

The following are the conditions governing the award of the cups:—

(1) Girls.—The classes concerned are to compete in the following: Tennis, circlos, tunnel ball, and swimming. Points will be allotted to each class on the results of these competitions.

(2) Boys.—The First Year classes are to compete in the following:—Football, cricket, tennis, and swimming. Points being awarded to each class on the results of the various competitions.

In each case the cup is to be handed over to the winning class at the end of the first year, if this be practicable. The winning class will have the privilege of carrying the cup into second year for three months.

The First Year students are to be congratulated on having these fine cups for competition. The "Novocastrian" is confident that they will show their appreciation of what has been done for them by entering with all heartiness into the competition.

THE UTILITY OF CHALK.

Numerous, weird, and wonderful are the purposes for which this substance is used.

To the question, "For what purpose is chalk used?" a Fifth Year (fresh from the Chemistry Class) would probably reply with dignity: "Calcium carbonate is generally used for the purpose of writing on a blackboard." While a First Year, if he truthfully voiced his thoughts, would say, "It's good to throw at someone the other side of the room, when the teacher is not looking."

The other day I noticed a boy busily writing on a blackboard, and immediately, also busily, wiping the spot where he had written with a duster. This process was repeated until the duster was covered with finely powdered chalk. A school authority appeared on the scene, and asked, "What are you doing with that?" To which the boy (well, yes, I suppose I will have to admit he was a Fourth Year) replied, "Powdering the kids!" Seemingly satisfied with this alarming reply, the querist moved on, and the amusement of "Powdering the kids" merrily proceeded.

Sad to relate, some enterprising and humorous youths decorate the photos, doors, or, indeed, anything which is by chance near at hand, with advertisements, witticisms, or public notices. Doubtless 'tis a very amusing (I am sorry I cannot say harmless) pastime, but most annoying to the class prefect, who is in charge of the chalk supply.

"If you must wear white sandshoes, let them be white!" Such, as every girl knows, is the rule concerning sandshoes for physical culture. This, perhaps, may account for the oft-repeated cry of maidens who either did not have time or forgot to clean their shoes: "Has anyone a piece of chalk?"

When one hears the unexpected command, "Take the chair for this debate, please," what a relief it is to discover, on glancing at the table, that a piece of chalk, which one may turn round instead of one's thumbs, is lying there. Kind-hearted prefects would always make this provision for an English lesson, for a piece of chalk might easily save the reputation, and the nerves, of a speaker.

So it may be seen that the purpose quoted by the Fifth Year is not the only instance of the utility of chalk.

Perhaps some day in the time to come, when all things will be perfected, High School students will also be perfected. And then, who knows but that all will agree upon the subject, and chalk will be "generally used for the purpose of writing on a blackboard."

—ETHEL HEERY.

THE DISCOVERY OF AUSTRALIA.

SCENE.—Deck of the "Endeavour" at dawn.

Enter two Sailors.

First Sailor: Dost thou not think 'tis hard for us, my friend,
That we should be compelled to man this ship,
Ill-fated as it seems by destiny,
And set her in pursuit of unknown lands
That seem no more than flimsy fantasies.
For days and days we've ploughed our weary way
Across this heartless, never-ending sea,
And borne the hardships of this tedious route.
All to no purpose? What thinkest thou?

Second Sailor: I cannot understand why you speak thus.
It surely must have been the wintry weather
We've had of late, that changed your merry spirit.
Why, sir, this voyage is a pleasure trip.

Look what a glorious dawn doth grace the sea!

First Sailor: 'Tis well for you, who think not seriously,
To marvel at the beauty of the day.
All through the night my thoughts have troubled me
With pictures of the dangers all-unknown
Towards which we sail unwittingly ahead.
This morn I left my bed with this in mind,
To seek our noble captain when alone,
And try to urge him from his purpose set,
And to return us to our native homes
For which we long.

Second Sailor: Right well you judged the hour, for here he comes
Whom you do seek

(Enter Captain Cook.)

Captain, this sailor here would speak a word with you.

Captain Cook: Speak up, I listen. But I hope 'tis not
Words of complaint you have to waste on me,
For I judged my men a most contented lot.

First Sailor: I grieve, captain, to have to say it is
In consequence of murmured discontent
Among the common sailors in the foc'stle,
I'm sent to try dissuade you from your plan,
And ask that you may turn this ship about
And let the prow re-furrow its own wake,
And, in this way, forsake our fruitless search.

Captain Cook: What reason have they for this strange behaviour?
Have they not always been with justice treated?
And, as for change of plan—my mind is fixed.
To no amount of urging will I yield.

(Enter several Sailors.)

What! Would you all return to English ports
 Without achieving anything of note?
 Ever let it be said that all my men
 To follow and obey me were content
 Without complaint or question.
 But who is that who leans with lazy posture
 Against the gently swinging cabin door?
 Go bid him come before me.

(Exit Sailor.)

Sailor: Captain, how far are we from this strange land
 Of which you speak?

Captain Cook: From calculations I have made of late,
 I think that after three days of swift sailing,
 Our destination we shall reach at length.
 But my instruments are faulty and untrue.

(Enter Sailor with Person sent for.)

Why 'tis Lieutenant Hicks without a doubt—
 Hicks: Sir, I beg to interrupt and contradict.
 In truth, I have a doubt and it is this:
 I know not if 'tis right for me to spend
 So many long and dreary, fruitless hours
 On yonder look-out tower.

Captain Cook: Make haste to your deserted post at once,
 And never let that station empty be,
 For who shall warn us of the deadly rocks
 If no one be on watch?

(Exit Hicks.)

Is there among you all assembled here
 A man who cares not for renown and honour,
 That in England surely will await all those
 Who help locate this vast and unknown land?

Sailors: Not I! Nor I! Nor I! etc.

Captain Cook: Then all back to your various works.— But, hold!
 What voice is that I hear? Did not one shout?

Sailor: The look-out man. I'll signal to him, sir,
 To call again. Ahoy, aloft! What news?

Hicks: Ahoy, below! There's land ahead. Due west.

Captain Cook: This land, as yet invisible to us,
 May prove to be an island small and bare;
 Or it may be a large expansive land,
 The long lost Southern Continent new found.
 Grant, Heaven, that it be that very shore!

Hicks: A land of huge extent! A continent, for sure!

