age in which hopes for world peace are centred more and more on "round table conferences," many will be interested to read the dramatic accounts of successful ones at another time when the meaning of failure was bloodshed.

The Author flew backwards and forwards in India seeking agreement and seeking friendship, the only grounds on which agreement could rest. He met important people, helped to form decisions on grave issues, but many will be proud that this versatile Old Westminster should end his *Preface* with the words, *Alan Campbell-Johnson, Westminster, July, 1951.*

\* Robert Hale Limited, 25s.

# THE DEBATING SOCIETY

## ETON AND CHRIST'S HOSPITAL

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FOR some years now the practice of holding "inter-debates" with our brother societies in other schools has been growing steadily more frequent and more popular. The system has many advantages: it gives members of the debating society the opportunity, so seldom available, of a mental and cultural *rapprochement* with other schools, it provides an excuse for much enjoyable hospitality, and it gives speakers the valuable experience of speaking to a strange audience — rescuing the society from the domesticity which constantly threatens to descend upon it. For all these reasons the society much enjoyed the two recent visits it has received from Eton and Christ's Hospital. It was a relief, too, to discover that the representatives of these two societies, whose regular attendance is from two to three times greater than ours, were evidently not accustomed to a standard of speaking greatly superior to our own. Our guests were in some respects more polished as orators, their jests were of a more premeditated kind than ours; but as regards contribution to the substance of the debate it was felt that there was no great discrepancy between our standards and theirs.

Eton brought seven speakers and a president with them, to debate the motion "that *laissez-faire* principles are the only possible basis for a tolerable human existence." Mr. T. R. Ware, of Westminster, opened the proposition with force and earnestness, deploring the decline of liberty in the modern world and voicing a plea for escape from the utilitarian horrors of the "planned state." Mr. Hope, of Eton, presented, as we had expected, a contrast to the proposer's technique; with a languid charm, but no very noticeable continuity of argument, he opposed, to the concept of "people doing what they like," the necessity of a "tyranny of the enlightened." One felt that Mr. Hope had entertained the society with some graces which it too seldom witnesses—a rare humour, a telling choice of illustration and a conscious use of words and metaphor.

Mr. Thomas, of Eton, seconding the proposer, poured out a great stream of calumny and journalism, his speech culminating in the dictum "Let the mob vote, but don't count their votes—burn them!" His speech was entertaining, and therefore welcome; he suffers, however, from the

occupational disease of seconders, the belief that their main task is the vituperation of the opposing main speaker. Mr. A. M. Howard, of Westminster, sounded his familiar clarion call against the "slackers" of this world, reminding the society, amid a spate of quotations, that for far too many people "live and let live" became in practice "live and let die." Oratorically this speech was probably the best of the evening; but somehow, perhaps from over familiarity with his theme, the speaker did not quite establish his customary sympathy with his audience. The quivering plea for "sympathy for the drab and wretched" on which he ended was, nevertheless, admirably achieved.

The speeches from the floor were on the whole remarkably substantial. The Secretary spoke at length and with laboured analytical force, showing with rather partisan dogmatic interpretation that as regards a tolerable human (social) existence, *laissez-faire* was completely without alternatives as a theoretical basis. This thesis was somewhat stumbling and lacked "human appeal"; nevertheless, it provided the proposer and his supporters with a useful platform. Mr. Wolfenden, of Eton, pointed out the difficulty of *laissez-faire* when faced with the doctrines antagonistic to it. Mr. G. Barton, of Westminster, showed the inadequacy of economic *laissez-faire* in time of crisis. Another Etonian speaker, deputizing for Mr. Currie, stigmatized *laissez-faire* as a system of "Strong men rushing to the top." Mr. J. I. Hyman, of Westminster, spoke with his customary charm, on the subject of "pseudo intellectuals," being interested by the frequent inferences by our guests to a "pseudo Etonian attitude." *Laissez-faire*, he thought, was the only possible system because all others led to the retention of power by one minority, and who was to choose that minority? Mr. Whitaker, the Etonian secretary, carried *laissez-faire* to a higher power by advocating a "degree of *laissez-faire*, to avoid the establishment of a controlling class." Finally the Society was provided with a freakish and exasperating oration, though nevertheless amusing, from Mr. J. D. Barnes, of Westminster, who with the technique of the true "filibusterer," by a prodigious circumlocution informed the society that the government was infringing the principles of *laissez-faire* in decreeing the destruction of the model village "Beaconscot."

