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19 MAGAZINE 59

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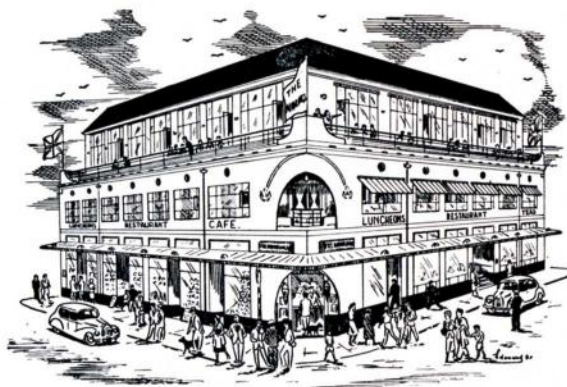


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4 CHAPEL LANE, IRVINE



The dream which many have cherished so long, finds fulfilment at last in this first printed issue of our magazine, and we hope that the popularity that attended our home productions will not desert this our present issue.

While we still pursue our courses of study in H.O.R.S.A. huts and various other buildings, the dreams of our future school are slowly coming into shape, our new building having been approved at high level. Rome was not built in a day, but we wonder did Romulus take thirty years to think before he laid the first stone of his city. Though we seniors will have passed out of school without having seen our marble halls, yet we can always pride ourselves on the fact that we were the pioneers who bore the lean days of the school—the Abraham Lincolns who started life in a wooden shack.

The Muses have certainly been active in St. Michael's during the past month for our chief publishing problem is one of selection. Space will not allow the insertion of all the articles on hand and in an endeavour to strike a just balance we have tried to take representative work from every level in the school. It has been hard to put aside much good work but we abide by the principle that each level should be articulate.

We know that our many F.P.'s who are scattered round the world will greet our effort with their usual appreciation and we thank them for their allegiance to the Clan. We owe a special debt to the many who have helped our publication by giving us advertisements—their contribution was an essential one; to Sr. Pauline and the Staff for their aid and inspiration and to all the pupils who burnt the midnight oil for the sake of St. Michael and the School.

Finally we ask our saint to give our Magazine his special patronal blessing as we launch it forth, in the hope that it may prove interesting and enjoyable to all its readers.

School Jottings

The session that is nearing an end has been no less busy than others that have gone. Though each school year repeats itself in so many ways yet each too has its own particular problems, its own worries, its own joys.

At the beginning of the session, we settled down happily, glad to welcome three new members to the Staff: Mrs. Barbour, Miss Kathleen McCann and Mr. James McCutcheon. But soon it became apparent that this year staffing difficulties were to loom largely and persistently. Early in the session, we regretfully said goodbye to Miss Doran who left us to teach in a distant convent school in Barbados. A short time later, Mrs. Barbour resigned from teaching. Long illnesses meant a suspension from work for Sister Eugenius, Mr. Farrell and Mr. Harkin, and to help us out in our difficulties we have had the services of Mrs. McArdle, Mrs. Muir, Mrs. Barnett, Mrs. Duffin and Mr. Scott. At Easter we welcomed to the permanent staff a former pupil, now returned as a teacher of English, Miss Philomena Doherty. We have also been glad to have with us for the session Monsieur Sirven as French Assistant and Senorita Chona Sagrado who replaced Senorita Ventura de Miguel Munoz as Spanish Assistant.

Our accommodation problem is still with us. We have more than seven hundred pupils on the rolls and in the next three years we expect that this number will rise by at least one hundred. We have been heartened to learn within the last few weeks that the Scottish Education Department have approved the building of an entire new school for St. Michael's instead of the big extension that had been planned. Within the next few years we look forward to having a fine building with Assembly Hall, two Gymnasias, Library, Staffrooms, Practical Rooms and Classrooms. The problem of housing the increasing numbers that will come to us in the intervening years will be possible only if additional hut classrooms are provided.

During the session we have had the usual visits from the Labour Exchange Representative and Careers' Adviser as well as from representatives from the Air Force and the Nursing Profession. The Police have given their annual talks on Road Safety and the Assistant Fire Master from Kilmarnock has instructed us in Fire Prevention. Pupils from the Sixth Form have taken part in the Schools' Conference on the West Indies; the Seniors were thrilled with their Geographical Expedition to the Central Highlands, while lower Forms have enjoyed their tour of the Burns' Country and an historical visit to Glasgow. Primary pupils have acquitted themselves creditably at the Ayrshire Musical Festival and for both seniors and juniors the School Dance and various Christmas Parties made fun for all. Our fine record in the field of Sport is recorded elsewhere in the Magazine.

We celebrated the feast of St. Michael by a corporate act of worship at Mass in Irvine and later in the day enjoyed the half holiday that we now have come to expect. With the entire Catholic world, we sorrowed at the death of our wonderful and saintly Pontiff, Pope Pius XII who took such an interest in youth and who relaxed so much in the presence of children. On television we watched as he was laid to rest among other Pontiffs in St. Peter's. Some days later we thrilled at the applause that rang out in St. Peter's Square when Cardinal Canali announced to the eagerly waiting world that the Conclave had elected to the Papacy, Cardinal Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli, now beloved by us all under the name of Pope John XXIII. Before Christmas we had a Retreat for school-leavers, given by Father Paulinus C.P. and during the present term Father Oswald, C.P. has conducted Retreats for senior boys and girls. The Conference on the Lay Apostolate, organized by the Grail was attended by sixteen of our senior girls.

There are many other things that have gone into the making of this present school year that space leaves no room to mention. We have but outlined some of the happenings. The interests of our pupils and some idea of their spirit, you will glean as you read the Magazine.

THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT

For many years now, the call of the Lake District has been answered by thousands of people—especially those who appreciate the beauty of Nature. Last August my father and I answered its call.

Our mode of conveyance was a Lambretta motor-scooter—a most economical vehicle as we were to learn later. According to plan, we made our way to Penrith on the first day. We were two miles inside England before we realised that we had crossed the border. Somehow, I had expected to see different scenery and to hear different sounds; but this was not the case. In fact, it was not until we reached Carlisle that we saw and heard an Englishman, who, to my amazement, was quite normal!

Penrith is dominated by the ruins of a castle well known to Richard III, who, as Duke of Gloucester and Warden of the Marches, stayed at the still existing Gloucester Arms Hotel while repairs were being made at the Castle. The ancient Parish Church contains contemporary portraits of two English Kings, Richard II and Richard III with his queen; and in the churchyard we found the Giant's Grave—the giant being Owen Caesarius, who spent his time exterminating wild boars in Inglewood Forest.

Although there is much of interest in Penrith and the neighbourhood, the real attraction lies in the fact that it is near Lake Ullswater—the “English Lucerne”. The Lake is nine miles long and is set in the midst of superb scenery, varied enough to suit all tastes. Stretches of its banks are wooded like those of Windermere, while the mountain masses at the head of the lake are equal in grandeur to those of Westwater. Here Wordsworth “wandered lonely as a cloud” to come upon “a host of golden daffodils”.

Leaving Ullswater behind us, we started to climb through the mountains to Windermere via Kirkstone Pass—the steepest pass ascent from any town in England. But, alas! fortune was against us. We had just started to climb the hill when the scooter started wobbling across the road. We had a puncture! We drew the scooter to the side of the road and set about fitting the spare wheel. Then it started to rain. Throwing on our coats, we jumped on to the scooter and continued our long climb, this time without mishap. The Kirkstone Inn at the top of the pass is renowned for its famous echo and its interesting visitors' book.

That evening we went down to the lakeside to watch the sun setting behind the Langdale Fikes. The sky to the west was a rose colour, shading higher in the heavens to pink and higher still to a pale grey-blue. A broad strip of shimmering golden sunlight stretched across the Lake, shortening gradually as the sun sank behind the Langdales. All was peace and loveliness: as Dorothy Wordsworth so beautifully puts it, “It calls home the heart to quietness!” The stars began to peep out; the moon slowly rose, shedding its silver rays across the Lake; and we went back to our hotel marvelling at such loveliness.

Next day we started off northwards along Lake Windermere to Ambleside, “the centre of Lakeland” (which, by its central position has rightly earned its description: “the axle of a wheel of beauty”). Having left this quaint town behind us, we arrived on the shores of Rydal Water. A number of cars were drawn up, their occupants beholding the entrancing and hypnotic scene of Rydal Water, its surface, a sheet of glass, reflecting faithfully the beautiful surroundings.

Grasmere, the Mecca for the literary-minded, came next. Before we had been in Grasmere many minutes, we were made aware of how closely this lovely village is, for all time, connected with the greatest of the Lake poets, William Wordsworth. His first Grasmere cottage home, “Dove Cottage”, is preserved in almost the same form as when occupied by him from 1799 to 1808. Other literary giants connected with Grasmere are Southey, Coleridge, De Quincey, Shelley, Scott, Gray, Lamb and Ruskin.

Passing on, we continued northwards until we reached Thirlmere. This lake reminded me of Loch Awe with its fir-clad slopes rising sheer out of the water. Yet, although the

Lake District has beautiful scenery, it does not produce the same thrill—at least, in a Scotsman's heart—as the Scottish Highlands. In the Highlands we experience the thrill of knowing that it is these parts that witnessed so much of the tragedy and glory of Scotland's history. In the Lake District there is no such thrill, only beautiful countryside—which Scotland has, too.

Having visited Keswick which also has many literary connections, notably with Southey and Coleridge, we set off on our homeward journey through the district where the Blencathra pack hunts—the pack made famous by its associations with the famous John Peel.

We arrived home with many tales to tell, after having covered some 450 miles on 4½ gallons of petrol. Not bad, eh?

J. PENTLETON, VI Year.



BOB-A-JOB WEEK

I joined my fellow scouts in their "Bob-a-Job Week" expedition. This is part of a Scout's duty to help others and enhance the good name of the Scout movement. I was full of the typical Scout's high ideals, determined to fulfil my "good deed every day" promise, as I ventured forth on my first "bob-a-job" assignment.

