

Newcastle  
Boys' High School

# The Newcastle

NO. 46 - 1934



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Boys' High School

# The Newcastle

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## THE STUDENT ON THE STUDENT

Criticism of the present educational system is rife, particularly as it applies to the High School. New avenues of thought are being explored, and the student has been given the opportunity of expressing his ideas in public. But the fact that the public has in general an entirely erroneous conception of the student is a matter which deserves further attention and elucidation.

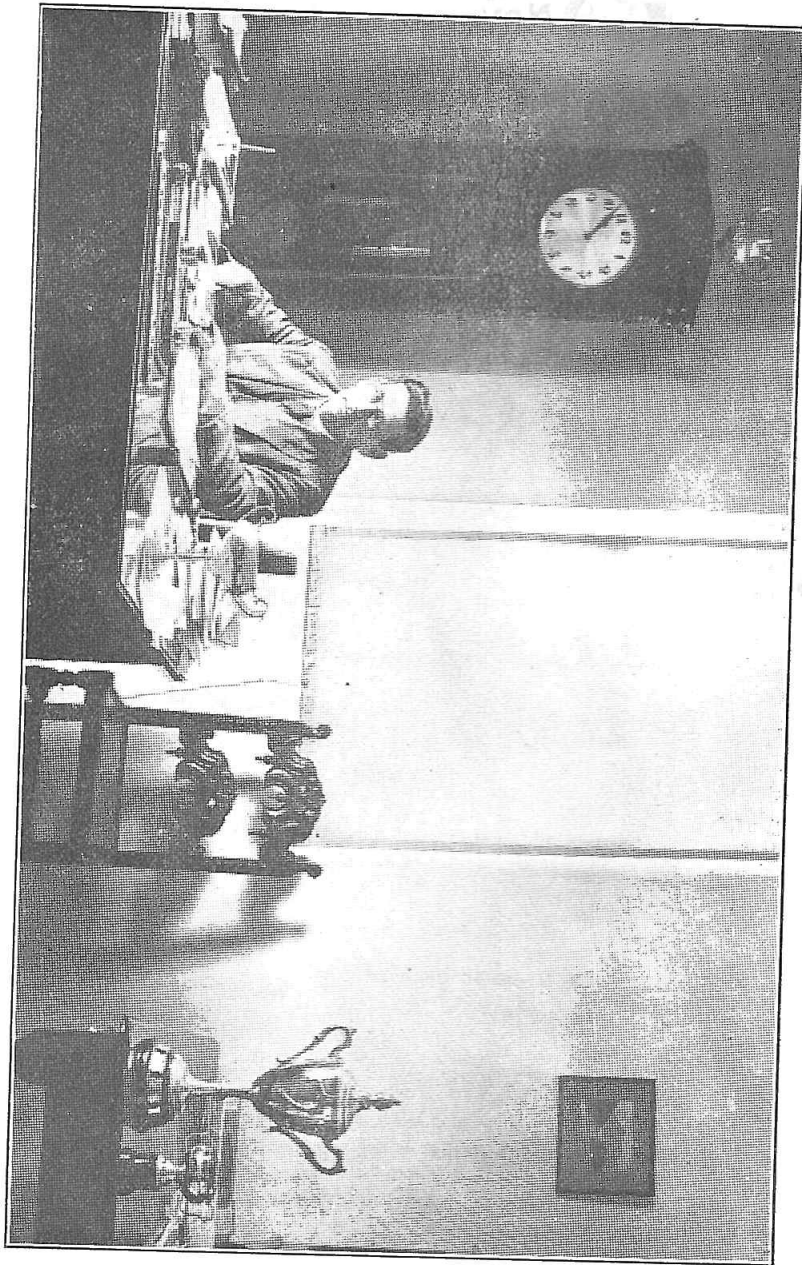
The student is usually thought to be some half-educated, simple creature, with no original conception of life's problems, or thoughtful attitude in matters other than sport and pleasure. This charge of inexperience is the usual refuge of the armchair philosopher, who cannot realise that in the term "experience" is concealed affectation, artificiality and perverse worldliness. As regards life, there is not much that the senior student in the high school—especially in these modern times—does not know. Sophistication comes earlier these days.

The charge that he is hardly educated is purely a relative one. He is far better educated than most. It is realised that education is not the mere assimilation of fact. Culture is the criterion of education. The student has the opportunity—and in most cases avails himself of it—to gain the rudiments of a culture that would otherwise take him many years to attain; or perhaps would not emerge from the daily routine of life at all.

The student in contemplating various incidents and problems arising in life, is not influenced, as the general public, by a conventional and biased conception of the very basis of life, but regards these in an extremely impartial manner.

It must not be forgotten that the average senior student in the High School is in his late 'teens and that it will not be many years before he will take an active part in the government of his country. Surely his strong desire to take an active part in public affairs is an indication of earnest thought in the mind of the student.

—G. Bentley and W. Reines.



The Headmaster in his Office in the new building.

Photo: "Newcastle Herald"

THE SCHOOL SONG

The School is no longer "on the hill so high," and many are our regrets, mingled though they be with delight and pride in our new home. Yet it is to be hoped that this inspiring song will never be abandoned. No one who heard it, as I did, for the first time, so feelingly rendered by a full hall on Speech Night; could contemplate it being superseded by any new composition.

A new song may be written some day to live with the old, but we reprint the old song, with its traditional associations, as a gesture.—A.M.H.

NEWCASTLE HIGH SCHOOL SONG

D've ken the School on the hill so high,  
Bravely facing the winds and the sky,  
While the waves sing their song to the beaches nigh,  
As the bell goes for School in the morning?

Chorus:

Yes, when we are gone, in the years far ahead,  
When the last game's played, and the last lesson said,  
The name of the School will awake from the dead  
The memories of many a morning.

Serving straight in a hard-fought match,  
Sprinting for the tape or a puzzling catch,  
The "blues," from the limit man to the scratch,  
Will still do their best, night and morning.

(Chorus)

Remis Velisque's the motto for all,  
And our hearts yet again will still hear its call  
When the muscles are stiff that once toed the ball,  
Or climbed up the hill in the morning.

(Chorus)

—Henderson.

THE MODERN TREND



A recent publication, entitled "A Twentieth Century Tragedy," by Rudolph Brunngabor, an author suffering under morbid fear, describes this present age as one to be deplored as retrogressive and as one of incredible foolishness. It is a terrible indictment of human folly which endeavours to produce for the reader a glimpse of the inside workings of this "mad world," wherein we helpless mortals, unthinking and uncaring, struggle, as one modern song blithely sings, "For a one-roomed flat, a two-piece suit and three meals a day." It is a general lament for the idiosyncrasies of this modern age, and with the present chaotic state of affairs in mind, the author drives home forcibly the fundamental fact that a radical change in our systems is necessary; and this, for the material benefit of the individual, must be achieved in the near future.

A general survey of the present age must convince the reasoning and calculating critic that there is something commendable, even admirable, in this author's summary of the state of affairs. Under modern conditions, the individual has greater liberty and constitutional freedom than hitherto experienced, and by the increased use of machinery, inventions and other labour-saving devices, his leisure time has been immeasurably increased, to the greater satisfaction of his material welfare. Moreover, the worker of to-day finds himself in the vortex of an individualistic society, in which he must depend on his own resources and the amount of calculating enterprise he possesses. But the world as a whole is the result of a conflict between militaristic avarice and economic pacificism—two ideals which are in opposition and which are continually striving for supremacy in a world considerably weakened as a result of the period when all the world went mad, that period of blood-lust, 1914-1918.