Summing up the opposer attacked the Secretary for talking about an "ideal world," and asserted that there was "no logical difference" between *aïsser-faire* and anarchy. The proposer summed up forcibly and acutely, emphasizing the word "basis" in the motion. A tolerable society must be founded on the assumption that men have free will. On being put to the vote, the motion was carried by thirty-eight votes to thirty-six with five abstentions. It had been a solid, enjoyable debate marred only by the unresponsiveness of the large audience—an imponderable factor which is

merely unfortunate when it occurs. It is to be hoped that our return debate with Eton in the Spring will be equally enjoyable.

The debate with Christ's Hospital was again entertaining and enjoyable. The motion "that this House would rather dwell in the tents of the ungodly than be a doorkeeper anywhere" provided humour, if at times cynical, and a great deal of lively argument. Such occasions are always enjoyable, and the Society is grateful to its visitors for providing so keen and entertaining a debate in both cases.

## THE MODERN LANGUAGES SOCIETY

### "LA LITERATURE EXISTENTIALISTE"

THE very large body of writing which has recently appeared in Europe under the banner of "existentialism" has still, perhaps, received very inadequate recognition in English academic circles. With this in mind it was both eagerly and with the sense of a removal of a long-standing deficiency that the more interested members of the Modern Languages Society went to hear M. Girard, of the *Institut Français* speak on "La Littérature Existentialiste." M. Girard appeared anxious to make his talk as simple and as humanly appealing as possible, and must have stimulated many minds with his dramatic portrayal, aided by many expressive gestures, of the existentialist pre-occupation with the concept of "dread" (*angoisse*), and the concept of "flinging oneself into and against the world" (*engagement*).

However, it was perhaps this anxiety to be understood which made M. Girard's talk as a whole somewhat unsatisfying, and probably a

very poor justice to his own powers. Though admitting the great contribution made to existential philosophy by Germany (Heidegger, Jaspers), M. Girard confined his discussion of existentialist literature almost wholly to Jean-Paul Sartre, whom he defended as an artist, while maintaining that Sartre's only substantial philosophical work, *L'Être et le Néant* was an academic prank. As a survey of "existentialist literature," therefore (and it may be doubted to begin with whether there is in fact a literature which is truly "existentialist," or an "existentialism" which is truly literary), M. Girard's discussion was perhaps, as he himself suggested, something of a caricature. Nevertheless, he introduced to the Society the elements of Sartrist thought; and these elements are surely, apart from being always entertaining, a useful introduction to the problems which surround the mystery of the philosophy of existence.

#### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

1952		
January	16th.	Lent Term begins.
	28th.	Mr. C. H. Gibbs Smith at the <i>Political and Literary Society</i> , at 5.15 p.m.
February	6th.	Mr. John Bowle at the <i>Political and Literary Society</i> , at 5.15 p.m.
	9th.	Westminster Athletics v. Milocarian Club, at Putney.
	12th.	Westminster v. Winchester, up Fields.
	23rd.	Westminster v. Eton, at Eton.
	29th.	The Rt. Hon. Florence Horsbrugh, M.P., at the <i>Political and Literary Society</i> , at 5.15 p.m.
March	1st.	O.W.W. match, up Fields.
	7th.	The Rt. Hon. Peter Thorneycroft, M.P., at the <i>Political and Literary Society</i> , at 5.15 p.m.
	8th.	The Head of the River Race for Schools, at Putney, at 3.15 p.m.

