

THE BALSHAVIAN

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The magazine of
Balshaw's
Leyland

Pages

Comment by Senior Committee

- 3 The Link between Us
- 4 Review of "H.M.S. Pinafore"
- 8 Aren't our parents marvellous?
- 10 What's cooking?
- 13 Votes for ALL?
- 15 Interview with Mike Scott
- 21 A look at BANKING
- 24 Do you come here often?

Junior View by Junior Committee

- 29 The Junior Committee
- 29 The Contributors
- 32 Organised Leisure
- 39 Out of this World

Contributed by Balshavians

- 44 It
- 45 A Funny Thing
- 46 Cross Country
- 47 Aeolian Visitations
- Hockey
- 48 Rugby
- 49 S.C.M.
- 50 On the Downs
- 50 Tropical Fish
- 52 Season of Promise
- 53 A Story with a Twist
- 54 Two Sides of Library Life
- 56 On Giving Pills to Cats
- Now or Never
- 58 Hope
- 60 Camera in the Casbah
- 64 Parents' Association
- 66 At the Youth Concert
- 67 A New Society

SIR THOMAS HARGREAVES, J.P., C.A.

It was with deep sorrow that the School heard, just before Easter, of the passing of Sir Thomas Hargreaves, Justice of the Peace, County Alderman, Foundation Governor and Vice-Chairman of the Governors of this School. Throughout his long life, Sir Thomas played a distinguished part in the industrial and public affairs of the local community and of the nation, being especially concerned in recent years with the construction of the M.6 Motorway.

He was appointed to the Governing Body in 1953 and became Vice-Chairman in 1958. His wise counsels and kindly presence will be gravely missed.

COMMENT

The Link between Us

*An Editorial View
by Judith Hunt*

Is Balshaw's the Ivory Tower some people think? Do the pupils, who dwell within its sheltered precincts, have too little contact with the outside world, and do the staff actually recognise that there is a life beyond that of school? Surely it is impossible for a day school such as ours, ever to be cut off from the community which it serves. The daily journey past homes, shops and factories is sufficient to remind each one of us of the world at large. Each one of us goes back to a home, where thoughts of school play only a minor rôle, subservient to the more practical demands of daily living.

Perhaps, if we were a boarding school, with outside contact rigorously reduced to a minimum, then criticisms of isolation may be justified, but, as it is, probably there is greater justification in the view that we are too much under the influence of those outside. Witness the attempts to modify school uniform to conform with the current fashion. We have only to ask ourselves which dominates our lives and hopes the more, school or the society outside, to realise that we all have horizons beyond those offered by the school.

The staff too share our daily routine of home and school, and it is clearly untrue to claim that their interests are restricted to the school. We often hear the arguments that teachers ought to be compelled to spend some time working in shops, offices and factories. How about compulsory teaching service for those in other occupations? Or, in other words, which group knows less about the other?

Any group, it would seem, that shows any lack of knowledge of others, is open to a charge of isolation. Any group that fails to accept and understand the needs and activities of others is guilty of enclosing itself behind barriers which may not always have the quality of ivory. We wonder which section of society sins most in this respect? Schools? Pupils? Teachers? Parents? Teenagers?

We fear that your answer will in all probability be determined by the group to which you belong.

Love levels all ranks

reviewed by Margaret Gormley and Barbara Antoine

Anyone who happened to be present at the dress rehearsal on the Sunday afternoon previous to the forthcoming performances, would have joined in with the desperate cries of anguish, on viewing the hired costumes that the female chorus were to wear. It is an understatement to say that they were definitely not up to the required standard! However, this catastrophe was soon overcome by the sheer determination of staff, particularly Miss Wallbank, and pupils alike, who tackled the immense job of making their own costumes from certain materials supplied from—where?

Fears that this experience might have daunted some of the less stalwart members of the cast, proved groundless, however, and as the final curtain descended on the Saturday evening, it was pronounced a sparkling success. This success is not surprising, however, when one considers how gay and enchanting "H.M.S. Pinafore" is, for there is something intoxicatingly gay about both the lyrics and the music.

The overture, played by Judith Topping and Mr. Black, who was also the co-producer and the musical director, put the audience into a receptive mood, and set the high standard for the delightful performance that was to follow. Although the opening chorus was slightly weak in places, the tars took command and were soon sailing along merrily. Margaret Fish was a charming 'Little Buttercup,' who belying her name (for she was a plump and pleasing person) sang her aria with a clear and rounded voice, and Ian Veitch will be remembered for his dastardly Dick Deadeye. The part of Ralph Rackstraw the love-sick tar was ably played by John Almond, and Christine Sumner as the Captain's daughter Josephine looked her best in the lovely costumes of the time, her beautiful soprano voice matching her presence. Frank Ryding was an amusing Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., who 'by sticking close to his desk and never going to sea, became the ruler of the Queen's Naveel!' His most outstanding scene where his acting talents were displayed to the full, and which also received the greatest ovation was undoubtedly the trio with Josephine, the Captain and himself. He was accompanied most of the time by the vivacious chorus of his sisters and his cousins and his aunts, with the demure Judith Simpson as Hebe his first cousin. Mr. Wilson as Captain Corcoran richly deserves three cheers and one cheer more, not only for his gallant Captain of the Pinafore but also for the important parts he played behind the scenes as producer, and designer of the attractive scenery. Among the shipshape members of Pinafore's crew, the most notable were Mr.

Shackleton as the Boatswain, Mr. Holmes as the Carpenter's mate, and Frank Crowe as the Midshipmite. The entire chorus provided a good melodious background for the principals. It was a polished performance by everyone, and hardly any mistakes were made (what, never? Well hardly ever!)

There are some who bewail the absence of team spirit in the school and the gulf that exists between "them" (the staff) and "us" (the pupils) They moan (and this magazine has given them plenty of opportunity to do so) about the general unwillingness of all of us to do anything for the school, other than what is required in the classroom. This year's operatic production, like its predecessor, must surely serve as a denial to all the oft-repeated criticisms, for the team spirit which united all ranks in this mammoth task and enabled them to overcome all obstacles is surely an example for all to follow.

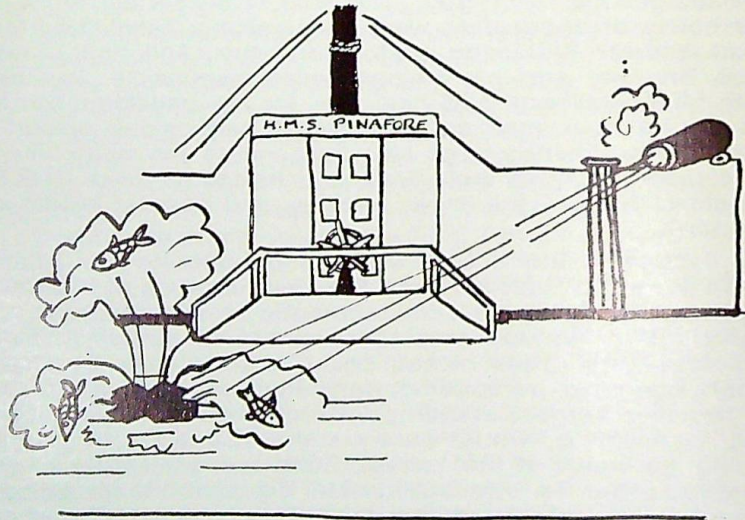
There are many who share the credit for this achievement. The members of the cast, whom we have already praised will surely be the first to recognise the enormous debt they owe to those who slaved to the point of exhaustion for the success of the whole undertaking.

The effective lighting and all the ingenious improvisation that this required were entirely due to Mr. Shackleton and his helpers, whilst the stage was smoothly and efficiently managed by Mr. Rigby. The sale of tickets and front of the house arrangements were very capably handled by Mr. Kidd, and Mr. Wilkinson made over a thousand cups of tea. Miss Bromley and her helpers were responsible, together with Miss Wallbank and her girls, for the transformation of the entire cast into an effusion of harmonious colourful characters. Thanks must also be given to the many others who gave freely of their time, and helped to make 'H.M.S. Pinafore' one of the most exciting and popular events of the term.

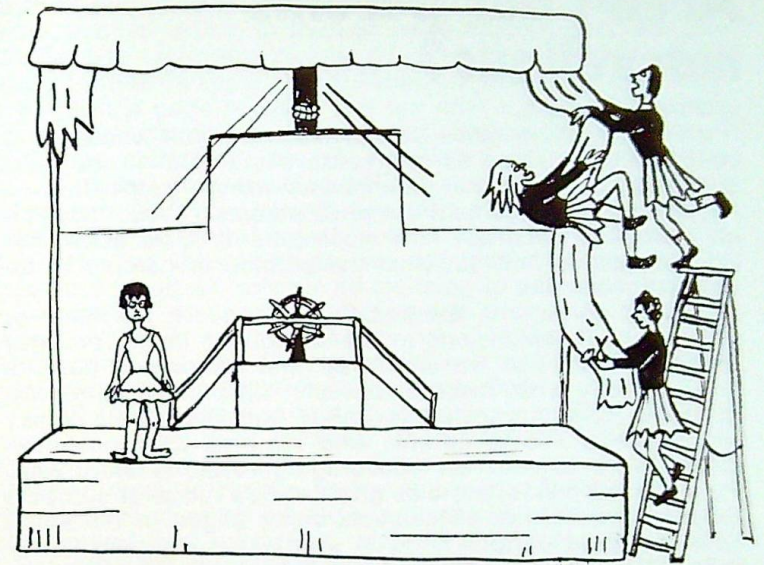
However, the efforts of all these people would have been in vain but for the rock-like determination of two men. Goodness knows, the demands made by a typical term are sufficient to occupy most people, but to survive endless rehearsals, to create a set, decor and costumes, to spend hours coercing, persuading, correcting, advising, in the face of growing fatigue, standing, climbing, lifting, playing, singing, performing, would surely make all but the truly dedicated go weak at the knees. Such is the measure of the gratitude that we owe both to Mr. Black, and to Mr. Wilson, and we can only hope that the utter success of the whole enterprise is an adequate reward for their superhuman efforts. May we have more Gilbert and Sullivan (if what? If you please).



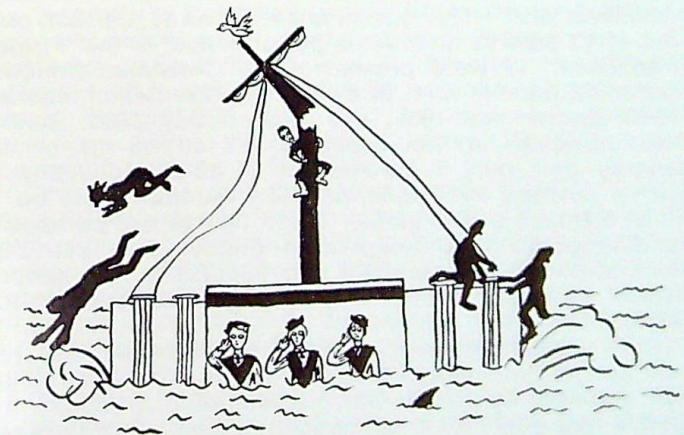
"Performances were well attended."



"Realism was the aim of this production."



"Costumes were . . . original."



"And the finale exceptional."

Aren't our parents marvellous?

by Pamela Beales

First of all, a thank you to those parents whose kind co-operation enabled us to prepare this article — and next an explanation for those parents who are still in the dark — A questionnaire was sent out to 60 parents (about 10%) in an attempt to ascertain how much parents know about the School, and to find out what the attitude of parents is towards School life.

What do parents know about the school? As many of you will know extensions to the school are in the process of being built, but we wondered just how many parents know exactly what these extensions will provide (they are of course going to provide the School with new laboratories) — 39 out of the 42 parents who returned their questionnaires were correct, an encouraging result to start with. Pupils at the school are also given a wide range of subjects to choose from, not all subjects being begun in the same year — would parents know in what years German, Geography, Greek and Biology may be taken up? (the answers are respectively, third, first, third and fourth year). Unfortunately parents seem little informed on this matter, only 9 out of 42 giving four correct answers.

Several events take place during the school year, parent association meetings, for example, or a musical event — but are parents really enthusiastic in their support of such school functions? The questionnaire showed us that only 16 out of 42 parents attended a performance of the 'Pirates of Penzance,' 17 were present at the Christmas Concert; 20 out of 42 parents went to a Parents' Association meeting in 1965, sports day 1965, and Speech Day 1965. School games, however, do not appear to be at the top of the popularity poll; only 5 parents out of 42 attended any of these — perhaps excusable, as many parents would be in work at the time of the game. These figures are perhaps a little disappointing, although it is gratifying to see that parents showed more interest and support in the serious activities such as Speech Day and Parents' Association meetings.

One excuse frequently offered by those who do not attend school functions is that they fail to receive circulars which are sent by hand. Our questionnaire produced the evidence that only one in ten of such circulars fails to reach its destination.