Economic nationalism has control of the world and is specifically characteristic of the post-war period. When the strife of armies and navies ceased, the war continued in the economic sphere. The men who formulated the Versailles Treaty made new nations which were children of

war, born in fear, lacking a sense of permanence and security. These new groupings of people arose with a sense of national entity and a desire for national self-sufficiency. As a consequence, to-day, if we read the innermost secrets of the various nations' diplomacies, we find that all are on the economic defensive; that they are in the progress of regression towards crustacean forms of life; and a great cause of the present chaotic disturbance is this insular outlook of each nation.

The modern age is admittedly a period of philosophic enlightenment and the epitome of secular advancement, but unfortunately for the individuals caught in the web of its diplomacy, this cultural move is not in the right direction. The students who have recently terminated their school career find that, even though the world is termed progressive, no opening for a life's occupation is presented as an outlet for their energies; and through constant hoping and waiting, they become distrustful of the world's politics and the rosy promises of those in power.

How ludicrous it is for a student to read of the philanthropic efforts of a Government to provide relief work schemes, and free training for agricultural and pastoral pursuits, when he has spent years trying to master the problems of algebra or the subtle craft of Shakespeare, in the furtive hope that these will serve him in life's career. Cases may be cited of students who have lagged behind in the race of Life merely because they have failed to satisfy some trivial requirement of a particular faculty, or because they could not successfully overcome the ordeals of an examination. Nothing is more unpalatable to the individual's state than to witness valuable resources, necessary adjuncts to Society, wasted and thrown to the winds.

The vision of illimitable progress which characterised the Nineteenth Century has become bedimmed. The Great War has ushered in a new age with new problems. How is Society to carry on the heritage of the former century? It is a matter worthy of the most careful consideration of every citizen, and a solution must be found which will be sufficiently progressive to withstand the rate of modern progress.

There was a time in human history when the doctrine of "laissez-faire" released human energy. It organised vast

enterprises, it disciplined raw multitudes into efficient tradesmen, and it set new standards of comfort. It turned a poverty-stricken world into a veritable hive of industry. To-day it dangles before man's eyes visions of a world of ordered beauty; but it is only a mirage in an arid desert, and man pursues it in vain.

The present age cannot be entirely condemned; it has illimitable resources ready to be marshalled into a stable, easy-going system; and, above all, it has the support of the individual. It is now awaiting leaders of courage, integrity and foresight to branch out in the strength of their new knowledge and collect these resources in a unified manner.

It behoves all citizens of a country youthful in history, and a future teeming with promise to produce and support these leaders; and if these leaders are the best representatives of our present Society, the ship of state will soon be righted to an even keel, for at present the dangerous wave of depression has it floundering miserably.

—G. Griffith, 5A.

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### "ANECDOTAGE"

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Writing of one's school days may seem a simple task to the average schoolboy, but to one who began as a pupil of Newcastle High nearly a quarter of a century ago—old fogies always think in sub-multiples of centuries—the task is one calling for a feat in Pelmanism of a high order. So much has happened in the intervening years—a world gone mad with hate, motor cars, aeroplanes, wireless, jazz—that those distant times seem to belong to another world.

Most of the details of school life have passed into limbo, but a few personalities and incidents stand out in such bold relief that the account of them may be of interest to present-day students.

I can well remember how proud we all were to belong to the School and to wear its badge, a silver shield, which I still possess. We were very happy at school. There was, as there should always be in a good school, a most friendly feeling between staff and pupils. We were put at our ease

on the very first day by being told that we need not stand up when answering questions—a great concession after the iron discipline of the primary school. We soon discovered that by standing up smartly when addressed—as years of discipline had taught us to do—the tip-back seats emitted an ear-splitting shriek; and in consequence we found it difficult (?) to break away from established custom. No doubt the concession was made more out of consideration for the staff's nerves than of our personal comfort.

The outstanding personality at the School was the Headmaster, Mr. C. R. Smith, or "Caesar" as he was called by irreverent boys. They say boys do not refer to their teachers in flippant terms now-a-days! He taught Latin and by some peculiar system of marking would often allot minus thirty marks out of a possible twenty, for an exercise over which one had pored for hours. You will no doubt have guessed that this was not my strongest subject.

French we learned at the feet of "Joey," an abbreviation for Josephine. She knew Paris very well and delighted to recount its glories, so that a few astute boys and, alas, girls soon contrived to turn rather uninteresting, though important lessons on irregular verbs into personally conducted Cook's tours of her beloved city. I still retain memories of those delightful trips, but I have forgotten those irregular verbs.

Maths. were taught first by "Frizzie," whom you will guess was a lady, and later by "Herb," who was a man—a he-man of stern countenance but a heart of wax. We did not play up with Herb. Another teacher of this abstract science was "Daddy X—s," who taught the bloods working for the Senior. He was noted as an exponent of withering sarcasm, which happily has mellowed with time into a propensity for "leg-pulling." (I hope the censor will pass this.)

"Jimmy," who taught History, could beat all records for marking papers, but we discovered the secret. First read the candidate's name, then the first and last paragraphs, count the number of pages and allot the mark—probably as good a method as any.

Science at school was in its infancy, or better, swaddling clothes, but although its life was short, it was not

uneventful. It was taught by "Roley," who, after discussing the phlogiston theory for weeks and dictating copious notes, decided to prepare oxygen. Unfortunately, he mistook some gunpowder for black oxide of manganese, with the result that he was deprived of a handsome moustache and a set of eyebrows in a period of time that would leave the world's fastest barber aghast. It was a record shave for "Roley"—and a close one.

Social life at school was primitive, consisting of a Beach Tea perhaps twice a year. Once we ventured as far as a picnic to Speer's Point, setting out with the H.M.'s injunction ringing in our ears—"Now boys keep away from the gals, and gals keep away from the boys." Naturally, it was a tame affair.

Talking of the girls reminds one of their dresses. Looking at a photograph of an old school group recently, I could not help thinking that the sartorial emancipation of women was something to be thankful for. They wore skirts to the ankles and blouses which did up at the back. Only a boy with sisters could explain how hooks and eyes in inaccessible places were made to connect, and often a girl performing the gymnastic exercises which usually accompany the proving of a geometrical theorem on the board, would disclose a gap where a hook had lost its eye—all very intriguing but rather distracting!

Then, of course, there was the train. A certain scholar, who shall be nameless, but who afterwards became a prominent solicitor in his home town, was known to have had his boots and socks removed and his lily-white feet waved out of the window at an astonished world all the way from Newcastle to Waratah.

And so one could go on turning over the pages of memory, but there comes before me a vision of an editor with blue pencil, scissors and handy waste paper basket, exclaiming, "This fellow is in his anecdotage!"

May your recollections of Newcastle High School a quarter of a century hence be as pleasant as those of the writer.

—"Old Novocastrian."

## MUSIC IN THE SCHOOLS

"Fundamentum totius republicae est recta iuventutis educatio."—Cicero.

Admitting it to be true that the foundations of a state depend on the education of the youth, the question naturally arises. "What is the object of education?" It aims primarily at the culture of the individual and has as its ultimate goal the culture of the race. Again, what is culture? Is it not the refining of the moral and intellectual nature of man? The word "culture," however, is merely a clumsy make-shift, and it is but a miserable substitute for the Latin *humanitas* and the original Greek idea of *paideia*.