March	12th.	His Grace The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury at the <i>Political and Literary Society</i> , at 5.15 p.m.
	15th.	Confirmation Service in Abbey.
	20th, 21st, 22nd.	Performances of <i>The School for Scandal</i> , up School, at 7.30 p.m.
	22nd.	Tideway Head of the River Race, at Putney.
	28th.	Concert, up School, at 7.45 p.m.
April	1st.	Term ends.

N.B.—(1) Those wishing to attend the School Concert should apply to: The Concert Secretary, 3, Little Dean's Yard, S.W.1.

(2) Those wishing to attend *The School for Scandal* should apply to: The Business Manager, *The School for Scandal*, Little Dean's Yard, S.W.1.

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# FOOTBALL

## WESTMINSTER LOSES AGAINST CHARTERHOUSE

WESTMINSTER kicked off with the sun shining directly in their eyes. In spite of a brief opening period when we succeeded in keeping the ball within the Charterhouse half, it soon became clear that our opponents were a better team. Throughout the game their tackling was faster, they were immeasurably quicker on the ball, and above all, their passing was surer and more confident.

Poor marking gave Charterhouse their first goal. A fine ground-pass to the right wing was followed by a well-placed centre and, although the first header was partially saved, another forward was on the spot to complete the movement. From that moment Charterhouse kept pressing, and two more goals were scored against us through good passing and superior speed. Westminster, however, were by no means idle. Several attacks looked like getting goals, but the shooting was poor and the Charterhouse goalkeeper was never really seriously tested.

During the first half Westminster did not look a bad side. If the defence had been a little less inclined to dribble the ball and had concentrated upon "first-time" clearances, the forwards might have had better luck. The latter, however, even when they had the chance, seemed afraid to shoot; once again they were obviously delaying their shots until too late, instead of taking long ones

from the edge of the penalty area. Many promising movements were ruined in this way. Davies and Hornsby came near to scoring and Hillyard presented some useful passes from the right wing. But it was noticeable throughout the game, and especially in the second half, that both the Westminster wings were continually starved of the ball, while the Charterhouse wings were the main factor in their attacks.

At half-time the score was 3—0 against us. During the first fifteen minutes of the second half there was a spate of goals. Westminster's only goal came from Higgins, after a good long pass which surprised the opposing defence. Charterhouse, however, never gave us any relaxation and continued their pressure to the very end.

Though the score of 7—1 might suggest a completely one-sided game, it was interesting to watch; perhaps the greatest lesson which we learnt from it was that while the Westminster forwards were tentative in their shooting, the Charterhouse forwards kept on shooting throughout the game, even where there seemed little hope of scoring. This, more than anything, won the match for them.

SINCE the beginning of the term the First Eleven has played eleven matches. Of these three have been won, one has been drawn, the rest have been lost.

---

## 50 YEARS AGO

"Forewarned, Forearmed"

To the Editor of the *Elizabethan*

Junior Athenaeum Club  
December 8, 1901.

Dear Sir,

Have any steps been taken this year to guard against the evils of a possible fall of snow? Those who know Vincent Square know how peculiarly it is affected by snow, and they know that it means no football for days, and sometimes weeks. What simpler than to procure the necessary articles for removing snow—a few brooms and a few stout planks of wood—and assign specific portions "up Fields" to the respective energies of the different Houses? Elson is an excellent groundsman, we all know that; but it is quite impossible for him, with a reduced staff, to cope

with the enormous labour occasioned by a fall of snow. There would be a regular "snow station" enforced in all the Houses—a nice healthy recreation, and infinitely better than wandering aimlessly "up-Suts."

R. R. CAMPBELL.

*Meteorologists tell us that our winters are becoming milder; perhaps this is so, for it is some time since football up Fields has been discontinued owing to snow, at any rate for a long period. Should, however, any such catastrophe occur, perhaps Mr. Campbell's suggestion of fifty years ago might be put into practice and footballers could devote their station to helping Covill clear Vincent Square from snow, a Vincent Square that is not so changed, as many other things have been, from what it was fifty years ago.*

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# FENCING

At the beginning of the season there may have been some doubt as to how the first team would fare having lost Miller and Plummer. Such doubts have been proved groundless by our record to date of four victories in five matches.