Captain Cook: The Southern Continent! The land of dreams!
 The land whose size is fanciful, unknown!

Sailor: And so, my friends, our quest is terminated.
 What blockhead said this vessel was ill-fated?

(Exeunt omnes.)

—E. ROXBY.

WARNER'S BAY.

A dying sun, gilding the placid bay,
 A whispering wind, sighing among the trees,
 The supple oaks, that bend and softly sway,
 And clustering banksias, rustling in the breeze.

The quick, bright flash of oars, their blades agleam;
 And, clear across the water, laughter gay;
 The cries of birds, which in the sun's last beam
 Fly homeward at the ebbing of the day.
 The stern bare hills above look down upon
 The purple glory of the lake below;
 The swiftly fading light has almost gone
 And left behind a tender crimson glow.

—FLORRIE BOEKENSTEIN.

A FORECAST.

'Tis the last pane of window
 Left standing alone;
 All the other "fenetres"
 Are broken and gone;
 No pane of its kindred,
 No window is nigh,
 To shelter the maidens,
 Who shiver and sigh.
 They'll not leave thee, thou lone one,
 To keep out the rain,
 For the youthful must practice,
 Their laurels to gain;
 So surely they'll send thee,
 With one deadly blow,
 Where the others in splinters
 Lie shattered below.
 For footballs and elbows,
 When strength is behind,
 Are fatal to windows
 And things of that kind.
 When windows are broken,
 And wild winds have blown,
 Oh! who would inhabit
 This bleak room alone!

—GWEN HOLMAN.

THE GREAT PYRAMID OF GHIZEH.

Throughout all the ages, and among all peoples, the Great Pyramid has been the supreme marvel of the world. We know that the builder had far better and more exact scientific knowledge than we possess to-day, and that he succeeded in achieving what is impossible to us at the present time.

For example, many attempts have been made to obtain perfect orientation, i.e., facing north, south, east, and west, of which that of the Maine Observatory, U.S.A., when all the skill and knowledge of the world was brought to bear on it, is the most noticeable. The Great Pyramid, however, has orientation which is exact, thereby proving that the knowledge of the builder exceeded by far the present-day knowledge of such matters. This fact is also shown in connection with the Pyramid itself.

In the construction of this huge edifice, stones weighing nearly 1000 tons were used, which no modern mechanism can lift. There

are stones used over 30 feet long, which fit together so smoothly that a penknife run over the join cannot detect the slightest crack; yet not one atom of mortar was used in the whole of the building.

Covering 13 acres, the Pyramid has a height of 486ft, and a base of 764ft, and is estimated to have a weight of 6,000,000 tons, or exactly one-billionth of the weight of the world. We only know the earth to be about 92,000,000 miles from the sun, but if the height of the Pyramid is multiplied by 10,000,000,000, we get 91,837,322 miles, which is, for all we know, the exact distance.

The unit of measurement in building the structure was a cubit, or 25.025 inches. The length of a base of the Pyramid is 365.242 cubits, or the number of days in our year to the very second. It was not till thousands of years later that scientists were able to make an exact calculation of that period. The sum of the four sides of the Pyramid is the circumference of a circle of which the height of the Pyramid is the radius, i.e., the builder exactly squared the circle, a feat which has baffled modern professors, in spite of Wallis' Indivisibles, Newton's Fluxions, and Leibnitz's Infinitesimal Calculus.

The builder knew the earth to be round, and what is more, the exact dimensions for the rock on which the Pyramid is built is bevelled to the ratio of 8in to a mile, which is the exact curvature of the earth. The cubit mentioned previously is exactly one twenty-millionth of the polar axis of the world, which also shows the marvellous knowledge of the architect. If the height of the Pyramid is divided by twice the base, the well-known number, 3.14159, is obtained, which is of so great importance in higher mathematics, and which has only quite recently been discovered.

The 35th layer of stones is especially noted for its great thickness, and about eight tons extra effort would have been required to lift it. On inspection it is found that the distance from this layer to the middle of the Pyramid is the exact number of inches that the base is cubits, and that the width of this layer of stone divided by its height from the ground gives the remarkable number 3.14159 again. The length of the diagonals of the base added together give 25,827, the exact number of years of the precession of equinoxes. It is now known as a fact that the Pyramid was built 2170 B.C., on which year, as is found in ancient records, the star of Draconis appeared, and at exactly midnight on the night of its appearance it was at such a position as to shine directly down the great main passage into the Pyramid, and then it disappeared, never to return again, for 25,827 years.

Nothing has been said about the internal measurements of the Pyramid, and the measurements of the various chambers, but they are quite as wonderful as the external; but one fact is most noticeable, and that is that the temperature of the main chamber, 68 degrees, is the average temperature of the world.

The question is always asked, "Who built it?" And to this a satisfactory answer has never been given. Certainly not the Egyptians, who were ignorant, and who always filled their temples with idols, paintings, and decorations, the absence of which is noted in the Great Pyramid. Moreover, the Pyramid was never used as a tomb, but whoever the architect was, it is certain that his knowledge in practically every direction far exceeded our scientific knowledge of to-day. And so the Pyramid stands, a monument of some marvellous genius, subject of wonder, and a puzzle to the world.

—H. CROMARTY.

A FANTASY OF LIFE.

SCENE I.—HALL OF DESTINY.

The Fates are grouped about the dais of Father Time.

Upon the dim waters of the Ocean of Time appears a ship.

Evil: Behold, the Ship of Souls approacheth! 'Tis but justice that I have first choice of its cargo.

Voices: No, I!

Father Time: The approaching vessel bears Mankind, and his soul is the throbbing soul of the universe.

Fates place man on the broad road of life—the road that stretches far into the dim vista of the future.

Sorrow: He shall know me well!

Hope: But 'tis I that will be the glowing heart of his guiding torch.

Faith: Ah, my sister, and I shall strengthen his flagging spirits.

Love (softly): Faith, Hope, and Love, and the greatest of these is love.

Turmoil: I shall rage and wreck havoc in his heart.

Peace: Yea, but it is decreed that I shall soothe thy ravages.

SCENE II.—THE ROAD OF LIFE.

(Enter Pilgrims, stained with the dust of travel.)

One Pilgrim: The way is long, brothers, the journey weary. I strayed from the main road, and was all but covered with the slime of the Slough of Despond. But Hope's beacon led me again to the highway. What building looms yonder?

Man: 'Tis the Temple of Desire, and here we must pray for a safe journey to the Fields of Fulfilment.

(Pilgrims enter Temple, and approach the shrines of their heart's desire.)

Man (voice rings out clear and strong): Oh, ye who worship the iron statue of Prosperity, or that of Fame, or that of Power, mark ye not that the feet of your idols are of clay? Ah! my comrades, it is not these futile things that your hearts crave. Happiness is the beacon star which leads us all on to some Peak of Attainment, when we shall see, with unclouded vision, the spires of a City Beautiful.

Voices: But where shall we seek it? Where?

Man: Yonder, comrades! Let us press forward!

SCENE III.—THE HALL OF DESTINY.

Wisdom: I have indeed endowed him plenteously.

Evil: He will fall yet, by my powers. I am the greatest of ye all!

(Faint tap-tap is heard.)

Hark, who comes?

Pride: 'Tis death! He will conquer even you!

(Tap, tap, growing more distinct.)

SCENE IV.—The way is dim and cloudy. A sharp valley is at the side of the road.

Man: The way grows dim, misty with the clouds of uncertainty and doubt. But we must go down into the valley of the shadows. Courage, comrades! Happiness lies beyond the mists. Through

Death we gain the Land of Heart's Desire.

(Clouds envelop all the pilgrims as they go from our sight, from the sunshine of the Road of Life into the darkness beyond.)

SCENE V.—THE HALL OF DESTINY.

(Tap-tap.)

(Enter Death, with his ever-tapping staff.)

Death: I have claimed my own. I am the greatest force in the universe.

Love: Nay, perchance you triumph over the dust that is his body. His soul is mine through eternity. I go down with him, yea even into the Valley of the Shadow I shall prevail. "For the greatest of these is love."

(Darkness falls.)

—MARJORIE WOODS.

THE MARTYR.

"It was early in the morning,"

Said the poor unlucky wight.

"I arose when day was dawning—

It was early in the morning,

When the cold gray light was dawning—

An article to write.

It was early in the morning,"

Said the poor unlucky wight.

—NOEL SAXBY.

ODE TO THE NIGHT.

O, sable Night! child of the drowsy Earth,
 Bearer of blessed sleep to weary men!
 Grey-winged, thou comest heralding the birth
 Of myriad stars of purest gold, and when
 The light has faded from the glowing west,
 Thou spread'st thy spangled mantle o'er the sky.
 Luna keeps guard, from yonder starry nest,
 O'er slumbering thousands of the earth who lie
 In death-like silence, stillness of the tomb,
 While Night continues on her stately way.
 Ever, across the heavens, her shade doth loom
 Till bright Aurora hold her power at bay.
 Sweet Night! my scattered sense in Lethe steep,
 And soothe my bosom with the balm of sleep!

—MARJORIE SMITH.

THE BATTLE OF POINT SPIERS.

This great naval battle, comparable perhaps only to such great historical combats as Trafalgar and Ned Kelly v The Rest, took place on the morn of the 15th December, 1922. Though the combat only existed between two craft, it is said to have been one of the most bloody in the annals of time. The most regrettable feature of the affair was that while the two nations econcerned—Thisside and Thotherside—while hostile were not openly at war.

The morning of the fatal 15th December dawned bright and clear, none thinking as the great orb upraised itself that that evening it would hide away its flaming face from one of the bloodiest scenes of death, destruction, and carnage that perhaps it had ever seen. The "Lady May," Thisside's modern vessel of war, loaded with a happy crowd, was on its trial trip down the coast of Boolaroo, when, as a bolt from the blue, the "Phooty-Phooty-Bang-Bang," one of Thotherside's latest and fastest cruisers, appeared on the horizon. At any other time this wonderful mechanism's appearance could not have but caused admiration, but now it caused consternation. Closer she drew, with quivering frame and belching funnels, while from her razor bow poured away cascades of green.

The gallant captain of the "Lady May" (Captain O'Arrey) quickly packed away the non-combatants and prepared for an action, to which he could see only one inevitable end.

Though possessing heavier armament, the "Lady May" did not possess half the speed of the "P-P-B-B"—no, not a quarter. In fact, she hasn't any speed at all; she only moves from one place to another, if the wind is favourable.

Meanwhile the guns of the "P-P-B-B" were speaking, adding to the confusion of screams and cries from the women on the "Lady May." In answer could be heard the sullen booming of the "Lady May's" heavy guns, but the "P-P-B-B" was the first to register a hit, having advanced to a closer range of twenty yards she opened fire with a full broadside. An over-ripe tomato burst with a deafening roar on the upper works of the "Lady May," to be followed in quick succession by a half apple and an empty ginger-beer bottle. The scene was now one of dreadful carnage. Shrieks and cries rent the air. Even the "P-P-B-B" had not escaped unscathed in her tornado attack. Hit with a scone early in the battle, her upper works were twisted and torn as if they were of wire.

Then came the climax. With terrifying swiftness the "P-P-B-B" dashed alongside the doomed "Lady May," and before resistance could be planned the villainous captain of the "P-P-B-B" (Captain Hotstuff) jumped on to the bulwarks of his vessel, pausing only to shout, "Follow me, my merry men." They, however, thought it safer to cheer. He jumped on to the "Lady May." Captain O'Arrey, leaping to meet the invader, was hit on the nose and kicked in the shin. Captain Hotstuff paused to cry, "Forward!" and then jumping over the prostrate body, leapt to execute further devastation, but the rest, cowed by the loss of their leader, gave in, and were let off with a caution.

—E. HOSKINGS.

EVERYDAY OCCURRENCES.

Few realise the pleasures of the daily train journey into "town." Indeed, it would be hard to convince the average person that there are pleasures in a journey in one of our suburban trains.

To begin with, one arrives on the platform—quite a necessary thing to do. The first pleasure is obtained by watching someone who has lingered just two minutes too long over his breakfast, striving gamely to race the train into the station.

After the usual rush, in which one usually knocks someone over in an endeavour to obtain a seat, the points of the various runners are criticised. Strange to say, the same people run for the train almost every morning. The spectacle they provide is a never-failing source of amusement to the onlookers, that is, if the onlookers haven't had to run themselves.

One gets comfortably settled in one's seat, when the train arrives at the next station. Then there is a general commotion, and one fervently prays that neither an old lady or one with a baby in arms will "anchor" near one's seat. This danger passed, one again settles down, only to be similarly disturbed at the following stations.

Two stations up the line, some school girls get in. During the remainder of the journey they strive to convince the whole carriage that either they do or they don't know French, and, at any rate, they are intent on learning last night's French homework now. At first they make one smile, but it gets fearfully monotonous after about three months.

A door bangs. Everybody looks round with anxious foreboding. A sigh of relief. It's only someone changing carriages.

Again a door bangs. This time it is he, and there is a general commotion, for nearly everybody suddenly becomes firmly convinced that he or she has left their ticket on the breakfast table. Then there is a sigh of relief as the wanton ticket is found in some out-of-the-way pocket.

On our line there is a tunnel. On entering it the carriage becomes filled with piercing shrieks issuing from the small fry. Strange to say, all are silent when the train once more emerges into daylight.

A short distance from the tunnel a new station is being made. The train usually slows down there, and one hears the same remark passed every day, "They're getting into practice for when the station will be finished."

After this the journey is rather uneventful, except if one happens to meet a lady friend. Then, the pleasure of her company, however pleasing her personality may be, is amply counterbalanced by the hardness of the seat's arm-rest.

At the end of the journey comes another search for one's ticket, and then the usual rush from the central station.

These are a few interesting facts about an everyday occurrence, or, at least, I hope you will find them interesting.

Sometimes they amuse me—sometimes not. That all depends upon whether I have been trying to do some neglected homework, or whether I have an interesting novel. Nevertheless, they actually happen, and generally such incidents are a never-failing source of interest to me, if I am in a humour to enjoy them.

—W. BELL.

A TRIP TO THE NORTH-WEST.

Away in North-Western New South Wales, upon the banks of the Namoi River, is the small country town of Wee Waa, whose whereabouts many people are aware of, but who perhaps

have not had the pleasure of visiting it. It was my fortune to spend a holiday there early this year.

To reach Wee Waa one may travel by the North-Western mail, which goes to Walgett and Collarenebri on alternate days. Leaving Newcastle at 7.40 p.m., and travelling all night, the train draws in to Narrabri at 5 a.m. The "through carriages" of the train wait an hour to allow the passengers to partake of an early breakfast. The train then, after a great amount of "fuss," noise, and bustle, finally begins the remainder of its journey.

After about two hours more journeying, Wee Waa is reached. A few stray cars and an ancient horse bus meet the train to convey passengers whither they are bound. Sometimes, as in my case, travellers are whisked over to a nearby hotel for breakfast.

As I was to stay at "Oakburne," outside the town, I motored out and saw much fine country.

The Namoi River, which flowed through that part of the country, is much wider and more beautiful than I expected it to be. A branch of the same river at Narrabri is one much praised by tourists. I saw many, many acres of prickly-pear, which grows far too rapidly for the landowner. The fruit is a deep purple, and looks very fine, but the plant is a pest, and is very difficult to eradicate.

I also saw a portion of the Pillaga Scrub, where some of the finest timber in New South Wales is growing. Thousands of pounds' worth of beautiful cyprus pines, coolabars, gums, and Kurrajongs are being lost to the State every year because there is not a convenient railway to connect the district with a main line. The Pillaga Scrub is often called "The White Pine Forest."

Around Wee Waa are to be seen many fine wild flowers, e.g., Macquarie lilies, Darling peas, everlasting and field daisies, poppies and wild buttercups. Rabbits, hares, and foxes are numerous, especially rabbits. Dingoes are more rare; some are found at Cuttabri, 18 miles outside the town.

Although Wee Waa is the oldest town on the Namoi, it is not very far advanced. There is only one street of any size, consisting of several small shops and two hotels. There are also two churches, a hospital, two schools, and a hostel. The railway station is "spick and span," as is everything else surrounding it.

There is only one industry carried on extensively. This is the timber industry. Between Wee Waa and Pillaga there are nine sawmills, where the chief wood sawn is white pine.

Nearly all the houses and buildings are built of pine, which, on account of its unique grain, only requires varnishing. At any time of the day great teams are seen drawing logs to the mills.

Well, a description such as this must not occupy too much space, so I draw this one to a close.

—MARY CLEARY.

THE ATTACK ON THE HUT.

Dramatis Personae:

Ben Hall ... Leader of Gang of Bushrangers.
John Gilbert, John Dunne, John O'Meally: Companions of Hall.
Barman, Labourers, and others.

ACT I.—SCENE I.—Country Road.

(Enter Hall, Dunne, Gilbert, O'Meally, riding hard.)

Hall: On! On! my trusty steed, for before the fall of night we must reach our goal. Put your horses to the gallop, worthy companions, that we may the sooner reach our destination.

Dunne: By my troth, captain, my body weakens from lack of wholesome food.

Gilbert: Lo! Can it be that mine eyes do deceive me? Yon hut looms out of the cold, grey mist, and now to my gaze is plainly visible.

(They dismount before door of shack.)

Hall: Approach with cautious steps, good comrades. I smell a rat.

O'Meally: No rat do I smell, but the odour of nigh-cooked meat doth come to my nostrils, and already I am a ravenous lion, for constant riding doth give appetite.

Hall: Draw forth thy daggers, loyal comrades, and let each blunderbuss have close inspection. Tether these thoroughbred chargers close by, thus making provision for hasty flight. Dunne, furnish thyself with a strong, stout cord, for within I espy two lusty labourers, to my mind, father and son. As you are well aware, have I great faith in that sage saying, "Safety First." Approach, fellows!

(They enter, brandishing pistols.)

Dunne: Move, and thou shalt turn thy toes towards the azure heavens!

Hall: Twine stout bonds about their giant-like bodies, and place them yonder, whence they may the better behold us, partaking of their hard-earned food.

O'Meally: Much though we regret it, we must satisfy our needs in this heartless manner. No more do we intend, save if ye betray us.

(They eat.)

Hall: Enough! No more! 'Tis just as sweet as 'twas before, but lingering doth oft' cause capture, and troopers follow close in our wake.

All: Farewell, kind hosts.

(Exeunt.)

SCENE II.—A Country Inn.

Enter Hall, Gilbert, Dunne, and O'Meally. They dismount before the inn.

Hall: Hold your pistols in close readiness, worthy fellows, for who knows but that troopers are within.

(They enter.)

Put up your hands, fellows, and he who presumes to lower them shall see daylight never more. O'Meally and Dunne, bind these fellows safely, and rid them of their shooters. My worthy Gilbert, procure me the best of yon spirits, for already is my appetite on the wane.

Barman: What dost thou do?

O'Meally: We will now proceed to drink thine health, fair sir—

Gilbert: Or thy beer, noble host.

(They drink.)

Hall: No time is this for banter, friends, for even now I feel the troopers are at hand. Dunne Relieve yon fellows of their notes, for we must hasten.

(Curtain.)

—KEVIN RILEY.

SUPPLICATION.

A radiant gift of thee, oh Life, I crave,
No stinted measure from a scanty dole
Of rich red wine

Will quench the questing ardour of my soul,
The eager soul that is mine,
That is mine.

Grant me the pen to loose my soul in song,
A hand to weave of fancy's faerie dust
A fabric clear,
To tread Parnassus' slopes in hot noon hush'd
And hear Pan piping near,
Magically dear!

Grant me these things
Till my work is done,
Till the joyous days of my life are run,
And I cross the beyond through the setting sun;
Grant me my prayer.

—MARJORIE WOODS.

MEMORIES.

Within my old school garden
A slender gum-tree stands,
Its smooth trunk crudely lettered
By many childish hands.

Its twisted leafy branches,
With blossoms white as snow,
Cast strange fantastic shadows
Upon the sward below.

Sweet scents of leaf and blossom
To me the soft wind brings,
Whilst up amidst the greenness
A bell-bird's sweet note rings.

Gay birds amongst the branches
Flit lightly to and fro,
While up and down the white stems
The playful squirrels go.

I love that dear old gum-tree,
I love each twig and leaf,
I love the snowy blossoms
Whose lives are all too brief.

—LORNA WEISS.

"SLICK."

While "rooing it" out on the Bogan, I saw a trick executed by a stockman that would knock the slickest west of "Noo Yark" into a "cocked hat."

Something had frightened a herd of almost 500 steers, and straight as a die they charged for a high bluff, over which they would tumble into a gap 200 feet deep. On they went in their mad procession; those in the rear hustling the ones in front, as it seemed, to certain death.

I stood as if transfixed, but the head stockman, cool as a cucumber, swung his "brumby" leisurely towards the rapidly-decreasing distance between the wild, surging mob and the bluff, and having made a wide detour, came in front of the herd, cut across their path at right-angles, and finally cantered to the very edge of the gap, to contemplate the tons of flesh, now less than 400 yards distant, hurtling through space towards him.

I gasped. Suddenly the leaders tried to slacken up, and when the steers in the rear had got to about where the stockman had crossed their path I was surprised to see them stop and commence to nibble at the grass. Then the whole herd wheeled and came back to eat the herbage that had attracted them in their mad career. The stockman had emptied a large bag of salt, brought from the homestead, for them, across the herd's course. The animals, sniffing this trail of salt, faltered, and the stampede ceased.

But I can tell you I shall never forget seeing that fellow there on the edge of the bluff quietly rolling a cigarette when it seemed as if he'd be lying under 200 tons of beef in about a minute and a-half.

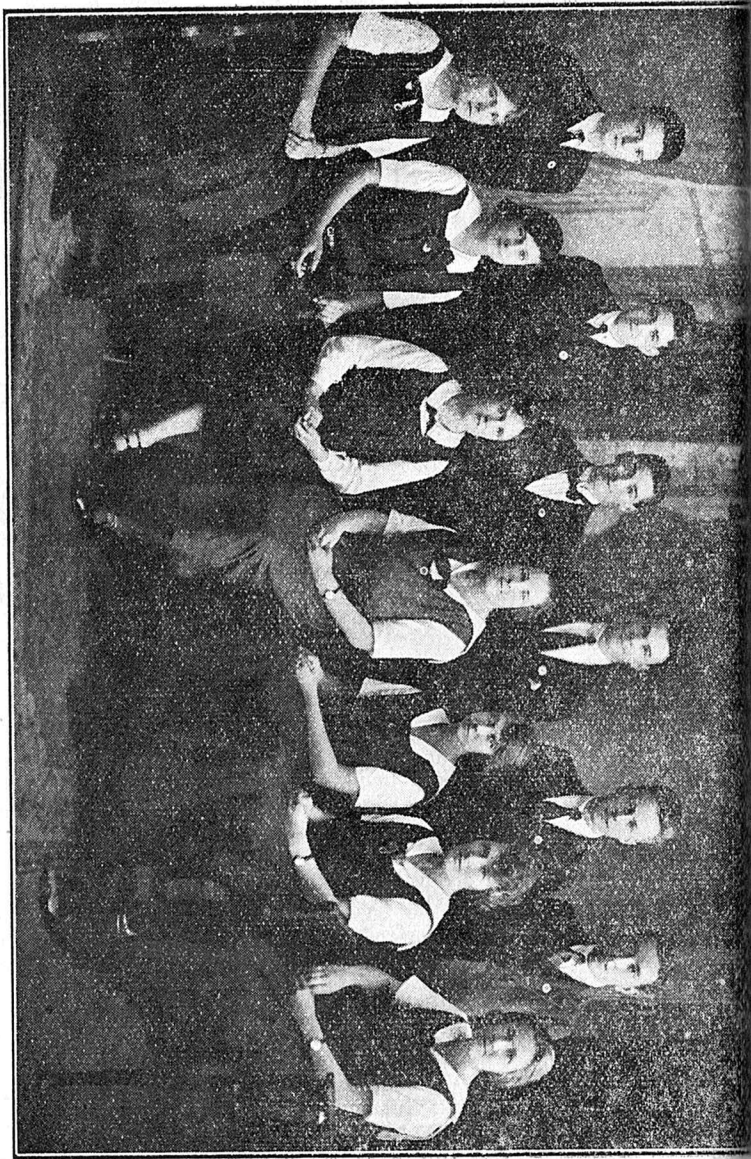
—F. RUNDLE.

DIRTY WORK IN THE DUNGEONS.

One evening last week, a few minutes after half-past three, several youths might have been seen lowering themselves through a trapdoor in Room 3. They were myself and two friends.

Our purpose was to examine the passages which led underneath the school, and to take possession of anything we might find. As a light to show us the way, we had an acetylene lamp.

The passage consisted of a number of small rooms, about 10ft by 8ft. A stone had been knocked out of each dividing wall, so that you could go from one room to another if you were thin enough. The hole in the first room was bigger than the others, so my friend, B—, could only get into the second chamber, because he was too fat to get through the others. However, we described it to him.



The Prefects, 1924

Back Row—W. R. Hetherington, N. H. Saxby, E. Gilbert (Capt.), G. A. Peattie, H. M. Thomas, E. W. Duncanson.
Front Row—Hazel Grassick, Mabel Sutton, Merle Jones, Iris Fallon (Capt.), Freda Palmer, Evelyn Robertson,
Mildred Boddy

It is a labyrinth of small rooms and passages. The rooms are only about four and a-half feet high. After crawling through several rooms, we found ourselves under the office. From there a passage led to the Demonstration Room, but the hole was too small for us to get through, so all we could do was to put the lamp through and see what it was like. We then returned to the first room, and after gathering up the spoil, which consisted of pens, pencils, rulers, and exam. papers, we climbed back through the trap-door. On examining what we had obtained, I found that we had nearly enough pens, etc., to keep a stationer's shop.

We had to brush ourselves afterwards with the yard broom to get the dust off.

Thus ended our great adventure under the school.
—COLIN SAXBY.

NEWCASTLE APPROACHED BY RAIL.

The train had halted in its flight, towards the station bound,
A pause before the last half-mile was run,
From the creaking, jarring brakes broke forth a drawn-out grinding sound,

The signal o'er the iron king had won.
And through the window open wide my wandering gaze did float
To light upon a wondrous scene beyond;
'Twas our Newcastle Harbour, in its early morning coat,
As still and smooth as any village pond.

A gentle, softening mist did like a shroud hang over all,
That did each moment thin and weaker grow
In its struggle with the sun that up the eastern sky did crawl,
From which the mist emerged a conquered foe.
The kindly haze did hide the docks' all jumbled-up display,
That would have blotched this sight, all bright and clean;
I never saw the harbour in more beautiful array,
Nor have I ever once its equal seen.

Midway between two shores did ride the pilot's stately ship,
Like a resting swan in dignity and grace;
To the gently-heaving flood the painted hull did rise and dip,
Accompanied by white birds upon the lee.
And oft from out the ranks of gulls a snowy bird would rise,
And far above his mates, would soar aloft;
And through the morning air would come his shrill and piercing cries,
As the waters he would skim with feathers soft.

But turning round, my eyes beheld a very different sight,
A frowning wall with glaring hills adorned,
The drab, smoke-blackened wall, behind the shop-fronts bright,
That seemed to me as if in grief it mourned.
What contrast was there in these views presented on each hand!
What difference did in those two scenes appear!
The one the work of nature, and the other wrought by man,
And they were as a smile is to a tear.

—E. ROXBY.

AUSTRALIA'S LIONS.

The softly-tinted mountains,
Now blue, pale-green, or gold,
Are standing high and watching,
Like sentinels of old.

Through ages long they stood there,
And watched o'er our dear land,
They saw the first who came here,
To our dear Austral strand.

Like a dim line in the distance,
They see the bright blue sea,
And guard well all its secrets,
To which they hold the key.

—MARY HINDMARSH.

UNA AND THE RED CROSS KNIGHT.

SCENE I.—The Palace of the Fairie Queen. All the courtiers and knights assembled. One youth kneeling before the throne.

Queen's Attendant: And what is't thou cravest, O youth, of Gloriana, Queen of the Fairies?

Youth: O, Queen, that thou would'st grant my boon, that which through day and night hath set fire to my chivalry. Create me one of thy knights, that I may win honour for thy name, and bring justice to thy people.

Queen: By my elfin's wing, thou art young and sturdy, yet I fear the fire of thy chivalry soon will die out. However, on this my festal day, grant I your boon.

Youth: O glory, O honour to thy name, O fair and mystic Queen!

Queen: Enough! Enough! 'Tis but— O stay! What have we here? Rapunzel, bring forth the maiden whose countenance shows as mournful as her habit. What may your trouble be, O maiden, that you seek the aid of the Fairie Queen this day?

Maiden: Alack aday! I am come, fair Queen, as do many others, to crave a boon of you. My sire is beset with a thousand foes. I beg the aid of your brave knights in avenging that wrong, and relieving our dire distress!

Queen: It shall be granted. Why, this fair youth, affecting such earnestness, seems fit for such a quest. Come hither, youth. I proclaim thee as my knight, conferring with this fair armour, crossed by the red, the knightly name—St. George. May you keep it stainless, and return, by six years, successful in your quest.

(All exeunt.)

SCENE II.—St. George and Una are making their way through thickets and groves.

St. George: Behold, the broken tracks lead us to a cavern, sable as Black Night, wherein dwells some loathsome monster, hated by mankind.

Una: O! my dear lord, refrain thee from entering therein, for in that stygian shade dwell'th an evil monster, odious to God and man. It is the den of Error.

St. George: Am I not St. George? Am I not a knight who know'st no fear? Restrain me not, sweet lady. (He goes in the cave.) Avaunt! foul fiend! This day will I rid this orb of thy great scourge. Unsheath, my trusty sword, and deal in mortal combat with this most deadly sin! (Struggle ensues, and, at a blow, he severs the head of the monster.) Ha! One more step to the fulfilment of my task.

(Both exeunt.)

SCENE III.—Open plains, a castle in the distance.

Una: At last, Sir Knight, draweth nigh the end of thy task. How must we pray for a successful issue? Many are the dangers that beset you, and many the friends convening against you. Therefore, be watchful and wary, and ready for the foe. Awaken your valour and excel your own great deeds, for the hour has come.

(Great roarings are heard. A hideous monster draws near, breathing fire.)

St. George: Get thee hence, to some place, where, free from harm, you may watch the combat. Now must I collect my wits and strength.

(Prepares for struggle, buckles on sword, fastens helmet, and holds shield in readiness.)

St. George: By my troth, now will I try out my trusty sword, on the hide of this leathery monster. What! (Sword breaks.) My trusty sword is useless! Now, indeed, may Fortune scorch me with her beams, or surely my task will be unfinished. Unfinished? O, infamous! I dare to do or die! Let me be true to my knighthood. (Strikes dragon on the head, after struggle, kills him.)

Una (running up, after viewing the combat on her knees: O, Heaven be praised! How may I thank thee, my liege, for thus delivering my people and my lands? But here is my father, who will perhaps know, meeter than I, how to thank you.

King: From my castle walls did I behold thy great valour, O stranger of the red cross! How must I reward you? Take all my lands, my palace, my all, in reward for thy chivalry.

St. George: No reward would I crave of thee, than the hand of thy fair Unia! I vowed the Fairie Queen to serve six years for her, and now must needs return, to perform that service. With

my task accomplished, however, in five years from to-day, wilt thou see me at thy castle, to claim the hand of thy fair daughter.

Fare thee well, I go at the Queen's command,
To return to my lov'd one, to win her hand.

(Exeunt.)

—LILIAN ANDERSON.

THE LAKE.

The beauty of the sunset was reflected
By the lake, long and smooth,
From either bank, clothed in green, projected
Twisted oaks, and weeping willows move.

Anon, the last faint glow had disappeared,
A breeze refreshing blows,
Their branches stirred, their leaves appeared
As silver as the moon arose.

The night bird's eerie cries are heard,
As they awake so thrilled,
The whole mysterious world of night is stirred,
The air with song is filled.

The silver crescent sank behind the trees,
The sky showed signs of dawn,
All sound was hushed except the murmur of the breeze,
The lake was shrouded in its veil of morn.

—MARY MIDDLETON.

SPRING-TIME.

I hear again the call of Spring,
I love her golden hours,
I hear again the bluebell's ring,
As she trips among her flowers.
I see one more her smiling face,
I hear her voice in every tree,
The young green leaves grow on apace,
And there's laughter in the sea.
She spreads her robes o'er the grassy meads,
Brooklets ripple their way along,
The golden corn has sprung from the seeds,
Streams join in her dance and song.
Roses are waving in the breeze,
And glitter with dew and love;
Listening, I hear the whisper of the reeds,
And the lark's song up above.

—M. WALLER.

PADDY.

His name was a mistake. That is, I think everyone will say that after this story.

He was given to us, at about six months of age, by a friend who was going to the war. Night after night he barked at the moon. When the frogs croaked, Paddy howled. If we had any music, Paddy's howls wailed through the night air.

One morning he was gone, nowhere to be seen! We searched high and low for him, even advertised, although we knew quite well he could not read.

The next day, however, we received a few lines which told us the pup had gone to his old home, and when convenient we could come and take him again.

Again Paddy was at our place. But this time we kept him chained up. When he understood that our place was his home, too, he began to become very friendly with us all. As he grew older we taught him some tricks, and often he used to go for the paper in the evening.

After twelve months Paddy was our truest friend, our most devoted playmate, and our most trustworthy nightwatchman.

Dad went to the war, and he left Paddy to guard us. Only a dog, but always a friend, and Dad knew this, that he could trust our pet for ever.

Night after night he kept his post, never faltering in his one great duty. He was our guardian, and we could not have had a truer one. He was almost human. Through those years of strife and seemingly endless waiting, our old friend watched us all.

Then such news! So thrilling, so relieving! Dad was at last coming home to us all. When we told Paddy, he seemed to know what joy those words brought, for he wagged his tail, and racing round the yard he barked to his heart's content.

Long afterwards we were awakened one night by such a noise, the barking of a dog, but such barking, it seemed to call us from our beds to come out, somehow, anyhow, but to come out.

"Lie down!" called Dad. Still he barked even louder, and he had always been so obedient, but he continued to bark. Then he began to scratch and jump at the door. Dad got up and opened it. Paddy pulled him, ran a few yards away from him, and then came back and pulled Dad again. So Dad followed him.

About ten minutes later he rushed in, shouting, "Fire, quick, fire!" Then the fire-bell began to ring. Clang! clang! through the night air.

We all rushed out with whatever we could lay our hands on. Soon we were assembled, with, now, a large crowd, while the firemen worked hard with the flames which leapt up like serpents fighting for life.

Suddenly, "Where's Paddy?" came from one of us. All rushed about like lunatics, and returned to the spot, no one having found him. What could we do?

Five minutes later there appeared at the door our friend's head, and he was carrying some large object in his mouth. Dad helped him out and rolled him on the grass to put out some of his fur which had caught alight. Then we looked at what he had been carrying. It was a bird cage, and in it were our three pet canaries. They and Paddy had always seemed friends.

In our bustle we had forgotten them, and he had risked his life to save them. There they were, all huddled together, but quite safe and unharmed.

I think you will agree now that, despite his name and breed, an Irish terrier, he had a true Australian heart underneath his shaggy Irish coat.

—EDNA MOTTERSHEAD.

NOSTRA SCOLA.

The school presents many pictures to the eyes of the pupils and others who have been privileged to see it. These pictures are the school as a prison, an old church, and an old ruined castle.

The prison is no more, for the hand of modern man has renovated it. During the last few years the prison was in the height of its glory, with its iron columns and railings, arched windows and stone walls and floor, and that mystic ray of light which was wont to stray through the arches and present that peculiar appearance. But the prison is gone for ever, for those horrible men called painters and carpenters have taken away the mystic appearance, and so it has lost all its beauty, which has been followed by mechanical ugliness.

The old church is still with its high pointed slate roof and pointed windows, and also its musical hall. Many are the tales which are told of the supposed old church which belonged to every denomination. Of this church even some of the parents of the present scholars were members, and when these tales have been completed some bright spark suddenly proves this supposition wrong, and introduces a new theory whereby stating that previously our present school was a primary school.

Perhaps the castle, with its stone walls and iron palisades, is best known, for every pupil knows of its magic corners and numerous passages where one is apt to go astray.

Many are the tales told of how our archers (who have so much practice on the ceilings with all sorts of spears) fought and saved us from the enemy. But spears are out-of-date now, for the enemy is able to defeat our archers, but if they gained admittance to it they would be overpowered by the newly-found gas X, which is prepared by adding—. Oh! I nearly told you!

No school anywhere has the mystery and wonder with which our school is encircled. Every corner, every stone, every board, and every nail is surrounded by mystery. And so, though other schools may have the ugly modern equipments which are too new to be interesting, yet we possess the most beautiful, wonderful, and mysterious school in the whole of New South Wales.

—GWEN MORISON.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE FLEET.

Out of the mists in the morning grey
It rode—that mighty fleet,
Visiting us in peace array,
Their kinsmen here to greet.

Nor could the sun this fleet disdain,
But rose in crimson flood,
Driving the mists across the main,
As toward the land they stood.

Brisk through the Heads in the sunshine gold
The British Squadron steamed,
Leading the way was the "Hood" so bold,
And sunlight beauty streamed.

High on the cliffs on either hand
The cheering multitude
Welcomed the "Tars" to our sunny land,
In hearty, joyous mood.

As to its anchor each warship came,
Great guns roared their salute;
Kinsmen are we, and we share their fame,
Replied in tones not mute.

—EDGAR MITCHELL.

SUNRISE.

The hazy clouds moved lazily,
A few bright rays shot forth.
The air was fresh, and gently blew
A light breeze from the north.

The white-tipped waves flowed slowly in,
And spread upon the sands;
The sea-nymphs near the rocky cliffs,
With joy all clapped their hands.

The tree-tops bent before the breeze,
The ground lark sang her song,
And welcoming the morning bright
Laughed kookaburras long.

The dewdrops on the fresh green grass
All glistened in the sun,
The pretty flowers their leaves unfold,
And open every one.

The clouds became all tinged with gold,
Their inner parts were red,
Then with the greatest majesty
Rose King Sol from his bed.

—NELLIE GILBERT.

A DAY IN A POLICEMAN'S LIFE.

Daylight was peeping in between the shutters of a window in a bedroom, where lay a sleeping policeman. He was a very large man, and his feet poked out from the bedclothes at the end of the bed.

Presently a voice was heard calling, "Tom! Tom! Git up, it's six o'clock." A loud grunt was the answer. "Git up, can't yer! Breakfast's ready," again said the voice a few seconds later. This time the big form moved, and a voice from beneath the bedclothes said, "Righto, Maria! I'm gitting up."

It was some time before a sleepy policeman, in his official suit, sat down to the breakfast of pork sausages which his wife had prepared. Not long afterwards he came out of the house into a muddy street. His beat was round a square, when he caught sight of two boys taking the peaches which had fallen during a storm the night before.

"Ah! Got yers this time, yer young rascals." Two small necks felt a hard pinch, two small voices gave a loud scream, and before the policeman could take a better grip, four small boys ran off to school. The policeman knew it was no use pursuing them, because, although he was big, he was not fleet of foot, and the small boys ran like two male Atalantas, so he satisfied himself by scribbling in his notebook. He then continued on his beat, and proceeded to the police station. He stayed there so long that it was nearly dinner-time, so, feeling hungry, he went home.

It was washing day, and he found his wife in the midst of steam and clothes. "Can't knock off yit, Tom," she cried. So Tom got a ham bone, a cup of black tea, and a large piece of dry bread, which he ate in a very short while.

He then went out, and it was not long before tea-time came. After tea he again patrolled his beat, and towards midnight he distinctly heard a tap! tap! at a window, and, standing still, shading his bull's-eye, he heard a man getting through a window of the house opposite, so he stood outside that window and waited for the burglar. It was some time before he reappeared with a large swag. Bang! whish! wallop! The policeman had the robber, and was saying to himself, "I shall get stripes for this," and sure enough he did, and not only stripes, but he saw stars as well.

The burglar had seen him dreaming, so he dealt one, two, and even three heavy blows, and then ran, but left his swag, and so when the policeman had finished studying astronomy he found the bird had flown, but had left his bundle behind. So he proceeded to the police station with his valuable parcel, and when it was opened it was found to contain a number of jam and treacle tins. On seeing this the policeman collapsed, and had to be carried home. The burglar had seen the policeman, and so, instead of filling his bag with silver, he filled it with tins.

So now, whenever the policeman sees a suspicious-looking parcel, he says to himself, "All is not gold that glitters."

—OLGA HEDLEY

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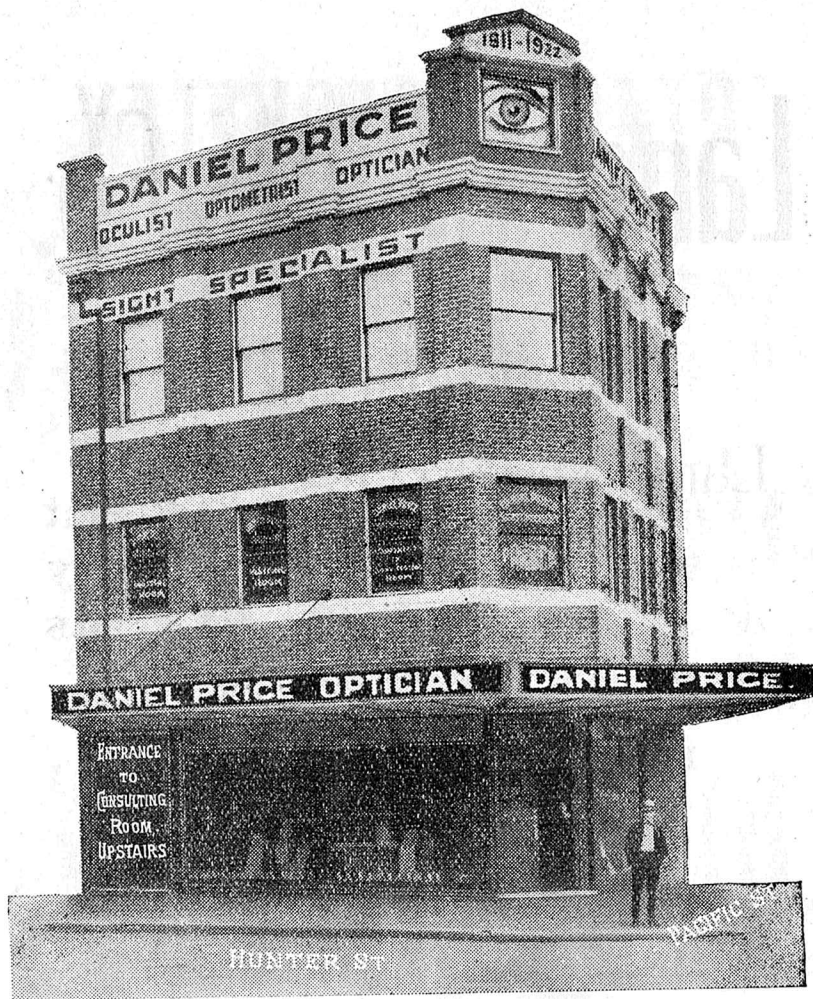
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