Nevertheless, if culture is moral and intellectual refinement, how does it come to pass that art which, according to Pretorius, "ranks second only to faith and religion," should be entirely omitted from the modern educational curriculum? Surely true culture is impossible if the cultivation of a love of good music is lacking; for when all things are considered, "music"—to quote Beethoven himself—"is a more lofty revelation than all wisdom and philosophy." And yet, in spite of this, the musical education of the youth is quite neglected. That this should be so appears well-nigh incredible; surely there is some explanation.

Schumann tells us that "music is the outflow of a beautiful mind." What! Are we to infer that there are no beautiful minds in our schools to-day? Again, Wagner declares that "music has a powerful influence upon the tastes and morals of a nation." Heaven forbid! Have we no morals? Have we no tastes and desires worthy of being educated for higher things?

If the Australian schoolboy is a human being, and there is no legitimate reason—at least, to my mind—for suspecting that he is not, then it would not only be to his own advantage but to Australia's also that music should be given a very definite place in the curriculum of the modern High School.

As it is, music is not the only cultural influence that is disregarded by the present educational system. The result is that the High School of to-day turns out robots instead of cultured citizens, and adding machines rather than



This Staff group was taken at the first assembly at Waratah.

Photo: "Novocastrian."



human beings. Students are taught how to pass exams and how to earn their livings, but not how to obtain the very best that life has to offer. In short, they learn how to exist instead of how to live. They are offered up as victims upon the altar of the Examination God by the giant Standardisation, whose Procrustean methods are a dire menace to the community.

The attitude of the average student who, by some unfortunate mischance, does not learn music outside his school is reminiscent of Bottom the weaver when he says, "I have a reasonable good ear for music, let's have the tongs and the bones." This type of student picks up his love of "music" in the dance hall and the cinema. He holds the viper "jazz" to his bosom merely because the rattle of its tail is rhythmically pleasing. He does not understand real music, and he honestly admits that "classical stuff" is not in his line, yet no effort is made to help him to a better understanding of that for which he believes he has no taste. The average Australian schoolboy cannot tell a vocal strain of Robert Franz from a goods train, and can scarcely tell a bar of syncopation from a bar of soap.

Only the other day whilst walking down Hunter Street, I chanced upon a workless man who, like some loud-mouthed stentor, was demanding to know who of the multitude was "afraid of the big, bad wolf." If this is a true reflex of the Australian taste for music, then when one takes time to reflect, the matter becomes truly alarming. It is high time that music was made part of a secondary education.

At Newcastle High we are fortunate, as are some other secondary schools, since we have on the staff an able musician, and it would not be out of place here to say that the School greatly appreciates his efforts on behalf of music. We have an orchestra of which no school could but be proud, and we possess a juvenile choir of no mean order, both of which were trained under circumstances of extreme difficulty.

Some day, perhaps, the Department will see fit to remove these obstacles, and we are optimistic enough to hope that some Minister for Education in the near future will see, with Hoffmann, that "music so imbues man with its grace and beauty that his mind is so wholly engrossed by it, that another and purer life seems to raise him above the shallows and miseries here on earth," and act accordingly. —B.B.B., 5C.

## EDUCATION

## THE STUDENTS' VIEWPOINT

[The following article appeared in the columns of the "Newcastle Morning Herald" during a recent controversy on the present educational system. Articles were contributed on the subject by "The Wogologist," "Die-hard," Mr. K. Barnard and "J.P.," and this article was written in reply to those contributors. It is reprinted here because it is believed that it reflects the general attitude of the student towards this question.—Editor.]

The position of the critic in matters of education is like that of the critic of art or drama; for, taking all things into consideration, his lot is not an enviable one. According to the measure of his criticisms, so is the measure of condemnation meted out to him. If he praises, he receives no thanks for it. If he "damns with faint praise," his lack of enthusiasm is put down to a jaundiced mind. Dare he to criticise painting, himself not a painter, he is received with scorn by the artist. Has he the temerity to suggest that a musical performance is a little short of perfection, whilst he himself is an amateur, he is told that fools rush in where angels fear to tread. Yet the artist is notoriously unable to judge his own work, and it will be readily admitted that even the meanest grocer is a better judge of an egg than the hen that laid it.

In this case the "hens" are the gentlemen whose views we have heard on the subject; the "grocer," the student. Yet, while so much has been said on the matter, nothing has appeared as the voice of the present student, and this article is an endeavour to express his viewpoint. It will be noticed that this attempt represents the views of three senior students (who are taking different courses), and so it may fairly be considered to represent the attitude of the student in the general sense, not the narrow outlook of one individual.

The first article appearing in these columns by the "Wogologist" appears to us to be a considered opinion on the whole, but it is obvious the student days he speaks of are long since fled into the limbo. His views upon the incompetency of teachers and their attitude toward students are not borne out in the light of our experience. The student of to-day has no quarrel with his teachers; he

rather appreciates the big-brother attitude that they adopt. It is the system to which he objects.

Mr. Barnard seems quite content to accept the Department's well-known policy of standardisation. Mr. Barnard! He mentions the fact that the days of Mr. Squeers and Dotheboys' Hall have passed. Just so! But we are not so far removed from the days of Mr. Gradgrind and Mr. McChoakumchild, those worthy gentlemen who insisted upon "fact," and whose students, like themselves, "had been turned out at the same time in the same factory, on the same principles, like so many pianoforte legs."

But of all correspondents, "Die-hard," with his atavistic attitude, is most insidious to the student. Well has he chosen his name! Visions rise before us of some prehistoric denizen of the cave, with his long, hairy arms, his bone slung over his shoulder, exclaiming to Mrs. D., who sits over the way, "What was good enough for my grandfather is good enough for me!" We deplore this attitude. A very good argument against the present system—and we say this without malice—is "Die-hard's" defence of it, especially as he seems to think that the final test of a good education is the students' ability—like his own—to repair cisterns, typewriters, and badly tattered periodicals. "Die-hard" disputes the derivation of the word "education." He avers that it comes from "educare" and not "e-ducere." Had this gentleman really learned "how to consult books"—to use his own phrase—he would not have made such a gross error. "Educare," according to Webster, comes from the other Latin verb "e-ducere."

A kindred soul to "Die-hard" is "J.P." This critic talks of the "play way" of education. If there is such a method it is being kept very dark—at least, it has never been tried out on us. He it is whose cry is "Standardise, standardise!" He it is who would judge two students, perhaps entirely dissimilar in their inclinations, upon the results of the same examination; an examination which, as we shall show, represents the making or the marring of the students' career.

So far we have turned our attentions to the opinions of other correspondents. It is now our duty to offer some constructive criticisms.

The senior student in the High School has no objection to the educational system up to the "Intermediate." And this is not because he has passed it, but because he realises that some general education is necessary to equip him to take his place in the community. The fact that most business places employ those who have only gone thus far, seems to us to be evidence of the fact that the business community considers such an education to be sufficient for general purposes. That being so, we consider that the post-intermediate stage of the High School course should be one that would guarantee the development of the students' natural talents and inclinations, and enable him to take his place in a cultured society. As Ruskin points out, the youth should not be educated merely to enable him to earn his bread and butter—that is a secondary consideration—but rather to develop his mind, and to make of him a cultured citizen; not to enable him to knock at the front door of a house, but to enable him to wander among the "king's treasuries." To give him something that will make his life beautiful; something that will lift his life to a higher plane, and his thoughts to loftier ideals.