We began the season with an overwhelming victory over Lancing College, 23—4, in which the captain, J. L. Lee, was undefeated. Our second match we lost to the Cambridge University Cutthroats. They sent a fairly strong team along, and we made a bad start by losing the foil 3—6. The épée was closely contested and ended in a 4—3 victory for us. A 6—3 win was needed in sabre for us to carry the match by one fight; the team, however, completely failed to reach this mark, and we lost the sabre 1—8 and the match by 8—17. This result was due mainly to lack of confidence on the part of most members of the team, and it was a pity that this match came so near the beginning of the season.

Later we fought Imperial College and won 16—5. The foil and épée we won fairly easily, 8—1 and 5—1, and the sabre was a draw, 3—3, their third sabreur having failed to arrive. This was a good match and the team fought well.

Our next match was with the Polytechnic Fencing Club, whom we beat by one fight. The foil we unfortunately lost, owing to poor judging, by 3—6. In the épée the teams were evenly matched, and after some good fighting we lost this weapon 4—5. To win the match we had to win seven fights in the sabre. This time the team rose to the occasion, Hunt especially fighting with great speed and attack, and we thus gained a victory by 14 fights to 13.

Finally we fought Eton, and were held to a draw. The foil, as last year, we lost 4—5, but we drew the épée. With a 5—4 victory in the sabre we did not quite manage to turn the scales in our favour, and the match was therefore a draw, 13—13. The Colts had meanwhile, gained a 5—4 victory over the Etonians, for which J. D. I. Boyd did well, winning all his fights.

The second team has only had one match so far this season. This was against Rugby, and was won easily by 12—6. One very gratifying victory was that gained by the "A" team (without Lee and Hunt) over the St. Paul's "A" team (without Mallett and Mackenzie).

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## CORRESPONDENCE

SIR,

Mr. Breem's letter in your November issue struck me with some perplexity: but I take it, from the instances he cited, that he was complaining of a tendency among present Westminsters to consider that the life of the school in exile during the war "must have of necessity been a monotonous life."

Monotony is a difficult word to apply to a way of living. Does it for instance mean that important events do not happen with frequency or that amusements and pastimes must be created by oneself for want of anyone else to create them? Both of these remarks could be applied with equal truth to the life of Westminster in Herefordshire.

To quote Mr. Breem's examples of Westminster's activities during the war: kitchen gardening, by which is usually meant vast amounts of weeding and digging, is not everybody's conception of the life beautiful; and stock-breeding too can lose its interest after the initial thrill of discovering that babies are not found under gooseberry bushes: even the joys of bicycling are inclined to pall when one is compelled, willy-nilly, to do "forty or fifty" miles of it—an exaggeration here—a week. In sum, only Miss Joyce Grenfell would, with Mr. Breem, equate the happy life with the single word "effort."

On what grounds Mr. Breem asserts that the cultural life of the school flourished on an ever-broadening basis, I confess myself at a loss to understand, since he admits that many of the school societies ceased to function.

It must not be thought that I in any way regret my first two years at Westminster. But few would deny that the school suffered both materially and spiritually

from its long exile. I support Mr. Breem's denunciation of the two remarks, but on the grounds that without any evidence beyond hearsay, they were not very clever ones to make. I do, however, take exception to his suggestion that life in Herefordshire was never dull.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,  
FERGUS BATESON (K.S. 1943-47).  
Hertford College, Oxford.

SIR,

The Editors of the Record of Old Westminsters are anxious, with a view to the new volume now in preparation, to get in touch with the following O.W.W. for whom the School has no address. We should be grateful if any addresses, or any information likely to lead to tracing an address, were sent to Miss Francis, Westminster School Society, 3 Little Dean's Yard, S.W.1.

Yours faithfully,  
G. R. Y. RADCLIFFE.

CHINNECK, Edgar Herbert (H.B. 1931-32).