My first customer was an old lady whose request held me spellbound but nevertheless thrilled me with the prospect of adventure. She had lost her pet budgie. My first clue for identification purposes (should there be more than one of them adrift), was the heartening information that this budgie knew its own name and address. Luckily too, its name was not "Joey", because I am sure that all budgies, canaries and parrots are called "Joey" or will at least answer to "Joey". Its name was "Buzzer".

I started buzzing around the countryside, whilst some people were eyeing me curiously. I soon spotted Buzzer, buzzing to his heart's content in joyous circular movements. I kept my eye firmly fixed on him, lest he should disappear from view. After a long time of unfaltering vigilance on my part, Buzzer began to lead me a merry dance. He wheeled off towards the harbour. I trailed him as a detective an escaped prisoner.

Buzzer eventually offered me the greatest challenge ever offered to any Scout. He took refuge in the crow's nest of a ship's mast. There was nothing for it but to board the ship and climb the mast. I reached the top rung of the mast ladder, directly beneath the crow's nest, with some tit-bits for Buzzer in my pocket. I climbed into the crow's nest and managed to entice a hungry budgie to eat from my hand, before planking him into my inside pocket, and safety. When I had time to look down and around me, I saw a ship's officer waving me to come down. We were leaving Ardrossan. Buzzer and I were now outward bound.

When I reached the deck below, the chief officer asked me for an explanation of my conduct. My Scout uniform saved me from what otherwise would have been an embarrassing situation. He suggested plenty of "jobs" which would keep me occupied until the ship berthed at her first port of call, which luckily for me was Greenock, before going on to Australia. I asked the officer if he would take Buzzer into safe custody during the trip. He sent me to the ship's carpenter who in turn had an ingenious suggestion for accommo-

dating the old lady's pet budgie, namely, in a rat cage. I gave the carpenter a hand to batten down some of the hatches by hammering the wedges in. Buzzer hopped about in his new cage in the carpenter's workshop, enjoying the pitching and rolling of the ship.

We eventually reached Greenock where I was invited to have tea with the captain and officers. Afterwards I went round the entire ship's crew and collected all their letters for posting ashore. The captain gave me a donation and money to pay my fare home. I collected Buzzer, thanked the captain and left for home. An hour and a half later, I returned Buzzer to his overjoyed mistress and reported back to Headquarters, feeling as important as Baden-Powell himself. My particular assignment was more exciting and intriguing than I had ever dreamt possible. I would not have missed it for anything. The trip to Greenock was for me—A night to remember.

PETER McEVoy, IIC.

NEW YORK

It has been raining all day and the air is cold and damp. The tops of the tall buildings are shrouded in the clouds while the streets below are thronged with people hurrying to escape the rain. Few would ever call New York beautiful, and never on a day like this. But there are many sights here to impress or surprise the visitor. There is the Manhattan skyline. I first saw this at 5 o'clock in the morning as the boat I was on, approached the harbour. The red sun was slowly rising behind the tall skyscrapers, casting long shadows over the water. Then there is Broadway at night, with millions of bright lights, neon signs, and gaily lit theatres. World-wide headlines are flashed on the walls of the press buildings for all to see. Here too is a famous cigarette advertisement of a man who blows real smoke rings. Macy's is near—the world's largest department store where they boast that they sell everything anyone wants. I called their bluff when I asked for haggis! On every corner there are slot-machines where you can buy anything from a hot meal to a packet of handkerchiefs.

New York, too, is a very cosmopolitan city, with many different nationalities living in their own section. Near the top of Manhattan is Harlem, where everyone is Negro—even the policemen and bus drivers. A little further down is the Puerto-Rican, Spanish-speaking section, and then the German section. Down near Brooklyn is the Chinese quarter, famous for its restaurants. There are many Jews throughout the city. The feast of the Passover is soon, and the Undergrounds are full of posters advertising special wines and unleavened breads for the celebration. There are no Red Indians here, though many of the places have Indian names—like Manhattan itself, Lakawanna, and Rockaway, after the Rockawawa Indians.

There are several universities in New York. The largest is New York University with about 20,000 students. Fordham University is in the Bronx section of the city. It is conducted by the Jesuit Fathers and is primarily a boys' college, although girls are admitted to some departments and to the Graduate School. There are about 10,000 students. The campus is very large with grey stone buildings surrounded by lawns and trees. I am learning about student life here—the glee clubs, fraternities, baseball matches and barbecues. Last week I met a boy roller-skating down the corridor to class, so I asked him why. He said that he wanted to join one of the college societies but first he had to prove that he would obey their rules, so he had been ordered to spend the day on roller skates. Unfortunately, none of the teachers would let him into their classes. I don't know which he chose in the end.

As you see, I am very happy here in America. Americans are kind, hospitable people and I have made many friends. There is so much here that is new for me to do and see. But next year I'll be just as happy to come back to my family and friends in Scotland.

MARGARET TAYLOR, F.P.



A 4,000 Mile Hitch-Hike

Four thousand miles without a square meal! Six weeks without getting to bed! Forty-two days divorced entirely from youthful pleasures! Such was my apprenticeship to the life of a tramp. Yet an ordinary peace-loving tramp would toil, rather than face such austerity as I suffered on my initiation.

On July 6th my father and I set out from home to begin our Continental hitch-hiking holiday. Having decided to "rough it" the whole way to Fatima, we discarded the idea of a tent and set out with only a rucksack and blankets. We made a promising start by arriving at Calais on the third day after our departure. Alas! we had not reckoned on the hard-hearted French motorists, who seemed to delight at the sight of a frustrated thumb! Nevertheless, we arrived in Paris within the next 48 hours.

Soon we were journeying "par autostop" through Central France towards our immediate objective, Lourdes. Our slow progress gave us time to appreciate the verdant beauty of the Loire and later the rugged splendour of the Lower Pyrenees which towered over Lourdes.

After spending two days participating in the activities at the Grotto, we headed for the Spanish frontier town of Irun. Our experiences seemed to bear out the dismal stories we had heard about hitch-hiking in Spain, when we only managed to reach San Sebastian—less than 20 km from Irun—after six hours of Spanish "thumbing." On the next, however, our fortunes changed when a "Seat" stopped and carried us direct to Madrid, where we had to suffer the indignity of sleeping at the side of a street! Progress in Spain was rapid and we had soon arrived at Fuentes de Onoro, the frontier town. In Portugal our efforts were facilitated by the readiness of drivers to stop, and in a few days we arrived at our destination—Fatima.

After we had visited all the interesting parts of the Cova, we decided to return towards France by a circuitous route in order to visit the Shrine of Santiago de Compostela, an ancient place of pilgrimage, and then travelled north to Corunna. After zigzagging across the Cantabrians we followed the main road along the northern seaboard of Spain through Oviedo, Santander and Bilbao, to France. We travelled by the main road from Bordeaux to Paris and although our homeward journey through France proved to be a grim chapter, we eventually arrived home safely.

Since, with bundles slung across our backs, we had the appearance of professional tramps, it is not surprising that the police everywhere showed a lively interest in us! When, at the beginning of our journey, for example, we arrived in London, too late to find sleeping accommodation—all the parks were closed—we sought refuge in Victoria Station for the

night, but an unfriendly Police Sergeant had other ideas, and, after he had eyed us over, he dismissed us as shady characters to the mercy of London's streets. This cost us a sleepless night amid the vegetable smells of Covent Garden, where we got a lorry towards the Channel. At Dover, however, we managed to board the boat before it was swabbed and a kindly constable, ignoring the opposition of the ship's officers, ordered us to remain on board. In France we were stopped four or five times by police on motor-cycles who questioned us and examined our passports. At Cavignac, a small town on the Bordeaux-Paris road, while buying our "iron rations", we were arrested and taken to the gendarmerie by the officious gendarme, who suspected us of subversive activities. He was an ignoramus and actually asked, "Where is Glasgow?" after he had examined our passports! In Spain, on the other hand, the notorious Guardia Civil proved to be the most friendly police we encountered.

Despite their extreme poverty, the Portuguese proved to be the most hospitable of people. One of the drivers who "lifted" us took us to a farm where we had a wholesome Portuguese meal. On another occasion two lorry-drivers insisted on buying us lunch at a small restaurant. What a contrast to the English lorry-driver so intent on scrounging from us! Little did he know!

While "on safari," we slept in every conceivable place. As a general rule we slept under the stars but this routine was frequently interrupted for the luxury of a barn. Outside Chaumont, on the Loire, we slept in a small inlet at the road-side, while gigantic eight-wheeled lorries roared past, only a few feet from our heads. At Lourdes, our "hotel" proved to be a byre which we shared with ten cows. On our way home through England we found ourselves stranded in the open, near Scotch Corner, on a bitterly cold night with no prospects of sleep as it started to rain heavily. Fortunately, however, there was an empty lorry parked off the road, and without more ado we got inside the cab where we obtained an uncomfortable night's sleep.

Our prearranged plan had been to live on five shillings a day, varying our diet according to the prices of the foods available wherever we were. But on our way back through France, when lifts were almost unobtainable—we were financially in dire straits. We had only 500 francs (8/4d.) with over 750 km. to cover. For the sake of survival we adopted the iron rations of bread and sugar until our situation should improve. Fortunately the darkest hour precedes the dawn and on the next day we travelled no less than 550 km. and reached the Channel coast at Berck Plage at 2 a.m. There we spent a sleepless night, shivering under the awnings of the Municipal Abattoir.

Strange for me was the return to the ordinary civilised way of life. At meal time, for example, even after consuming several large courses, I still found the pangs of hunger not fully relieved. And being one of these mundane mortals who enjoy the pleasures of the table I was, therefore, relieved to know that the austerity of four thousand miles in six weeks on £6 (our expense per head on food) had in no way impaired my appetite!

HAMISH FRASER, VI.





Let Loose For A Day

In answer to all our prayers, Corpus Christi dawned bright and clear. This was the day chosen for the annual Geographical Expedition for the Senior school and the place selected was the Three Lochs including a visit to the Loch Sloy Hydro-Electric Scheme.

The two buses which were to carry us into adventure left Troon and proceeded north, picking up pupils from the towns en route. At Largs, the buses were filled and soon we were speeding along the Clyde Coast to the strumming of guitars, and the strains of "mouthies"—and vocalists, of course.