But the present system and the present state of society mean that this cultured aspect has to be subjugated, and has to give place to the secondary one, which is concerned only with procuring for him his livelihood. The position with which the student is faced is this: He is required to matriculate before he is admitted to the University, the University being the intermediary step to his objective. To accomplish this, it is often necessary to pass in certain subjects in which he has no interest, and which will be of no use to him in the faculty he wishes to enter, or in after life.

To quote one instance: A student from Newcastle High School passed last year's Leaving Certificate with first-class honours in Mathematics I. and II., and second-class honours in Physics. His object was to take up a scientific career, but because of his failure to satisfy in French and English he was unable to proceed to the University.

And other circumstances may be found of students who, brilliant on the classical side and wishing to do Arts or Law, are unable to accomplish their object because of their inability to pass in mathematics. The future

engineer wonders — quite rightly — why he is required to digest Bradley's "Shakespearian Tragedy"; and the "English crank" wonders—just as rightly—why he should be required to understand the unspeakable idiosyncrasies of the binomial theorem. They are not given the opportunity to develop their natural talents, but are circumscribed by the requirements of matriculation. We think, with Mr. Barnard, that the Victorian accrediting system would be a preferable substitute for the present one.

Correspondents have objected strongly to the learning of French irregular verbs. This is so much nonsense. The student realises that such elementary processes are necessary; but he deplors the fact that he is not allowed to have sufficient acquaintance with the masters of French prose, in the senior years, to satisfy any cultural curiosity he may have in the subject. In the study of Latin, too, although the student is required to study the masterful epics of Virgil and the brilliant orations of Cicero, the requirements of the Leaving Certificate mean that he must digest a disproportionate amount of those authors in a few short months.

To sum up, we may say that the student of to-day looks eagerly for some change in the present system of education that will enable him to satisfy his natural inclinations.

Although we appreciate what has been done for education in this State, we consider that those who would uphold the present system are making the mistake of applying the methods of the past to the needs of the present, and are neglecting to consider that, with the increased competition that exists in these days for the student, some change in the system becomes necessary. The days have passed when any sort of pass could secure for the student his objective in life. To-day he needs a brilliant pass, and the limitations that are imposed mean, that many a brilliant student will fail because he is compelled to take subjects for which he has no inclination and in which he has no ability.

And so the student of to-day appeals to the community for its thoughtful consideration of educational matters, and he asks nothing more but that he be given a fair chance.

—"Three Men in the Same Boat."



Photo: "Newcastle Herald"

The Prefects — first day at New School.

Mr. SPEAKER!

“With space the universe encloses me and engulfs me  
like an atom, but with thought I enclose the universe!”  
—Pascal.

The power of eloquence has been recognised from the earliest times. It has occupied a foremost place in influencing human conduct and persuading men to action. In ancient Greece oratory was as seriously regarded and studied as any of the arts and sciences. It was this art, indeed, which gave to Athenians much of their polished grace and superior culture. And yet—and this is the tragedy of the whole business—the educational system of to-day tends to neglect the art of speaking altogether, or at best relegates it to the background of school activities.

At Newcastle High, however, it is gaining more and more attention, and both students and teachers are commencing to take a deep interest in school debating. At the beginning of the year, a meeting was held to form a senior debating society, Mr. Wilson taking the chair. Brown-Bishop was elected secretary, and a committee comprising Bentley, Reines and Lew was appointed. The committee then arranged two trial debates, which did not take place until we were domiciled in the new school at Waratah.

The question for debate was, “That Compulsory Military Training should be resumed in Australia.”

In the first debate the teams were: Government, Deitz, Eaton, Roach and Primrose; Opposition, Lloyd, Hobson, Anderberg and Ratcliffe. This debate was exceedingly humorous—though quite unintentionally. The only one who did not see the humour of it was Mr. Wilson, who was in the chair. Roach almost created a riot by saying that watching soldiers marching would increase our appreciation of beauty. He was probably thinking of the female battalions of Russia.

The second debate was certainly of a higher quality, from the point of view of argument, but even so the worthy chairman was obviously “bored stiff.” The teams for this debate were: Government:—Bentley, Reines and Declerck; Opposition:—Brown-Bishop, Griffiths and Lew.

On Saturday, June 9th, a School team met the Workers' Educational Association at their rooms in Scott Street. The subject was again “Compulsory Training,” and the School for the first time defeated the W.E.A.

On June 14th we had another try-out against the Staff. It was held in the Assembly Hall, before a fourth-year audience. Wingett, of fourth-year, aided and abetted by Mr. Wilson, presided, whilst Mr. Moroney acted as adjudicator. The teams were: School:—Bentley, Griffiths, Reines and Brown-Bishop; Staff:—Mr. Wootton, Mr. Hall, Mr. Barnard and Mr. Hornibrook. At the conclusion, Mr. Moroney gave an excellent criticism of the members of both teams, and we are deeply indebted to him for his advice.

On Friday, June 29th, the School met North Sydney High in the first round of the Hume Barbour competition. This debate took place in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall, before a large and appreciative audience. Although Newcastle lost, they lost fighting according to the best Novocastrian traditions. The teams were as follows: N.H.S.:—Bentley (leader), Griffiths, Brown-Bishop; North Sydney High:—Poulsen (leader), Wilson, Banks. No points were made available for this debate.

Although we are now out of the competition, it is possible that other debates may be held after the “Leaving.” In the meantime, however, we leave the task of gaining “Demosthenes” to fourth-year.

We thank Mr. Wilson for the trouble he has taken in connection with the debates. Neither do we forget the enthusiasm of other members of the Staff, and we sincerely hope that ere long Novocastrians will unite in saying with Quintilian, “Let us with all the affections of our heart endeavour to attain the very majesty of eloquence, than which the immortal gods have not imparted anything better to mankind, and without which all would be mute in nature, and destitute of the splendour of a perfect glory and future remembrance. Let us likewise always make a continued progress toward perfection. By so doing we shall either reach the height, or at least see many beneath us.”

—B.B.B., 5C.



"MA CINDERELLA"

"Ma Cinderella"! What a name for a book!" you will say. Well, it is a book which is well worth the trouble of reading. The author, an American novelist, Harold Bell Wright, has the ability to spin a good yarn, and his powers of characterisation are of no mean order.

The story itself is set in Ozark Mountains on the boundaries of the States of Missouri and Arkansas, in the United States, and thus the story interests us because of our geographical ignorance regarding these mountains; when we learn, however, that we are to be among the still-surviving backwoods of America, among precipitous crags and deep mountain glens and streams, and above all, among people whose sense of right and wrong is governed by no other law than the instinct of the backwoods, we cannot resist reading on despite our distaste at the deplorable literary style.

Ma Cinderella, or Mrs. Ann Haskell, as she is universally known, was the proprietress of an estate in the foothills of the Ozark Mountains. Throughout her varied life this rugged mountain woman had had four husbands, all of whom are dead when the story commences. She has two sons, one of whom she strives valiantly to keep at school and university, while the other she allows to become a typical, low-principled wastrel of the bush. This woman rules the surrounding countryside with the despotism of a tyrant, and makes sure that no one challenges the liquor monopoly of her secret still.

As a deep contrast to Mrs. Haskell, the author introduces Diane Carrol, a rich, young artist who possesses all the culture and fine breeding of the city but none of its haughty pride. With the beautiful forest and mountain glens as background these two women are brought together until friction wears away their differences and they learn to appreciate one another. It is hardly necessary, of course, to mention that the wastrel son pays Diane unwanted attention, and the university son suddenly returns home to see his mother and gives his half-brother and two of his henchmen an awful battering, later marrying Diane.