Every pupil at Balshaw's takes home a copy of the School Magazine — but do their parents read it? Are they

sufficiently interested? We are pleased to be able to report that 32 out of 42 parents do read 'The Balshavian,' — the most popular article in the last issue appearing to be 'Life at the Top', followed closely by 'First Impressions'. However, comments about 'The Balshavian' were very encouraging and it is good to know that our efforts are appreciated.

Questions on the line of 'what encouragement do you give your child to do his/her homework' were designed in the hope that they would reveal the attitude held by parents towards school life. Would they have a 'couldn't care less' attitude, or a lively interest in their child and his work at school? The latter attitude, we are glad to say, was the one held by all 42 parents, all claiming to give as much encouragement as possible, and several even said they provided a special room for homework — without television. 30 parents admitted that, at some time or other, they had gone so far as to do their child's homework.

All parents claimed to discuss school with their children and all except four parents, deemed such discussions, together with every encouragement to be essential if their children were to remain happy at school. Quite obviously the parents questioned have a 'healthy' attitude towards the school and education, and consequently 32 parents were able to describe their child's attitude to school as 'enthusiastic'.

'How do you expect your child to benefit from life at Balshaw's other than by being successful at examinations', was a question which provoked quite a variety of replies — "success in examinations is enough" and "by becoming a good citizen" were among these replies. The general view was that life at Balshaw's would be character forming, a pupil becoming more confident and independent. The knowledge gained would lead to him/her becoming an interested and useful member of society. Almost all the parents thought that their child would have a rewarding social life — able to mix confidently with all kinds of persons, as a result of being at Balshaw's.

The question that the parents really went to town on was — 'Have you any further comment that you think might prove useful and helpful?' One parent, in reply, wondered whether the questionnaire might provoke criticism and parental interference. We are glad to be able to reassure him on this point, in that all the parents who replied realised that criticism was not invited, and entered into the spirit of the matter in a most encouraging way.

To those parents who asked if summer holidays could be organised by the school, we would reply that there is not really a great deal of support. However, this summer there is a party going to the Loire valley, and as every year there are a number of individual exchanges, and since

language practice is the main justification for continental holidays, then clearly the individual exchange should receive the greatest encouragement. Further, such a request for holidays seems to assume total leisure on the part of the staff; such an assumption is, to our certain knowledge, fallacious.

Another point which cropped up several times was that of football — 'why don't we play football' — was the query of many. The answer to this is that rugby gives boys another game — football being played anyway. Furthermore facilities compel a choice, it is simply not possible to offer an alternative and we chose rugby and there seems to be no reason to regret the choice.

Many parents were aware of their ignorance of the school, and regretted that this was so. The problem is how this can be remedied. We hope, of course, that the magazine itself is achieving something in this direction, and the Parents Association exists, too, for this very purpose.

Several other suggestions, some of which have been passed on to the appropriate quarter, were put forward, but many parents were in complete agreement with the gentleman who said:— 'The School life should be left to the experts which, of course, means the staff'. By means of this article we have tried to show how aware parents are of what goes on at the school and if they are interested — naturally we do not claim that either the parents or their replies are truly representative. They are examples; since they were chosen at random they cannot be regarded as typical examples, but on the whole can justifiably claim to be a credit to their children.

Scenes of School Life

What's Cooking?

by Janet Davies and
Susan and Margaret Walsh

"We've got three weeks in which to make a tiger, girls!"

"Don't forget to lower your head when entering the Art Room — those paints are still wet!"

"Keep that gold spray away from my still life!"

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The end of term's hectic activities can be said to have begun one eventful day when Preston Station witnessed the



arrival of three frantic and bedraggled females, two of which were in Balshaw's uniform, bearing masses of brown paper, squashed cardboard boxes, balls of string, and a certain huge green folder which emerged from the boot of Mrs. Cook's car. Amidst the mud, puddles and strong wind, the folder was trussed with the cardboard and paper, all the string was used, and a generous helping of cello tape completed the package. Halfway through the packing was heard the whistle of the train — and after frantic struggles to get the folder onto the platform, they arrived in time to see the guard's van disappearing out of the station. Undaunted they went their separate ways and pestered every railwayman on the premises, until their perseverance was rewarded and arrangements were made to have the folder despatched on the next train. With great sighs of relief they tumbled back into the car and spent the rest of the day recovering!

The tiger which was presented to Dr. Fogg on Speech Day was the result of much hard work by many people. Our search for the most suitable piece of wood led us from Worden Park to the depths of the Norwegian Forest. However, our raw material was finally supplied locally by Mr. Tomlinson who went to great pains to meet our exacting requirements. Future generations in the Art Room should have no trouble in finding specimens of wood for carving — our stockroom affords an abundant supply. Each member of the Upper Sixth Art Group had a chip at the old block but to Mrs. Cook the tiger represented strenuous and meticulous work by candlelight and through the early hours of the morning. Her patience was well rewarded and the tiger emerged as a veritable masterpiece. We wanted desperately to produce in "Humphrey," our pet name for the animal, a resemblance to the Leyland Tiger seen on the front of all Leyland Motor vehicles, so we approached the firm, asking if they would provide us with some illustrations of their famous tiger, whereupon they obliged us almost immediately by sending six beautiful, glossy, photographs — the only snag was they were of the mechanical variety, not the furry kind!

No sooner was the tiger off our hands than the general cry was: "tongues out for the great label licking feat." Label after label had to be stuck into every speech day prize. Mrs. Cook headed the team displaying her script writing skill on each and every label.

Christmas time brought added merriment and activity to our little community in the Art Room. Programmes were needed for the Christmas Concert and once again the Art Room was called upon to assist. The suggestion of using a multi-coloured lino print on each programme produced the desired artistic effect but proved very laborious in practice. The Art Room was transformed into a miniature



printing works. Gay profusions of programmes — 397 in all, were strung in rows from one end of the room to the other, limiting the headroom considerably. In the midst of all this confusion, hunched figures could be seen intently rolling, pressing, stapling, and counting every programme. Is it surprising that these dedicated, hard-working Sixth Formers, assisted by three able-bodied Fifth Formers, needed some light refreshment as the day wore on? Indeed the reviving cups of coffee were more than welcome to their parched throats!

The following morning witnessed these self-same people, headed by Mrs. Cook, trudging across the school field, apparently refreshed from their long ordeal — or were they seeking consolation in nature after the previous day's activities? On the contrary, they were once again despatched on an important mission. This time the search was for twigs, branches and leaves suitable for the school decorations. This random selection of twigs and greenery was transformed by gold paint, glitter, ribbon and glass balls into attractive and impressive displays.

The Art Room to many seems to be isolated from the rest of the school, available only to those endeared with artistic talents. However, we have endeavoured to show the varied activities which do go on there, and the part it plays in the life of the school. We, as Sixth Form Art Students have grown to think of the Art Room as our second home.



## Votes for All?

by Diana Schofield and Sandra Dewhurst

Owing to the advent of the General Election, it was decided to carry out a survey to discover precisely what the sixth form really thought of politics.

The first question put to them was 'can you give a brief definition of politics?' Many could not, would not, or were censored. However, some of those which passed our stringent ruling were not complimentary and consisted of such statements as 'a spare-time job for an unemployed deadpan comedian,' and one person boasted of his literary knowledge of quotations and said 'politics is the struggle of two rival stage-coaches racing against each other, splashing each other with mud on their ways to the same destination.' As the above person did not know the origin of the quote it was supplied by a more learned member of the sixth as quote 'Hazlitt you ignorant buffoon!' The most popular definition is 'politics is the art and science of government.'

We found that 42 people considered themselves 'interested and informed' in their attitudes to politics, while others remained 'indifferent, critically hostile or utterly ignorant.'

To our surprise considering the average age of the sixth form, the majority of students do not believe that people of 18 ought to be allowed to vote.

On being asked whether politicians were sincere or hypocritical, the poor misguided Lower Sixth believed in the former, whilst the more discerning and sceptical members of the Upper Sixth decided whole-heartedly on the latter.

Most people in an election would vote for a particular party because they agreed with the party policy, though one sixth-former, a girl obviously, stated that she would vote because she liked the looks of the candidate.

In answer to which current problem needed priority in home government, we found that Education, Prices and Incomes, and the Economic position rated highly with National Health and Defence; whilst abroad the acute problems seemed to be Rhodesia and Vietnam and the introduction of birth-control in underdeveloped over-populated countries.

When asked who would make the best Prime Minister 44 people voted for Jo Grimmond, and Enoch Powell ran a close second. Few people seemed to like the idea of George Brown being Prime Minister, and even less Barbara Castle — we wondered why?



With regard to immigration we found various opinions, but the majority thought it should continue with greater restrictions. Nobody however thought immigration should be made easier.

Economic sanctions and negotiations with Smith seemed to form the basis of the Sixth Form's answer to the current situation in Rhodesia.

Everybody knew that Mrs. Ghandi was the Indian Prime Minister and whilst most people knew that Erhardt was West Germany's Prime Minister, there were several variations of his name including Urquart, Herhart and Aerhart. Lester Pearson rightfully claimed most of the votes as Prime Minister of Canada though some clever individual plumped for Lester Piggott. In answer to the question of who is Holland's Prime Minister, seventy people gracefully declined to answer, while nine out of the remaining fifteen answered 'Von Rottenheim' which we do not believe to be exactly correct as were Willy Brandt, Pres Nyrere, Doctor Booeear, Peter Van Der Merwe, or Joseph M. L. Thealls.

Could anyone please supply us with the correct answer?

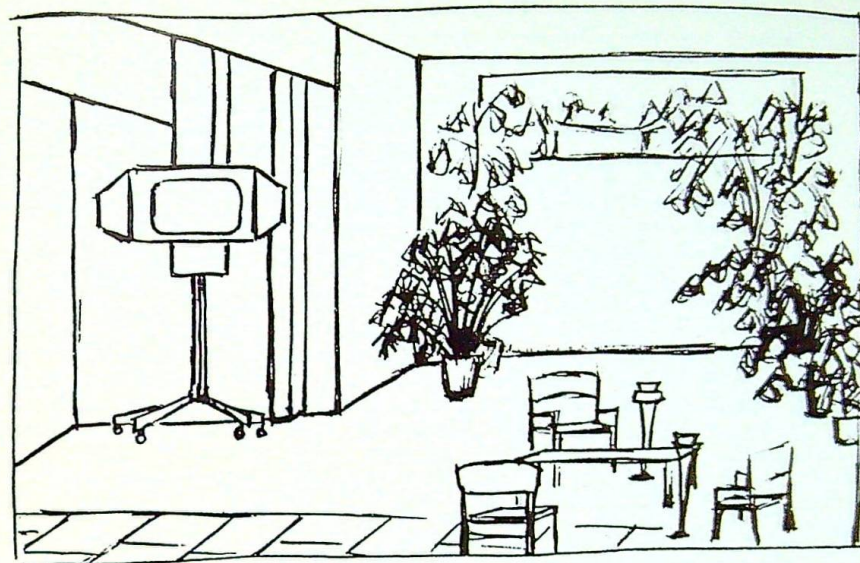
The majority of students believe that Britain should enter the Common Market, though one victim of Americanisation decided we should become more dependent on America. Is this the result of the subtle brainwashing of the man from U.N.C.L.E.?

The fight for freedom in Vietnam was the mainstay of sixth-form belief though one or two anti-capitalists believed that the Communists should be allowed to have the country.

It is evident that Lloyd George was the main political figure between 1900 and 1930, Lenin and Woodrow Wilson were also highly popular but we thought that Emily Parkhurst took some beating. The 1939 to 1945 period had Churchill as its political leader, Hitler and Roosevelt gaining a small minority of votes.

Kennedy, followed closely by Macmillan, was deemed to be the main figure between 1945 - 1965 but one highly honourable and courageous sixth-form student decided that the honour should go to our own historian W. G. Wilson of "H.M.S. Pinafore" renown, a distinction which he shared with Bessie Braddock and the late Hugh Gaitskell.

Although a significant conclusion was neither achieved nor expected we could not help forming the impression that although our sixth formers would not exactly improve the quality of the British electorate, on the whole they were neither worse nor better than the average voter.



*Celebrity Interview with*

## **Mike Scott**

*"SCENE AT 2-30"*

*by Judith Hunt and Janet Davies*

*Mr. Scott, what do you think of the recent criticisms that sex is over-emphasised on television?*

People who get flustered about sex are over sensitive. Although sex is perhaps over emphasised, the attitude towards it is much healthier. I deplore the hypocrisy of people who object to Kenneth Tynon's outburst on television but find a sketch about it by Jimmy Tarbuck most amusing. Sex in advertising may appear unscrupulous at times, and I must admit that deodorant commercials make me shudder, but on the other hand, if someone gets the message I suppose they have served their purpose! I would like to make a point that we at Granada have nothing to do with the advertising at all.