CLARE, Anthony George (G. 1944-46).

COMER, Flying Officer David, A. C. M., D.F.C. (H.B. 1933-35).

CORBETT, Raymond Edmund d'Alton (A. 1924-27).

COULBORN, William Alfred Lindsay, M.B.E. (R. 1923-27).

COWPER, James Denis (A. 1936-38).

CURTIS, Robert Foster Hunt (1920-22).

CUSACK, Reginald (1922-24).

DALGARNO, Christopher Miln (B. 1947).

DANOS, Stefan Rudolf (R. 1940-43).

DAUS, Edward Herbert (R. 1939-41).



# OLD WESTMINSTERS

At a meeting of the Royal College of Surgeons Sir Max Page was appointed as the next Robert Jones lecturer.

Sir Philip Hendy has been elected chairman of the British Council's Fine Arts Committee.

Mr. L. R. Carr has been appointed Parliamentary Private Secretary to Mr. Anthony Eden.

Dr. W. R. S. Doll has been appointed Milroy lecturer of the Royal College of Physicians for 1953.

The Reverend C. J. Lees-Smith has been ordained priest.

Mr. E. de T. W. Longford has been ordained deacon.

The Reverend C. Chitty, rector of Kessingland, is retiring for reasons of health.

Mr. A. B. Gourlay has published a *History of Sherborne School*.

The Rev. P. M. Bartlett has been appointed Rural Dean of Poplar.

Mr. R. B. Orange has been appointed Joint Registrar of the Westminster County Court.

## BIRTHS

**BARR-TAYLOR**—On September 26th 1951 at Carshalton to Jean, wife of Dr. P. Barr-Taylor, a daughter.

**DAVIS**—On September 25th 1951 at Rinteln, Germany to Elaine, wife of Squadron Leader J. F. Davis, a daughter.

**LAZARUS**—On October 3rd 1951 in London to Elizabeth, wife of P. Lazarus, a son.

**OATES**—On October 4th 1951 in London to Mary, wife of W. G. R. Oates, a son.

**TREBUCCQ**—On October 20th 1951 at Crépieux La Pape, France to Janine, wife of Michel Trebucq, a daughter.

**WORMELL**—On September 30th 1951 to Joan, wife of Major P. G. Wormell, a daughter.

## OBITUARY

We record with deep regret the death of the following Old Westminsters :

**ARTHUR BEVAN**, who died on October 26th at the age of 75, entered the School in 1889. He studied medicine at St. Thomas' Hospital and took his M.D. in 1902. He practised in London, but served as surgeon with the China Expeditionary Force in 1900, and held a commission in the R.A.M.C. in the first world war. His son, Dr. Roger Bevan, is medical officer to the School.

Brigadier-General **ROBERT HENRY MORE** was born in 1875 and admitted to the School in 1889. He received a commission in the Shropshire Yeomanry and fought in the Boer War. In the first world war he was assistant to the Military Secretary at the War Office, and in 1918 became Lieutenant-Colonel in the Royal Air Force. In the following year he was made Director of Air Personal Services, and was promoted to Brigadier-General. In 1939 he was again employed with a commission in the R.A.F.V.R. In 1918 he was made C.M.G., and in 1919 C.B.E. He married Phyllis Blanche, daughter of the Hon. Francis Parker, M.P.

**DEREK PARKER**, who was killed while driving in the R.A.C. rally of Great Britain at Launceston on June 8th, entered Westminster in 1940. Leaving four years later he entered his father's saddlery business, taking up motor racing as a pastime. In 1949 he married Betty Margaret Nichols. He was 25.

**ROGER KIRKPATRICK STILGOE** was born in 1904, and was at Westminster from 1918 to 1919. He lived at Bexhill and interested himself in the study of agriculture. In 1948 he married Nina, daughter of Major E. Brudenell-Bruce Williams of Redmanley, Gloucestershire.