Nothing extraordinary happened until our arrival at the Erskine Ferry where we read with horror notices informing would-be crossers that the ferry was out of action. The vision of a retreat to our Ayrshire homes loomed up in our minds but, thanks to the experience of our drivers, this fear was swiftly dispelled for within half-an-hour we found ourselves in a queue of traffic waiting to board Renfrew Ferry some miles upstream. In no time at all we were proceeding along the opposite bank to Dumbarton and then on to Balloch, our first stop.

At Balloch we all filed out of the bus, took some snap-shots, ate some sandwiches, drank some lemonade and filed back. Soon we were admiring the "Bonnie Banks o' Loch Lomond." At each turn of the road, new vistas of this beautiful waterway, famed in song and story, opened out before our marvelling eyes.

Our next stop was at the power-house of the Loch Sloy Hydro-Electric scheme. Before entering to inspect the four great turbines powered by water cascading through pipes down the mountain-side, we adjourned to the lochside for lunch. Seeing us lying there with the cool waters lapping round our ankles, a stranger might have supposed that we had covered the sixty-odd miles from home, on foot.

Having visited the interior of the power-house (an experience much appreciated by the more technically minded) we proceeded up the mountain-side by a track, so steep that, when we reached the top, both buses were belching great clouds of steam from their radiators. The track was narrow, too. At one point a motor-cycle parked alongside the grass verge had to be removed by Mr. Leahy, much to the annoyance of its owner in the valley below. He came running up the hill frantically waving a stick but by the time he reached the road, we were well on our way again—perhaps just as well for Mr. Leahy.

The view from the dam itself was breath-taking. Here was Scotland's rugged beauty at its best. The hills came tumbling down into Loch Sloy; and, as far as the eye could see,

great boulders of granite were scattered about. Even the grandeur of the dam itself seemed to blend naturally with its setting.

We were unable to stay here long for by now it was late afternoon and at that height (almost 1,000 ft.) the evening breeze was chilly. On the way down we saw a wonderful view of Ben Lomond, its shoulders lit up in the evening sun, standing guard over the loch at its feet.

Back in civilization, we were soon speeding towards Arrochar. From Arrochar we went by way of Loch Long and the Gareloch down to Helensburgh, our last stop.

In the one and a half hours allotted here, we had tea—fish and chips, of course; we played a round of putting on the local green; and, I might add, some of us stooped to a donkey ride on the sands.

Climbing on board the bus, tired physically but in high spirits, we set off on our homeward journey. By the time we arrived home, we were all of the opinion that it had been a most enjoyable day made so, we thought, by the informality of teachers and pupils. Our thanks to the former. Roll on, next time!

DAVID M. CRAIG, VI Year.

Three Coastal Towns

There is a toon wi' mony a store,
Wi' sun an' beach an' cafes galore.
The Glesga lads and lasses pour
Inta SALTCOATS,
Tae lie an' sit on the sandy shore,
Or sail in motor boats.

There is a toon sae trim an' braw,
Wi' views o' hills a' capp'd wi' snaw,
An' sights that fill my heart wi' awe.
It's here I bide,
And never will I gang awa'—
ARDROSSAN is my pride!

Noo FAIRLIE is a toon o' fame—
Since yon Atomic Station came
Its quietness will na be the same,
But never fear!
Its ither beauties still remain—
The fish are there, I hear!

TONI DI CARLO, IIA:



Stuck

It happened once in our French Class,
This tale I have to tell:
It does concern a bright wee lass
IB remembers well.

Her finger in the desk she stuck,
Though sore ashamed to tell,
The teacher said, "It's just your luck!
Your finger fast does swell!"

To Mr. Leishman hurry o'er
And beg him to come quickly,
With saw to cut and brace to bore:
The girl is feeling sickly."

When in he came and saw her plight,
How loudly he did laugh;
Then bored and sawed with all his might,
The hole to cut in half.

So, boys and girls, you'd best beware,
On French please keep your mind,
The desks are there for books to care,
No pranking of this kind!

ANNE MARIE McLAUGHLIN, IB.

Barbados

Up till some time ago Barbados was to me only a name. Now I know it is the most easterly island of the British West Indies and claims to be the only island which has always been a British possession since it was first colonised. Because of this and because of the influence of the English on Barbados it is sometimes called "Little England." I think any resemblance to England must be only comparative for, to me, many things are strange.

Barbados is a coral island and so exhibits those characteristics which are described in "Robinson Crusoe," "Coral Island," etc. Most of the island is surrounded by a coral reef. On the Atlantic side of the island the waves break noisily over the reef and roll forward to break once more on the sands. On the Caribbean side of the island, however, the sea is like glass; this is a popular place for bathing and water-skiing.

In the residential areas of the island the streets are lined with very tall cabbage palm trees. In the gardens there are tropical flowers, such as poinsettia, hibiscus and oleander. Outside these areas, the roads wind between fields of very tall sugar-cane.

The food is slightly different from British food. Barbados is famous for flying fish which is a favourite dish. There is a large variety of fruit and vegetables such as bread-fruit, guavas, yams and sweet potatoes.

The people in Barbados are "happy-go-lucky," not too fond of work, and very kind. The greater part of the population consists of black people although there are many coloured Barbadians and some white people. The white and coloured people tend to be rather Anglicised but the others are most interesting. The women carry enormous baskets on their heads; these baskets may contain anything from bananas to half a dozen "squawking" chickens. It is very funny to see a woman walk along empty-handed while on her head she carries a large suitcase topped by her hand-bag, or to be fanned by the tail of a four-foot long Dolphin which is being borne on the head of the next passenger in the "cattle trucks" which serve as buses.

The Barbadian is very dress-conscious. Sometimes the results are most attractive but at other times they are ludicrous. On Sunday every child is clad in frills and bows and the whole effect gives the impression of "Christmas Party" time at home. Little girls wear the latest adult fashions and little boys will talk quite knowledgeably about sacks and sheath and chemise lines. Unfortunately, since the shops sell merchandise imported from many countries of the world it is common to see women dressed in saris and exquisite sandals, and just as common to see women dressed in elegant dresses with fashion straight from "Vogue," and topped with children's Cowboy hats straight from Woolworth's.

The West Indian is supposed to have a very good sense of rhythm. In Barbados, this alleged talent seems to be turned towards the appreciation of Calypso music and steel band. The young people are not jazz-conscious, and instead of playing 'skiffle' every young boy wants to play in a steel band. All the firms sponsor steel bands, and these play at every social occasion, including jumble sales, sales of work, public welcomes, and farewells. There is a form of "dancing" called "jumping-up," and at Carnival time young and old alike "jump up" in their hundreds following a steel band for miles along the streets.

Schools are very inferior to those of Scotland. Attendance is not compulsory even at an Elementary School and, as it is difficult sometimes to obtain entrance to a Government school, there are many small schools in private homes. There is no Government Catholic school, and all secondary education has to be paid for. The Convent school, however, consists of many fine buildings set in beautiful grounds. The class rooms have large windows on both sides of the room; the result is that books, etc. are blown around by the wind, but the rooms are very cool, and little sparrows and doves fly in and out of the class rooms as if they were pets. Classes stop at one o'clock in the day and holidays are long and frequent. Pupils come to this school from most of the Islands of the Caribbean and from

South America. The South Americans are mostly Venezuelans, but there are Italians, Poles, Bulgarians and Scandinavians whose parents are temporarily resident in Venezuela. Consequently there is a variety of languages spoken and, although it is the rule of the school that English must be spoken at all times, most foreign children cannot speak English when they arrive and have to have their lessons repeated in Spanish. The children do not seem to be disposed towards learning, but who can blame them when the alternative to sitting in school is surf-riding, water-skiing, or bathing in the warm waters surrounding the island, or sun-bathing on the glorious beaches?

MARY DORAN, F.P.



INCIDENT



Twilight filtered into the misty glen, replacing the ruddy hue of evening with its diffusive purple and softening the sharp outline of the hills till they were one with the darkening sky. The last drone sped homewards as the heather bells closed against the coming chill of night and saw the shepherd tramp wearily across the pasture to his solitary croft. The breeze had dropped to nothingness and the watcher on the hill could hear the noises of the valley below as clearly as though he were down there. From the gully to the west came the tumbling melody of a torrent playing leapfrog over huge, black rocks; from above came the farewell scream of a young eagle as it rose through the motionless air to its eyrie in the highest peak; from the depths of the glen came the lingering melody of a lament, sung by Joan, the shepherd's wife, as she milked the single, scraggy goat penned in the rough byre. From the house itself the excited clamour of children greeting their father told of the love that the valley held for some.

For some, but not for others. The watcher, seeing the woman complete her task and join the family in the croft, stood up and motioned to the figure half hidden in the shadow behind the hill. Only the moon and perhaps a few grazing sheep marked their noiseless descent from the rocky fastness of the mountain to the sloping, blackening green of the pasture. Only the owl, hunting a marsh frog, saw them creep up and around the brightly-lit cottage.

"Open, in the King's name!" The cry echoed across the glen to the hills themselves; from some whins by the burn a flight of nesting martins rose in terror. The door creaked open and the candlelight from within spilled out hurriedly to fall on the gaudy red of the waiting officer's uniform. The soldiers in the gloom brought their levelled bayonets to bear on the uncowed figure of the clansman who stood framed in the rough oak pillars.

"In the King's name and by the orders of my Lord Duke of Cumberland, I arrest you, John Michael McAlpine, on the suspicion of collaboration with the traitor, Charles Edward Stuart." The shepherd stood stock-still in the doorway, his weather-lined face betraying no hint of the agony racking his mind. Then, after several minutes, he turned sharply, stared hard at his wife, kissed the tear-stained face of the nearest child and lurched off into the night. The sobs of the children, too frightened to cry aloud, sighed down the length of the valley and crept through the branches of the oak tree where a fresh rope hung, waiting. The clump of boots on grass ceased, shortly to be replaced by the creaking of the branch, bent under its awful burden.

