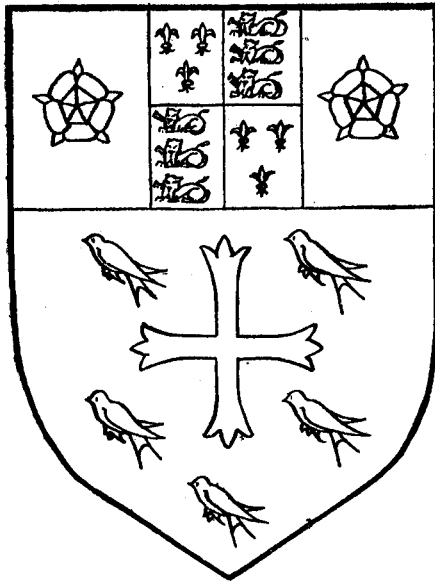


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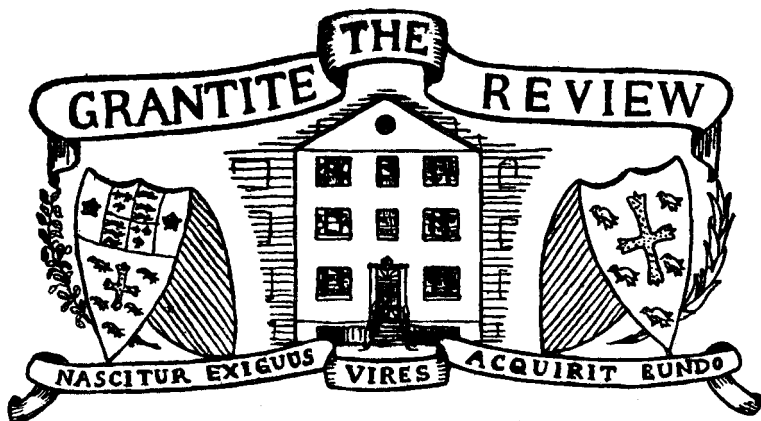
THE GRANTITE REVIEW



LENT TERM,
1946.

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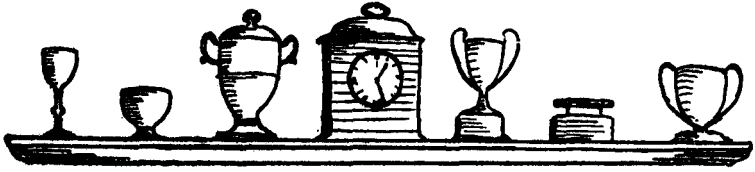
197TH EDITION.

EDITORIAL.

John Sargeant said this of Grant's, " Its external architecture is hardly a work of consummate imagination." Old Grantites may or may not hold with this judgment. But the fact remains that in the order of rebuilding the school, the construction of an entirely new house has some priority. The current generation of Grantites are very much in favour of this plan and suggest all manner of improvements. But it would be very pleasant to hear from Old Grantites on this subject. After all, most of them spent far longer at 2, Little Dean's Yard than have any of us, yet!

At this stage we must come to earth and remember that there is a peace on. Fortunately most people in the House have realized that we shall be here for at least ten years, so that they are settling in. For the monitors, deprived as they are of their bondmen and boot-blacks, this process is least difficult. Even the most conservative of Old Grantites would admit that the present Inner is a tremendous improvement on the old one. The younger members of the House no doubt miss the open spaces of Herefordshire. But they have already reinstated the game, which we used to play in the Buckenhill Yard. It is this problem of finding suitable places for playing games which has become more and more trying since we left the country. Old Grantites may cherish memories of summer afternoons, spent at Vincent Square. But if they were to see Fields, as it is to-day, they would recoil in horror. We are fortunate in that we are even able to play football there on the one muddy patch that is not covered in barrage-balloon moorings and static water tanks. Thus for a countrified generation of Grantites a criticism of Westminster in London is the comparative lack of suitable places to play knock-about games. However, it should not be supposed that we are not pleased to be back in London; on the contrary, we feel that at last we can truly enjoy the benefits of a great public school.

This Editorial began on a note of reconstruction, and, for the benefit of those who have read this far, it should end on the same note. One cannot go far in London without seeing some malevolent Chad either bewailing the lack of reconstruction or else almost losing his grip on the wall in his astonishment at some effort of Mr. Bevan. Nevertheless it is fitting that Westminster as a London school should be included in the plans for the reconstruction of the capital. But whatever form the House takes in its outward appearance, we trust that in spirit it will remain the same as ever.



HOUSE NOTES.

There left us last term :—J. W. P. Bradley to Oxford. We wish him the best of luck.

* * * * *

We welcome this term :—G. N. P. Lee and R. M. Milligan.

* * * * *

In Inner are :—G. J. H. Williams, J. A. Davidson, W. J. Frampton and J. C. Barrington-Ward.

* * * * *

In Chiswicks are :—D. C. F. Chaundy, J. M. Chamney, M. G. Baron, I. M. Bowley, F. R. H. Almond, R. A. Lapage, H. A. E. Tilney-Bassett and D. L. Almond.

* * * * *

The Head of Hall is R. E. Nagle and the Hall Monitors are H. L. Murray, G. G. Skellington, and J. D. Swan.

* * * * *

We won the Finals of Football Seniors, beating Busby's by 5 goals to 2.