Perhaps the most interesting of the minor characters is Uncle Jimmie Cartwright, the old white-haired, grey-

whiskered mountaineer, whose humorous conversations with his ancient mule, Ahab, make very entertaining by-play, as, for example, when his mule suddenly stops stock still on the road, he exclaims: "Giddap! You dad-burned old reprobate, what you stoppin' fer now? I ought jest natchally git down right hyear an' hang your measly hide on the fence, G-e-e-ru-salem-on-high!"

Although, as I said above, "Ma Cinderella" makes interesting reading, it also affords ample field for comment. The book is divided into four parts, each of which is divided into smaller sub-parts, and the first of the former, that is, the beginning of the book, opens in the least striking and most uninteresting manner imaginable: "This story happened in the Ozark Mountains not many years ago."

The first sub-part is made up of irrelevant matter asserting that the story to follow "happened true." Now if an author wishes to state that his novel comes direct from real life with only the names fictitious, it is his place to say so in a preface or introduction — not confuse it with the story itself. Following this comes an historical statement regarding the location of the plot in which mention is made of the "Haskell place" which, of course, is meaningless to the reader until he or she has read several pages wherein a minor character, Uncle Jimmie Cartwright, is referred to before he, too, is introduced.

Thus the novel meanders on with characters and places popping in here and there as if they were everyday acquaintances and not absolute strangers to the reader.

The language is atrocious and obviously overdone in regard to local mannerisms. For instance, Mrs. Haskell, in conversation with a visiting lawyer, when she should obviously be most careful of speech, says: "We war thar 'bout two year. Then we came hyear. We war a-doin' right well, me an' 'Erb, when a tree fell on 'im and killed 'im. So hit's all like I tell you, mister." Certainly, the effect of this strained dialect is most nauseating and detracts from the fine character delineation and pictorial description.

However, one may affirm that characters should speak as the author thinks best, but surely the author himself should adhere to the established usage of the language in which he is writing; and this Harold Bell Wright certainly does not do.

Indeed, regarding "Ma Cinderella" as a whole, we cannot but deplore its conspicuous lack of external polish and the finishing touch which ought to raise it to the high level of literary value, of which certain scattered parts give a definite promise.

—A. G. Declerck, 5th Year.



Photo: "Newcastle Herald"

The Vestibule at Waratah.



DELLA ROBBIA

From the copse,  
A deafening peal of joy.  
An abrupt laconic termination.  
And the bird  
In utter boredom  
Floats high.  
Gliding, ever gliding.  
Gliding on motionless wing,  
Unto the realms of yesterday.

The sullen sun,  
Behind the cloud o'er yonder hill,  
Shadows the earth wanly.  
Lingers awhile  
Hesitatingly uncertain.  
And it too passes  
Beyond the hill.

Sinuous night  
Loosely robed  
Cadaverously.  
Enturnes its shapeless limbs  
About sweet dark-eyed dusky eye;  
And Eye lay crushed and strangely still.  
A hush,  
And evening was gone.

So pass the wordly multitude  
Unto the river of forgetfulness  
The realms of yesterday.

—W. REINES.

MY DREAM

Yesternight, I thought I strode  
Gallantly a mountain road,  
Lofty as a single span,  
Like an eagle's flight, it ran.

Overhead, a wall of cloud  
Cast a darkness like a shroud,  
Underneath, to left and right,  
Blackness of Stygian night.

Here and there a wild flower bloomed,  
Up on high the mountains loomed,  
Now and then, through rifts of shade,  
Shining moonbeams danced and played.

—W. S. QUINN 3A.

## PARADISE UNGAINED

(Written at the request of the Prefects)

Of scented zephyrs and tuneful cherubim,  
 Luxurious wealth, long, restful, indolent ease;  
 Of wild-haired Maenads, clinging, yielding nymphs  
 Who bring red wine in crystal goblets clear—  
 Winking the while and smiling meaning smiles—  
 Sing heavenly muse, that with us doth lament  
 Th' insidious loss and arrogant denial  
 Of a palatial haven where to rest  
 Our wearied frames and to regale our hearts  
 And minds made sore and troubled by the loud,  
 The unrespectful tenor of the voice  
 Of many a First-Year Monster whose angelic  
 Strain has naught in common with the melody  
 Of Triton's shell, as loud he blew his Sire's  
 Domain afar, and charmed fair Panope  
 To peaceable content, and soothed the waves  
 To breathless inaction.

O Jove, give us a Prefects' Room, where all  
 These blessings will be found the Muse has told  
 Us of! Where sweet content shall reign in peace  
 And Thy son, Bacchus, shall have sovereign sway.  
 With sweet contentment shall the air be scented,  
 And there melodious music such as Pan  
 To Syrinx piped, the soul-starved Tityrus  
 Shall find.

One such as this we had on Tyrell's Top;  
 Where is it now, O Jove? Bacchus himself  
 Shall wreak a vengeance horrible, and smite  
 His Father for His gross neglect of us  
 Fair souls, blithe Hippocrenian courtiers . . .

—J.G.B.

## VISION

I saw the ghosts of three score years and ten  
 Crowd, groping through the pallor of my room,  
 With furtive steps from memory's squalid fen,  
 In dire and dismal visions did they loom.

Old age and youth came gliding side by side,  
 Lean years and plentiful were lingering there,  
 Fair deed and foulest deed with me did bide,  
 Wan shadows of the past crept from their lair.

I trembled, thus to see my faults outlined,  
 And sadly wished to live this life again.  
 Despondently I said that I was blind,  
 And only thought of after life with pain:  
 But with the entry of the sun's first beam,  
 I knew that I was young and life a dream.

—W. REINES.

## THE OLD AND THE NEW

The bullock team toiled through the dusty way,  
 They toiled from the dawn to the end of the day,  
 Behind them lumbered the cumbersome dray,  
 In the days which have long gone by.

The load was heavy and the way was long,  
 The driver singing his snatches of song,  
 As they crossed the mountain and billabong,  
 In the days which have long gone by.

Gone are those days to return never more,  
 Where the dray carried two, the car carries four,  
 But 'tis pleasant to dwell on the memories of yore—  
 Of the days which have long gone by.

There sits a man who's grizzled and grey,  
 He dreams of the time when he drove in the dray,  
 The troubles he mastered along the way,  
 In those days which have long gone by.

The team went slow and the motor goes fast,  
 And speed has conquered the world at last,  
 But the driver of old years after the past—  
 Years for the days which have long gone by.

—REG. PARKER, 2A.

## TOP O' THE HILL

There are roads that are small,  
 There are roads that are long,  
 There are roads where we wander at will,  
 But the best road of all

For the bold and the strong,  
 Is the road to the top o' the hill!  
 When the contest is won  
 And conquered the height,  
 There is glory and life in the thrill,  
 When you sit in the light,  
 Of the sun shining bright.

When you rest at the top of the hill.

—P.T., 1D.

## THE LAND!

Far across the rocky hillsides,  
 In the blue and distant haze,  
 The farmer at his homestead,  
 Sees his sheep and cattle graze.

Right across the distant valleys,  
 He sees again through shimmering heat,  
 The food that feeds so many thousands,  
 The world-renowned Australian wheat.

—A.S., 1A.

THE SNOWFLAKES

Across the plain unending  
 The snowflakes soft and white,  
 Began in early morning  
 To carpet the ground with white.  
 Softly they fluttered downward,  
 And some of them paused to rest  
 On two bright threads of iron  
 That join the East to the West.  
 But one little snowflake whispered  
 "Alas! how small am I!  
 On this hard bed of iron  
 What can I do but die?"  
 Her sister snowflake answered,  
 "'Tis true that we are small,  
 But that need not concern you,  
 We've naught to do but fall!"