The owl flew higher now; up, up into the almost solid night, as it made for the safety of its nest. From this vantage point high in the hills, it saw the flames hungrily devour the rushes of the cottage roof and heard the squeals of the dying goat, as the soldiers completed their mission.

IAN ROWE, VI Year.

The Missing Cup

My adventure began at the School Sports, although at the time I did not know that I would become the school heroine. The day was fine and warm and the playing field was crowded with the pupils of St. Michael's, their parents and friends. At one end of the field the prizes were displayed on a table and the most beautiful of these was a gold cup to be won by the leading House.

Everyone was having a wonderful time and I enjoyed taking snaps of the happy winners. When the final points were totted up, St. Margaret's House was found to be the winner of the top prize, but judge the surprise of everyone when it was discovered that the gold cup was missing. A thief had taken it while we were intent on the sports. It threw a shadow over the whole gathering and we went home discussing the gloomy subject.

Late that night as my Daddy was developing my spools he saw something that made him hurry and make one into a picture. As soon as he saw the snap he took it to the police. Next day at school all the teachers and pupils were happy again for the Cup had been brought back. I also received a little present for myself. You see when snapping one of the winners I had also unintentionally photographed the thief in the act of stealing the gold cup.

HELEN MCROBERTS, Prim. V.

MY DOG

I have a little dog at home,
His name is Spotty Dog,
One day I saw him in the wood,
A-nosing round a log.

A rabbit darted from the log;
He followed in pursuit;
But Duncan's terrier crossed his path,
His enemy in truth.

He started up and growled at him,
And then began a fight.
A few days later my poor dog
Had almost lost his sight.

KATHLEEN DAVISON, Pr. VI.



THE LITTLE WHITE SNOWDROP

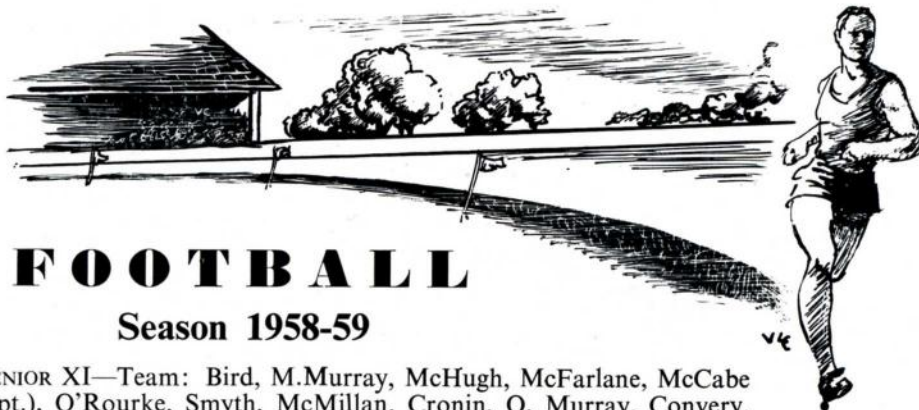
Little white snowdrop,
So deep in the ground,
Why are you hiding
Till spring comes around?

Why are you timid?
And why so ashamed
To hold up your head
As for theft you'd been blamed?

Where did you come from,
O little pale flower,
When once you sprang up
Just after a shower?

One day in my garden
I suddenly spied
A poor forlorn snowdrop
Who'd bowed down and died.

WINIFRED GARTLAND, Prim. VII.



FOOTBALL

Season 1958-59

SENIOR XI—Team: Bird, M. Murray, McHugh, McFarlane, McCabe (Capt.), O'Rourke, Smyth, McMillan, Cronin, O. Murray, Convery.

The season was very successful, and after a poor start in which we lost our first two games to our "Auld Enemies," St. Joseph's High School, Kilmarnock, and Irvine Royal Academy, we were victorious in all our remaining matches, thus retaining the League Championship Shield. The competition in the league this season was very keen, and the ultimate winners of the shield were not decided until the last league match of the season, which resulted in a 2-1 victory for St. Michael's over St. Joseph's H.S.

The only other competition for which we were entered was the Maley Trophy, played for each year by the Catholic S.S. Schools of Scotland. So far we have reached the semi-final in this competition, beating St. Modan's H.S. Stirling 3-0 in the first round, and disposing of St. Joseph's H.S. by four goals to one in the quarter-finals.

The game versus St. Modan's was played on February, 14th and we anticipated a very hard game. In the opening twenty minutes it seemed that the Stirling team was to live up to expectations, but gradually our defence got on top, and a well-taken goal by centre-forward Cronin gave us an interval lead, and encouragement for the second half. As the game wore on, St. Modan's tired, and we increased our lead with goals from Smyth and McMillan.

The next round was played on April 30th, the week after we had clinched the League Championship. We had expected St. Joseph's to be seeking revenge, but their team was weakened somewhat by injury, and we won comfortably with goals by McMillan, Smyth (2) and Murray, who converted a penalty when the score was at the critical 2-1 stage.

The school was well represented in the Ayrshire Trials, and McCabe, Murray, Smyth, Convery gained places in the County team versus Dumfries and Galloway. In this game Murray and Convery played well enough to justify their selection for the team to play first the Rest of Scotland and then Lanarkshire, while Bird and McCabe were reserves for both games.

A summary of our successes (and failures) during the season reads as follows:-

Played, 16; Won, 14; Lost, 2; Drawn, 0. Goals: For, 58; Against, 15.

Our top goal scorer was centre-forward P. Cronin with 16 goals to his credit. M. Smyth scored 12, P. McMillan got 11, and the left wing pair, O. Murray and J. Convery scored 7 and 8 respectively. The total was made up with two from left-half O'Rourke and two converted penalties by right-back M. Murray.

Intermediate and 1st Year XI's

Congratulations to our Junior XI on winning the North Ayrshire Junior Cup. They defeated Stevenston J.S. in the final, having gained victory over Irvine R.A., Dalry H.S. and St. Peter's, Ardrossan in previous rounds of the competition.

Our Intermediate XI had a poor season, especially in the League competition. Their record for the season:-

Played, 16; Won, 7; Lost, 9; Drawn, 0. Goals: For, 30; Against, 42.

E. Monan and A. Reid of the Intermediate XI were chosen to play for North Ayrshire against Coatbridge and Airdrie.

Our First Year XI played several games this season and although not highly successful, several players showed great promise. Their record reads:-

Played, 9; Won, 2; Lost, 6; Drawn, 1; Goals: For, 23; Against, 24.

ST. MICHAEL'S HOCKEY CLUB

Throughout the season the standard of play in St. Michael's Hockey Club has steadily improved. Unfortunately, owing to the weather, ten of our games were cancelled, some of which, we felt, might have been won. From a total of eight games played by the 1st Senior XI, three were narrowly lost, two were drawn and three were won. The 2nd XI lost three games, drew two and won three.

As the season progressed, and more games were cancelled, the enthusiasm for hockey seemed to wear off, and the number of players available for practices seemed steadily to decrease. It is felt in the Hockey Club that, if more recruits presented themselves for next season, stronger teams would be fielded. In this respect we appeal to the lower half of the school, as the members available for our 2nd XI last season were very few, and some games had to be cancelled because there were not enough players.

The South West Hockey Association Tournament, cancelled on the 4th October, was played on 21st March at Troon. Although we did not win our section, we fought valiantly against strong opposition and were not disgraced and our hopes are high for next year.

This season, Cecilia Macintyre, our captain and centre-half, brought honour to St. Michael's by being chosen as left-back for the Ayrshire Senior Schoolgirls' Hockey Team. Having fully justified her selection for the Ayrshire Team, in the match which followed, Cecilia was then chosen for the S.W. Scotland Team. Although this team was defeated, Cecilia again played well. We congratulate her on her success and we hope that she will go on to even greater triumphs next season.

A.B.

CRICKET NOTES

Two seasons ago, a few of the Senior boys tentatively arranged one or two cricket matches with other schools, and approached the staff to put the seal of officialdom on their enterprise. This was gladly done, and so cricket made its modest beginning as one of the games played at St. Michael's.

Lack of a proper match pitch and grave shortage of equipment, while being undoubted disadvantages, have not blunted the enthusiasm of the boys. In this connection a debt of gratitude must be acknowledged to the schools who have so readily invited us to play on their grounds and use their equipment over the last two years. Although we are still dependent on Away matches, we have made great progress in the matter of equipment this year, which has enabled us to attempt to cater for the younger boys of the school.

As to matches actually played, there is, of course, no league or cup tournament, and each game is a separate engagement, to be enjoyed for itself alone. In these initial years, as is natural, we have learned to accept defeat with equanimity, but a victory and a tie last season should certainly be recorded here.

Whatever the result, we have enjoyed our outings, and we look forward confidently to the future, fortified by the thought of the very real enthusiasm which has been shown this year by the younger boys.

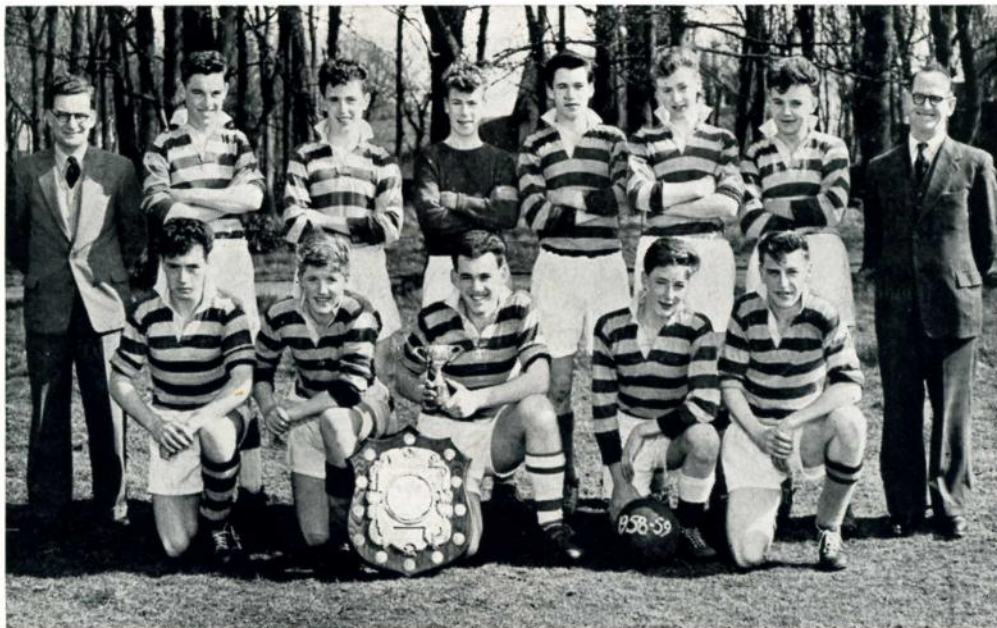
J.G.H.

STAFF



Back Row (L-R): J. McKinley, P. J. Leahy, E. Mellan, O. Maguire, P. G. Farrell, J. Mullen, J. A. Leishman, J. G. Hughes, J. McCutcheon, J. Harkin, R. Laird, R. L. Walsh.
 Middle Row (L-R): H. Medine, V. L. Campbell, Miss Brown, Mrs. Cook, Mrs. Kilfeather, Miss Higgins, Sr. Paul Mary, Miss Fulton, Mrs. Duffin, Miss Doherty, Miss Whiston, Miss McCann, J. Cleland.
 Front Row (L-R): Mrs. McGuinness, Sr. Marie Celeste, Mrs. Muir, Sr. Leonardine, Mrs. Barkey, Mrs. Cassidy, Sr. Pauline (Principal), Miss Devine, Sr. Mary Campion, Miss Wade, Miss Traynor, Sr. Eugenius, Miss Brosnan.

FOOTBALL
Senior XI—League Champions 1958-59



Back Row—Mr. Leishman, M. Murray, E. McHugh, P. Bird, M. Smyth,
 J. O'Rourke, T. McFarlane, Mr. Walsh.
 Front Row—P. McMillan, P. Cronin, M. McCabe (Captain), O. Murray, J. Convery.

Under 14 XI



Back Row—Mr. Leishman, C. Birmingham, G. Sloan, J. Busbridge, J. Milligan,
 G. Meikle, J. Murray, T. McLaughlin, Mr. Maguire.
 Front Row—C. Barr, D. Newall, J. Kelly, J. McBride, P. Medine, E. England.

NETBALL



Senior VII—Back Row—Miss McCann, J. Traynor, A. Brown, M. Paterson, I. White
C. Macintyre, A. Convery, K. McLaughlin.
Junior VII—Front Row—G. Hughes, C. Hand, K. McGinty, E. Smith, A. Murley,
K. McKeever, M. Kearney.

HOCKEY



Back Row—Mr. Leahy, A. Brown, C. Macintyre, M. McCann, D. Callaghan,
F. Cronin, J. Traynor, Miss McCann.
Front Row—I. Whyte, M. M. Macintyre, E. Smyth, G. Hughes, T. Medine.

SENIOR PREFECTS



Back Row—J. Kennedy, J. Convery, H. Fraser, D. Roche, D. Craig, I. Rowe.
Front Row—C. Dillon, A. Stuart, G. McGibbons, M. McDermott, S. Pentleton, (Captain),
C. Donnelly, (Captain), F. Oakes, K. McLaughlin, K. Carragher.

PRIMARY V. FESTIVAL CHOIR



Back Row—P. Murphy, M. Finnigan, I. Diamond, A. Price, A. McCaffrey, H. McRoberts, Mrs
Cook, E. Hall, G. Duffy, M. O'Hagen, A. Murray, A. McBreen C. McGavin.
Front Row—S. Zikmann, J. Donnelly, V. Gartland, J. Hunter, J. Gartland, T. Egan, P. Traynor
G. O'Neill, T. Kilfeather, E. Crancher, M. Curley, C. Moore.

NETBALL

The netball season started with a match against our neighbours, Irvine Royal Academy. None of our teams was defeated though the First Senior Team managed only to draw. In the next two games, however, this team recaptured the glory which has invested former St. Michael's teams by defeating Cumnock and Ardrossan Academies, 9-3 and 5-3 respectively.

The main weakness in the senior teams was shooting and in the junior teams, defence. This fault among the juniors has been rectified with the result that they won in the North Ayrshire Junior Tournament, thus keeping up the College tradition.

The results are promising and we wish to thank Miss McCann without whose help and encouragement our teams could not hope to face the strong opposition ahead.

M. PATERSON, (*Captain*).

MISSION WEEK

Last year, we pupils of St. Michael's College were asked to devote our energy and cash to assisting the Foreign Missions. This test of the diabolic ingenuity of the religious teachers in emptying the pockets of the pupils was welcomed with a curious enthusiasm by the first year pupils but dreaded by the more experienced upper forms. For a full week the school playground was turned into a Market-Place cum Gambling Saloon.

The main danger, as survivors of previous mission weeks can testify, came from the traffickers in raffle tickets. Anyone who dared set foot on the large open expanse of school-yard courted financial ruin. The tickets, like the sellers, appeared in all shapes and sizes. Almost every class, inspired, of course, by their religious teacher's threats, had collected a huge pile of cheap articles from which the lucky ticket holder had to choose his prize. The value of each prize was, of course, always guaranteed to be at least that of the ticket. The unfortunate who, perchance, had bought a winning ticket, was faced with a great problem: should he take the two-ounce bag of dolly mixtures or the hand-embroidered-during-needlework-periods antimacassar? Nine times out of ten, by a kind of poetic justice, the winners were teachers.

The raffle tickets were not our only scourge. Numerous other rackets were being operated in every part of the school. Every dinner-hour, the Domestic Room was converted into a Cafe. This highly unorganised establishment had some scruples: it served you with a cold cup of chocolate or an unsweetened, milkless cup of coffee—for only ninepence! Then, of course, there were the Skiffle Shows and the Record Hops. At these, for only sixpence, it was possible to hear any and almost every record under the sun. Puppet-shows, Fortune-telling and Treasure Hunts were only a few more of the catchpennies. One class even presented a play: its religious teacher had produced, directed, prompted and generally organised it. This play had the primary-school kids enthralled, but proved only an escape from lessons for the older pupils. The whole idea, it seemed, during that week was to get as much money as possible from others, without spending any oneself.

On the Monday after that mad, topsy-turvy week, Sister Pauline stood up on her lectern, rubbed her eyes incredulously with her left hand and addressed the assembled pupils. She told us the sum-total of our mission effort. It was a staggering amount. The thing that struck me later was that although the pupils were congratulated and thanked for their efforts, nobody thought of thanking the religious teachers for the work they put into the week. However, I think they were rewarded enough by the sight of all that money pouring out of what they had pretended to think were the meanest set of pupils in the land.

WILLIAM A. CHALMERS, V.



(*Captain*),



ts, Mrs

Traynor

JESUS CRUCIFIED

Dearest Jesus, grant me pardon!
Spare me, Lord, in mercy spare
By Thy anguish in the Garden,
By Thy thrice-repeated prayer:
Crucified, I turn to Thee;
Son of Mary, pity me.

By Thy base betrayal by Judas,
By the buffets and the blows,
By the judgment ruled by Caiphas,
Lord, to Thee I bring my woes:
Crucified, I turn to Thee;
Son of Mary, pity me.

By their tearing off Thy garments,
By Thy scourging with the rod,
By the Crown of Thorns, and torments
Suffered by Thee, Son of God:
Crucified, I turn to Thee;
Son of Mary, pity me.

By the Robe of Scorn Thou worest,
By their spitting on Thy Face,
By the cruel Cross Thou borest
Thou didst save the human race:
Crucified, I turn to Thee;
Son of Mary, pity me.

By Thy dreaded crucifixion,
By Thy hanging on the tree,
By Thy thirst and dereliction,
Fount of Pity, save Thou me:
Crucified, I turn to Thee;
Son of Mary, pity me.

By the Passion Thou didst suffer,
Help me, Lord, when death is nigh;
Come to me and, with Thy Mother,
Take me to Thy home on high:
Crucified, I turn to Thee;
Son of Mary, pity me.

HELEN McMILLAN, IIIA.

II Carnevale

As the great aircraft slowly touched down on the run-way of Viareggio's beautiful airport, I could hardly wait to be allowed to descend. My mother, father and sister were highly amused as I craned my neck to see if the weather was all it should be. You see, it was not September, the month when we usually visit Italy, but February. And we had flown over for the great "Spring Carnevale."

The next morning dawned bright and clear, and as I awoke I could already feel the joy and gaiety in the air. Running downstairs to the breakfast room, I was soon joined by the rest of the family. Half an hour later we were all ready and gaily set off to mingle with the happy laughing throngs. It was by now 9.30 and the procession of floats was due to start at 10 o'clock. Excitement among the crowd was already at fever pitch.

Then it started. The first floats were coming down Viale Margherita. The first six were each drawn by four white horses and all portrayed scenes from wonderland. The first was Snow White with her Prince and her faithful Seven Dwarfs in attendance. On the second stood Rose Red and Rose White, one lovely girl dressed completely in red roses, while the other was similarly attired in white roses. Both were sitting in a bower of roses with their arms entwined. Alice in Wonderland followed with the Mad Hatter, the Dormouse and the March Hare. The March Hare was indeed a very comical fellow who stood about seven feet high.

After the first six floats had passed, there appeared the clowns who cavorted and danced, singing happily as they passed. O, what fun, what excitement as float after float passed by! One moment you were invaded by men from Mars, who jumped into the crowd from their floats and laughingly made off with beautiful young signorinas as their captives;

next moment you were in the middle of the African Jungle surrounded by tigers, lions, gorillas and even elephants, while jungle drums beat out the eerie tattoo.

At last came the high light of the parade:- a float which was covered completely with flowers of every hue and tint: in the middle was a large throne also completely draped with flowers and amidst this flowery glory sat the "Queen of the Flowers"! She was exquisite—with laughing black eyes and blue-black hair, and was dressed in shimmering white. There she stood like a lovely princess from a bygone age, smiling to her subjects and throwing flowers.

Morning passed to afternoon, afternoon to evening. Then the floats were withdrawn for the night, and the fireworks and illuminations began, as did the dancing in the streets. Oh, what a wonderful evening! Young lovers dressed in their traditional costumes had come from all the surrounding villages. Merry-makers had come from many parts of the world to Viareggio for this wonderful Carnival, yet all seemed one laughing, happy family as they danced the whole night through, under the wonder of an Italian sky illuminated by fairy lights and fireworks.

"One!", "Two!", "Three!" . . . as the last stroke of midnight chimed, my eyes had begun to lose their lustre. Very reluctantly I bade my parents good-night and slowly made my way to bed. But the joy was still in my heart as I was to be in Viareggio for two glorious weeks and, as you see, so was the "Carnevale."

ALBA MILANI, IIC.

A Smuggler's Paradise

Think of a starless night, a low mist slowly creeping round the jagged rocks on some isolated stretch of sand. Coming into view is a creaking ship laden with contraband from France and Spain, bound for various clandestine stops along the coast towns of Ayrshire. The small group of men who wait tensely on the shore are receivers and distributors of the illegal cargo. A little way inland shine the lamps of a small town, twinkling bravely against the oncoming mist. Behind some of these lights lie unseen dangers to the smugglers—the Excisemen, ever on the lookout for such illegal traffic as this—though few, it seems, of the smugglers were ever caught. An hour or so later, the cargo safely landed and spirited away, the ship sails back to its secret harbour, and, all traces of the transactions of the night removed, the weary but contented men return stealthily home to sleep.

Romantic ideas of smuggling seem to have little connection with the very stolid and down-to-earth Ayrshire of today. We can pride ourselves now on our law-abiding respectability, but our Ayrshire forebears of a couple of hundred years back won satisfaction and gain from transgressing the rules and regulations laid down for the conduct of trade. The art of smuggling, for it was a very fine art, thrived all over the county and in particular in Irvine. The "Fair Traders," as the smugglers were called, operated through Ayrshire with little serious opposition from the none-too-efficient customs system. Ships carrying contraband were frequently to be seen slipping into lonely parts of Irvine shore after dark, and it was frequently not until two or three days later that the excisemen discovered the facts.

From the days of the Elizabethan wars in Ireland, the Scots, from Ayrshire in particular, made good profits by trafficking smuggled arms and ammunition to the soldiers on both sides. The centre of these illegal activities was Irvine and in 1601 the Privy Council were so aroused that they arrested fifteen citizens of Irvine. Some time after this a quantity of smuggled goods was confiscated by the authorities and even some bailies were cited to appear before the Court. Nevertheless the Irvinites blithely continued their "work". From Ireland were transported salt, beef, meal, corn and even cattle, though it is a mystery how the latter were concealed. Skippers now decided to go further afield and bring in foreign liquors, for we hear of a ship containing these things being confiscated. One burgher lost his burghership over it, from which we can gather that staid citizens as well

as adventurers were concerned in the trade.

The eighteenth century, as we know, was the smuggler's heyday. Tea was then a very profitable cargo: in fact tea had become so popular that highly righteous people were taking the pledge against it as against alcohol. McJannet's "History of Irvine" quotes one of these anti-tea promises made by the tenants of William Fullerton, Irvine:-

"We, being all farmers by profession think it needless to restrain ourselves formally from indulging in that foreign and consumptive luxury called tea, and when we consider the slender constitutions of many of higher rank amongst whom it is used, we conclude that it would be an improper diet for the more robust and manly parts of our business; therefore we only give our testimony against it, and leave the enjoyment of it altogether to those who can afford to be weak, indolent and useless."

Salt was another valuable import, especially after the Union in 1707 when severe duties were imposed on legal trading in Scotland. The salt already being produced at Saltcoats being too rough, the people welcomed the finer continental and Irish rock salt. So the "Trade" progressed. At this time the Isle of Man was used as a dumping ground for foreign contraband goods and this was easily reached from the Ayrshire coast.

Nevertheless, not all the smuggling was carried on without disturbance of the peace. Sometimes officers of the King were attacked in the performance of their duty. One night, after a successful haul by the officers, the Irvine Customs House was attacked by smugglers and a great deal of fighting took place. As a result of this, troops had to be called in to reinforce the excisemen, and dragoons were posted at Irvine, Kilmarnock, Beith and Saltcoats. Once again, in 1773, fifty armed smugglers from Beith attacked and broke into the Irvine Customs House and appropriated most of the goods therein. Evidently Beith was even deeper in the smuggling game than Irvine. In his "Annals of the Parish", John Galt described the widespread smuggling as a great evil to the whole community:-

"The tea was going like chaff, the brandy like well water, and the wastrie of all things was terrible. There was nothing minded but the riding of cadgers by day and excisemen by night and battles between the smugglers and the King's men, both by sea and land. There was continual drunkenness and debauchery and our Session had an awful time o't."

Probably there is little excitement brought to the minds of present-day youth by smuggling and smugglers, but we must remember that the folk who risked their lives by smuggling or delivering contraband, possessed the selfsame courage, steel nerves and cool-headedness which we admire so much in our Cheyennes, Matt Dillons and Wyatt Earps of this modern age.

DOREEN MCCOY, IV.

THE MAIDEN

When I was a young girl, I drove my mother potty,
And I met a maiden in the wood who said her name was Lotty.
Now Lotty was the ugliest girl that I have ever seen,
One of her eyes was purple and the other it was green.

Her hair was like spaghetti and her nose was fiery red,
And both her little ears were on the same side of her head,
Her tiny hands were frozen and her face was wreathed with pain,
You would think it had been trampled on by more than one mule train.

Her teeth were green and yellow, with one as black as jet,
If she had had a blue one, she'd have had a snooker set.
I have not seen my Lotty for many and many a day,
For she climbed upon her broomstick and she swiftly flew away.

MARGARET O'NEIL, IIB.

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN THE EXAM-HALL

Avenge, dear Saint, thy tortured sons, whose groans
Are heard to moan around thy school so old,
Even those who answered when the bell was tolled
And dared, not one, relax his weary bones.
Forget not, at the Great Correctors' thrones,
Who learned—"Je suis," "tu es", in classrooms cold,
Harassed by logs and Shakespeare's heroes bold.
O, recommend our cause in urgent tones.
Record our pleas and yearnings; labours keen
Of teachers, who their sweat and blood did spill!
Smile on their efforts, make their harvest teem,
Pass us one hundred-fold—dreams to fulfil.
Climax our years of hopes that they may seem
Fruitful: O guide us yet to Gilmorehill!

WILLIAM WALSH, V.



Press Button "B"

Through the classroom windows the playground could be seen. It was deserted. It was always deserted after four o'clock. In the classroom a solitary figure sat hunched up over a desk, writing long pages of notes—history notes. Why was this boy in class when everyone else had gone home? Well, for the answer to that question we must go back several months to the last summer holidays.

That summer had been a glorious one. The sun was always blazing down on the holiday-makers. The boy, however, had been too preoccupied to bother about the weather: his father, that eminent scientist, John S. Bunyantoes, Snr., had presented to the boy, John S. Bunyantoes, Jr., a new and completely fascinating toy. The toy was, in fact, that masterpiece of ingenuity known as an electronic brain. Whenever anyone mentions an electronic brain, one immediately visualizes a huge piece of machinery with glowing buttons and buzzers all over the place. This electronic brain, however, was very different. It was as small as a medium-sized ink-bottle and could fit quite comfortably into a pocket. There were only two controls which were easily handled. It was, in fact, just the thing needed by a boy not very brilliant in his scholastic achievements. John thought so, too.

Thus, at the very end of the summer holidays when he returned to school, John had no qualms when entering the history class. History was John's weak subject. No matter how hard he tried, he could not remember one single date; but with the brain in his pocket John had complete confidence in his ability to answer any question. That first day was a triumph for him. He astounded everyone by his speed and accuracy in answering. At the end of the lesson the history teacher congratulated him on his answering. John nearly laughed out loud when the teacher told him that "he was glad to see that he had taken his advice and done some serious studying during the holidays." Day after day John answered brilliantly. Word soon got round that John S. Bunyantoes knew all his work. Teachers stopped asking him questions and turned their attention to the more recalcitrant members of the class. John had an easy life. He began to buy more Wild West novels to read in class. It was like a dream come true!

The weeks passed. The end-of-term exams. drew closer. John, of course, was not at all worried. All he needed to do was to put the question to his electronic brain and out would

come the answer. There was no need to swot like all those othermugs! He could take life easy. The exam. would be plain sailing to him.

The day of the exams. dawned. John's classmates were almost sick with nervous tension. How they envied John strolling nonchalantly across the playground! How they wished they had started swotting a month or two ago instead of just a day or two ago! They racked their brains for the dates of the English Civil War, but in vain. They were sunk! They knew it and John knew it. But what did they matter to him? *He* was all right. He was going to pass all his exams. He was no sucker.

At last the bell rang. The class walked nervously into the examination room like cattle into a slaughter-house.

Years later, or so it seemed to the candidates, they walked out of the examination room, not nervously, as they had gone in, but like automatons. In this state of suspended animation they would live until the results of the exam. came through. John, however, was bubbling over with self-confidence and bounced around telling everyone how well the exam. had gone and how easy it had been.

At last the results of the exam. were read out. John was shaken to the very marrow of his being when it was announced that he was bottom of the class in history. He sat in a stunned silence all through that lesson. At the end of the lesson he approached the teacher and asked if he could see his paper. He was sure the teacher had made a mistake and said so.

At these words the teacher said, "Listen to me, you self-opinionated jackass! Any more of your cheek and I'll have you up before the head! It's not me that's making the mistake: it is *you*, in thinking that you have some brains! Let me disillusion you, my boyo! Anyone who could write that the cause of the American War of Independence was Archimedes' Principle has clearly no brains! And another thing, Master John S. Bunyantoes, the Mercantile system was not an Extension of the Theorem of Pythagoras. In future, Master John, you can just stay in for an hour after four o'clock and learn what these things are!"

And that is the reason why this boy stays in class when everyone else has gone home. It is, to be sure, a great humiliation to him. But the greatest humiliation of all was when, on examining the electronic brain he found that he had forgotten to press Button B and as a result all the questions and answers fed into the machine had got mixed up, thus causing his failure. It was a bitter pill for him to swallow, but he did not become embittered. He learned his lesson, as I hope *you* will, from this unhappy experience, and in this approaching exam. he has vowed that he will remember to press Button B!

C. WHYTE, IV Year.

THE BARBER

I hate to go to the barber's;
He makes me sit too quiet.
He tells me not to wiggle,
I'd like to see him try it.

My barber bosses me too much;
I just don't think it fair.
He never gets a haircut
'Cause he hasn't any hair.

JOHN McLAUGHLIN, IC.

A LATIN LIMERICK

In vico Titus ambulabat,
In nubibus caput servabat,
Est lubricus vicus,
Et stultus est Titus,
Mox stellas multas numerabat.

JOHN HAMILTON, IIA.





JAZZ



“ . . . Although Al Jolson’s nauseating blubbering masquerades as savage lamenting, although Tin Pan Alley has become a commercialised Wailing Wall, the only jazz music of technical importance is that small section of it which is genuinely Negroid. . . .”
(*Music Ho!* CONSTANT LAMBERT).

Many people today have a peculiar aversion to the word “jazz”. They seem to think that it encompasses the vast quantity of assorted slush variously known as “pop”, “rock-’n-roll”, “swing”, “be-bop” and much more. These forms of modern music can be entertaining in their own way, but to associate them with classic jazz is, in my opinion, the ultimate heresy. For the benefit of the uninitiated, I shall enlarge on the phrase “classic jazz”.

After the emancipation of Afro-American slaves in the second half of the 19th Century, the traditional work-songs of the Negroes, together with French and Spanish popular music and other influences, blended together and ripened as one into primitive jazz. Jazz is, basically, the folk-music of the American Negro, and that heterogeneous stew-pot of the deep South, New Orleans, because of its size and gay cosmopolitan atmosphere, was its natural cradle.

The poor untutored Negro, who somehow obtained a secondhand instrument, played with heart and soul, and it is this deep feeling and spontaneity which is the essence of classic jazz and which distinguishes it from all imitations and “progressive developments.”

This brings me to the subject of “modern” jazz, which I shall gloss over in this article, for it is a highly controversial facet of jazz music. I myself cannot enjoy, let alone enthuse over jazz forms which are as precise, dull and usually as incomprehensible as a complex algebraic equation.

These days, fast air travel enables the great personalities of classic or traditional jazz to tour the world, and St. Andrew’s Hall, Glasgow, is usually their Scottish stopping-place, at which times I, and thousands more of the anointed élite, squeeze into the huge auditorium to pay tribute to the “greats”. I hasten to add that these audiences, unlike the riotous rock-’n-roll fans listen to the music and applaud at the proper time.

To some, this article will undoubtedly be boring, to others provocative, but I hope that it will interest a few, and, better still, encourage them to take an interest in jazz.

I will close with the inspiring words of the immortal poet, Jelly-Roll Morton:-

“Hello, Central! Give me Doctor Jazz,
He’s got what I need, I’ll say he has!
When I’m trouble-bound and mixed,
He’s the guy that gets me fixed!”

DAVID ROCHE, VI Year.

F.P. NOTES

LAST YEAR, Mr. Murphy wrote to tell us that on the day the magazine arrived at his house, his wife dropped all her household chores and read it through from cover to cover. We commend her good sense in putting first things first, and hope that our new style magazine will get her off at least three days' housework!

THE FIRST DECADE of priests is completed this year with the ordination of Rev. James McHugh, one of the first group of students to emerge from Drygrange. We were delighted to receive a visit from Fr. James a few days after the ordination in St. John's Stevenston. The first "bead" of the decade is Fr. Joseph Bell, late of Irvine and now in U.S.A. Many F.P.s will recognise him better by his nickname "Scutum", bestowed on him at an appropriate moment by Jimmy Duffin. A contemporary of Fr. Bell's is Fr. John Hamill, who is a parish priest in the South of England. He is uncle to a host of Hamills and a couple of Tippings. Then we have Fr. Dalton Haughey, also in the south of England, Fr. John Connlan, Fr. Peter Murphy and Fr. John Kane, all from Stevenston. The latter is at present teaching in Blairs College. Fr. Alban McKee, C.P. resides at Dankeith. Fr. Charles Duffin is a Verona Father, and has been working in Uganda since 1955. Number nine "bead" is Fr. Thomas McCann of Irvine. To our Benjamin, Fr. McHugh, we offer heartfelt congratulations.

"ELEVEN THANK GOD", the title of a book by Fr. Vincent McNabb on his own family, neatly summarises the answer to the question, "And how many nuns have we among the F.P.'s?" Quite a few of them have chosen to dedicate their lives to God as Carmelites: Rose Brady (Sr. Ann of the Holy Spirit) in Langside, Teresa Campbell, Annie McQuade, Annie Dorrian all in Dumbarton. The latter is called Sr. Mary of St. Michael and pronounced her final vows last July. She wrote a word of special good wishes to the present Sixth Year before the "Highers", as they were her last set of First Years before she left us. Sister Mary (Julia Brosnan) has changed surprisingly little under her Sister of Charity coif, as some of the Staff remarked, when they had the pleasure of meeting her in Easter week. There are two Passionists among the eleven, Sister Jane Francis (Agnes Mulgrew), teaching in Lochgelly, and Sister Pauline Therese (Agnes Leverage), teaching in Bradford. A miscellany of Orders accounts for the others: Josephine Archbald is a Sister of Nazareth; Cathie Malone, a Franciscan; Margaret Long (Sister Noemi), a Sister of Misericorde; and Moira Donnelly, a Religious of the Sacred Heart. And who knows when we shall have to change "Eleven, thank God," into "Eleven plus"?

LETTERS reach us from far and near, telling us of the doings of those who have passed on into life's struggle—where they seem to be holding their own. Margaret Taylor is doing research work on caffeine as a pain-killer at Fordham University. Her letter appears elsewhere in this magazine. Richard Smith writes from the high seas to tell Sr. Pauline of his success in the G.C.E. The Navy is keeping Claude Pratchett busy, but he still has time for boxing and reached the Navy semi-finals in Gibraltar. John McCaffery, in the Merchant Navy, had the privilege of being a member of one of the last groups received in audience by the late Pope Pius XII. Nancy Bates writes sometimes from Birmingham where she teaches. She also paid us a visit at Easter. Oonagh Furlong wrote from Ramsgate and her letter included news of Pat Key who is doing Market Research. Christmas greetings came from Tom O'Rourke—in mid-January! Tom received Minor Orders in the Royal Scots College, Valladolid, in December, and had to edit and write in long-hand the single copy of their college magazine, *The Ambrosian*. So, between the tonsure and the magazine, we excuse his belated greetings. And if he isn't green with envy when he sees OUR magazine, he deserves the sack for unprogressiveness! Only . . . who is to sack the editor?

GOOD WORK is being done in many fields. Alice McGaffney is doing cancer research. She shares a flat in Glasgow with Phil Davey who teaches in the city and is studying for her Ed.B. Notre Dame College of Education loosed a bigger than usual quota of our past pupils among the unsuspecting school population of Ayrshire: Elma Robertson completed her post-graduate training and is teaching in Loudon-Montgomery school, Irvine; Nancy Aitken, Isobel Platts, Anne Ogilvie and Margaret McNaughton have come to rest in St. Columba's! St. Patrick's accepted the services of Catherine McIlhoney. Margaret Craig is teaching Domestic Science in St. Peter's, Ardrossan, while Pat McCurry is Gym teacher in Dalry High and Central. Kathleen McCann became Gym instructress with us last August. In St. Paul's, Hurlford, is Helen McCann, and in St. Sophia's, Galston, is Janet Brown. While we are on the subject of teachers, let us congratulate Agnes Kelly who was invited by the Belgian Government to represent Scottish Primary teachers at their country's Pedagogical Week before Easter. Mrs. Barbour (Moir Davey) came to us for a short period as Domestic Science teacher and Mrs. McArdle (Betty Lennan) took the place of Mary Doran until Easter. Philomena Doherty emerged from Notre Dame to take over from Mrs. McArdle after Easter. Mrs. Duffin (Mary Trodden) has been with us since December, doing fine work in the Modern Languages Department.

BEWARE, all you unruly past and present pupils! We've got someone in the "polis" who knows the tricks of the trade—Rosemary Brady, who having done a preliminary three months in Kilmarnock has now gone for full-scale training as a member of the Ayrshire Force. She looks well in uniform but don't be taken in! Sadie McMillan has completed her training at Langside House and is now the proud possessor of a Home Office Certificate for the Residential Care of Children, and—more important—a good job! She is Assistant Matron at "Barrholm," a Paisley Council Home in Largs—a big achievement for a twenty-year old girl. Well done, Sadie! Margaret Macauley has finished her nurse's training in Edinburgh and is now doing the mid-wifery course at Irvine Central. Betty Brodie and Moira Freer are student nurses there. Eileen McGinty, training in Glasgow Royal Infirmary, takes her finals in October. Mary Kane got her S.R.N. last year in a hospital in the south of England. Kay Patterson, having completed her training as a children's nurse, is now doing excellently as a probationer in Glasgow Victoria.

VISITORS during the session included James Jennings from Kilbirnie, a member of the Ayr County Council. A number of last year's Sixth attended the Senior Dance at Christmas, among them Betty Sloan, who also paid us a visit at Easter when home on leave from London, where she has a post in the Air Ministry. Betty plays netball and hockey for her office and hostel. Her brother, John, is employed at Hunterston. William Jardine and Vincent Gallagher are apprentice draughtsmen there. Kenny Brown is an apprentice barber in Saltcoats. Christopher McAteer is training as a chef at the Turnberry Hotel. John Donnelly of Irvine has been coming to the school every Thursday to train our infant orchestra. We are very grateful to him for all the trouble he takes. Tony Pieroni and his wife, Anna Gartland, called to show off their darling new baby AND to order a magazine! May McAtamney is, as always, willing to help us in any way possible.

EMIGRATION has claimed yet more former pupils. Betty Winton and Rose Campbell (who has married since) have gone to Canada. Laura Kilbride has taken a teaching post in Rhodesia. Therese McKinstery and Mary Doran left the Staff in July and October respectively to take posts in the same school in Barbados. And the address? St. Michael's! . . . Govan!! You can read elsewhere in the magazine what Mary has to say about their school. Jeannette Devlin called to say good-bye before leaving a few weeks ago, to take up a post in Ottawa. Incidentally she paid for a magazine to be posted to her—wise virgin!

ON THE ATHLETIC SIDE we are pleased to hear that Frances Macintyre plays for the West of Scotland netball team. She and Blanche Hughes have their University colours for this game. Joseph McGeough is a member of Glasgow University Sprint team. Hugh

Strain plays football for the Irvine Meadow and his team got to the Scottish Cup finals this year.

MARRYING and giving in marriage are as common as ever. The following have "tied the knot" since our last issue: Gerardine Dorrian, Veronica and Ann Magee, May Whiteford, Isobel Fraser, Margaret McNally, Ann McGurk, Henrietta Finnie, Mary Aitken, Maria Delahunt, Margaret Delury, Pat McKivett, June Mullen, Pearl Price, Pearl Cassellis, Maria Madden. Josephine Boland has married Stephen Neill. Among the boys who have got married are: Eddie Mullen, Alex. Mair, Ian Pratchett, Michael Pentleton, George McCall, Bert White, Quinto Pieroni, Leonard Biagi.

THE CIRCULAR on the possibility of beginning an Association of F.P.'s drew a moderate response. We found it extremely difficult to contact you, though we tried conscientiously to cover all those on the rolls for the past ten to twelve years. There is scarcely an address which has not changed. If you are interested, get in touch with the school. We intend that group activities be started whenever the numbers warrant it, in the most suitable venue in the area from which the demand comes. F.P.'s who have already promised their support, will be notified when arrangements are completed.

IN CONCLUSION we should like to say how pleased we are to hear of your achievements. Your joys and sorrows are still ours, and we are glad to share them. Let us hear from you, but PLEASE give us your correct address, and if you are—or were—a girl, your **two** names if you are married.

WASHING DAY

The dazzling suds are boiling,
The wringer standing near,
The rope is now uncoiling,
For washing day is here.

A lively breeze is blowing,
And the sun begins to shine,
My mother now is going,
To hang the washing on the line.

Daddy's shirt is dancing,
With Mummy's Sunday gown,
Big brother's socks are prancing,
While towels jig up and down.

Blanket, pillow-case and sheet,
Are waltzing to and fro,
Such a lively, happy washing,
Drying row by row.

MARGARET MARY MAGEE, IA.

AUX REPETITIONS

Les sanglots longs
Des violons
Des élèves
Blessent mon cœur
Me font horreur
Comme en rêves.
Tout suffocant
Et blême, quand
Sonne l'heure
Cinq heures et demie.
Tous les jeudis
Que j'ai peur!
Et je m'en vais
Ou je pourrai
Ne pas entendre
Pendant longtemps
Les violons
Qui m'ont troublé.

J. DONNELLY and K. MCKINLAY, IIIA.

HAMSTERS

Hamsters are new pets which have recently been placed on the market. They have rapidly gained favour with pet-lovers because they are easy to care for and because their bright intelligent eyes seem to hold an overwhelming attraction for even the most casual observer. You may be tempted to think that hamsters are just another common, ordinary pet, but they are not. Hamsters sleep during the day and come out at night to play and they are most amusing to watch at this time.

A mother hamster and thirteen young ones were found in an 8 ft. burrow in Syria. Of these, two pairs were sent to England and all hamsters in captivity today are descendants of those original thirteen. It is likely that there are more hamsters in captivity today than in their wild state. Through careful breeding, hamsters of different colours have been produced but details of this development would fill a book.

Hamsters are much like miniature bears although some people think they are like rats. They may have some rat-like characteristics but they are much more amusing and more pleasant, although I am not implying that tame rats do not make interesting pets. People seem to think that tame rats are like their wild relations but there is a big difference. The natural colour of hamsters is a golden mahogany with a white underside. Also there are noticeable black stripes stretching from behind the ear to the cheek and called "cheek flashes".

Harry, my own pet hamster, has got into the habit of climbing up the leg of one's trousers, inside or outside. Usually he cannot find the way down again, and so he takes the only way out and "thuds" down. Hamsters are shortsighted and when Harry is put on to a chair he falls off because he does not know how far away the floor is. The curious thing is that he does not learn from his mistakes; he does the same thing time and again. He is kept in a small glass-fronted box in the living room. The bottom is covered with sawdust and his sleeping quarters upstairs are filled with hay. His bed has no unpleasant smell otherwise I would not be allowed to keep him indoors.

One curious thing about hamsters is that they have cheek pouches. Into these they can stuff food or nesting material to convey elsewhere, and they can carry almost one half of the hamster's weight. When he is emptying the pouches, he pushes out the contents with his fore feet.

If food is given to my hamster, he immediately stuffs his pouches and scuttles off to deposit his load under the sideboard. Does he pick it up again? Not likely! He leaves it there until somebody picks it up. Sometimes the contents of the pouches, like wisps of hay, can be seen sticking out of his mouth. Once he escaped into the budgies' cage, and, amidst a cloud of feathers, proceeded to examine it, probably looking for some tasty morsel discarded by the birds. Another time he chewed a hole through my trousers after climbing up the inside. He also likes to chew the edge of the carpet and when someone goes to chase him, he stands bolt upright, sniffs a few times in your direction and then slinks off to some corner to sulk.

Unfortunately hamsters only live for three or four years at the most and so you will only meet disappointment if you buy an old hamster. Although not yet widely popular, perhaps some day this most interesting and unusual pet will become as great a favourite as the dog or cat is at the moment.

DAVID TYLER, III.B.

Jennings and Darbshire come to St. Michael's

On a warm, sunny morning in the middle of the summer term, the total population of I.A. was working, or rather trying to work its way through a Maths exercise, when a prefect entered and whispered something to the Maths Master. After the prefect had left, the Maths Master looked up and detailed Tom Ryan to go and fetch two new boys for I.A. And, at that moment, who do you think were standing in the corridor? Jennings and Darbshire! Both boys were very excited at coming to a new school. Jennings, a small, insignificant, tousle-headed boy, had been very surprised when he heard that he was going to school in Scotland, and immediately imagined himself leading a wild horde of clansmen down a hill with a claymore in one hand and a shield in the other, to attack a neighbouring clan. Darbshire, on the other hand, was a weedy-looking youth, with inch-thick glasses that were about as transparent as a brick wall, and when he heard that he was going to school in Scotland he wondered whether or not he would have to wear a kilt; he was very much relieved to find he did not need to.

At that moment, Tom Ryan, the class prefect, arrived and asked, "Are you the two new boys for I.A.?" They replied in the affirmative. "What are your names?" Ryan asked. "Jennings and Darbshire," was the astonishing reply. "It can't be!" Ryan gasped. "But it is," put in Darbshire. "O well, come along then," Ryan said, and led the way out of the corridor. As they went along he explained who he was and what school was like.

The rest of the morning passed uneventfully although the two boys received curious stares from practically everybody in the class. But when the bell went, everything was different. There was a mad stampede for the dinner lines and Jennings was nearly killed on the way. But when they did manage to get to the line they found places had been kept for them by the three friends whom they had made during break, namely, Tom Ryan, Jim Stevens and myself.

During dinner, Tom remarked on the meat which was exceptionally tough, to say the least of it, saying that it tasted like the old cow the nuns kept in the convent. Another remarked that it was probably a prefect, and yet another thought that it might be a mixture of the two. Jennings nearly died of indigestion that day.

In the afternoon, Music and Latin lessons passed quietly, but the fun began in the next period, Science. The Science teacher went to the next lab. to borrow some chemicals. Seeing a beaker of water, Martin Carty filled his water pistol from it and proceeded to empty it in Darbshire's face. Turning round to refill it, Carty spotted an old label on the beaker—Hydrochloric Acid! Just then Darbshire began to moan that his eyes were stinging. Then Carty went mad, running round the room and shouting that he had blinded

Darbshire for life, and when Darbshire heard the news he let out a hideous scream that could have wakened the dead and gabbled off prayers like a machine gun. At that moment the Science teacher came running in and shouted, "What's going on here? Have you all gone mad like that thing there?"—indicating Carty who by this time was nearly airborne. After hearing Carty's story he said, "Hydrochloric Acid, my foot! that's salt solution. Somebody take Darbshire out and help him to clean up." At that moment the bell rang, saving Carty from certain annihilation and ending Jennings' and Darbshire's first day at St. Michael's.

MICHAEL ELLIOTT, IA.

AT BURNS' MONUMENT, IRVINE

I stood beside the monument to Scotland's bard one day,
And as I stood there lost in thought,
I dreamed I heard him say:-

"Two hundred years have passed away
Since I first saw the light of day
And now I stand here cast in stane,
Immortalised in every hame.
They call me Scotia's greatest poet,
Though when a lived they didna show it.
I ploughed many a lonely furrow,
I've trudged this ancient Royal Burgh,
Today I'm praised an' crowned wi' glory,
An' auld Scots tell their bairns ma story.
Man's inhumanity to man,
Upsets the Great Designer's plan.
I dearly lo'e my cronies sure,
Especially cronies such as Muir.
Men wi' Auld Scotia's pride at heart
Like Lindsay, Smith and Grieve and Barke;
McCarg, McDiarmid, Hutchison, Kemp,
Literary men, all Heaven-sent.
But why this joy—this praise—those tears,
After two hundred weary years?
If only they had shown such care
When I was struggling in Auld Ayr.
My only armour in those days was Jean,
She's due the greatest praise.

Two hunner years, an' here I'm still,
In stane, unfit to use the quill,
Although tae me those years were fleeting,
Dinna mistake me—I'm no greetin'!
"Be to my faults a little blind,
And to my virtues very kind."



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