**JAMES IRVINE STIRLING**, son of the Rt. Hon. Sir James Stirling, Lord Justice of Appeal, was admitted in 1883, and became the first townboy Captain of the School in 1887. He obtained a first class in part I of the Classical Tripos, and was called to the bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1895. He became an equity draughtsman and conveyancer. He was 82.

## THE ENTERTAINMENTS COMMITTEE

Mr. W. E. Gerrish has been appointed Chairman of the Entertainments Committee *vice* Mr. R. S. Barnes, who retired under the three years rule.

## THE WESTMINSTER BALL

The Westminster Ball was held on Friday, November 2nd, at the Dorchester Hotel, and was attended by 520 Old Westminsters and their friends.

The Head Master and Mrs. Walter Hamilton, the Dean, and the Mayor of the City of Westminster and Mrs. Sciver were the guests of the evening.

The Ball fell on Exeat Friday and many Masters and their ladies who generally attend were unable to do so and were badly missed but, by kind permission of the Head Master, the School Monitors and Heads of Houses with their partners attended the Ball as guests of the Committee.

The guests and general assembly were received by the Presidents of the Ball, Lord and Lady Rea, who brought a large party.

Mr. A. B. Horne's table extended the length of the Ballroom.

The Bishop of Willesden followed the precedent set by Bishop Ryle and attended the Ball in full dress.

Eightsome reels were played during the evening and the School song, set to waltz music, was played before supper.

Owing to the smaller number present, guests were able to dance in greater comfort than at the last Ball and the Committee can be congratulated on another successful Ball.

The next Westminster Ball will be held in November, 1953.

## GOLF

The Autumn Meeting was held at the Berkshire Golf Club at Ascot and was attended by over 20 members of the Society. The results were as follows :

### MORNING ROUND SUTHERLAND CHALLENGE CUP

J. H. T. Barley (won on the last 9 holes) 76-3 (73).

*Second Prize*—G. S. Blaker 81-8 (73).

*Scratch Prize*—R. K. Pitamber (80).

(J. H. T. Barley having taken the Sutherland Cup.)

### STAPLEFORD FOURSOMES

J. H. T. Barley and F. J. A. Mangeot 31 points

## FOOTBALL

The results of matches played to date are as follows :

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against
1st XI	6	3	0	3	14	16
"A" XI	2	0	1	1	2	7

The first round of the Arthur Dunn Cup competition will be played at Vincent Square on Saturday 22nd December and not as stated on the fixture card. The Club's opponents will be the Old Wykehamists.

## FIVES

The 1951/52 season commenced on October 2nd. The Club, unfortunately, has not increased in playing strength, it is hoped that more Old Westminsters will take an interest in this section.

A lot of enjoyment is had out of the Tuesday practice game, and in addition to the games every Tuesday there is a full fixture list throughout the season.

So far the Club has played four matches, having lost two, drawn one and won one.

## SQUASH RACQUETS

The results of matches played to date is as follows :

O.W.W.	3	Metropolitan Police	2
O.W.W.	5	Spencer House Club	0
O.W.W.	1	Lansdowne Club	4
O.W.W.	0	Royal Naval College	5
O.W.W.	0	Old Bradfieldians	5

## WESTMINSTER SCHOOL BOYS' CLUB

Although there is still a great deal to be done, work on the premises at Nunhead taken over last year by the Westminster School Boys' Club has reached the stage where the building is becoming attractive and interesting to the fifty or more boys who at present form the membership.

The Club is being slowly but surely recognized as part of the communal life of the district, and the slight bewilderment caused by the name of the organization in the early stages is now giving way to an appreciation of the interest taken by the School and Old Westminsters in providing facilities for the local youngsters to lead a fuller life.

Much can be gained from a visit to Nunhead on one of the club evenings. Visitors are always welcome, but if some nights are to be selected as better than others, we would suggest Tuesdays, Thursdays, or Fridays, any time after 7.15 p.m. A telephone message to the Club Leader at New Cross 5879 will be appreciated, but is not essential. The address is simply Banstead Street, Nunhead Green, S.E.15, and it is not hard to find.



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