—R.S., 1C.

THE WIND

Wind! How it hounds and bustles,  
 How it whistles, and rustles,  
 And whirls all things in its way.  
 Wind! How it shrieks so high,  
 From the earth to the sky,  
 And ripples on every bay.  
 Wind! How it blows and it shakes,  
 Until everyone quakes,  
 And stays inside while it plays.  
 Wind! How it whisks along,  
 Till all but the strong,  
 Have locked themselves in  
 for the day.

ANDREW SNEDDON, 1A.

THE FAIRIES' COBBLER

There is a place in Fairyland,  
 A toadstool as a seat,  
 An Elfin man sits there and makes  
 Tiny shoes for the Fairies' feet.  
 There are rows and rows of tiny shoes  
 Of every shape and hue,  
 And if you went to Fairyland,  
 He'd make a pair for you.

—K. H. JACOB, 1A.

THE SCHOOL DUSTER

In a package labelled inkwells,  
 Or in tidy cardboard box,  
 From our department kindly,  
 Among the new school stocks,  
 Come the unbesmattered, not yet battered,  
 Dusters so immaculately clean.  
 Then from our class the captain,  
 With eager beaming face,  
 As summoned by the deputy,  
 Goes with quickening pace  
 For an unbesmattered, not yet battered,  
 Duster still immaculately clean.  
 Now from a nearby class-room,  
 Though difficult his task,  
 A scholar smiling comes to us,  
 And coming, turns to ask:  
 "Have you an unbesmattered, not yet battered,  
 Duster still immaculately clean?"  
 And the teacher, without pausing,  
 Doth the treasured object lift,  
 His heart quite torn with grief,  
 Surrenders as a gift,  
 Our unbesmattered, not yet battered,  
 Duster still immaculate and new.  
 But the duster's now departed,  
 And none will bring it back,  
 The teacher almost weeping pleads,  
 "Can no one see we lack  
 Our unbesmattered, not yet tattered,  
 Duster so immaculate and new?"  
 When we hear our teacher's pleading,  
 And by his tears are hurt,  
 A certain philanthropic lad,  
 Brings a piece of father's shirt—  
 Yes! a torn and tattered, badly battered,  
 Piece of father's shirt.

—R.D.

FROST

What a mantle of white,  
 Soon to vanish from sight,  
 When kissed by the sun's brilliant ray,  
 As he rises so high,  
 In the bright azure sky,  
 Of a perfect Australian day!

—K.G., 1D.



VAMPIRE TIME

Cold and desolate,  
 The old mill stands in ruins  
 Overgrown with moss,  
 And with slime  
 Clinging to it cloyingly.  
 The stream flows by despondently,  
 In silence,  
 In reverence  
 For the hallowed spot  
 Where long ago,  
 The song of the mill stirred the forest  
 In a rhythmical dance.  
 The sails are poised,  
 Casting shadows,  
 Broad and dark, over the scars of time.  
 The sails are still,  
 Silent and still  
 As they were  
 When the mill had ceased to hum,  
 Long ago.

—C. REINES, 4A.

SONG

Amid the luscious leaves of lime  
 And restless rainbow tinted roses,  
 Where, in sensual summer time,  
 Only gentle love reposes.  
 Wandering, by a forest brake,  
 Wild with woodland eglantine,  
 Where the lulling of a lake  
 Lingered like the scent of wine.  
 Cupid sang his song of love,  
 Lulling to the wheaten hue  
 Of the sleeping moon above,  
 Heavy lidded still with dew.  
 Singing softly, sweet and clear,  
 A bell-like cadence lingered long,  
 The birds awoke, and sang to hear,  
 Sang to hear, love's mellow song.

—W. REINES.

THE LAKE IN ITS BEAUTY



Among the outstanding beauties of the world are the lakes. How well known are those of Ireland, of Switzerland, renowned for their exquisite beauty and splendour! But how much is heard of a lake, from the point of view of travellers one of the most wonderful in the world, which nestles away some few miles to the south of Newcastle.

The air is foggy, the sky is pinked with the radiant sun yet to show its glowing face, the grass blades glisten with the sparkling dew of a past night; rippling in the early morn, the lake awakes to the glory of another day, a typical day of spring as seen by that silvery expanse of water. Beneath the lifting fog as the breaking dawn changes to morning, the ripples smooth out, leaving a mirror-like surface on which the dancing sunbeams produce shimmering reflections, and the cloudless sky tinges the sheet of glass beneath with a light blue, while black patches where trees on the banks throw their dark shadows are striking in their contrast. The day moves on and towards noon the waters are once more broken as a rising wind turns them to waves. All the afternoon the waves break peacefully on the shores, and towards sundown once more settle down to a mere rippling. Once more the lake is tinged with mellow colours. The setting sun throws its rays on the western sky, giving a pink colouration blending with the blue.

Spring passes to greet us with a hotter sun, for Summer has arrived—Summer with its warmth and sunshine. In this season it is that the romance of the lake and the joy and gladness of anything and everything are revealed. In these days of hurry and bustle it is hard to find places of romance, but here with its peace and calm, with the sails of its yachts billowing in the wind, with its little fishing boats and chugging launches dotted over the expanse, this lake of ours in the warmer months, but especially summer, is touched with the romance of olden days, when the sailing ship skimmed over the ocean like some lovely creature, like some great white-winged bird.

All the year round in this realm of peace birds, from blue wrens to eagle hawks, fly merrily about as they would

in some unfrequented bushland far removed from human haunts. On a summer morning it is like a huge aviary, for twittering, chirping, whistling, the birds add an air of happiness and companionship; while kookaburras, with their cheering laugh at the dawn and the sunset, create a truly Australian atmosphere.

Summer disappears, the weeks pass to arrive at the break of a day in late autumn. Except for some few low clouds in the east, the sky is almost cloudless. Hidden, the sun makes a brave attempt to show its face but is kept under cover; yet how wonderful are its effects. Its rays shoot heavenwards, the sky and clouds behind making a soft background. An opening in the clouds lit up by the sun hidden beneath is as a great city flooded with torchlight with the top of a cloud its buildings, and others its surroundings—the metaphorical city of the golden west in all its enchanting glory; and like a silver lining to that glorious outburst the tops of the clouds are decked with a narrow strip of phosphorescent light, giving the effect of lighting paralysed as it flashes. Then for a moment the sun is given an opportunity, throwing its quivering rays on the blue waters, but, as if suffering some penalty, is once more doomed to imprisonment as more clouds forming, its face is again hidden.

But what a picture—a picture that must be seen to be appreciated—is now formed as the sun, moving up behind those clouds, produces on the glass-like surface beneath enchantment—glorious enchantment. The water reflecting the sky above is likened to some beautiful painting, but its reality far surpassing the brush of a great artist. Here pink merges in blue, there like some yawning chasm the reflection of a black cloud cuts into its mellowness. Behind this glistening mass of soft colour the sky forms a marvellous background—blue, white, pink, grey all mixing and blending with the green bushland below, setting off the whole picture.

But now the weeks have rolled by. Winter is at hand and the lake is churned to a seething mass, tossing and pitching as the wind rages over its troubled waters to pound them in white foam on the pebbly shores. But yet with all its wildness, the lake is still beautiful—a wild beauty which grips, attracts like a magnet and forces to admiration.