*Popular literature?*

Read and enjoy. I am the kind of person who prefers to curl up with James Bond rather than Hamlet.

*Education by television?*

It is a field which will be exploited more in the future. I feel that sex education by television is far less embarrassing than similar topics in class. A master in front of a class



would be more embarrassed than a teacher in front of an impersonal camera.

*How much of your own personality is projected on to "Scene at 6-30," and how much is just reading out other people's ideas?*

I was a director for six years, and after that I just performed for six months, which I found frustrating because I am happier on the producing side of a programme. Now I am a producer-performer which I find a happy medium between the two, but as I am the link-man of **Cinema** as well, I do not spend as much time on **Scene** as I would like. I only produce the programme one week in four and am responsible for its content every fifth week. **Cinema** takes up three days every week, and although I still argue over content, and row over scripts, in the friendliest possible fashion, of course, I am not as involved in **Scene** as I was before.

*Which programme do you prefer taking part in, "Cinema" or "Scene at 6-30", and why?*

I feel more at home in **Scene** because our ranges of interest are matched. I write the scripts for **Cinema**, and enjoy being involved with the programme, but it is more specialized.

*How did you begin your career, and what advice would you give to people trying to break into the field of television?*

After national service I worked for Lever Brothers for six months and hated being a small cog in an enormous organisation. I then worked as a stage hand and a film extra which I thoroughly enjoyed. After working in Rank Organisation as an office boy, I was fiddled into the editing department in 1955. I worked in a sort of partition without a roof and could hear interviewers questioning people for television jobs, so I just burst in and said, "What about me?" This is the wrong way to go about it, but in my case it was successful. I was given the job of production trainee which includes working with cameras, microphones, boom trackers, tea urns and sweeping brushes! Upon leaving Rank Organisation, I became a camera man for Granada and later a floor manager. In the year 1957 I was made director of current affairs and my career has successfully continued from there.

What advice would I give to young people who want to work in television? For a research producer etc., newspaper experience is vital, and directing experience, e.g. as a repertory company stage manager would be useful. Everything really depends on your ultimate ambition. Theatre experience is essential for drama, just as journalism is for current affairs. I would like to point out that the path I took was rare: there is much more chance now.

*Are you not afraid of being considered a programme which panders to popular taste—e.g., pop music every night?*

**Scene** has to cater for a very wide audience and so we try to include things which will interest the majority. Anyway, pop music plays such an important part in modern culture to justify its inclusion in our programme.

*Do you think of yourself primarily as a journalist, or as a television personality?*

Primarily as a journalist, by which I mean I am interested in the world as it affects us and the television about that I would hate to be thought of as just a television personality as I feel that many of them tend to be empty headed.

*Which favourite figure have you had or would like to have on "Scene" and why?*

There are various milestones in my career—the Beatles, interviews with Harold Wilson and George Brown, but the most memorable moment of my career was the night when I had to interrupt the programme with the news of President Kennedy's assassination. I do not like interviewing dim film stars. Nothing is worse than being faced with a "yes" or "No" response to every question asked. My most favourite character who has ever appeared on **Scene** is Ken Dodd. *Unusual hobbies?*

I have a 1932 Lagonda Vintage Car and wish I had more time to spend on it.

*Have you achieved what you set out to achieve in your television career, or do you aim higher?*

I didn't really set out to achieve anything, which sounds a bit tame. I wanted work somewhere in show business. The point is chance took me into television. I wanted to be a director and have achieved that but I know I'm not brilliant at it. I feel **Scene at 6-30** is a good enough programme to be seen nationally. Coming from down south, it was three years before my mum saw me on television!

*Aims of "Scene at 6-30"?*

To entertain. To stimulate thought on present day problems and to inform as a by-product.

The tour of inspection, which was intended to show us the technical difficulties, demonstrated at once the difference and at the same time, the link between the real personality



and the one portrayed on television. Clear evidence of this was found in the Studio Canteen, where we were quite distracted from eating, by comparing the personalities of Dennis Tanner, Albert Tatlock and Jed Stone to those we had expected from their television image. We were fascinated at the prospect of seeing Mr. Scott editing **Cinema**, and discovering the different facets of his existence, as a **Cinema** announcer, a **Scene** producer performer, and as an ordinary man.

We were invited into the small private cinema, where the production team were hard at work compiling a programme based upon Karl Boreman's career. We saw trailers from such films as **Guns of Navarone**, **The Victors**, **Bridge over the River Kwai** and his latest film which is in complete contrast with his others — **Born Free**, and we were amazed at the careful thought, deep analysis of material and exact timing, which goes into the **Cinema** script.

As soon as the editing had finished we were rushed off to the dress rehearsal for **Scene**, which was a complete contrast to the quiet orderliness of the private cinema. We actually sat in the studio, which seemed to us a confusion of lights, cameras and headphoned floor managers. Brian Trueman, with whom we shared a table in the corner, kept us highly amused with subtle impersonations during the programme. The advent of the pop singer, clad in plum velvet, promised further amusement. How he carried on his sensual gesticulations into the camera, amidst so many bored cameramen and amused onlookers, it is hard to imagine!

Whilst watching the programme on a monitor set, we reflected upon the difference between the black and white character in focus, and the colourful, far more real person we had interviewed. Perhaps it was because we had only been at the studio for one afternoon that some of the people we met seemed to be doing nothing more than projecting their television personality, but it is true that the more time we spent with them, the more alive and more real they became.

[The Editors would like to thank Mr. Scott and his colleagues at Granada for so kindly agreeing to give us so much of their valuable time and for the courteous and friendly way in which they received our interviewers]



*What next?*

## A look at Banking

*by David Farrington*

Those fortresses on the main street, the elegant stone and heavy, studded oak doors, so austere it hardly seems credible they could house anything but museum pieces. What really lies within?

This was my quest, and knowing little more than that high-stools, top hats, and quill-pens had ceased to inhabit the territory, I set forth to investigate.

The first rigours of my task began by wading through the literature of all the main banks and, as I had expected, although very helpful on hard facts, in every case the purple prose of the 'ad-man' had succeeded in expressing in magnificent stage whispers! "Come to sunny banks, everybody is happy, everyone is earning a fortune, and the social life is marvellous." To such expostulations one can only reply "so why isn't everyone in banking?" Omissions of importance were also apparent and so I sallied forth into the front lines . . . the banks themselves.

Here came my first surprise. The reception and response were most encouraging. Furthermore my belief that beneath the gloss lurked boredom, stagnation and antiquated outlooks was shattered. It was a normal active community with the usual even dosages of routine and enthusiasm, as enlightened and pleasant as any working atmosphere.



My next step was to discover the necessary qualifications for entering this select sect, the actual occupations experienced, and to burrow thoroughly for the real facts regarding opportunity and promotion.

The minimum entrance qualification is set at five 'O' levels including English and maths although this varies even to the extent of gaining entrance on the banks own examinations only. All entrants are given initial training at a Training Branch at some time during the first six months (at most of the banks) and all have the opportunity of taking the Institute of Bankers Examinations which follow a quite lengthy three-part course and for which most banks give day or half-day release to their staff to have tuition at nearby colleges. Each area of banks has its own Training Branch and on my visit to the Birkdale Training Branch of the Midland Bank I was much impressed by the care taken to imitate exactly the normal working conditions in a bank especially on their cashier's course. Entrants at 'A' level with passes in certain subjects are given exemption from those same subjects in the banking course and also receive one year's seniority in salary.

The major role that examinations play in the success of a man's career in banking was not wholly emphasized but it is a plain truth that without having passed the exams of the Institute of Bankers, however able and otherwise capable a character, a person can ascend no further than to the post of a cashier. It can be said that success in exams is the whole crux of promotions and that this alone will ensure a man a position in the specialized technical departments whilst a combination of such ability with character merits can obtain the highest positions of Second Officer and Manager.

For the more ambitious and successful man in banking a great deal of movement from bank to bank occurs. The policies of banks vary a great deal on this matter but whatever the arrangement in all cases the willingness of the employee to comply with movement greatly aids promotion chances.

To this point I have virtually ignored 50% of the bank's staff — women. The brochures for girls contemplating this job bear much misrepresentation. Inference has it that girls in banking have an equal chance of promotion as men. But this is untrue: a man emerges from junior clerk duties to the counter but a girl must first serve much time in the ledger-keeping department which requires extra training and is quite easily the most "boring and monotonous" department. Assuming then that a girl takes twice as long to become a cashier, the bank literature hastens to point out that girls have an excellent chance of acquiring the higher positions through examinations but subtly continues with

references to men only. This is in fact because very few women reach the higher offices. There are very few female Second Officers and only two lady managers — both in Barclay's Bank where they were originally appointed as an experiment — and the idea has not been followed up.

The banks, however, are by no means wholly responsible for this. So many women leave banking to marry that the banks only take important promotion interest after a girl has reached 24 (an interesting age for rating a girl less likely to marry) when they are much more willing to use money and training to further their wage and status.

When both I and the banking literature eventually reach at the hard facts of wages, the amounts did not differ but the conclusions certainly did. I spent quite some time contemplating the salary scales before I began to appreciate their merits. A boy or girl entering the bank receives £370 p.a. (it varies slightly from bank to bank) at the age of 17 and by the age of 21 the wage of both sexes has "soared" to around £580 p.a. Yet it can well be argued that the employee is still training . . . but isn't he also working for the bank most of the time? At 24 all equality of sexes disappears and by 31 the boy has reached a salary of £1,145 and the girl £815 approx. There appears no explanation to this split and only a vague promise that a girl of high ability will continue to receive the same wage as the boy — without high ability! After 31 the wages continue to rise according to the bank's estimation of your value. There is, however, a Special Grade wage addition of up to about £200 p.a. for the promising bank employee. It is accepted in banking that the promotion of a woman after she reaches the cashier's desk is extremely slow and as one girl employee phrased it: "it takes a book-worm spinster, fiery and determined to improve her lot after this stage."

The holidays of employees after twelve months service are 15 day's holiday with pay and a period of holiday increasing to four weeks maximum with length of service and position. The social amenities appear to vary from bank to bank but most of the recreation pursuits are carried on in regional centres.

According to statistics 1 in every 2 men in the banks will eventually become a manager. For these men the prospects are very favourable; responsibility of great magnitude and a salary of at least £2,100 rising to a possible £5,000 or even more.

A young clerk finds that the type of manager he serves under plays a vast part in the prospects, atmosphere and general interests to be found in a bank. The number and success of social events depend very largely on the amiability of the employer. An enlightened and helpful manager



can be a terrific asset to a man eager to succeed in banking and the amount of personal interest a manager takes in his staff is a very important factor in a man's promotion chances. From my brief experience I found that far more than the information of an impersonal booklet, the attitude within a bank set up by a manager is the ultimate deciding factor when choosing a bank.

I met no one in my interviews who absolutely hated banking and couldn't wait to get out but there again I met little bursting enthusiasm for the job. It appeared to me that its attractions for a male were to a man who wished for a regular, steady job and who was more concerned with a sound regular income than with great and immediate financial benefits. I would expect a man who was keen, intelligent and willing to work, with charm and respect for customers and employer who had enough drive to prevent any chance of stagnation to do very well in the profession. The merits for most women, as banking stands at the moment, seem to be only that it is a good regular job with a reasonable wage for a girl during that indefinite period before they vanish from the scene into the pursuits of married life.

## Do you come here often?

by John Smith, Sixth Form Society Chairman

Originally it was intended that this article should be compiled from the views of the sixth form on the various social events which take place at the school. The aim was to give suitable expression to many of the points which have been raised in discussion during recent weeks in the hope that this would be found useful by those whose task it is to organise these events. However, the comments received showed such a lack of originality and such a complete unawareness of the problems involved that some commentary was thought to be necessary.

A few people were completely satisfied, and a comparable number said they never came and so did not feel qualified to express any opinion. Most other answers expressed dissatisfaction to some degree but could offer very few remedies or innovations to overcome this.

Authority and organisation came in for a lot of criticism:  
*The presence of members of staff represents a symbol of repression.*

*Once inside school one immediately feels a little restrained. Teachers should leave it to sixth-formers.*

*The organisation is chaotic.*

These comments showed how little is known about the way in which events are organised. In fact at present, sixth

form activities, with the exception of house parties, are organised entirely by an elected committee of sixth formers. Yet very little help is offered. Usually organisation is left to house-captains, society chairmen and a few helpers. It is probably those who say

*The spirit is felt only by the organisers and the rest of the school come only as an alternative entertainment.*

*House Captains are overworked.*

Virtually the only practical criticism, which offered a suggestion for a change, was that house-parties ought to be replaced by year parties:—

*Such wide ranges of ages and diversity of interests cannot be catered for for a whole evening without boring quite a lot of people for a lot of the time.*

*People get bored and roam round school looking for their own entertainment.*

*Sixth-formers do not want to have to arrange games for first-formers.*

Again these answers show the unwillingness of a large part of the sixth-form to take any part in the organisation but

*Even with year parties the first-formers would need organising.*

Another argument against this separation is that

*This is one occasion when first-formers do not have to regard Prefects as policemen, and when sixth-formers do not have to look upon them as "wards."*

*It is perhaps the only chance these different age-groups get to mix socially.*

A number of people thought that school events ought to be opened more to outsiders

*If we cannot bring friends we see nothing but the same old faces.*

*If the school wants to compete with outside dances it must move with the times.*

But surely the school wants to provide completely different activities. It is not competing with outside organisations, and what is more, it is no part of its purpose to offer entertainment. It is both significant and sad that those who gave comments thought only in terms of entertainment. They seemed to think only of amusing themselves, practically never did anyone seem to feel the need to do anything for others or the group as a whole.

Judging from the more helpful suggestions it would seem that many people think that invitations to sixth-formers from other schools were a thoroughly good idea, and provided a great incentive to attend sixth-form society events, although the suggestion that



*Sixth Form events at this school ought to be joined to similar ones at the local secondary modern schools*

is not really practicable since these schools do not have sixth formers.

Some people commented on sports day but thought

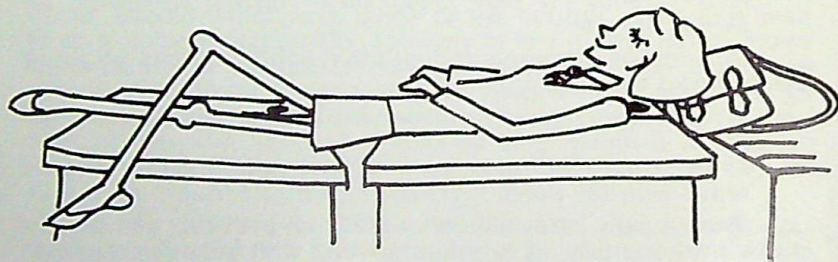
*There was a lack of competitive spirit between houses which could be encouraged by House Masters.*

The Mountaineering Society was also mentioned a number of times, and always praised

*It is something really different, and provides us with something that we could not enjoy otherwise.*

Perhaps one of the better points came from the person who wrote—

*Old students ought to be given greater encouragement to come along. This would bring about more 'school spirit' and raise our dances above the level of an ordinary beat dance.*



*Room 13 has been the scene of unprecedented activity*

## JUNIOR VIEW

### The Junior Committee

*A Junior editorial view  
by John Baker 4/4*

Have you ever seen that group of about a dozen people who, about once a fortnight, hold a lunch-time meeting in the School Library?

All from the fourth form downwards, these are the "old faithfuls" of the Junior Committee, all prospective writers. It is not that they do any writing at these meetings. All they do is talk and talk and talk.

In fact, it is not until the last few meetings that they have written anything at all. However, in each case, it is always clear that the talking has not been wasted.

It is our hope that this section of the Magazine not only expresses the views of the junior part of the school but also provides interesting reading for the whole School and for our friends outside.

### The Contributors

There are many ways of contributing to the life of the School and it is true that everyone who observes and respects the School's standards whether in his work or in his behaviour is making a valuable contribution. However, there are many who do this and more. They make that little extra effort and it is these people who are the subjects of this article.

We have chosen to exclude members of the Sixth Form because their exploits are adequately recorded elsewhere. In confining our efforts to the Middle and Junior School we do not claim to have included everyone worthy of inclusion. Nor have we chosen the most outstanding. Participation in an 'extra' activity was considered to be sufficient to our purpose.

In each case we tried to interview the person concerned. Our first victim was Audrey Dawson, now in the second form, and already the undisputed Junior Chess Champion. Audrey explained that she first became interested in chess at the primary school. She said that the greatest enjoyment came in trying to beat the other player and she



feels sure that it helps you to improve your powers of concentration. The advantage of chess as a hobby is that you can play it any time but it does leave plenty of time for other activities. Audrey's second hobby, we found, is walking. And to encourage new comers we are happy to pass on the opinion that chess is easy to learn, if you are interested. Audrey learned just "by watching others."

Carolyn Campbell was interviewed as a typical member of the Craft Society. She said that more than anything else she enjoyed the feeling that she was making something useful and worthwhile. "It's good fun, too." Looking ahead, she felt that it might well help to develop a skill that would prove very useful in the home. "What had she made?" Well, up till now, a number of soft toys, two dogs, a couple of cats and some penguins, although not everyone in the Society makes the same kind of thing. When we asked how she first became interested she said that it was cold, in the middle of winter, and it was one way of getting inside. Her first visit was both successful and enjoyable, and so she "kept on going."

At the past two Christmas Concerts the School Recorder Group has been warmly applauded and we were glad to be able to exchange a few words with one of the members. "Name?" "No, couldn't you leave it out?"

"Why do you play?"

"Just for fun."

"What does it entail?"

"Going to the Music Room every Thursday at 1-20 p.m."

"Is it the same just before a concert?"

"No. Then, we practise every day."

"Did you enjoy playing in the concert?"

"Of course."

"Do you feel that you are doing this for the School?"

"No. I only play because I want to."

"Do you have to be able to read music?"

"Yes, but you can learn quickly."

Angela Brown is Junior Hockey Captain and she told us that she too plays mainly for enjoyment rather than because of any sense of duty. When we asked whether the result was the most important thing about a game, she replied that although obviously everyone likes to win, she finds a good game equally satisfying even if they failed to win. The chief attraction in going to play at other schools is that you can enjoy meeting people — without having to do any of the chores. Like a good captain, Angela preferred to talk about the team rather than herself. She felt that everyone had played well this year and that the team's record was quite a good one. Special thanks, she felt, were due to Mrs. Pickersgill and to Mr. Miller for all the invaluable work they had done for the team.

Kelly explained that his duties as captain of the U/13 XV included checking travelling plans, collecting fares and trying to keep in touch with the members of the team so that they all knew when and where to turn up. When asked whether he played in order to represent the school or simply because he enjoyed playing he replied that it was mainly for the enjoyment. Did he prefer rugby or football? Rugby, definitely. Did he play rugby other than at school? No, not much. Did he feel that being captain was something of a responsibility? Yes.

There are, of course, those who make their contribution within the form organisation — the monitors. Not all of them are equally efficient and many of them do their jobs only because they were "invited" to do so but without them form efficiency would be seriously impaired. On the whole we found that most monitors are content with their jobs, although there is considerable variety in the tasks which they are asked to perform. One monitor replied: "It doesn't amount to much except to collect in the previous night's homework and to remind the teachers about that day's homework. This latter job unfortunately does little to increase one's popularity with the rest of the class." The window monitor whom we interviewed replied solemnly "My job is to keep the room ventilated."

The monitor who enjoyed the title of form captain said that his job was to keep the form quiet and to fetch teachers if they are late. As the teachers had never yet been late, so far there had been few complications.

Blackboard monitors, we found, need to be tall, otherwise the top part of the board never gets cleaned. As for the door monitors, they complained that they were mainly redundant — "The teacher always gets there first."

The outstanding event of the term was, of course, H.M.S. Pinafore and John Baker was approached mainly because he seemed to be the youngest member of the cast. John was in the sailors' chorus and stoutly maintained that he greatly enjoyed the whole thing in spite of the long and frequent rehearsals that were necessary. It was his first appearance on the stage and he had not previously been interested in dramatic productions in any way. His main hobby is stamp collecting. His favourite song in the opera? The finale at the end of the second act.

Margaret Norris, is just one of four librarians from the fifth form. Her interest in books dates from her days at primary school and, although a regular user of our School Library ever since she came here, she did not become actively involved in the work of the library until she answered Mr. Downer's call for volunteers from the fifth form. She is glad to be able to do what she considers to be a very worth-



while job and she has been greatly impressed by the organisation of the Library and by all the work that goes on behind the scenes. One of the main tasks is that of cataloguing new books and this has to be done mainly during the lunch hour. Their work also includes the general tidying up of the library, replacing books on the shelves, putting magazines on the rack and picking up all the litter so unnecessarily left behind. The miracle is that the library manages to have such an active life in the notoriously overcrowded conditions which it has to endure.

To all those who have assisted in the preparation of this article we are extremely grateful and can only add that their general willingness to co-operate is but a further example of their wish to contribute to the life of the School. *(In addition to those interviewed, the Editors wish to thank the following for their help with this article—Carolyn Campbell, Eileen Mills, Dorcas Howe, Judith Dunn, Janis Yates, and Alex Bamber.)*

## Organised Leisure



*We asked members of the lower school to say when and under what conditions they do their homework and to summarise their own and their parents' attitude to this nightly activity. Below is a selection from their outpourings.*

On arriving home at 4-15 or thereabouts I drop my satchel on the nearest chair and begin to unpack it. (5ths)

Some nights my homework has to wait because I have to catch hens to put them in cages or do anything else my father needs me for (1c)

The time of my homework arrives after tea every night — that is if I have nothing better to do. (4/7)

I usually do my homework after tea, but if I have more than usual I start before tea, then I am effectively occupied so as to escape table-setting or tea-making (5ths)

The greatest difficulty arises when I try to do my homework and eat my tea at the same time whilst sitting in an armchair (5ths)

My homework is sometimes done in the morning but most often at about 8.30 or later in the evening after I have helped to do some housework. (3L).

If I can find an excuse I leave it until after tea but unfortunately my mother keeps on nagging and nagging until I have to do it to have some peace. (1c).

At weekends I do my homework in bed so that I can have an excuse for staying in bed late. (3L)

My homework gets done at a time best for me and the school — both are taken into consideration. My conscience does not allow me to put it off without good reason — I blame my upbringing for this. The speed at which I do it corresponds directly to the weather — hot weather, fast homework. (4/6)

I usually start the homework about half-past six and finish about half-past eight or nine. I do not begrudge spending this time on homework although in the summer when daylight extends to 10 o'clock and the weather is warm I often have a hard job to dissuade myself from throwing my books into my satchel and going out (5/7)

I do my homework in the sitting room with the rest of the family. I find I can concentrate better with the television blaring away and the shop bell ringing all the time. (1c)

I do my homework in front of the fire in the living room while the rest of the family are watching television. I could go into a separate room which is heated but I do not wish to do so. (5ths)



If there is a lot of noise from my younger brothers my mother keeps them quiet until I have finished (3L)

I usually do my homework at night.  
I lie on the floor in the living room in front of the fire (3L)

I do my homework in the same room as the family but there is no noise except for my parents telling everyone to keep quiet. (3L).

I do my homework in the living room. The television is on in the next room and dad is listening to the radio in the room I am in. If I ask for it to be turned down I am told to go upstairs to my bedroom to do it. This room is heated but it is directly above the room with the television in it. (5ths)

My parents will shut up while I'm working and will even refrain from switching on till I have finished even if it is something that they really want to watch. (5ths)

Then I am in command, I decide how much noise they are allowed to make and when the television is switched on. (4/6)

If there is a television programme I like, I watch the programme, turn the sound down during commercials and do a little homework then. (1c).

Homework becomes very infuriating when I hear my favourite television programme starting in the next room. (5ths)

I find that doing my homework in front of the television distracts me but being surrounded by other people I am less liable to start day dreaming than I would be if I were on my own. (5/7)

If I do my homework while watching television it takes me about an hour but if I do it without watching it takes me about thirty minutes. (1c)

If I stay in the living room, I am always interrupted by something either the dogs howling at my brother, the cat screaming at the bird or my mother nattering to my dad. If I go into my room, someone will come and ask 'Where's this?' or 'Where's that?' or 'Come and get your tea.' At this rate, I am usually doing my homework at half-past nine or even later. (4/6)

My parents see that my room is heated but invariably they have television on too loud. (5ths)\*

Unfortunately my choice of room is somewhat predestined because my homework is a joint family effort: 'Mum, what's . . . ?' 'Dad, how does . . . ?' (5ths)

I do my homework in my bedroom. The only sounds being the cat's purr and the ticks of five clocks (if they are all going) I do it from 6.30 until 7.30, then I practice my violin, mouth organ and recorder. The room has heating but I don't use it. (3L)

Unfortunately the heater does not heat the room. So bogged down with my duffle coat on and a rug round my legs to stop the terrible draught I manage to do it this way. (5ths)

The room is well heated with a gas fire and I sometimes have to open a few windows to cool down. (3L)

My mother would rather watch television than never speaks anyway except for the occasional test my Latin sentences and my father, well he objection to me saying my logarithms out loud.

Even with all the quietness I do not succeed in getting all my Latin homework right. (1c)

I sometimes start playing the guitar when I am learning something e.g. poetry, Latin, etc. (3L)

I finally go over my learning homework in bed before I switch my light out. (3L)

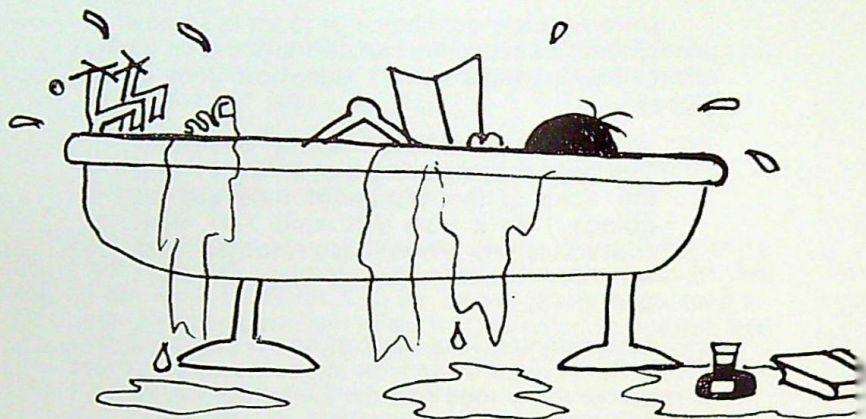
I tend to do less when my parents are out and more when the tele is at the menders. (5ths)

The Homework I cannot do I leave till the following morning when I am in good company with a few friends. (3L)

I find myself in a state of constant procrastination resulting in traumatic anxiety punctuated by intermittent televisional disturbances resulting in parental oppression and consequently magistrophobe intentions leading to ejaculations to the same effect followed by self-induced hysteria resulting in violent physical exertion leading to a crippled younger brother. (4/6)



I have tried learning vocab in the bath but unfortunately the outcome wasn't too successful.



The room I work in is not particularly warm and my brain tends to freeze a little. (4/6)

My parents think homework almost sacred and think I ought to do it in the comparative quiet of the dining room. However, they do allow me to do it when and where I wish. If I want to go out and still have a little homework to do I say that I have finished it. (5ths)

The attitude with which I do my homework depends on whether I have anything else to do or not. This also affects where I do my homework, for if I want to go out I do it in the dining room and get it done reasonably quickly. However, if I have nowhere to go I do it in the front room with the tele on and I can take all night. (5/7).

On Fridays I do it on Sunday afternoons. (1c)

My mother thinks we have too much some nights and not enough on others. I agree. (4/6)

My mother likes to see me with a furrowed brow. (4/6)

I like to think that my homework goes first on the list but that doesn't mean that I don't have any fun and never go out at nights because I do. I don't think that endless hours should be spent on homework like some of the better ones in the class do to get it to perfection. (3L)

I do not think that it does us any good as we usually cannot do it and either (a) do it together on the telephone or (b) do it on the way to school. (5ths)

Sometimes, however, I get a burst of energy and do my homework promptly and properly but this rarely lasts (4/6)

When I first came to the school I did my homework as soon as I got home, I was an angel. (1c)

There can be no doubt that homework is a bind and a thorough bore, particularly when you have been working all day and are thoroughly depressed by the agony of irregular verbs and compound interest and have to give your leisure time for further study. (4ths)

Homework is the curse of all school children, an unjustifiable affliction that makes sure that **everyone** is miserable, not only the children! (3L)

Homework is something that must be done but I do wish there was a break sometimes in the nightly ritual. (5ths)

Nearer to exams my revision work is done in bed accompanied by sweets, drinks and, if I feel unfit for work, the radio. (5ths)

I then have to settle in the kitchen. It takes a while for the room to heat up. Then just as it is beginning to get a bit cosy, someone comes for coal, which is kept outside. Doors are banged and icy blasts whistle past me. (5ths)

It's not that I dislike homework, it is just that the conditions in which I have to do it are so appalling. We have simply got to accept the fact that some of us get absolutely no co-operation from our parents, who (so we are told) are now enjoying more leisure than ever before. In fact, the only place suitable for school work is school itself. (5ths)

It seems to me disgraceful that we should be prevented from doing homework when we want to do it. (5/7)



I feel that the ideal place to do homework is where your friends are doing the same work, not so we would confer (although this isn't completely out of my mind), but it is less distracting to know that you are not the only one having to work. (4ths)

I don't regard my homework as important. I think it is a nuisance and wish I didn't have to do it. (1c)

No time is left for other interests such as reading, yet we are expected to indulge in these activities as well. (5/7)

Surely homework could be set in advance for the whole week I would like to be able to plan my time so that I can keep an evening free for some other activity (reading, hobbies, etc.) even if it means doing more during the remaining evenings. (4/6)

Of course, if homework is set for the following week it is always left until the night before. (4/6)



## OUT OF THIS WORLD

# Staff Elections

by Carolyn Campbell 2L/2

The Spring Term 1966 was dominated by the General Election of that year and with all that talk about democracy it was probably inevitable that someone should suggest that teachers too ought to be elected.

The S.A.D.S. (Society for the Advancement of Democracy in Schools) soon gained considerable support and elections were accordingly arranged and one by one members of staff issued their manifestos.

The voters were interviewed by a member of the Junior Committee and it soon became clear that a successful candidate would have to satisfy the following demands.

"The abolition of punishment."

"He will have to give only a minimum of homework and mark it leniently."

"Must have a good sense of humour."

"A teacher must be kind and understanding. He must believe in relaxation."

All of which reflected the electorate's preoccupation with what seems to be nearest to the hearts of all of us — a pandered work-free existence! Such is democracy!

However, at least we can happily record that during the period of the election all the candidates went around with friendly, smiling faces!

## OUT OF THIS WORLD

# The Thing

by Stewart Turner, 2L/2

We came to school one morning and there it was. What on earth could it be? Was it what it seemed to be? A piece of useless equipment left behind by the builders.

Why then had they left it there, in the middle of the playground? With unaccustomed curiosity members of the school gathered round. Imaginations ran riot. Comment was free and frivolous. The days went by and we became used to 'The Thing.' Conversation in its vicinity was entirely uninhibited. Whilst the duty master was patrolling somewhere round the other side of the school or across the field guilty secrets were furtively exchanged by boys in characteristic stances around the Thing.

Now that the object has been removed we are at last able to inform the school that it contained electronic devices which recorded and transmitted both sound and picture to the Staff Room. The recordings, we understand, are not



to be made generally available and are to be stored away in some safe place.

Not that this is news to the majority of us, for who on earth could be expected to believe that a useless piece of equipment would be left lying around, here of all places?

## Mrs. McDade

by Eric Dunn, 3G

Until I interviewed Mrs. McDade I had not realised the extent of the School Secretary's duties. Although there are possibly some pupils who have never seen her, even they must be aware of her existence, and indeed she is a key figure in the lives of all of us at Balshaw's. One might say that she is a "back room girl" whose work infringes on most school activities.

Before we ever arrived as first year pupils she had sent letters to our parents, regarding our admission, and when the time comes for us to leave it will be she who administers the last rites.

Though sometimes thought of as the Headmaster's secretary, she is, in fact, the School secretary. Much of the administration of the school lies in her capable hands. She records our attendances and absences, deals with the school accounts, receives dinner and other money, and devotes her time and attention to bills, orders, receipts and communications of all kinds. She is constantly busy, not just between the hours of nine and four, but long after we have gone home, and even during the school holidays.

This short account shows how indebted we are to Mrs. McDade for the eighteen months she has been with us, and we are indeed sorry that she has now left us to become a full-time housewife. Not that her interest in the school was confined to her work as secretary, for she is an old girl of the school, and a member of the Old Balshavians hockey team. On more than one occasion she gave vocal support to school concerts. Many will remember her for her un-failing cheerfulness and sympathy, and for this we should like to record the School's gratitude.

Though Mrs. McDade has gone, the work remains, and to do it we welcome Miss Walker. This is perhaps the place to mention two of the things that Mrs. McDade felt to be worthy of comment — dinner money brought in late, and pupils ignoring her routine by coming to the office during the lunch hour. This sort of thing is very tiresome for the secretary. Can we not show the sincerity of our welcome to Miss Walker by making a real effort to avoid causing her extra work and by visiting the office only at the appointed times?

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# CONTRIBUTED

It

by Elizabeth Duval, 1B

As we walked along the track which led to the edge of the wood (Mary, my friend, was with me). I was deep in thought, thinking about the mysterious book I had been reading the day before, all about ghosts, phantoms and skeletons.

I had just thought of that specially mysterious bit where a cold, sinister hand had grabbed hold of a girl's neck, when my thoughts were interrupted by a scream. It was Mary. Mary was cowering down behind me as if she had just seen a ghost. I heard her stammering some utter rubbish about a white form gliding and floating through the trees. I looked up but I could see nothing. Whatever it was it was not there now, I told her, so, on we walked and I went back to my book.

Suddenly I heard another scream. It was Mary again. This was going a bit too far so I told her if she did not stop screaming every five minutes I would give her something to scream about. (I was a year older than Mary and felt I could talk to her like this). We walked on again in silence as before, only this time I was wondering what I would do if I saw a ghost. I really did not believe in ghosts but when Mary kept screaming and making up stories about them it made me feel awfully jittery and shaky.

I looked up and my hair nearly stood on end. No wonder Mary had screamed. There it was, a white form just as Mary had described it, gliding through the trees like a bat.

Mary noticed that I had stood still and gazed towards the trees to where I was pointing. Again for the third time Mary screamed and a cold shiver ran down my spine and made my stomach turn over. I ran behind a bush with Mary following. We both crouched down and I covered my head with my hands for fear of the creature (IT) coming down on me and carrying me off in its huge eagle-like talons. All was quiet except for the gentle breeze which whistled through the trees. I slowly raised my head and nearly got the shock of my life. There sitting on a lower branch of the silver birch which grew opposite, staring at me with large, round, greenish eyes, was an owl.

# A Funny Thing

by Pauline Beales, 4/6

Have you ever tried to write a humorous story? I did, once, but I'm afraid I didn't succeed. I began by asking my family for suggestions.

"Write about witches." "No, write about that stupid dog up the road." So I got no help from that direction. So I had to write one myself.

'Well, loads of funny things happen in life. It should be easy,' I thought. One hour and one blank piece of paper later I had changed my mind.

What about funny comments? The things my small brother comes out with! "A boy in our class does smell funny. You know how paraffin smells? Well, he doesn't smell like that"??? I'm still working that one out. Again I was at a blank.

"Write about the funny things you do, they'll raise a laugh anywhere," suggests my father.

"Oh, yes? Like what?"

"Like saying 'Look at that big rabbit, gran'. The rabbit was a big spaniel."

"Do you have to dig up the past?"

"You're still as potty."

"Ha, ha."

So then I thought of expanding a very funny joke, sort of cheating. However I couldn't think of any funny jokes.

'Perhaps a short, witty saying will do.' But then there was the problem of finding one. Once again I drew a blank. What could I do? I was running out of time.

'Perhaps he'll believe me if I say I was ill all week-end and every night. No, he's not that daft. Anyway, I must persevere it's "for the school." Wonder what other people have put. I hope they're finding it as hard as I am! Oh dear. What can I do?

'Bandage up all my fingers and say I burnt them? He'll probably say "Oh well, dictate it and I'll write it down for you." You just can't win with that man!

'I have the solution! I'll just say I hadn't the inspiration necessary. "Oh you have." "I haven't. "You give up too easily".

'I know. I'm a coward. I hate making a fool of myself, and what better way is there than writing a stupid story?'

"I know lots of funny things. Like mm . . . I can't remember just at the moment." Oh well, the poor little boy tried to help."

Now I must begin.

"Once upon." That's not very funny. I'll rely on someone else to have written one. Someone, somewhere, knows something funny. I hope!



## Cross Country

Although many members of the school probably do not realise it, there is a school cross-country team. One fixture was run at Chorley against Chorley Grammar and Rivington Grammar and another at Kirkham against Kirkham Grammar and King Edward's, Lytham. Both games were lost, however, owing mainly to an inexperienced team and much older and more experienced opponents. The performances of Pearson, the captain, however, were particularly creditable, finishing third and second in the respective games.

*Team: Pearson (Capt.), Almond, Crowe, Ryding, F., Nightingale, Hilton, Jenkins, Jolly.*

## Hockey

*Captain's Report, by Diana Schofield*

Another hockey season was successfully concluded with a match against Rivington which we won by three goals to one, with no major mishaps.

Throughout the season, the condition of the pitches has left much to be desired, after various onslaughts by the elements, and the homing instincts of the smaller boys who insist on indulging in various obscure activities on the bottom field. The pitter-patter of the 1st and 2nd XI's tiny "tootsies" thundering across the turf perhaps propagated the illustrious quagmire. Thus, to add to the intricacies of the game one had to find the ball before one could hit it.

It is very gratifying to see some very promising and enthusiastic members of the Under 14 and Under 15 teams, which augurs well for the future first XI.

The climax of the School's hockey fixtures, is the County Senior and Junior Hockey Tournaments. The Juniors were not on peak form, but they made a gallant, though unfruitful, attempt. The 1st XI who played at Whalley Range Grammar School in the Senior Tournament were more successful, being knocked out only in the quarter-finals by Ashton-in-Makerfield. Susan Walmsley particularly deserves mention for the skilful way in which she co-ordinated with the team when asked to play in the tournament a short notice.

Christine Spedding has been awarded colours for her admirable contribution to the 1st XI, Hazel Ryding has her colours re-awarded, and Edith Park and Diana Schofield have their colours re-awarded for the second time.

Edith Park has had a very successful season playing a staunch left back, but occasionally trying to dash into the circle to get a goal making it necessary for a panic-stricken forward (usually myself) to run feverishly back into defence. A moment of severe anxiety was once alleviated when Edith,

having knocked our renowned trainer and umpire Mr. Miller for six, had the forethought to pick him gently up out of the mud.

1st Team — J. Prescott, E. Park, J. Dalton, H. Ryding, A. Voss, K. Taylor, C. Spedding, D. Schofield (capt.), E. Watkinson, H. Sumner, F. Newsham.

The House knock-outs have been well attended and exciting, Cuerden and Worden being the finalists, but Cuerden were very well beaten. Farington won the League Cup in well-fought matches with Worden a close second.

As retiring captain I would like to wish the school teams all the best of luck for their 1966-67 fixtures and will follow their progress with interest. I hope they have more co-operative weather than that which has fated our matches this year.



## Aeolian Visitations

*A. Oakes, U.VI.Arts*

*with apologies to B. W. Scale*

Smoke rises vertically and sea is glossily smooth,  
Smoke drifts but vanes do not respond.

Leaves rustle.

Leaves and small twigs in motion;

Small branches move; raises dust

Small leafed trees swayed,

Large branches move, telephone wires whistle

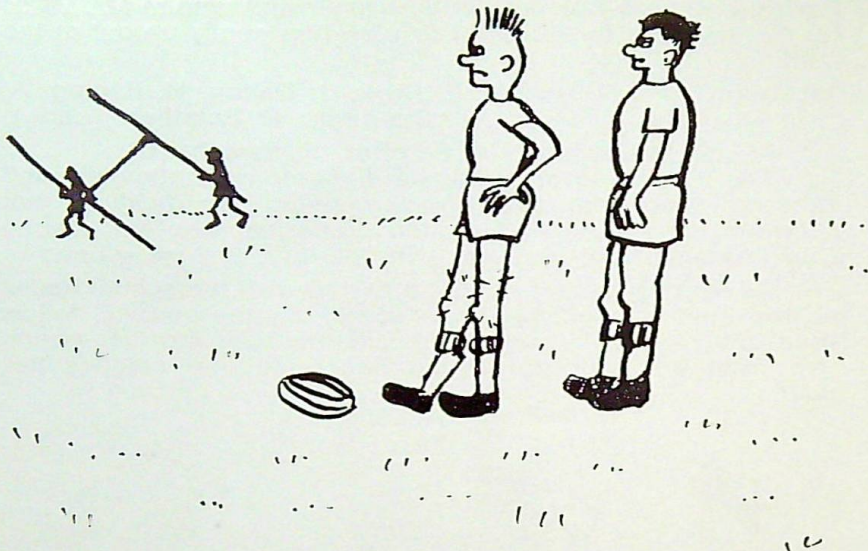
Whole trees in motion, walking difficult

Twigs broken from trees, chimney pots brought down;

Widespread damages, trees uprooted.

Whole area laid waste.





## Rugby

*Captain's Report  
by S. C. Park*

The School 1st XV had its most successful season ever, achieving an unprecedented 16 out of a possible 17 victories. The one defeat was sustained at the hands of Upholland G.S. soon after the Christmas vacation when some of the team appeared to be still suffering from the effects of the festivities.

The Spring term fixture list was considerably shortened by inclement weather and consequently several interesting games were cancelled; notably against Blackpool G.S. and King George VI's, Southport. Nevertheless good victories were achieved over Hutton and Ormskirk G.S., the latter by a wide margin. The excellent results have been accomplished essentially by team effort and this has been recognised by the presentation of colours to all the 1st team.

The two wingers Baldwin and Winn have scored more than 20 tries each, the former scoring a record number of 24. This formidable total again reflects the endeavours of the whole team for the openings have to be created before the wingers can run in the tries.

Next season the majority of this year's 1st XV will have left but with the remaining five or six members plus some potentially good players from the U.15's it should prove possible to form quite a useful team. As retiring captain I can only wish them an equally enjoyable and successful season.

The 2nd XV have lived somewhat in the shadow of the 1st team but have improved since Christmas, winning two out of their three games. Their overall record is not so impressive but it must be remembered that many of the opposition field 2nd XV's almost equal in ability to their 1st team because of the vast choice available in their sixth forms.

The junior teams have had rather a mediocre season, particularly the U.13's whose results have been very disappointing, especially after showing some signs of a revival just before Christmas. The U.15's have improved since the vacation but their performance in general could have been better as the results verify.

## S.C.M.

*by Kathleen Glover*

The Student Christian Movement group has had three meetings this term. The first two meetings were based on this year's theme — "Should we care for others," and for the third meeting we hired a film.

The speaker at our first meeting, the Reverend H. C. Sutton, B.A., gave us a very interesting talk about his work as Chaplain at H.M. Prison, Preston. At our second meeting, a member of the Blackpool branch of the Samaritans spoke to us about his work, and told us how the members of this voluntary organisation are able to help people. Both these meetings were fairly well attended, but we would be very pleased if more members could manage to come in the future.

The film which we hired for our third meeting was entitled "Teenage Marriage" and, as we had hoped, was well attended. The film was an American production, and even though the plot was rather predictable, it was quite enjoyable. The idea of hiring a film for one of our meetings seems to be very popular with our members, and as it also helps with the group's funds, we hope to hire another film in the future.

Unfortunately, we had to postpone our proposed visit to Shepherd Street Mission Children's Home at Preston. However, by the time this magazine has been distributed, we hope that we will have been able to go to the Children's Home.



# On the Downs

Helen Meadows, 2F

I saw a horse go galloping by,  
With a shake of his mane, and a roll of his eye,  
A girl on his back, a dog at his side,  
Oh, what a wonderful, glorious ride,  
Racing across the turf so fast,  
Gallop, gallop, gallop past.  
I saw a horse go galloping by,  
His ears pricked, his tail a-fly,  
Pounding the ground, hammering his feet  
Where his hooves and the heather meet.  
Racing across the turf so fast,  
Gallop, gallop, gallop past.

## Tropical Fish

by Alison King, L.VI.A.

This is one of the most colourful and rewarding hobbies. The thrill of breeding these living jewels is exceeded only by exchanging or selling the resulting fry for fresh stock! A community tank is one of the best for the home, as several breeds can be exhibited together, their differences in colour making a beautiful picture. Once the tank has been equipped, and has been left working for a few days, the fish can be introduced, and if a community tank is desired, the owner must purchase fairly peaceful and company-loving fish.

The Guppy is an ideal fish for the beginner, as it is a relatively cheap, but beautifully coloured life-bearer. Breeding is undertaken many times a year, but the male is continually displaying his fins and performing his dance of courtship. Platies, a few shillings dearer than the Guppy, are also ideal community fish, and will inter-breed with swordtails if none of their own breed are present. Many colour variegations of the Platy exist, including several shades on the same fish. The Danio family, including the lively, shoal-forming Zebra Danio, and the calmer Pearl Danio, are also ideal for the mixed tank.

Obviously, many of the fish must be of similar size, as many larger varieties habitually eat eggs and fry, and will attack and kill smaller fish. For this reason, some representatives of the boisterous Barb family are not recom-



mended, and it is wiser to buy the smaller Golden, and Cherry Barb. However small and unobtrusive a fish may appear to be, remember that their growth rate is fast, and a small Barb can soon become the tyrant of the tank. The male Siamese fighting fish, very beautiful with his long flowing fins and rich colours, also tends to terrorise other fish, and will fight to the death with another male of his own species. Male swordtails are rarely troublesome, but must be provided with female interest! The best of the males however, generally take longer to develop their sword-tails. The Gourami family are ideal community dwellers, and vary from the smaller Dwarf, and rare sparkling Gourami, to the much larger group, including Blue, Lace, and Moonlight Gouramis, but in spite of their size, the latter group rarely attack and kill other fish. Angel fish too are generally peaceful, but it is useless to try and breed any variety if there is a large Angel, or Gourami, present. Members of the Cichlid family can also be included, but the larger specimens will wreck a tank before attempting to breed. Many of the scavenging catfish, especially the Corydoras family, are surprisingly expensive, but that breed is valuable for his diligence and endurance in keeping the tank clean. The eel family tend to burrow during the day, as do tropical snails, and the latter can become a serious pest. Other fish, including the beautiful Tetra family, the velvety Black Mollies, and colourful rasboras, make an ideal community, and these families include self-coloured, striped, and 'silver' fish, so enabling the collector to establish a varied tank from comparatively few family groups. It is wise however, to invest in several fish of the same breed, as lone representatives tend to become rogues, and some single fish, like the shy neon tetra and Dwarf Gourami, tend to hide on the tank bottom, whereas a shoal of them would enchant anyone with their swift movements.

Keeping tropical fish therefore, needs a balance of many things. A water temperature of about 75 F is the most common, as extremes either way affect breeding and can cause disease. For this reason, a thermometer, and a supply of the more common disease-remedies, is essential, as one sick fish can infect all the others if not cured in time. The numbers and breeds therefore, must be planned according to size and temperament, and the tank should, if possible, have an aerator and filter to aid plants in keeping the water fresh. The plants themselves should be arranged pleasingly and economically as many varieties propagate themselves, but tank lighting must be consistent if the plants are to survive. It is this balance, helped by correct and varied feeding, that transforms a boring round of cleaning and expense, into an informative and delightful hobby.



# Season of Promise

by Kathleen Cobham, 1B

John and Susan were trotting along the road merrily, hand in hand. How important they felt! It was the first time that their mother had ever let them venture out by themselves. They stopped frequently to examine the small buds which seemed to be coming to life again.

"I do like spring!" exclaimed Susan.

As they wandered on they met the milkman.

"Hello kids, hop in and I'll give you a ride. Where are you off to?"

"We're going to Aunt Clara's house. Mum let us come by ourselves!" exclaimed John proudly.

"It's a nice day isn't it? I think spring's come." ejaculated the milk-man.

"Would you please drop us here? We've to make a call for mummy," asked Susan.

"Course love, been nice talkin' to you. I'll be seeing you again sometime. Goodbye."

John and Susan jumped out of the van. They walked a while then knocked at Mrs. Primton's door. She came to the door.

"Good-morning children. How are you? Very well I hope. Did your mother send you?"

"Yes Mrs. Primton she did. Would you buy a raffle-ticket?" asked Susan.

"Yes, I suppose so. Isn't it lovely weather? It is beautiful. There doesn't seem a thing wrong in all the world!" exclaimed Mrs. Primton.

"It's very nice weather. Spring seems to be here," remarked John, copying the milk-man.

"My dear boy, how right you are!" exclaimed Mrs. Primton.

The children set out again. They saw the butcher coming along. He was fat and jovial.

"Good morning children," he said, in his deep resonant voice. "What a splendid day it is. Spring didn't take long to come this year."

"Hello Mr. Butcher. We're going to Auntie Clara's all on our own," said Susan.

"How grown up you are!" laughed the butcher (knowing how much he was pleasing them). "I really **must** be off. Good-bye, children."

"Good-bye Mr. Butcher," they chorused together.

Then they met Miss Dreamy staring into space and not seeing them. She was muttering "God's in His heaven, all's right with the world."

Then the children spotted something at the side of the road.

"Why, it's a rabbit asleep. Come on let's wake it up?" exclaimed John.

They ran up to the rabbit.

"Why, it's asleep with its eyes open!" murmured Susan, "and look, it has a hole in its head. How did it get that?"

The children tried in vain to wake the rabbit. But the rabbit was past wakening.

# A Story with a Twist

by Ann Smith, 1B

"Hello Wendy," said Miss Barnes the school-teacher, "what are you collecting flowers for?"

"For my granny, who isn't very well," replied Wendy.

"Well pick some daisies like the ones you picked for me. They were beautiful," said Miss Barnes.

After a short time the vicar of Wendy's parish came along. "Hello Wendy, what are you doing all alone in the wood?" he said.

"I'm picking flowers for my granny, who isn't very well," she said.

"Why not buy some palm leaves at the florists; they are quite cheap and it is Palm Sunday next Sunday, he suggested.

After quarter of an hour the village policeman came past and said, "Morning Miss Wendy, what are those flowers for?"

"My granny, she is very ill in bed."

"Well, I must be on my way now, but why not pick some snowdrops, they look very attractive at this time of the year." With that the policeman went on his way.

"Oh dear," thought Wendy, "this wood is getting quite busy." Just as Wendy was thinking it was time to go home, she saw the postman.

"Well hello, Wendy, I see you are collecting flowers; are they for anyone special?" he asked.

"They are for my granny, she is very ill," Wendy replied crossly, because she was tired of people asking her why she was collecting flowers.

"Well, don't worry, those flowers at the side of her bed will soon make her better."

"Ha, ha," laughed Wendy, "they are not for her bed: they are for her grave when she dies."



# Two Sides of Library Life

*As seen by two Old Balshavians, Dorothy Browne and Kathleen Kazer*

On entering the County Library, one would hope to find the customary 'SILENCE' placard, or, failing that, an atmosphere of peace; instead of which there is a constant hammering outside, harmonising beautifully with a pneumatic drill. The reason? Progress is with us once again and soon there will be a fine new lift (or should I say elevator?) to save our aching legs: meanwhile we endure the noise with the characteristic patience of dedicated librarians. "I wouldn't like to stand around all day listening to that" is a typical parting shot from well-meaning borrowers.

However, we don't "stand around all day." There is plenty of work to be done, and during the earlier part of the day, most of my time is spent in a cosy little room across the corridor known as Monthly Loans. Here, books are sent out for one month to the branch and mobile libraries, and books being returned are either sent out again on request or returned to the shelves in the main library. In addition to this is a flourishing Polish library which, for reasons unknown, is kept separately from the main one. Unfortunately, we are not supplied with Polish phrase books . . .

During National Library Week, a few borrowers thought it an ideal time to return overdue books—their reactions were somewhat varied on discovering that they were not exempt from paying fines, and thus departed a good deal poorer than when they came in.

Does a librarian "sit and read all day" as is popularly supposed. Each afternoon I work in the main library, and if a borrower requires a book which is not on the shelf, I am sometimes sent down to the sub-basement (yes, there is no end to our resources) to rummage through the reserve stock. All the duplicates are kept down here, while further along the corridor is the Music and Drama department which is a complete library in itself. Back upstairs again, I usually manage to glance discreetly through a few books (in rare moments of idleness), at the same time keeping a watchful eye on the counter; thus I am able to appear industrious while taking a rest—a coveted art which I discovered in my early days at Balshaw's and which will no doubt prove useful during the next two years at library school. Over to Kathleen in the Children's Library:

This is not really a library at all, but the centre where all the new children's books for the whole county arrive from the booksellers and are then sent out to branches and schools. Children are not allowed to borrow books from

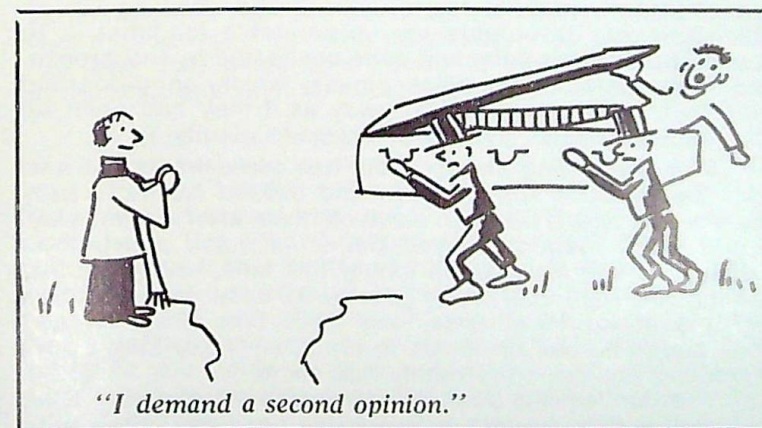
here, and so are rarely seen. An occasional schoolgirl accompanying a teacher does manage to fall off a ladder now and then.

My work is very routine and rather dull. All that is required here is a knowledge of the alphabet and the ability to count. Ex-members of the Balshaw's Anti-Games League would be amazed to see me heaving boxes of books, pushing loaded trolleys at dangerous speeds down the corridor and cavorting with great agility up and down ladders with an armful of books. The super-developed biceps (or triceps?) in my right arm is due to excessive use of the duplicating machine which is the bane of my life. All the junior non-fiction books need two extra filing cards which the booksellers cannot (or will not) supply. Therefore I have to duplicate sixty copies at a time, and as the machine runs on methylated spirits and has to be cranked by hand, it is indeed a tiring process.

The library has its own jargon—"LCL 65's" and "primary pool stocks"; it took me a fortnight to realise that when anyone was "over the other side," he or she was merely in the adult library.

I work for much of the time in the cells—once part of a police station. The door is four inches thick with huge bolts and a peep-hole, and fortunately is always left open. Life is enlivened by the porter-cum-packer who is very helpful and has saved me from numerous mistakes.

Life in the library has convinced me that librarianship is not for me—but I wish anyone so inclined the best of luck and hope that this account has not discouraged them.





# On giving pills to cats

by Alison King, L.V.I.A.

1. Take pill in right hand and cat in left.
2. Open jaws of cat.
3. Pause to bathe scratches and attempt to kneel on cat.
4. Retrieve pill from Aspidistra and cat from chimney.
5. Place cat in bag leaving head free.
6. Look for pill, which is now in bag.
7. Attempt to tie front paws of perishing animal together.
8. Open jaws of P.A. avoiding flailing back legs.
9. Find replacement for soggy pill.
10. Release dosed animal to make sure pill well and truly swallowed.
11. Recapture cat which was sitting on perishing pill.
12. Grasp cat firmly between knees.
13. Pause to apply tourniquet.
14. Force open jaws to P.A. to retrieve forefinger.
15. Attempt to flick pill down P.A.'s throat.
16. Apply iodine to torn thumb.
17. Suspend cat from door handle.
18. Haul door back on hinges.
19. Give up. Release cat. Put pill down and reach for aspirin.
20. Phone Doctor. Have swallowed cat pill.

## Now or Never

by John Curless, 4/6

Looking up into the sky you see the dullness of the late afternoon, and also feel a slight breeze which you think will be neither favourable nor unfavourable for what is to come. The water is calm and quite unaffected by the breeze, and those threatening black clouds, which once loomed overhead, have slowly drifted away as if they had seen all this before. Even so the sky still remains cloudy.

At last the long awaited hour has come when you and your companions appear tense and excited but not really scared. You slowly begin to move off, then, after a short way, at the given instruction, you put on a quick spurt, then slacken off and spurt again longer this time, and gradually coming to a halt. Everything goes quiet, once more you can feel the atmosphere tense, why does time drag on so? Then suddenly the air seems to erupt, all those long hours of waiting are over, the reality has come.

You can feel the coldness leaving your body, and it all becomes a fight to gain a favourable position. Those who

are lying on the bank, on the Surrey side, can see a long dark blue streak pass by, then this passes into the distance with a white streak of about the same size on the other side. But to you and your friends this is a fight, no, not a fight for existence, not quite that, although at times this crosses your mind, but a fight for something which you wonder if you will ever achieve or in fact why you are trying to achieve it in the first place. Although you know that you have to concentrate, and that you have to keep on fighting even when everything seems lost, because the rest of your companions need your support more than ever then and you can't let them down, can you? Apart from all this you wonder, when the fight is slipping from your grasp, why you ever got into this and is it all worth while. The crowds, you imagine, because you can't hear them, say that it is all worth while, those months of training and of mental as well as physical strain are real, no it isn't a dream. Then as the fight is in your favour you know that it is worth it, you feel on top of the world, it's almost over now.

Oh, but that was just a dream, you realise that you are behind the opponent is drawing away, all your hopes and wishes just float away, the end is in sight and you know that you cannot improve your position. You try, you continue to row, because you have to finish; the cox urges you on, he pleads for you to give your last ounce of strength and that's about as much as you have left. You can hear the shouts now, but everybody knows that it's all over. They have won, they flop down in their boats just managing to smile. You go alongside feeling just a little more sick than they do, and not able nor wanting to smile, but you congratulate them, the best team must have won. Then you think, all those months of training, hoping and wishing, even praying for something that you have just failed to achieve. "Hard lines, it was a good race," you hear people say. "Ha. You train hard, row over four miles from Putney to Mortlake, feeling sick at the end, and what for? Just to see your rivals triumphant.

All this runs through your mind, but especially the words that you said to yourself at the start of the race, "It's now or never." Well it looks as if it's going to be never, yes, there is always next year, but for someone else. You will be elsewhere. The congratulations and consolations of tonight will be your last reminder of something that you fought so hard for, yet just couldn't quite achieve. It's heartbreaking, your one and only chance, and you failed. Could you have done better? Well you will never have the chance to prove whether you could have or not, you've had your chance. Next year is another year and next year there will be a different crew.



# Hope

by Christine Taylor, 4/6

Old Kerry had always been able to look after herself quite well and was very independent. She could have managed easily enough now if it wasn't for that interfering busybody next door, she kept thinking, but she was here now and there was nothing she could do about it.

Actually, it wasn't the lady next door who had recommended that Kerry be taken to an old folks' home, but Bill, the young milk boy.

So often had he come into her slum of a house, to find her cowering in front of her little gas cooker, trying to keep warm.

"Kerry," he would say to her, "why don't you ask that nice Mrs. Simmons to come in and light a fire for you?"

"Oh, I can do it Bill," she'd reply, 'it's just that I'm so cold,' and once again Bill would fetch the coal in and light the fire.

Bill had a soft spot for old Kerry, perhaps because she reminded him of the mother he had hardly known. It wasn't her age that reminded him of her, for his mother had been very young when she had committed suicide, but Kerry possessed all the qualities of love and kindness that in Bill's mind, seemed ideal for a mother.

Kerry had a daughter who had left home, and since she had gone, there seemed to be no purpose left in Kerry's life. She had become forgetful and Bill had been afraid that she might forget to light the gas some morning and so gas herself.

Kerry's neighbours thought well of her, but if they offered to help in any way, the gentle-natured old woman would reply angrily that she didn't need "charity".

Bill wondered why Kerry was so short of money all the time. She had her pension, and so many old people managed on their allotted amount, why not Kerry? Recently, Bill had paid for her milk himself because she had no money. The situation had become so bad that Bill was visiting Kerry every night, bringing her food and keeping the fire burning. This had gone on for weeks but in time, Bill was unable to help her any more. There was no coal left and the winter was proving to be the most severe ever recalled in the past twenty-five years.

Under these conditions, Bill had been forced to apply for a vacancy in an old folks' home, even though he knew that it would break Kerry's heart to leave her home, for she was still a very proud individual.

At last the letter had arrived saying that a place had been found for Kerry.

Clutching her little case, which contained her pension book and a few personal belongings, Kerry had climbed into the taxi, helped up the step by Mrs. Simmons. Bill was working, so he had asked Mrs. Simmons to see Kerry into the taxi which he had ordered.

When she had arrived at the home, Kerry had been met by the matron and three old women who were staying there. She had a little room to herself and a sitting-room which she shared with the three old women. Everyone was very kind to her, especially her three companions, who had awaited her arrival eagerly.

Throughout the first day, Kerry never spoke to anyone. She was unhappy and wished she could die, but just before everyone went to bed, she was called to matron's office and was met by Bill. Poor old Kerry burst into tears and Bill comforted her. She poured out her story of how Mrs. Simmons had sent her to this place, but when Bill told her that he had sent her, she became silent, staring at him with eyes which seemed to be asking, "Why, oh why? How could you do this to me?"

Bill began to explain but was interrupted by matron who said it was Kerry's bedtime. Bill kissed her on the forehead and said goodnight, almost in tears himself, but still she never spoke.

"I'll come again tomorrow Kerry," he said as she walked past him. Then matron told Bill that on several occasions, Kerry had not collected her pension and that as she understood that Bill had been supporting her, he could now be repaid. Bill refused the money but asked matron to treat some of the pensioners.

The following day, Kerry walked about as if in a trance, and she didn't speak until a nurse brought her a big bunch of flowers from Bill with a message to say that he couldn't come that night.

"Oh, they're all the same," said one spiteful old lady who was jealous, "they come once and you never see them again!"

"My Bill's not like that!" replied Kerry indignantly, and from then on, she was as pleasant as anyone could be.

When Bill came the following day, Kerry apologised for the way she had acted, and said that the home wasn't too bad really, but she still wished she was in her own house.

"Wait till spring," said Bill, "there's always hope."

Through the cold winter months, Kerry tried to be content, thinking to herself whenever she was depressed, "There's always hope," and she often comforted many of the other old people with that little phrase.

But, despite all her hope, Kerry died on Christmas Eve.



# Camera in the Casbah

by Mr. B. L. Wilkinson

On my first night in Morocco I opened my hotel window and looked across the flat roofs of Tangier which stretched away to the sea. In the distance I could hear the weird strains of native music. How romantic it all was! I took a deep breath of the cool night air.