* * * * *

Congratulations to :—J. C. Barrington-Ward on being appointed Secretary of Athletics and to

R. A. Lapage, on being appointed Captain of Shooting ;

J. W. P. Bradley on his Pinks and to

G. J. H. Williams, R. A. Lapage and F. R. H.

Almond on their Half-Pinks and Thirds ; and to

F. R. H. Almond, D. L. Almond and H. L. Murray

on their Seniors and to

F. N. Hornsby on his Juniors for Football.

* * * * *

In Lit. Soc. we have read "The Housemaster," by Ian Hay ; "Tons of Money," by Ben Travers ; "The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse," by Barry Lyndon ; "Baa-Baa, Black Sheep," by Ian Hay ; "Call it a Day," by Dodie Smith, and "Orders are Orders," by Ian Hay.

THE CHURCHILL CLUB.

Ashburnham House has once more returned to the school. No longer do Chiswicks hungrily gaze at the members of the Churchill Club devouring their food in the courtyard opposite nor does a nervous orderly sergeant have to parade the J.T.C. under the eyes of several assorted major-generals and their American counterparts. Nor are we kept awake on Monday nights by the staff's revelry (the loudspeaker calling for U.N.O. delegates' cars in Dean's Yard did, however, replace this for some time!).

But what in fact has the Churchill Club's stay meant to us? It has been in more than one way a great benefit. The Club took over Ashburnham at a time when it must have deteriorated had it not been occupied, and they had it thoroughly redecorated and reconditioned. We were lucky in our tenants who saved the house from the Army or some similar institution that would not have been so considerate to it. So many requisitioned houses have been smashed up during the war by sheer lack of thought on the part of the temporary occupants for the owners.

Now that the club has departed it has very kindly left us the whole of its library, which consisted of all sorts of books presented by the Publishers' Association when the Club opened, only to be claimed by the Club if they decide to re-open again elsewhere. The Westminster School Society has also been able to buy for the School from the Club all the furniture which we badly needed and which nowadays would have been unobtainable. Unfortunately, though, nobody seems to have thought of buying the perfectly good cocktail bar, which still remains waiting to be sold. At least, if someone did suggest it, it can't have met with approval in the right quarters!

THE GREAZE.

For the first time since 1939, the official Pancake Greaze took place up School on Shrove Tuesday, but under very different conditions from those of 1939. School, on that day, ended at 10.45, and many of us went to meet our parents who were gradually flocking towards School. We followed in the same direction and stationed ourselves in as prominent a position as possible to get the best view. Cameramen and reporters were in position when we arrived. Matting had been spread out under the bar, the same old bar which had been used before the war and in many previous years, and which was now suspended by ropes from either wall. But the great difference lay in the fact that there was no roof. We could see the Abbey which seemed to hang over School like some guardian angel; but the grey London sky was not so impressive as the majestic room which was renowned throughout the country for its beauty; but perhaps the atmosphere was healthier.

At 11 o'clock punctually, the procession came up School, and the cameras flashed. First came the vergers, then John Angel in cook's apparel, followed by the Dean and the Head Master in ceremonial robes. After the Head Master had given out the instructions for the "Greazers" the Pancake was tossed, and the general mêlée ensued; the cameras flashed again. Unfortunately the pancake fell against one of the walls, and the participants had to struggle in the gutter which ran alongside, with the result that their clothes, or garb, which had been very varied at the beginning, were nearly all the same colour at the end. When the two minutes were up and the competitors had sorted themselves out, P. Webb, of the Modern Languages Seventh, was found to be the winner, owing perhaps to ability to tunnel because of his small stature. The onlookers applauded, not however as heartily or as vigorously as in pre-war days; and again the cameras flashed.

The procession departed as it had come in, and the crowd of parents, visitors, and boys dispersed into Yard and from there went their varied ways to offices, homes, and formrooms, having witnessed one of the traditional ceremonies of Westminster, and indeed of London, a ceremony revived, after six years of exile, in its traditional home, and long may the pancakes continue to be tossed on many Shrove Tuesdays to come.

FOOTBALL.

This term has not been a full Football one as Athletics has taken precedence since the beginning of March.

Vincent Square, which has only just been encircled by fencing, has again only provided us with one muddy pitch, while Grove Park has supplied the rest. But now that the fencing is up round Fields, the plans for its reconstruction should be able to go ahead and it is to be hoped that we shall have more football pitches there in the future.

The weather has not been kind to us. At the beginning the ground was very hard and icy but we were able to play some games, bargeing not being permitted. Now, at the end of the season, we were unable, because of snow, to play Lamprobatrics and the Finals of Juniors, both of these being postponed until the very end of term.

We played our old enemies College in the semi-finals of Juniors, our first round being a bye, and we beat them by 5 goals to 2. We have now to play Rigaud's in the Finals.

Last term was very successfully rounded off by the winning of Seniors. We met Busby's in the last round and beat them easily by 5 goals to 2. So once more the shield was shouted into the House, making a total so far of four times.

G. J. H. W.

THE WATER.

The Water at Putney is this term getting well into its stride in preparation for Henley, other school fixtures, and the usual inter-house races at the end of this coming Election Term.

Fifteen members of the House are now doing Water, the majority of whom have been, at one time or another, in the five eights out this term—two lightships, one sliding-seat, and two fixed seats.

The important event of the term was the Junior and Senior Trial Eights on March 2nd. Altogether there were eight Grantites in the four eights. The Junior Trials were rowed first from the mile-post in a bitter snowstorm, the Harvey easily beating the Vernon by a distance. The weather cleared a little for the Senior Trials—begun at Harrod's—in which there was a faulty start. The race was neck and neck till Beverley when the Centaur gained, and eventually won from the Defiance by a canvas.

Taken all round, Westminster Water looks as if it will regain its former achievements of the past years and—it is hoped—surpass them in the coming ones.

I. M. B.

GYM.

This term began well with the welcome addition of gym equipment in the shape of a pair of parallel bars and a horse, the parallel bars, especially, arousing the enthusiasm of everyone. The number of Grantite gymnasts is still six, Hornsby having got through an elimination test as one of five out of fifteen applicants. This test was necessary as the number of applicants was far in excess of the vacancies available.

Mr. Monk now holds his instructors' classes on Monday evenings, while Wednesday evenings are allocated for practice by the gymnasts who are keen enough to give up their spare time. Those Grantites who stay over the week-end also practise on Saturday evenings.

F. R. H. A.

BOXING.

The appointment of Mr. Eastman as the director of physical education in the school has incidentally revived boxing and this takes place every Tuesday evening for an hour in the gym. At the moment we are rather handicapped by lack of equipment but Mr. Eastman has managed to procure some good gloves and also such things as skipping ropes and sparring pads. The essential thing that we need is a ring, for at the moment fights have a tendency to wander everywhere and this leads to obstructions by the parallel bars and horizontal bar.

However, the improvement of those taking part has been rapid and it is hoped to have some weight-group championships next term.

R. A. L.

UNTOPPED SECRETS (2) ; " OPERATION EVAC."

Problems and solutions ; more problems and more solutions ; problems of a school dispersed into two centres ; problems in each centre of a London school living cheek by jowl with its country hosts ; problems in each school of internal organisation. The example went out from the Pad Farm that there was to be no problem without a speedy solution, that goodwill and commonsense could surmount mountains. And so it was—somehow or other quarrels and failures were at a discount, comradeship and achievement at a premium.

I cannot speak from firsthand experience of Westminster's life at Hurst. Mr. Willett rendered the first of his great wartime services by leading the band of masters who were appointed to oversee the life and work of Rigaud's and Ashburnham. Their first peculiar problem was that the former house shared the college buildings with their hosts while the latter were genuine evacuees, being billeted on private families in the neighbourhood. Contact with the Lancing centre was achieved on occasions by combined school teams or a combined J.T.C. inspection but the Head Master, accompanied by some of us, regularly paid a Friday visit to Hurst. However, the risks of keeping the school indefinitely divided loomed large among his strategic problems and the alternatives of doubling up with another school, or of returning to London, or of finding a large country house somewhere, were discussed by him with his staff. I wonder whether he remembers a remark which he once made at the Pad Farm to the effect that he " did not propose to go rushing about all over England with Westminster School at his heels " ! One of the fates with a perverted sense of humour must have seized on this.

Largely owing to the open diplomacy between him and Mr. Doherty, the Head Master of Lancing, major problems of the two schools were satisfactorily solved and difficulties or friction arising from either were never allowed to persist and so grow dangerous. Mr. Doherty was naturally disposed to help his old school in all possible ways but what he was prepared to do on our behalf far exceeded just his obligations of loyalty as an O.W. and his welcoming attitude was reflected by his own staff. In the same sort of way our internal problems found easier solutions owing to the close personal relationships which our Head Master established from the outset of evacuation with members of his staff.

All our houses had their own problems ; Busby's and Grant's were each in two sections ; College were together but without their housemaster living on the spot ; Homeboarders were a distance away in Shoreham, had had no boarding experience and had to bicycle to and fro, being the first of the school to undergo travel in cape and sou'wester through blinding rain ! Grant's found their solution in making the Farm as much as possible the real centre of the house's life, with everyone lunching there and the communal flick-shows on Saturday nights. Otherwise we relied on an alliance between our very good friend, Mr. Walker, the housemaster from whom we " borrowed " two dormitories, a day room and a small study, and those of our own monitors who were put in charge of the junior Grantites " up at the College." Our efforts to fit in, where necessary, with his regulations led to at any rate one amusing anomaly ; up at the College, Grantites were forbidden to wear hard-soled shoes in the dormitories (for fear of spoiling the polished floors) while at the Farm they were ordered to wear them (owing to the splinters). But our alliance worked well.

We had no precedent for this kind of life and readily made our own dispositions both in school and in houses. Our experiments were all directed towards the enjoyment of a commonsense freedom from unnecessary restraint to an extent which contrasted with the conventional pattern of the Lancing boy's life but which laid the foundations of the greater experiments which (unsuspected by us) lay before us. Yet Lancing and Westminster serenely led their differing lives, with an occasional treading on toes, certainly, but with an overriding tolerance of attitude towards each other. The problem was lightened by the fact that there was enough accommodation for both

schools to be taught simultaneously and that, by staggering half-holidays, there was games space available for both also. But all the same the success of our sojourn together could not have been achieved without the deliberate policy of goodwill which both schools insisted on.

Our phoney war period of evacuation flew quickly through plays and pantomime, frost and snow, digging for victory and writing out the first ration books, until May 1940 came with its shattering war news, the forming of the L.D.V. and a new significance in the siren which it was Mr. Fisher's duty to operate from the Manor in case of a "red warning." The possibility of no longer a planned modification of our evacuated life but of a forced and undelayed departure from the Sussex coast loomed up. The Head Master had to find somewhere for the school to go, if necessary, for the rest of the summer term; but he also had to contemplate the prospect of a sudden order to quit the coastal belt at a moment's notice. The former problem led, eventually and by no means easily, to our next home at Exeter; the latter might have involved either a complete dispersal to their homes of the Lancing section of the school or a scheme of desperation for getting the whole of this into the spare rooms and outbuildings of the large and lovely house of Danny, near Hurst, where, with others of the staff, Mr. Willett had been living. The Campion family, to whose generosity there Westminster owes a very great deal, were willing enough to receive us but the problems of space and maintenance were terrific and it is just as well that we never had to try it.

So, in mid-June, we packed up and Lancing packed up; we, on our journey by special train from Shoreham to Exeter, preceded by a few days them on theirs to the North. Though Hurst stayed on and never did actually evacuate, our contingent from there followed us shortly afterwards. Once more, notwithstanding the frightful prospects for the future, life flowed smoothly; our living quarters in the University hostels were of great comfort, our routine in school and out of it proceeded without hitches, above all the school, though not under one roof, was once more essentially united. The short six weeks there have left happy memories with us of Exeter and, so kind friends tell us, of us in Exeter. Many of us wished that we could have made our home somewhere there for the rest of our evacuation; probably, with the pertinacity which we had to display later on in finding accommodation, we could have done so, but, while the strategic problem of our immediate future was again under discussion, there was that deceptive lull before the storm which made even our most expert advisers underrate the enemy and send us back to London.

Back, therefore, went all the stuff to Westminster; there was a useful respite for some of us at Stalbridge with two pioneer farming parties and a very visible Battle of Britain; and then September 7th, the start of the London blitz, the great invasion scare, and we were at 2 L.D.Y. again!

It did not take many days to decide on re-evacuation; it took a good many more to decide where to go, and, leaving us inhabiting the vault or the stoke-hole by night and dashing about by day to reach somewhere before the next alert made it close down, the story moves for a moment to that "rush all over England with Westminster School waiting to follow at the Head Master's heels"!

T. M.-R.

AUTUMN ODYSSEY; OR WHY BROMYARD?

When the bombs began falling in Parliament Square it was clear that it was time to get out. But in September, 1940, moving out of London was just about as difficult as moving into it to-day. Every large house had been requisitioned. The army, under canvas since Dunkirk, was desperately trying to get a roof over its head before winter set in. Every Government department had its country retreat and had either already occupied it or was ready to go there on receipt of the appropriate codeword. Business firms were evacuating, and in addition the Government, fearing heavy bombing casualties, had scheduled large numbers of country houses as shadow hospitals.

But something had to be done, and done quickly ; and since house agents were obviously useless—most of them had already gone out of London themselves—it was decided that the only course was for those of the staff who were in London to go off and search the countryside for suitable accommodation. Each week the Head Master would send out one or other of us to try his luck, and the remainder, living a troglodyte existence in the stoke-hole of Ashburnham, would anxiously await his return, wondering whether he would bring any news of where the Ark could rest. Between us, I think we must have tried over fifty houses, and as week succeeded week and we still seemed as far as ever from our goal, even the most stout-hearted might be excused from feeling a little despondent. How the Head Master continued to remain equable, cheerful, even buoyant, was a mystery. He seemed to enjoy difficulties. Bombs appeared to hold no terrors for him ; indeed, he even went so far out of his way as to visit a time-bomb which had fallen in a house in Barton Street. " I was only in the house three minutes," he explained with perfect logic, " and it was very unlikely that it would choose those three minutes to go off in." He left us admiring, but unconvinced.

Hectic as it was, our search had its humorous incidents. There was the house in Warwickshire, for instance, which I visited in the early days of my exploration. I had taken the precaution of ringing up Lady Cookham (her real name is a much better known one) and had been told that I might come over and see her after lunch. I rang the bell diffidently, for I had had two rebuffs that morning, and waited for the inevitable butler. A second and a third ring produced no response ; so seeing that the door was open I ventured in among the priceless tapestries and the suits of armour. Wandering from room to room I came upon the dining room, where the remains of lunch for one littered the long refectory table. At last, convinced that the house was empty, I returned to the front door, baffled. I was standing there, wondering what to do next (for the house was really much too small for Westminster), when an untidy-looking woman selling vegetables drove up in a battered Ford van. " There's nobody in," I said, " but Lady Cookham will be back shortly." The vegetable woman eyed me coldly. " I am Lady Cookham," she said. " You can have this house at fifty guineas a week. It's a bargain, and you can help me wash up lunch while we discuss it."

In searching for houses we naturally explored the possibility of getting something near the Thames. One Sunday morning in October the Head Master, Mr. Fisher and I drove down to Fawley Court, near Henley, which we had been told might be available, only to find that the Natural History Museum had got in first and the stuffed animals, beetles and butterflies were in occupation. We drove gloomily to Henley to try our luck at the Phyllis Court Club. There we were shown into the Secretary's room where the Secretary, in high stiff collar and Leander tie, was sitting in immaculate double-breasted calm behind an enormous desk. He listened sympathetically to our tale of misfortune, but could hold out little hope of helping us. A famous club like Phyllis Court, he explained, could hardly be expected to accommodate schoolboys, and he was doubtful if his committee could see their way to At that moment the door was flung violently open and a wild and unkempt figure entered. " I'm through with this joint. It stinks," the visitor announced abruptly. For a moment we all sat in silent amazement. The Secretary recovered first. " That's all right, Smith," he replied, " I'll see you later," and with a dignified gesture he indicated that the interview was at an end. When the door had closed he turned to us. " That man is dissatisfied. I shall have to give him notice," was all he said.

It was not until the middle of October, when we were getting desperate, that we tried Saltmarsh. In the course of our summer evacuation, which had eventually taken us to Exeter, I had rung up Dr. Costley-White to ask if he knew of any places in the Gloucester district, and he replied that he thought that Saltmarsh Castle might be available but that it would probably be much too small even if it were vacant. But what had seemed an impossibility in July, or even in early September, had become a necessity

in mid-October, and so while in Warwickshire I had rung up Mr. Barneby and arranged that someone should come down and see him.

Mr. Fisher was chosen as the emissary and returned with the news that Saltmarshe was indeed too small but that with the addition of one or two houses in the neighbourhood something might be managed. There was, in particular, he reported, a house called Buckenhill which by peace-time standards was derelict but which might be repaired sufficiently to make it inhabitable.

It is difficult now to recapture the thrill which this news gave us. It was the first definite success after weeks of rebuffs, and we sat discussing it in the stoke-hole until the small hours, while the guns roared around us and the lurid glow of burning buildings lit up the Victoria Tower. It was decided that the Head Master with Johnson the school carpenter as technical adviser, and myself as driver, should go down to inspect the properties and to negotiate with the owners.

The sun was shining when we arrived at Whittbourne, and the Court and the Rectory were looking their best in the mellow autumn light. We inspected Fernie, which was empty, by the simple process of forcing a window and climbing in, and journeyed on to Saltmarshe, where we arrived about teatime. It was typical of Mr. Barneby that, with impulsive kindness, he should have arranged a dinner party in our honour. We were unprepared for it, and we felt instinctively that it was no use explaining to him that in London in October, 1940, people were not dressing for dinner. The Head Master had fortunately brought a dark suit with him, but my luggage consisted merely of a ruck-sack with an old pair of flannel trousers and a spare vest, and when I heard the words " Shall we go up and change ? " my heart sank. For form's sake I went upstairs. On my bed I found my old flannel trousers and spare vest, laid out by the butler in silent reproach. They said quite plainly that Bromyard was a safe area, and, though my heart sank still further when I saw Buckenhill next day, I knew that we had come to stay.

J. D. C.

INDIAN SYMPHONY.

The native population of India consists mainly of Hindus and Moham-medans. The latter are nearly all on an equal basis, but the Hindus are divided into numerous castes, running into hundreds when all the " branch " castes are counted as well. Caste is an amazingly large subject, and I have no doubt many volumes could be written on all the different aspects it presents, if this has not been done already. The highest caste is the Brahmins', who are usually priests, and is the most religious caste ; the lowest are the Pariah's, or " Untouchables," who are for the most part beggars, because very few are employed by anyone in another caste, and they generally get left out of things. If a Brahmin sees an Untouchable approaching him, he quickly gets as far out of his sight as he can, as he believes it reduces his holiness if their shadows even cross. Each main caste is distinguishable because their members have different caste-marks, usually in the middle of the forehead.

The beggar population of India is terrific. Beggars may be found anywhere, but mainly in the large cities, and more noticeably at railway stations' large or small, where there is always a collection of them standing beside the train on the non-platform side, shouting " Pice, Sahib," in the hope that someone will throw them a coin or some food. For the most part the railway beggars are children, who probably have nothing better to do. If they are encouraged, a larger crowd gathers, and if one coin is thrown to them, you get no peace till the train starts. As I have said, most of them are children, perfectly whole, but some are old men and women, and occasionally one sees cripples ; but these are often crippled by their parents, when they are very young, so that people will have pity on them. Some beggars amass great fortunes, running into hundreds of rupees, which is quite incredible considering how they " earn " it.

People in England talk about squashing and greazing on trains, but it is absolutely nothing compared to what goes on in the third class carriages of an Indian train. The classes on trains in India are First, Second, Inter. and Third. The rabble crowd into the Third Class carriages, which only have wooden benches for seating, but this does not matter much, since the majority of the occupants are standing, packed as tight as sardines, leaning out of the windows, and often just standing on the footplates, hanging on to their bundles with one hand and the train with the other. This is the main reason why there are so many deaths in big train crashes in India.

Court cases among natives are sometimes exasperatingly long, and the prisoner may collect all his family, relations and friends round him from far and near to back him up in the proceedings. On the other hand, quite a common thing to happen is for very poor people to commit petty crimes, such as attacking policemen, so that they may be kept in prison, where they get free food and a free roof over their heads. When a judge gets wise to this, he rather foils the person by letting him free again.

Hindu marriages are very interesting ceremonies. They take some days, including all the feasting and preparations, and sometimes the couple never see each others face till after the marriage ceremony. Their food is mainly of a very greasy type, and the sweetmeats are really sweet, in fact sickly, unless you are used to them.

The Hindus have a number of religious holidays, called Poojas, in which a great deal of ceremony in the form of processions is used, with much feasting and general rioting, with fireworks and all sorts of other things. The most sacred thing among Hindus is the cow, and if a Hindu kills a cow, he often gets killed himself. This is rather queer, since Indians on the whole are very cruel to animals, and the cow is no exception, but if someone goes as far as killing one, well, he's for it! The Ganges is their holy river, and they seem to drink its waters with immunity, though it is one of the filthiest rivers in existence. Well, no doubt they enjoy it!

H. A. E. T-B.

U.N.O. ; OR DO YOU ?

By now Old Grantites far and near
Will often have inclined their ear,
The Government accounts to hear
About this thing called U.N.O.

Around the Central Hall each day
Many have waited, but few could stay
As long as you need to, to go in the way
That leads to the council of U.N.O.

But what is not so often known
Is that the Green which once was our own,
Was filled up with staff cars, all on loan
For the delegates working at U.N.O.

And so when Juniors came around
And the Houses were looking for suitable ground
To play on the nearest spot was found—
Surrounded by staff cars of U.N.O.

And from one of those cars all resplendent in black
There came on one evening an ominous crack—
A football sent high by some great big tough "back"
Had come into contact with U.N.O.

And thus there came on our (no longer) Green
Which stands in the midst of the Yard of the Dean
A contingency which even they'd not foreseen
Football kicked at the staff cars of U.N.O.

R. E. N.

FACES WITHOUT FROWNS.

It was a Saturday night at the "Pig and Whistle," and as usual there was an argument, as there had always been anyway as far back as Old Ted, the barman, could remember; this time it was the oft-discussed problem: "Are there such things as ghosts?"

Farmer Giles was holding forth thus, "I've lived in these here parts, man and boy, and been the farmer round here for nigh on forty year, and I've never seen a ghost in all my born days—nor do I hope to see one."

This was countered by the butcher, who said that he had seen the ghost of the Abbot in the Abbey ruins up Gighbury way. These stories had been going on for quite a while, when a little man, who had remained quiet and unnoticed until then (for he was almost hidden in a dark corner), said in a low voice, "I do not believe that any of you know how to tell a ghost story or know anything about ghosts for that matter," He then started on the following rather astonishing story.

"About 20 years ago I was living in a little village in Yorkshire; it was the ordinary rural community of 200 people. But my story deals with one James Richardson, who was a farmer in the fells. One night he was walking home from the village at about 11 p.m., when he heard cries from one of the fields bordering the lane. He looked over and saw a white figure flitting about. As if by instinct, he shouted out, "Can I help you?" The reply came faintly on the wind, "No, I am too far gone." At this Richardson thought he had better do something, so he jumped the hedge and chased the figure. He soon caught up with it and saw it was a girl. When he turned her round to face him, he saw a sight that filled him with terror, strong man though he was, for she had no face! He leapt over the hedge into the lane and was soon back in the village. There he saw the village constable walking his beat; he rushed up to him but was given a fresh shock for *he* had no face. I happened to be walking in the street rather late that night and he ran up to me in a state of collapse, but," at this point the narrator got up and made for the door, "I could not help him." With these words he turned round to the company and they noticed with horror that he had no face! Then he disappeared.

G. N. P. L.

THE FESTINIOG LIGHT RAILWAY.

This narrow gauge railway is situated in North Wales and connects the mountain town of Blaenau Festiniog with Portmadoc on the coast. It was constructed over a hundred years ago with the object of carrying slate, mined at Festiniog, to the G.W.R. or to coasting vessels at Portmadoc. After a period of about thirty years the line was opened for passenger traffic as well as goods, because it formed a valuable means of transport between the two towns concerned.

The specially constructed track, which will be referred to later, has only a gauge of 1 foot 11 inches, owing to the exceptionally sharp curves to be negotiated. This is caused by the line having to wind its way round steep hills and over valleys. The locomotives used on this line are known to most people because of their almost unique design. For those who are not familiar with them, the engine is carried on two bogies which carry the cylinders. The boiler stretches from one end of the chassis to the other with a cab in the middle and a funnel and steam-dome to each end of the engine. This peculiar design is to get a powerful locomotive that can negotiate the sharp curves. The rolling stock is as in usual practice except that it overhangs the bogies to an almost unbelievable extent. This is to make up for the narrow gauge.

Making a trip on one of the few trains a day from Portmadoc the first thing, before starting, is that the guard goes down the train and locks everybody in their respective compartments. The train starts with a jolt and puffs off round a sharp curve to the right enabling the passengers in the first two coaches to take a good look at the last two vehicles. A mile long cause-way, over the marshy estuary, is crossed when the train again bends, to the left this time, and the rear end may once more be observed. Passing the engine sheds the line crosses the G.W.R. and pulls up at the first station. Those wishing to get out lower the windows and call to be unlocked while the six-coach train has round about thirty goods trucks and a guard's van attached at the rear. From here the line ascends a uniform gradient for the remaining twelve miles to Blaenau Festiniog. The scenery is very pretty and can be observed with ease from the windows. The second station is reached after a long pull up to it and is situated on a curve. This station, Tan-y-Bwlch, is under the jurisdiction of a station mistress who dresses in a witch's hat (almost 2 feet high), a red cloak and sweeps the buildings with a broom of twigs. The train may have to wait here some time to allow a goods train to pass. A goods train on this line consists of about fifty slate-laden wagons with a brake van at either end; the whole runs by gravity owing to the gradient, from Festiniog to the engine sheds—a mile from Portmadoc. This continuous gradient is what was referred to at the beginning when the track was in question. The reason for powerful engines and the addition of goods wagons to passenger trains on the up journey is now shewn.

From Tan-y-Bwlch the line curves round to the right and up into a tunnel. Emerging from it the scenery is not so nice up in the mountains but is still interesting. At the next station as often as not the down passenger train is encountered; needless to say this train does have an engine. From here the countryside deteriorates rapidly as the slate mining town of Blaenau Festiniog is approached. The train draws up at the L.M.S. station and those wishing to get a connection for the line to Llandudno Junction are unlocked first. From here the line goes on through the town to the G.W.R. station, where it terminates.

J. M. C.

WOT! NO ROOMS?

Have you ever visited the small rooms downstairs in the Music School? No? Well, perhaps you're lucky. They hardly deserve to be called rooms; "holes" or "dungeons" would be more appropriate. In fact one could easily imagine some poor lunatic, prisoner, or madman clutching on to the bars of the windows, which were probably caused by a loose brick, and screaming out: "For Pete's sake, get me out of this hole; it's driving me mad!" and he would walk up and down his 192 cubic feet of dungeon (this is not as much as it seems) and finally throw himself on to his matting which not only he but all the rats and insects in the place use as a bed or retreat.

This is, or was, the state of the holes; but, since our return they have been considerably changed by the arrival of pianos into some of them, and a little paint here and there. In one luxurious dungeon, with a green door, there is a fire, which sometimes works (it is called "Hell," although in comparison to the others it is Heaven). But the passerby on the pavement up above would rather have the screams of the lunatic than the screeches of the instruments, which now come out discordant, unmelodious, and painful to the ear, each player going full blast, and caring only for his own practice; for the holes are not even sound-proof. But, it cannot be helped; we hope the time will come when we have "rooms" in which to practice, where, however, discordant the noise, it will not reach the ears of some hapless passerby, and where we may feel the keys of our instruments with our hands, instead of having to guide them by radar, or remote control, owing to the present intense cold.

J. A. D.

TRAGEDY ON CONEY ISLAND.

Jim Nolan worked in a shipyard and lived in a small flat in the city of New York, all by himself, having no relations that he knew of. One day, on arriving home from the yard, he was busy cooking his supper when the bell rang. He went to the door and saw a well dressed, important-looking, man standing there who asked if his name was Nolan. On being told that it was, he asked if he could come in. Jim invited him to do so and asked what he wanted. As the man began talking, Jim's face at first showed signs of amazement and then of disbelief. It turned out that he had had, quite unknown to him, a very distant relative who had just died, leaving 300,000 dollars. As there was no will, it was to be handed over to him. At first he refused to believe it and asked if there were any strings attached to it. The lawyer replied: "Yes, just one. Your relative was on the eccentric side and has made one stipulation. Whoever gets his money must sleep one night in his country house which is reputed to be haunted. He used to live there quite alone except for a dumb, mulatto, housekeeper." On hearing this, Jim laughed heartily; "Why of, course, I will go and sleep there. I never did believe in ghosts, anyway." The next evening Jim met the lawyer at his office and they both drove down to the house.

On arriving outside a pair of large gates, Jim did admit to himself that it looked rather forbidding as it stood silhouetted against a dark background of trees. Still, he got out of the car and the lawyer, promising to call for him in the morning, drove off. Jim pushed open the gates, which creaked and groaned in a way that might have given people with more imaginative minds than his quite a turn. Further on he reached a large, oak door where he pulled a bell which echoed throughout the house. After a long delay the door slowly opened. Before him stood the housekeeper. To say the least, she was most unprepossessing. She beckoned him in and, walking in front of him up the stairs, pointed to a room and, without another sign, walked away. Jim was slightly taken aback at this but, shrugging his shoulders, went into the room. It was fairly large, with a big, old-fashioned four-poster bed, some chests of drawers and a wash basin. On one chest there burned a single candle, the sole means of illumination now that night was falling. Jim shut the door and, putting a chair against its handle, undressed and got into bed. He brought the candle over to the bedside, intending to read for a time.

After a few minutes the candle flickered and then went right out, leaving him in total darkness. For a moment panic seized him, he reached out blindly for the candle and knocked it over; and, as he did so, a horrible, crackling laugh rang out. He leapt out of bed, picked up a chair and flung it wildly in the direction from the the laugh had come. There was a terrific crash and a tinkling of glass; then silence. After a few frantic seconds he managed to find the candle and re-light it. He saw that the chair had hit a mirror and smashed it to pieces. The return of light brought him to himself and he got calmly back into bed.

He fell into a doze until, some hours later, he woke up to feel something on his face. Looking up, he saw a horrible black claw just above his head. He screamed out as he felt hands round his throat; the candle started to flicker again and, as it went out, he dimly saw the face of the housekeeper distorted with fury; then everything went black.

He heard the alarm clock ringing and sat up in bed with the sun streaming in at the windows. As he realised that it had all been a dream he laughed out aloud with relief. Well, to-day was his day off; he would have his lunch out and then go on to Coney Island. About three o'clock he was passing in and out of the amusements when he felt a sudden urge to go on one of those big cart wheels. So he went inside one of the boxes which could hold four but of which he was the only occupant. The cart wheel started to move from the ground and just at that moment someone jumped into the box. Jim put down the paper he had been reading and, as the box began to rise, looked to see what sort of person had got in. There facing him was the mulatto housekeeper,

twitching her fingers and grinning at him in a queer sort of way. With a strangled scream he flung himself out of the door and into space.

The evening papers had headlines: "Man falls fifty feet from cart wheel on Coney Island." They went on to describe how the man had been entirely alone in his box, which was normal except for a set of trick mirrors in which strange and distorted faces were reflected. A verdict of "suicide while of unsound mind" was subsequently recorded, attention being drawn to the dangers of allowing single passengers to ride in boxes equipped in this way.

P. M.

DON'T U.N.O.?

I know
U.N.O.
Went and had a beano,
Went and had a beano
Along with the King,
Where possibly Vyshinsky
Could tell his friend Bevinski
That all in Russia's garden
Grew free as flowers in spring.

But you know
U.N.O.
Wasn't all a beano,
Wasn't all a beano
When it came to talk of peace.
"Bevinski" changed to "Bevin"
As Vyshinsky vowed to heaven
That the Bear was safe in Persia
But the Lion a menace in Greece!

T. M-R.

THE MASTER MINDS.

Once upon a time there were two master minds. One was a criminal, the other was a detective. The criminal lived in a dusty garret, lit only by a candle stuck in a bottle, high up in a dark old house. The detective lived in a cellar, lit only by a blue electric light, with flag-dotted maps on the walls, under the police station.

Every Saturday night the master criminal had to smuggle some opium from his garret to a man in his dope ring who lived at the other end of the street. He had two trusty men to carry the opium, but the master detective had two trusty agents to try to catch them.

The first Saturday the agents were a little too late in getting to their positions in the road, and they only saw the two men going home after delivering the opium. So the master detective sent the agents ten minutes earlier the next Saturday and felt that he was certain to catch the smugglers. But this time the master criminal sent one man down the road, and the other, who carried the opium, down a little alley at the back of the houses. The man going down the road was stopped and searched. But he was not arrested because he had no opium. The master criminal had pulled off his bluff!

Now the master detective was at a disadvantage. He could not put one agent in the road, and one in the alley, because they were frightened of the dark if they were not together. So the next week the agents waited in the alley, thinking they were certain to catch the man with the opium. But they did not catch him, because he went down the street. The master criminal had pulled off a double bluff!

After that the agents went back to the street, and the opium was taken down the alley. What was it that the master criminal had pulled off this time? It was a treble-bluff.

And so it went on. The master criminal anticipated each week where the agents would be watching, and sent the opium by the other route. His bluffs were always successful, for the agents felt certain that they would catch the right man, but they never succeeded. This might have gone on for ever. But when he had reached his quinquagesimal bluff, the master criminal made his fatal mistake. Alas! he had not had a very good classical education. He did not know the Latin for fifty-one, so he could not pull off his fifty-one bluff. A master mind must call a thing by its right name. He had to try his quinquagesimal bluff again. Looking out of the window of his garret, he saw the man with the opium caught by the agents, handcuffed, and taken off to prison.

After that the criminal had to give up his life of crime. He was no longer a master mind. He had been defeated. So he took to drinking more whisky than was good for him until he died. But the master detective lived happily ever after in his cellar with the maps and the blue electric-light.

J. C. B.-W.

OLD GRANTITES.

To last term's Play Supper there came as guests:—P. J. Bevan and W. B. Frampton, both demobbed and returned to the Bar; F. N. Hornsby, also demobbed and with his elder boy now in the house; Doctors (!) Greenish and Farley; F. E. Noel Baker, baby of the House (not this house) and recent author; and R. J. M. Baron, who will no doubt be able to continue his constant visits now that he has been put in charge of the weather at Croydon.

We have also welcomed as visitors:—P. J. Sutton, who was stationed at Windsor; R. G. Reed, on leave from India where he had met his brother, John; J. S. Rivaz, now out of the R.A.F.; D. W. Shenton, back from Italy and with a home appointment; I. D. Grant, an architectural student; R. O. I. Borradaile, back from the Pacific and hoping to return to Oxford next autumn when he gets out of the Navy; M. L. Patterson, who has decided not to return to Oxford now that he is getting out of the Navy; D. M. Eady, in the Intelligence Corps and on leave from Batavia; F. G. Overbury, attached as an R.A.F. member of the Farnborough research station and about to take a joyride to Germany to find out more about it; and B. G. Almond, successful in getting posted to an R.A.F. course in Russian at Cambridge.

J. R. B. Hodges got married just before Christmas and is still posted at Grantham; D. I. Gregg has got his commission and has gone to Indonesia; and A. H. Williams has had snowbound experiences in Greece and will, no doubt, be profoundly relieved when the elections there are over and he can go somewhere else.

NOTICES.

Grant's are planning to produce "Ambrose Applejohn's Adventure," by William Hackett, next term, on Wednesday, June 12th, at St. Martin's School of Art (107-109, Charing Cross Road).

There will be two performances, at 2.30 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets at 3s. 6d., 2s. 6d. and 1s. 6d. may be obtained from D. C. F. Chaundy, 2, Little Dean's Yard, S.W.1, from May 1st onwards.

All correspondence sent to the Editor should be addressed to 2, Little Dean's Yard, Westminster, London, S.W.1.

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

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