The picturesque beauty of the lake is enhanced on closer acquaintance by its foreshores and surroundings. It is remarkable; it is unique; it should be renowned the world over for its winding bays, some large and unsheltered, others smaller, of the nook formation, beautiful in their natural seclusion; but in all, not spoilt by man, the same features which have taken nature centuries to create.

Along the margin of the bay the pebbles played upon by the lapping waters rise and fall in diminutive hillocks and hollows, their crystalline covering of salt sparkling in the sun like a mass of glittering diamonds. Behind this facing wall pebbles and shells of all colour and description mingle together. Here and there the brilliance of a mother of pearl catches the eye. Fringed by a border of snow-white shells, this pebbly slope passes into a grassy bank on which glimpses are caught of cattle moving amidst the grass into the bush behind; a bush full of joy, of merriment, of happiness; a bush filled with natural beauty: the birds, the flowers, the ferns, the shrubs, the gums, great and small, all living together in an atmosphere of enchantment. For where in all the world are trees to be found more beautiful than our red gums (*Angophora Corymbosa*), entrancing by their towering majesty?

Then, on emerging from the bush, one once more beholds the bay, missing the pebbly margin, but seeing instead its rocky headlands, on which the brown of the rock and the green of the grass and shrub produce a wonderful colour effect with the blue waters a setting to the whole. Indeed, these points in early morn are a picture in themselves, especially when the green and the brown are decked with flocks of white seagulls bathing in the morning sun. The seagulls rise and move gracefully over the waters. Once more one is entranced by the splendour of the lake itself.

In all its moods, with all its environment and colour, colour mellow and beautiful in its natural effect, this lake of ours presents a picture which the finest artist, the greatest of history, using all his detail and blend of colour could not approach. Such a picture nothing but the brush of Nature can reveal in all its glory; such a picture may be seen but may never be painted.

## THE BIRDS' CONCERT

The day dawned hot and clear. The chorus of the songsters was very sweet, for they had been practising for the last week their parts in the concert which was to take place that day. A throbbing pulse of excitement rent the valley from one end to the other. Anxious little mother birds bustled around, smoothing their children's feathers and preening their own, while they exclaimed reprovingly, "Be still, children! You will be untidy again before I have smoothed my dress!" Important-looking father birds, gay in their bright new, soft, green, spring dresses. The floor consisted of fresh, short, springy grass, of a pretty pale green; the seats were low branches of dusky trees. The Chairman, Mr. Emu, sat on a raised platform of dried grasses ornamented with bright bits of glass and feathers. The stage, where the performers stood, was built of dead grasses and gum leaves.

"The opening item," announced the Emu, "is a chorus by all. Ready? One, two, three!"; and in perfect harmony the birds sang their sweet spring song. When they had finished they sat down quietly and waited for the next item.

"We shall now be favoured by a quartette by the Robins," said the Chairman. Immediately, four beautiful birds flew down, and in very sweet voices sang the pretty song. Loud applause followed this as the birds bowed and left the stage.

"An exhibition dance will now be rendered by the Bower Bird," exclaimed Mr. Emu; and a beautiful, sheeny, blue-black bird flew down to the stage. He danced beautifully and a burst of applause followed.

A Flycatcher gave an exhibition of catching flies on the wing, and the clapping of wings was almost deafening.

At this moment, a disturbance was caused by the appearance of a large black snake. The little birds screeched and huddled together with fright. The big Kookaburra shouted, "I'll give an exhibition of catching and killing snakes!" Down he flew and picking up the snake firmly by the back of its head, flew up to a high tree from which he dropped it to the ground. This performance was

repeated several times, and soon the snake lay still with its back broken. How the birds cheered!

But now the Emu perceived the sun sinking in the west, and, with a "Goodnight" chorus, the birds departed and were soon fast asleep in the snug little beds.

—F. Jones, 1A.

## THE FUTURE IN THE PAST

Professor Pikito was particularly pleased. This is something to make a note of, for that self-same gentleman had not been seen to smile since 17th August, 1930. But let us not stray from the main thread of the story (if any). Some enthusiastic reader (once again, if any) wishes to know why the professor was pleased.

As a matter of fact, that morning the professor had just completed the making of his famous time machine, which he called "Leap Year." It was named thus because it could leap over the years into the future or back into the past, for a period of two hours, no more, no less.

Into this machine skipped Professor Pikito, looking so cheerful that he almost made up for the last four years during which he had never smiled. He pressed the lever on the graduated dial to the year 1999. The professor was a very precise man and never believed in dealing with easy figures. The "Leap Year" was filled with a greenish vapour, following which the machine and the professor lurched forward into space—right up the calendar to 1999.

There was a terrific thud as the 'plane struck earth, and the professor got such a jolt that his head went through the top of the plane; and then he found himself unable to move. Try as he would, he was bound by invisible ropes; held by invisible hands. He heard a mocking laugh, and perceived some hundred men descending from the skies, each holding a short, iron rod which the professor found later were ray-guns. They were short, thick-set men, almost half as broad as they were tall. Their heads were bald and uncovered except for small knobs which were connected to their home planet by wireless. They wore electrified cloaks and death to the man who touched them!

The professor already wished himself back in his laboratory of 1934, but the two hours had not yet expired.

Help, however, was at hand for men came rushing from all the points of the compass towards the invaders. The foes of Professor Pikito, seeing them, tapped their miniature helmets and were instantly whisked off towards the heavens. By the excited babble of the newcomers, the professor soon learnt that his adversaries were the inhabitants of Jupiter and Saturn, combined for the purpose of ravaging the earth.

The professor, astounded by the quick turn of events, took out his tobacco to roll a cigarette. Looking up, he saw much to his surprise that the sky had become overcast. The Jupitians and Saturnites were descending again. Once more Professor Pikito felt slightly paralysed, but only for a second, after which he jumped about cursing the invaders. The latter, seeing that their ray-guns had no effect on one of their enemies, once again fled. The inhabitants of Mother Earth ran forward and proclaimed the professor the hero of the hour. Soon he realized that it was the tobacco that had helped him, and was just on the point of distributing it when a noise from "Leap Year" reminded him that he had been there two hours.

Jumping into the 'plane he pressed the lever, but too far. The professor knew it and groaned. He hurtled through space, speeding down the calendar at a great rate, and finally landing with a terrific bump in the Great War.

The Professor almost wept—he could not possibly stay there for two hours . . . "Hurrah!" The professor was suddenly awakened by the excited shouts of the broadcaster as Chipperfield made his century.

It is unnecessary to say that it was a dream, so I won't say it.

—G. R. Solomon, 2A.

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## GREED

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It was midnight, and in the great hall of a city on the outskirts of the Black Forest, a masked ball was in progress, and the bottom floor was filled with scores of men and women. Merry laughter and joyous chatter could be heard on every side, while at the small tables the wine flowed freely.

As the second dance was about to be held, an old, wizened man appeared and silently watched the scene. He was dressed in the garb of a cleric, and white, curly locks stretched down to the back of his neck. After the dance had been completed, he held up his hand for silence. His voice rang out clearly as he rebuked the revellers and told them they were not to make a practice of merry-making in the early hours of the Sabbath Day.

He received some very impolite replies, and one youth, more venturesome than the others, stepped forward and hurled abuse at the venerable figure standing there. Encouraged by the admiring glances of his companions, he jumped upon a table and excitedly shouted, "Death is the foe of youth. Who will volunteer to come with me to seek Death and to slay him?" Two other youths immediately volunteered to accompany him on his mission, and all three made immediate preparations to depart.