Suddenly I became aware of a strange and subtle odour which floated across the rooftops. I stood transfixed for a moment and then hastily closed the window. I went to bed thoughtfully.

Next morning I looked again across the rooftops of Tangier. In the daylight, gone was the romantic appeal of the previous night. Directly opposite to my window was a flat room acting as a chicken run. The chief glory of a scraggy collection of birds was a bantam cockerel which hopped from roof to roof dutifully followed in true Moslem style by its hens. Except on special occasions the hens were not allowed by the cockerel to approach too near him, nor were they permitted to touch stray morsels of food until the cockerel had first sampled the goods.

On these roofs, too, several stray cats made their playground, frolicking by day and getting down to the more serious things of life after nightfall. In the darkness could be heard snarlings and hissing, and crying and mewling. Next morning one of the toms would appear with its face badly slashed but evidently quite satisfied with its night's work.

Two of my reasons for going to Morocco at Christmas was to see the sun and to take coloured photographs. Though picturesque subjects in Morocco are many, I found it risky to take photographs as one would in European countries. Moslems do not appear to like being photographed; I am told they fear the existence of an evil eye in the camera lens. If this is so then it is no wonder that the sight of my twin-lens camera, with its two evil eyes, appeared to scare the burnouses off them. Girls in veils turned away in alarm and old men called on Allah to strike me down. One old man on a donkey in the Casbah brandished his stick at me, shrieking curses which could surely be heard all the way across the Sahara.

The great drawback to a stay in Morocco is that one is pestered to death by touts of all descriptions, anxious to show one round the Casbah or to sell anything from a carpet to a camel. It took me several days to evolve an adequate technique for dealing with them.

I soon learnt that it was fatal to be soft and generous for when word got round there would be a crowd round the hotel next day. On the other hand, if you refused to buy anything or to give anything, taunts were sometimes hurled at you. Thinking the problem over, I hit upon what I thought was a clever plan. My next encounter went something like this:

"Hallo, mister! Welcome to Tangier! Very pleased to see you and hope that you are having a good holiday!" (It is astonishing how dirty Arab boys speak such remarkably good English).

"Comprends pas," I replied.

"Ha! Vous êtes Français?"

"Non."

"Deutsch?"

"Non."

"Italien?"

"Non."

"Espagnol?"

"Non."

"Alors. Qui êtes-vous?"

"Skandinavie." There was a long silence as the boy looked at me good and hard. He turned away and I felt that I had got the better of the argument. I hoped that word would get around that it was hopeless to try and make me understand.

My triumph was short-lived, however. Next day the same youth met me outside my hotel — this time he had a companion.

"Good morning, mister," grinned the boy in his usual expansive manner. "This is my friend. He speaks Swedish."

"Comprends pas," I replied, desperately flannelling for time.

"Voici un ami qui parle suédois."

"Er — er," I stammered. "Je suis Finn — de Helsinki." The boy gave me a long, sceptical look and then turned away with a gesture of disgust. Thinking that the odds were dead against him finding someone who could speak Finnish, I glowed with satisfaction once more.

Next day when I was sitting in the main square in the sunshine, the same boy came up to me and sat down. He was beaming all over his face and something told me that I was going to get the worst of this third encounter.

"Do you know what I think," he said. I sat silent, so he went on: "I think you are an Englishman pretending to be a Finn."



"Comprends pas," I muttered, determined to brazen it out.

"Come off it, mister. You can speak English perfectly well."

I put on a hopelessly puzzled expression, pretending not to understand a word of the proceedings.

"You can't kid me, mister," said the youth. "I am an assistant cook at your hotel and I have seen your name on the hotel register. You are an Englishman from Preston."

Whilst I sat silent wondering how to deal with this staggering development, he went on:

"Why do you pretend not to be able to speak English?"

Finally my irritation got the better of me and I snapped: "Oh, go to blazes. I am fed of being pestered all day long." I walked away hurriedly.

That evening at dinner I eyed the soup suspiciously, wondering whether it had been poisoned or not.

Anyhow, an entirely new technique had to be found for dealing with molestations for it served no useful purpose to get irritated. A few days later I hit upon a new method. My Arab friend came up, beaming all over his face as usual.

"Good morning, mister. Nice day. I hope you are feeling well."

"Yes, indeed," I replied, "and I beg to tender my very best appreciation for your solicitous regard for my health."

The boy stared at me, stroking his chin. Then he beamed again.

"Show you round the Casbah, mister?"

"Certainly not," I replied. "I have the most profound objections, not to mention artistic revulsion, to locations which offend my highly developed sense of smell. I regret I must decline your very kind and pressing invitation."

The boy pondered over this for a while as he walked beside me. I nipped into a shop for a newspaper. He was still there when I came out, grinning more widely than ever.

"Show you round the Sultan's Palace, mister? Smells very nice."

I shook my head sadly and replied. "I find it exceedingly regrettable that a member of the Moroccan Proletariat such as yourself should be on such intimate terms with royalty and other oppressors of the poor. Moreover, I beg to inform you that I have already ambulated the sacred precincts of the Sultan on two previous occasions."

The boy scratched his head. It was impossible to tell whether he understood me or not. Then he grinned again, though not quite so expansively as on previous occasions.

"Show you round a night-club, mister?"

"What, at THIS hour of the day?" I asked, momentarily forgetting my pose.

"I will call for you tonight after dinner."

This gave me time to recollect myself. "I regret I must condemn as reprehensible your lack of a sense of propriety. Besides," I added, "I am not sure that Allah would approve of your leading an innocent and unsuspecting traveller into the ways of the ungodly."

The boy's face was now serious. With only the faintest of grins, he said: "Can I take you to a good Bar? Very cheap. Wine very good."

I put on a horrified expression. "What," I said, "partake of wine during Ramadan? You cannot surely be serious."

The boy turned away in disgust. "You're not much ruddy good to me, are you, mister?"

Shoeblacks are another nuisance. In Tangier there appear to be more shoeblacks than shoes. No matter how spotless your shoes may be, it makes absolutely no difference. Pestered you will be.

One day an elderly Arab carpet-seller was sitting next to me in the main square of Casablanca. He was having his shoes cleaned. Other shoeblacks were pestering me to have mine done as well, but I repeatedly shook my head.

Presently the Arab carpet-seller gave one of these shoeblacks a coin and said something in Arabic. Then he turned to me and said in English "I have paid the boy to clean your shoes. I hope you do not mind!"

I felt most embarrassed. Was I expected to buy a carpet in return? I offered him a coin, but he refused and presently walked away, without attempting to sell me a carpet.

One unusual custom I noticed on Christmas Eve. Near my hotel, on point duty was a policeman. During the evening, passers-by stopped to give him a present. By midnight the stack of presents had mounted so as to render him invisible almost. I reflected on the cause of this apparent generosity, for I could not imagine such a thing happening in an English town.

Travelling from town to town in Morocco was not easy, for the trains are poor and crowded, whilst the buses are ancient and also crowded. One day I went by bus from Tetuan to Tangier. I was the only stranger on a bus crammed with Arabs in dirty burnouses. The smell almost turned me sick and for the first time in my life I had no zest for evening dinner.

Visiting the Casbah at Tangier had the same effect on me. The filth, the poverty, the beggars and the women vegetable-sellers grovelling in the gutter, and old men carrying bundles of scrawny chickens tied by their legs, all made me feel sick. The odour was so bad that I hastily took my photographs and got out as quickly as possible.

In the trains, too, I never got used to the revolting sight of a dirty-looking Arab sitting opposite, eating with gusto



some horribly greasy-looking meat. I just closed my eyes and wished I was back at Balshaw's.

But do not let me put you off going to Tangier. My hotel and food were good, the afternoon café where I had tea and eclairs was excellent, the weather was gloriously sunny except for the first two days, and the traffic is very light. There are nice shops in the residential quarters of the French settlers. On balance, it was well worthwhile.

#### *Parents Association*

## **From the Secretary's Diary**

**Friday, 4th March**

What a pleasant gathering this evening for our annual highspot—the Annual Dinner at the Royal Oak Hotel, Chorley. I suppose there must have been about fifty of us there. We enjoyed an excellent meal and listened to some witty and interesting speeches afterwards; the principal speaker being Mr. E. Johnson, Head of the Education Department, Edge Hill College of Education.

The only thing amiss about the evening was the comparatively small number present. How nice it would have been to have seen one or two hundred people enjoying the annual "big night". Only the other day I heard someone refer to the affair as the "Snobs' Dinner"—is this really the way most parents regard it? Of course, how wrong they are! I wonder if we would get a better attendance if the function were changed from a dinner to a dinner-dance? Is our Association perhaps too insular—would we attract more members if we became more "social" in our outlook? A really strong and active Parents' Association could do so much for the school, and there is no reason why the members should not enjoy themselves in the process. I know many parents live some distance from the school, but there are very many more who live almost on the doorstep yet take no part whatever in our activities. I must suggest at the next committee meeting that we have a recruiting drive—get each active member to bring along to the next meeting one new member—and let's see if we can't organise such a programme of both interesting and enjoyable events that we have members clamouring to join!



*Mr. E. C. Dunn (the Association's secretary), Mrs. M. Hargreaves (treasurer), Mr. E. Johnson (guest speaker) and the Headmaster.*

**Wednesday, 16th March**

A meeting this evening of the committee to discuss the arrangements for the Summer Fair, to be held this year on Saturday, 9th July. Good as last year's was, this year's event is going to be even bigger and better. We shall, of course, be relying largely on parents not only to supply items for the stalls but to give practical help on the day, though it is very encouraging to look back and think how much we were helped last year by both staff and pupils. This is our major fund raising effort of the year, the results of which are devoted to providing for the school those things that the authorities do not supply. We are catering not only for the present generation, but also those who will be coming to the school in future years. Whether or not Balshaw's is absorbed in a comprehensive scheme is quite immaterial. In reviewing last year's Fair, and planning for this year's, it seems that the "pot smashing" was a huge success—presumably gets rid of youthful inhibitions! I do hope parents will save all their chipped and cracked crockery for us.

**Tuesday, 29th March**

Thoroughly enjoyed the school's rendering of "H.M.S. Pinafore." The Headmaster tells me that Mr. H. M. F. Carrington has consented to open the Summer Fair . . .



# At the Youth Concert

by Judith Topping

At 3 o'clock on Tuesday, the fifth of April, we climbed into the coach which was to take us to the Free Trade Hall in Manchester for the annual Festival Youth Concert. On the journey under the baton of Mr. Black, we began to rehearse our items—items which had perhaps more artistic taste than the popular rendering of "On Ilkley Moor baht 'at."

The question which we secretly asked ourselves was—would we become stars overnight? but on arrival we soon found out that we eight singers and Sarah Thompson who played in the orchestra were just a few amongst hundreds from all over the county brought together for this annual event. After tea we had a rehearsal with the orchestra.

The concert consisted of items played or sung by the County Youth Orchestra, brass band and choir. The first three items, sung by the choir accompanied by the orchestra were songs connected with the sea—"Song of the Fishermen by Britten portraying life in a 19th century fishing village and two songs of the Fleet by Stanford—"The Middle Watch" and "The Little Admiral". The baritone soloist in the latter two was Brian Fish, a County Award Holder. Two orchestral items by Järnefelt followed—"Berceuse" and "Praeludium". The choir then joined the orchestra in an item from Brahms' Requiem—the beautiful setting of the psalm "O how amiable are thy dwellings fair, O Lord of hosts." To end the first half the orchestra played a selection from "The Bartered Bride" by Smeband.

After the interval the first item was a Serenade for wind ensemble by Mozart beautifully and artistically played by members of the orchestra. Then the platform was invaded by the Brass Band whose items included Rossini's overture to "The Barber of Seville" and Holst's "Suite in E flat".

All the items were conducted by Herbert Horrocks, County Music Adviser, who certainly encouraged the enthusiasm of all who took part. The whole concert was well enjoyed by both the audience and those who took part. I would like on behalf of those chosen to thank Mr. Black for the opportunity given to us to sing in this concert.

# A New Society

by Glenis Bond, IV/4

For some time there had been a large demand for a badminton society, and at the beginning of January, with the help of the Headmaster and certain members of staff, one was finally formed.

The members are nearly all fourth formers who show a keen interest in the game. They play locally at either the Parish Church or St. Ambrose's.

Although it was more than half way through the season when the society was formed, we were challenged to a match at St. Mary's Secondary School.

We formed a team of six, three boys and three girls:—D. Glover, C. McKittrick and J. Curless; Glenis Bond, Kathleen Higham and Barbara Eastham. In spite of having had little practice, each couple won two of their three games easily and consequently the result was 6-3 in our favour.

The season is now almost finished but we are all looking forward eagerly to the start of the new season in September, when we hope to arrange several matches with other schools. We would be very pleased to welcome new members from all forms, and we are sure that anyone who enjoys tennis, or indeed any game, will also enjoy playing badminton.

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## THE BALSHAVIAN

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