After travelling for many days they presented a pitiful sight. Travel-stained and weary, they at length came upon the road, which led down into the forest. On the way they met an old man who was dressed in an old, brown, shabby suit which had evidently seen its day. By his side, loping at no considerable pace, was a large retriever dog, who seemed very attached to the old man for he bounded joyfully along beside him.

As he approached the revellers, the leader of the youths, who was fair-haired and had a soft complexion and clear skin, halted the man and asked him if he knew a person living close by who answered to the name of Death. At this question, the old fellow chuckled inwardly and directed them to a nearby forest. He volunteered a further piece of information; that in the forest they would find a box filled with treasure. Thanking him profusely, the merry-makers continued on their way, very excited at the prospect of seeing the treasure.

After many tedious days and nights of searching, they came upon the box, carefully hidden in the bough of an old oak tree. At the first sight of it they were stricken with greed. Each planned to do away with the others and carry home the treasure for himself.

The next night, after much planning and plotting, the three youths went for a walk. Soon they came upon a steep-sided cliff. They approached close to the edge, and suddenly two of them seized their companion and threw him to his doom over the edge.

The following night, the two survivors planned to do away with each other. About midnight, one of the merry-makers rose from his bed and attempted to kill his companion. As he approached the other's tent, he fell forwards over a piece of rope which had been put there by his companion in case of treachery. This sound immediately awoke the other youth, who rushed forward and with his sword killed his treacherous companion. Left alone with wretched thoughts, he was now free to open the treasure box.

As with trembling hands he eagerly raised the lid, a strange odour struck his nostrils and daunted him. The treasure burst upon his view, but little notice did he take of the strange fungus which clung to the sides of the chest.

While he was still running his fingers through the golden pieces, a faintness came over him and he fell gasping over the chest. Death was not delayed many minutes—death with all the horrors of a guilty soul. The figure of the white-haired prophet in the banquet hall rose before him. But in the flesh before him as he lay there dying he saw an old man; the same old man, it was, as they had met outside the forest, who greeted him, grimly, with the same hoarse chuckle.

—W. Landy, 2B.

### A UTOPIAN FANTASY

When Bobby walked home from school one afternoon, a torrent of rain started to drench the countryside. His home being about two miles off, and the nearest house about a mile away, he had to run down an overgrown, ill-kept drive, towards the Grange, an ancient, dilapidated mansion dating from Elizabethan times. It was freely rumoured that this relic of the past was haunted by a former owner, but Bobby overcame his awe and ran up some well-worn, weather-beaten steps to the doorway.

As the rain was coming down faster, Bobby pushed open the heavy door, and went inside, treading cautiously, and looking over his shoulder like the villain in a play. Suddenly, he tripped on a piece of fallen masonry, stumbling to the floor with a crash, disturbing a few owls in the dark spots of the roof. One floorboard, weaker than the rest, caved in and Bobby lifted it interestedly. In a small cavity underneath was a ring, very dirty, which might have lain there for centuries, so secure had it been when the board was stronger. Suddenly, the rain stopped, so Bobby went out, having put the ring on a finger and little thinking what it was destined to bring him.

Now this ring was of very curious design. It had a green and a blue diamond as eyes, set in the tiny head of a snake carved in the ring. But, as it was grimy, Bobby did not look closely; he thought it to be just a bit of brass or tin.

Quite accidentally, he happened to rub the green eye in the snake's head. Instantly, a wraith-like form took shape before his eyes. It had a green and a blue eye like the snake, and said, in a squeaky voice, as though it had been unused for a long time, "I am the Slave of the Ring. What is your wish?"

"Gosh!" stammered Bobby. "C-could you d-do m-my homework for me?"

"Rub the blue eye," said the apparition.

Bobby looked at his ring and rubbed the blue eye. He then doubtfully opened his books, and lo! his homework was faultlessly done!

He rubbed the green eye as if in a daze, and said to the Slave, "I want to be king of Mongonia." He then again rubbed the blue eye, to find himself in a dark cellar, with a black-bearded man crouching at the door, a knife in one hand, a gun in the other, and a toothless grin on his face. "Ha!" the villain was crying. "I shall killa you bya da slow way. At last you will die!" Bobby, alias King of Mongonia, rubbed his ring and told the Slave to "Sock into him, Sammy!" In a trice the surprised ruffian was helpless, for who can move with one's legs round one's neck in a knot?

Hurriedly Bobby wished himself to be a hunter in Africa. To his horror he found himself running like a Schneider Cup aeroplane, pursued by a great lion. His great pace, however, saved him, for his feet went so fast that the friction caught the grass alight and the lion perished in the flames.

Tired of this adventurous life, Bobby decided to be a test cricketer. He found himself walking towards the wicket, where a man called Hardwood was throwing people off by means of a leg-theory. Bobby took block. The umpire made him put it back, and then he waited for Hardwood to bowl, meanwhile, making a rude face at Sardine. He evidently waited too long, for he woke up next day in hospital. Rubbing the old ring, which was still on his finger, Bobby wished to be himself again, for he thought that best.

That night, while his homework was being done by Samuel the Slave, Bobby was wondering whether to wish cream tarts or ice cream. In this pensive mood he was toying with the ring over the fire, when it slipped from his hand, straight to the heart of the flames. Instantly, a ghastly red light filled the room, and Samuel's death shriek rent the air!

Of course, Bobby had to relate his adventures to the adults, who, with lordly superiority, put the red light and adventures down to his imagination, and the scream due to the cat's tail being trodden on. However, Bobby is still thinking, thinking in a sombre mood, looking into the fire which had stolen his ring. Perhaps, some day, you may find a ring like his. Who knows?

—A. Crawford, 2A.

## SCOTLAND

### A GEOGRAPHICAL EXTRAVAGANZA

Scotland is a wee, braw land on the north of England: it has water nearly all round it and whisky over a large part of it. The population is about four or five millions, including Sandy McNabb. It has a peculiar language of its own, and if one can pronounce it coherently, it is an infallible test of sobriety.

It possesses considerable mineral wealth, though very little finds its way out of the country. Gold has at times been discovered in certain districts, as well as in the pockets of certain natives, but in both cases it has proved difficult to work.

The best-known exports from Scotland are Harry Lauder and Scotch Whisky, though sufficient of the latter is retained in the country to satisfy the demands of home consumption.

The bagpipes provide the chief music of the country. They are a wind instrument which are said to produce a tune when blown. On many occasions in the history of this country, Scottish regiments have marched to death, listening to the strains of the bagpipes, though it is not known whether their willingness to meet the enemy was inspired by a desire to escape the former—this terrifying instrument.

The national dress of Scotland is the kilt, which is a short petticoat. In pattern it resembles a chess-board, though in cold weather the wearer finds it more like a draught board. It is said to have been originally invented because the aborigines were unable to find trousers big enough to get their feet through.

Scotland has produced many well-known men, amongst them being Robert Burns. His most famous poems are "Tam O'Shanter," "Scots Wha' Hae," "Stop Your Tickling, Jock," and "To a Louse." He wrote his best poems, it is said, when he was full and merry.

The chief national characteristic is reckless expenditure, of which examples, too numerous to relate, occur every day.

—G.W.E.N., Prefect.

## DO YOU REMEMBER ?

The last rays of the dying sun played about the rugged features of an old man hunched against a tree, his silvery-grey head sunken on his breast. He seemed to be thinking deeply, but his thoughts were far away in his youth. Everything had flashed back into his mind on receiving that letter. The words were firmly imprinted in his brain: