The Sydneian.

No. XXXVII.

A MAGAZINE EDITED BY MEMBERS OF THE SYDNEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

OCTOBER, 1881.

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SCHOOL CALENDAR.

October 28.—Monthly Half-holiday.

November 7.—University Public Examinations begin.
9.—Prince of Wales Birthday. Whole holiday.
21.—Sydneian Box closes.
25.—Monthly Half-holiday.
28.—Sydneian No. XXXVIII. published.
EDITORIAL.

ENTHUSIASM is always gratifying to us dwellers amongst the tents of sleepiness, and the second letter of our correspondent "Bowler," with which he has favoured us in reference to his project for a school congress, is further characterised by a certain arcadian simplicity of design, which must commend itself to all. Undiscouraged by our mild disapprobation of his cherished scheme, he has slightly modified its form, expanded it with variety of detail and illustration, cleared away objections, and now desires that a meeting be formally convened to test the opinion of the school at large on the merits of his proposal.

We protest that it lacerates our heart to disappoint the hopes and expressed confidence of so warm an advocate of the rights of the people, but we must decline to fall in with his suggestion that we should use our influence for this purpose. Even the alluring prospect of our becoming the official gazette and organ of the ministry, with an immensely increased circulation from the reports of the parliamentary debates, is insufficient to entice us out of our shell of neutrality; because our natural sagacity enables us to foresee that the Opposition would inevitably start a press organ of their own, and the profits that politics gave, competition would take away. Let him not think that we are to be caught with such poor chaff as this.

We will proceed to touch in due order upon the various points which our correspondent has more particularly expounded in his second epistle. Firstly, he indicates the Sixth Form Class-room as a convenient House of Assembly, and desires that the visitors shall, in default of a gallery, be accommodated "in the desks." Personally, we have a prejudice in favour of the gallery, and in the interests of a free press, should decline to get into a desk to hear any debates whatever. Secondly, he declares that we were not justified in attributing unfairness to his original proposal that the Lower School should have three representatives only, whilst the Upper School had one for each form; and further professes a desire to know why we should set the numbers at eight and seven respectively; which estimate, it may be observed, we gave not as our own ideal, but as the logical outcome of his principles as laid down. Now therefore be it known unto him, that, if it be granted that fairness consists in equality, then if we reckon one representative for each form, since there are seven forms in the Upper School and eight in the Lower, the number of members sent to Congress will correspond thereunto; but if we reckon more strictly, to wit, in respect of counting of heads, then, since there are about 160 electors in the Upper School and 240 in the Lower, if the Upper School elected seven representatives, the Lower School should have at least ten.
At this point our correspondent unexpectedly abandons his original scheme, in order to adopt a new form, embodying fully the spirit of our amendments, yet cunningly contrived to overcome constitutional difficulties of practice. This is the new and improved constitution. There shall be one member for each form, each having as many votes as his neighbour. The second or defining clause of this briefest of constitutions presents serious difficulties of interpretation which cannot be neglected. We are naturally led to enquire, who is his neighbour? Even if we knew, we should still be ignorant how many votes he had, or where he got them. In any case, it is not apparent why, if A's neighbour B has 6 votes, and C's neighbour D has 60, A and C should therefore be unequally privileged with 6 and 60 votes respectively.

After lightly skipping a few delicate points, our correspondent undertakes to show forth a few of the advantages of his proposal, but (perhaps from oversight) he only mentions two, viz., instruction in the art of debating, and publicity of the financial accounts. As to the first, we have now a debating society open to all, whereas a seat in Parliament is to be restricted to a favoured few, whilst the second object is completely attained already, the accounts of all committees being published regularly in this magazine.

Finally, he calls upon us to mention a few of the political difficulties likely to occur. We really thought we had hinted at some of these sufficiently clearly already; but if not, we are disposed to respond to his challenge in a liberal spirit. We think, then, that of all forms of Government, Government by the mob is the worst, that such would be a correct denomination of a constitution in which the superiority of power lay with infants of tender years and elementary education; that the proceedings of a Congress mainly so elected could not fail to be alike ridiculous abroad and mischievous at home; that the discussions would either be a mere farce, the junior boys always giving way to the senior, or a futile succession of childish quarrels; that "Bowler" might very likely be elected as President, the consequences of which would be too dreadful to think of; in a word, that the whole scheme is based on the popular but very absurd political notion, that in the science of Government no account whatever is to be taken of intellect, ability, or knowledge, but that human beings are to be reckoned up like nine-pins or cabbage-heads, four against five, five wins.

A REPORT FROM THE "SYDNEIAN" OF A FEW MONTHS HENCE.

(By Kind Permission of the Prophe't Potts)

"Meeting of Congress."

"The whole of last night was devoted to the consideration of the Bill to Legalize the Meetings of a certain Society called the Grammar School Porridge Club, which had been brought in by one of the members for the Lower School. This Club has met several times since its formation, and, on the whole, has rather been a success than otherwise, being productive of much fellow-feeling amongst its members. Some good speeches were made last evening, but several shameful scenes took place."
"From want of space we have been compelled to abridge our report."

"The member for 6th Form, who, upon rising to speak, was greeted with loud cheers from the Upper School party, but on the other hand, with groans, hisses, and unpleasant personal remarks from the opposite, or Lower School party, said: 'Gentlemen, upon one occasion lately I attended a meeting of porridge-eaters, just for the sake of curiosity.' (The member for 1st Form, sarcastically: 'Oh yes.' Mixture of hisses, cheers, groans, laughter, &c., &c.) The scene to say the very least, was most disgusting, and a disgrace to the school, and being such, the Club ought certainly to be put down. Let each of these gorgers satisfy himself with porridge in the privacy of his own home, but for goodness sake, don't let us witness public stuffings here. The other night the members of the Club fought and snarled over their porridge in a disgraceful manner, and the greatest confusion imaginable prevailed. Soon after the oatmeal was brought into the meeting-room the animals—they don't deserve a better name—were so eager to get at it, that the tub was overturned, and its late contents quickly spread over the floor. What must these gormand do but commence scraping the food off the boards and devouring it! It pains me to state, gentlemen, that this sight made me feel quite unwell." (Several groans. The member for II. a: 'Praps you eat too much'). After throwing a glance brimful of contempt at the interpreter, he continued: 'In one corner of the room I perceived the member for 1st Form in a most pitiable state, crying abjectly, and licking his spoon between his sobs. Upon inquiring of him why he appeared so miserable, he said, that those beasts were stuffing themselves and he couldn't eat any more. He actually cried, gentlemen, because he could not devour any more porridge! I was shocked at such a sight, and was truly glad to escape from the room.' (Cheers, hisses.)

"The member for 1st Form, bursting with indignation, rose and blurted out: 'He doesn't tell the truth, gentlemen. I didn't cry because I couldn't eat any more porridge, there was none left to eat; that hawk of a feller (pointing to the member for 6th), collared it all, the beast! And 'e won't come poking 'is nose in our room any more I can tell you. Why, he knocked the dish over 'imself he wanted to get at it so bad, and when I told 'im to get out of this, he slapped me over the face and wouldn't let me get any, and that's what made me cry, ther beast! At last the fellers kicked him out of the room, serve him right.' At the painful thoughts of the 6th's unkindness the member for 1st now began to blubber pitifully. A little persuasion on the part of his friend of II. a., however, made him calmer. As advised by his friend, he turned to leave the meeting, but before reaching the door, once more broke down, and his sobs might have been heard over the whole school. Facing round again, he shook his fist at the 6th and then, to escape from his enemy, who he believed was following, rushed off amidst roars of laughter. A friend of ours says he met 1st round the corner a few seconds after, laughing loudly also. This is hard to believe, yet our informer has such a name for verity that it must be true. But let us proceed—

"The member for 6th again rose and said, in his manly way: 'Gentlemen, I assure you that what I before said is true. Can you believe that I, in the 6th, and a prefect, could be so base as that little, little (at a loss for a word).
villain would paint me?" (Appealing to all present and spreading out his arms.)

"Member for III. c., coolly: 'Don't know.'

"Member for 6th, with a cutting look: 'You don't know, sir!'

"Member for III. c., defiantly: 'No.'

"The member for 6th Form hereupon made a rush towards III. c., who threw off his coat and retreated, with remarkable nimbleness, to behind the blackboard. Poking his head and closed fists round the side, he cried out repeatedly, in a very threatening voice: 'Come on, yer coward! come on, now; come on.' This the other would certainly have done only he was prevented by being held in the arms of two of his friends. Comparative peace was after some time restored, and the member for III. c. induced to emerge from his stronghold and return to his seat. Affairs now went on pretty smoothly.

"Very good arguments on both sides of the important question were brought forward, the Upper School representatives being generally of opinion that the Porridge Club should be abolished, while the Lower School members were for legalizing the meetings.

"It was noticed, that whenever the 6th Form member rose to speak, he of III. c. who kept his eyes continually fixed on him, made a frantic rush for the other side of the black-board, returning when he saw 6th did not intend to molest him. As 6th spoke often during the evening this happened pretty frequently, and was the cause of much merriment, though it greatly interfered with the progress of business.

"At eleven o'clock matters were not any further advanced than when the sitting commenced. About this time the member for Upper Remove rose, and begged to say, that has he had not learned his Greek for to-morrow, he hoped the meeting might be adjourned until another night. Accordingly this was done."

GRAMMAR SCHOOL CADET CORPS ENCAMPMENT,

It is customary in giving an account of a camp to state that this particular camp excelled its predecessors in every respect, and was such as could be approached by no other, whilst in the next account we find remarks of a very similar nature. Now this must end somewhere, and we had an impression that as the Cadet Corps has now had about ten encampments, that there was not much room for improvement; but it must be confessed that so far as good management and discipline could make it so the late encampment was superior to any at which we have been present, and but for the rain which fell during a few days we could safely predict that no future efforts will produce a more pleasant camp. As usual the Saturday appointed for starting was wet, but as this is now a recognized thing it did not keep many away, and the rain showing signs of abating it was decided to start. This is the first time that the Cadets have patronized the southern line, and the scenery as we went along was therefore new to most and was looked at with much interest by those who were not either buried in the morning paper or in oranges. On
arriving at Mittagong we fell in outside the railway station and marched off to our camp, which was distant somewhat less than a mile. It was situated on a cleared space near the railway line, and was encompassed on three sides by thick bush. A creek ran along one side furnishing clear water. Mr. Southey's school was on the other side of the line, and all through our stay Mr. Southey showed us great kindness, allowing us to use his big school-room on wet days and adding to our comfort in various ways. There was a moderate slope from the camp to the creek so that it was thoroughly well-drained. There were sixteen tents in all, two rows of six each, the two captains' tents at one end and the guard tent at the other, whilst the cook's tent was apart. On our arrival we at once were allotted to the different tents and after making them comfortable had dinner. We then dispersed, some to play football at Mr. Southey's, others to explore the country, but the football was brought to an abrupt termination by a shower of rain, which at the same time somewhat damped our spirits, as we had hoped that the rain had come to an end. After tea we had some songs round the camp fire, but as we were somewhat weary after our journey we soon turned in; however, we were glad to recognise some old songs which enlivened former camps and which were destined to become as popular at this one. Lander as usual came to the fore, and Moffitt's song, Captain Cook, caused considerable amusement. On Sunday our regular routine commenced and we began the day by cleaning out the tents for inspection. At 10 a.m., the company fell-in for inspection, and Corporal Trebeck's tent was found to be best, and Lance-Corporal Thomas's second; this was the order during the greater part of the camp, Corporal Trebeck's being always the best. We were then dismissed until 2 p.m., when we fell in for Church parade and marched to Mittagong to Church. In the evening we retired early as there were no songs round the fire. After this our regular duties were to get up on the reveille being sounded at six o'clock, clean out the tents, have breakfast at eight, fall-in for parade at 10 a.m., dinner at one, tea at six, put out lights at 10 p.m. On Monday evening some of the master's arrived, and the All Saints' College Cadets, under Captain Bean, the singing force was recruited by Denny (a veteran from the All Saints'), and his camp song (written by himself) was deservedly a great success; Trebeck's songs from Olivette, also were duly appreciated, while Captain Bean, Cowper and Clapin, renewed the popularity they had gained at former camps. The drill of the company on Tuesday morning reflected great credit on Sergeant Hagney, who has brought the company to such a condition that its drill would compare favourably with that of any other volunteer company. As this day was decidedly hot the bathing holes were largely patronized; there were two of them, one shallow for those who could not swim, and the other sufficiently deep to admit of diving into it from a considerable height, and each day after drill there was a large crowd around the larger hole enjoying a cool bathe after their exertions at parade. On Wednesday, shortly after daybreak steady rain set in, which kept us within the tents and there was accordingly no inspection or parade; after spending a rather uncomfortable morning we were glad to hear of an invitation from Mr. Southey to spend the afternoon in his big school room, and many availed
themselves of the invitation; however, as it did not rain throughout the whole afternoon, we were able to go out to a certain extent. In the evening there was an impromptu concert which caused an evening that would otherwise have been very dreary to pass off very pleasantly. There was first some boxing, in which Watt, Thomas, Lewellyn and Helsham, severally displayed their prowess. Lander's songs were very good, and Denny's recitations produced much laughter, Sergeant Hagney recited "Bingen on the Rhine," and sang a song of his own composition called "The Sergeants and the Corporals," which is highly creditable; we heard also several of the songs that had been sung already at the camp fire, and wound up with three cheers for Mr. Southey for his kindness. On Thursday morning whilst the rest were having skirmishing drill, the Jerusalem Cuckoo's (who will be described further on), played a cricket match against the Owls, and as there was no time for a second innings, the match was decided by the first innings in favour of the Cuckoos. In the afternoon the first attack was made on the camp under Sergeant Hagney, who took with him about thirty Cadets whom he picked from the whole company; the remainder defended the camp under Captain Weigall, Captain Bean, and our old Lieutenant (Mr. Anderson) who had come to the camp that morning. Mr. Southey accompanied in the capacity of guide the attacking force, who marched out of camp about 3 p.m. After traversing some rather muddy ground they crossed the railway line and halted in a spot out of sight of the camp where Sergeant Hagney explained his plans. He divided his company into three parties, one under Quartermaster-Sergeant Cowper to go round to the left and attempt to effect an entrance, whilst Sergeant Barker did the same on the right, and Sergeant Hagney was to take up a position opposite the camp on the hill behind Mr. Southey's and thence draw the fire of the enemy. Sergeant Ashworth with a few others from Sergeant Cowper's party entered on a side which it had been agreed should not be attacked. Accordingly the attackers retired, and after a short pause, again advanced; this time Sergeant Hagney formed his party along the railway line, and whilst he kept the enemy engaged, Sergeant Cowper advanced behind him and effected an entry, which he did the more easily as Sergeant Barker's attack on the right still further distracted the attention of the defenders. Sergeant Hagney before advancing to the attack used the expedient of the ancients of exciting the courage of his men by an exhortation. His speech was brief, and merely pointed out that until we entered the camp we would get nothing to eat, and he could hardly have chosen a better incentive to bravery, for what force could resist those who were fighting for their tea. The only mishap which occurred during this attack happened to Sergeant Hagney who at the moment of victory sprained his foot so badly that although he did not feel it at the time, he could scarcely walk on it the next day. On Friday we had a skirmishing drill in the morning, and in the evening marched to Bowral where the Cadets were to give a concert for the benefit of the School of Arts. A few gentlemen kindly supplied buggies in which some of the performers went over, but the main body of the company had to march along a somewhat muddy road. It was found that the stage in the School of Arts was too small for the bayonet exercise to be performed properly, which was to be regretted
as Sergeant Hagney had brought his class to a high state of proficiency. The concert altogether went off very well; there was a large audience which was perhaps not so select as might have been desired, but the undesirable part of it was for the most part confined to the back part of the hall, and did not make itself particularly obnoxious. Mr. H. B. Cowper kindly consented to sing, and his songs of "The Little Midship mite" and "In Days of Old," formed a great addition to the programme. Pollock's piece on the piano was deservedly applauded, while Lander and Denny's performances hardly require mention. Quartermaster-Sergeant Cowper's song was duly appreciated, and Corporal Trebeck's selections from Olivette (amongst which we were surprised to notice "The Pirate King.") The bayonet and single stick exercise went off very well considering the want of room. The duet which Lander and Denny had composed for the occasion was certainly worthy of them and caused immense amusement. After a march home by moonlight we reached camp and turned in. On Saturday there was an attack in the afternoon, which was arranged between Captain Weigall and Sergeant Hagney, and which was waged more especially for the benefit of the spectators. As usual there was a considerable burning of gunpowder with no particular result except that the inhabitants of Mittagong were astonished at the amount of noise that ninety boys could produce. In the evening there was a concert at Mr. Southey's which was for the most part a repetition of the one at Bowral, except that as the stage was larger the bayonet exercise could be performed more perfectly, and there certainly seemed to be very little room for improvement in the manner in which the evolutions were gone through. On Sunday afternoon service was held in the camp, several visitors forming part of the congregation. In the evening Captain Weigall called the Cadets together and made a short speech as he intended to return to Sydney by the midnight train; he thanked the Cadets for their behaviour throughout the camp, and expressed the satisfaction he had felt at the absence of bad language, and the gentlemanly conduct which had contributed so much to the success of the camp, and called for three cheers for Sergeant Hagney, who by his exertions done so much for our comfort. After these were given Sergeant Hagney asked the company to give three cheers for his sergeants who had performed their arduous duties well during the whole camp. Altogether, Sergeant Hagney deserves the greatest credit for his management of the camp, and although a slight mistake on his part would have contributed largely towards failure, the only point of which we can fairly complain was the weather. For such a camp to succeed several things are necessary. Firstly, we require a commander such as Captain Weigall, to keep the whole thing together, next an experienced soldier like Sergeant Hagney to see after what is necessary, also the company must consist of a set of gentlemen, and last but not least, we must have a few such jolly souls as Lander and Denny, to keep us lively and amused. The institution of the Jerusalem Cuckoos contributed not a little to the last named object, for although to the unprejudiced spectator it might seem to be merely an eccentric body who devoted themselves to eating large dinners and worshipping an imaginary donkey, yet if it had not existed much of the fun that we enjoyed would have been lost. On Monday we started for Sydney by the midday-train and arrived in the evening for the most part with very sunburnt faces, and with bodies strengthened and improved by a little hardship.
GENS AUDAX OMNIA PERPETI.

O navitarum, quos tulit Anglia,
Gens, o paterni præsidium mars,
Cui mille duravere in annos
   Signa minas rabiemque venti
Martisque sævos fortiter impetus,
Jam nunc in hostes ferte iterum novos
   Vexilla ; dum vectos per altum
Impavidos feriunt procellæ
Depraeliantes fluctibus, et ferox
Jam jam tumultu Mars crepat horrido,
   Dum crebra desavet per undam
   Vis validi violenta venti.
Misseæ sub orcum nonne animæ patrum
   Omni resurgent parte per æquora,
Quoscumque non nudos honorum
   Condidit Oceanus sepulchro ?
Vos intuentes, dux ubi decedit,
Hispanæ tellus quem reputans tremit,
   Et te, ter infelix Trafalgar,
   Uret amor memores per annos.
Quid turris aut arx cela, Britannia,
   Quod mænum quid proficet tibi
   Tutela? namque haec certa sedes
   Additur imperio per altum.
Eructat ilex igne tonitrua
Commixta nigro—montis honor sui,—
   Sic stravit infando tumultu
Subter aquas, revocatique pacem,
Formidoloso littore quæ sono
   Turbata quassant, dum reboant Noti,
   Dum maesta debacchatus ingens
   Funera Mars geminat per undam.
Sed nostra fulgent horrifica, velut
   Puro coruscant astra polo, face
   Vexilla ; dum cæci perici
   Pax iterum tenebras fugarit.
Nunc, o potentes sive mari, viri,
   Terrave, vestri nos dabimus, neque
   Vos laude dignatos ter ampla,
   Immemores citharae silebunt,
Quum turbulentas Oceanæ minas
   Stravere venti ; quum deus impia
   Mars arma fulgoremque belli
   Condiderit veniens in ævum,
THE FEUDAL SYSTEM.

In considering the advantages and disadvantages of a system such as feudalism, we must definitely understand that we are discussing its good and bad qualities as they affected civilization at the time that the system was in force, and must make due allowance for the unformed state of society at that period. For a system which may fully satisfy the requirements of a nation whose civilization is still in process of formation, may at the same time be totally unfit for one which is in a more advanced condition, and though it is true that the whole plan of feudalism was clumsy and imperfect, we must not lose sight of the fact that at first it was required to supply the wants of a rude and unpolished people, and whilst men remained sufficiently uncivilized, the scheme answered all the purposes for which it was instituted. In seeking for the origin of feudalism, we find that in several other systems there is a resemblance to it, in certain points; for instance in the relations of patron and client at Rome, there is to be found a similarity to the relations of feudal lord and vassal, since protection was repaid by services rendered, and this was perhaps the most essential point in the whole feudal system; still as there was no question of tenure of land or of military service in this case, we can scarcely regard feudalism as merely a modified form of this arrangement. On the other hand the Republic and afterwards the Emperors used to make grants of land in return for military service, but in that case the persons concerned were not bound by the same ties as those which united lord and vassal. It seems probable that feudalism first made its appearance as one of the various methods of dividing land, used by the barbarian conquerors of Western Europe, and that it gradually supplanted the rest, being better suited to that age than any other. When the Franks took possession of Gaul, the land was distributed among them, and held as allodial property, that is, it was hereditary, and belonged entirely to the holder, who was subject to no obligation except public defence. But besides this land which was distributed to the people, some was reserved by the Emperor for his own use, portions of which he used to bestow on his favoured subjects, under the name of benefices, and it is in these benefices that we see the first trace of the feudal system. These were at first, according to some authors, held only at the pleasure of the Sovereign, and could be revoked by him whenever he wished to do so, but it is certain that they were shortly afterwards granted for life, returning to the Crown on the death of the men who held them, and since the heir of a man who had possessed a benefice would naturally have some claim to its being passed on to him in turn, they would have a constant tendency to become hereditary, and in fact it was not long before this happened. After this it was natural that the possessor of a large estate should divide it into portions to be held from himself on the same conditions as those on which he held his own property from the Sovereign, and hence arose the practice of sub-infeudation, which finally became universal and in fact necessary; for when the central power was not sufficiently strong to keep the nobles in check, and the large landholders were continually waging war upon one another, the only source of safety lay in the possession of a strong body of men who were bound to their lord by gratitude and the feeling that in protecting his property they were
protecting their own. At this point therefore we may observe that the land which had formerly been allodial tended to become feudal, for although so long as the whole country was kept in order by a powerful monarch, the allodial possessors were in a somewhat superior position to the feudal tenants, since they were not compelled to pay homage, and felt that the land was their own private property, yet when the kingdom fell into disorder and the more powerful without restraint oppressed the weaker, the allodial proprietors could not possibly contend against the strong union of feudal lord and vassal, and as a general rule they came under the protection of the lords in the position of vassals. We may notice that in the same way independent Princes being unable to protect themselves against more powerful neighbours often became vassals to the Emperor, and thus gained his protection at the expense of their independence. The feudal system had now attained its maturity, as after this no important alterations were made in it and for some time it stood as the foundation of the constitutions of the chief countries of Europe. But as civilization advanced, feudalism became an obstruction to its progress, and, as might be expected, could not stand against its onward march. For though the system was admirably adapted to carrying on these petty wars which were continually being waged between different nobles, it failed utterly to supply an efficient force for any great military expedition, since the leading principle of the system instead of binding together the whole nation, only united the separate divisions within themselves, and the ties which so strongly united lord and vassal, did not act in the same manner with regard to the lord and his sovereign. Moreover, as in France there was a continual tendency for the more powerful families to increase their power by intermarriage, all the important fiefs tended to fall into the hands of one family, and thus the whole power was absorbed into the sovereign; the kings also made use of various methods of increasing their power, and thereby subverting the feudal system, and among the most important of these was the granting of privileges to the free towns. Cities were always unfriendly to feudalism, for, since they were the centres of commerce, they were not likely to approve of a system through which no merchandise could travel overland without risk of being seized by some predatory baron. Accordingly their whole influence was turned against feudalism, and as the kings made themselves friendly to the towns, the system being assailed by enemies whose power was continually increasing, gradually died away, until it finally disappeared.

After the destruction of the Roman Empire, came a time during which the whole of Europe was immersed in darkness and ignorance; the clergy had supreme power, and were venerated and implicitly believed in every respect, whilst the rest of humanity was for the most part in a most degraded condition. At this period the feudal system arose, and arranged society on a secular, and not an ecclesiastical basis, being the first plan of the kind that had been formed during more than four hundred years, and as its power increased so the power of the clergy diminished, and Europe under its influence began to rise from the depths in which it had so long remained; a more independent spirit was diffused throughout the people, they began once more to exercise their reason, and the vice and crime, which had for many years predominated, began to disappear. With the date of the beginning of the feudal system then, we may associate the date of the revival of the intellectual independence of Europe, and if it had merely accomplished this object, and had done nothing more, the system would still be deserving of praise for having opened up to Europe a more advanced era of civilization. A system of which the main principal is mutual confidence and support, cannot fail to improve the morals of both parties concerned, and without strict honour and adherence to promises it was impossible for the feudal system to exist; therefore, as in the preceding age in the catalogue of crimes which stained
human nature, falsehood and treachery were prominent, so whilst the feudal system was in force it was necessary that the strictest faith should be kept, and the welfare of both lord and vassal were so closely united that each felt that in injuring the other he would be really injuring himself. But it is in the capacity of the preserver of liberty that the feudal system has especially benefited Europe, for by its means tyranny was kept within bounds at a time when it would have been entirely without control, and the nation being disunited and scattered would have been completely at the mercy of despots, but that the nobility, assisting and assisted by the poorer classes, kept the sovereigns in check, since any act of oppression exercised upon a vassal at once aroused the resentment of his lord. Still, although in this respect the independent power of the nobles was beneficial it effectually prevented the nation in which it existed from becoming a great military power. Feudalism was, as has been said, excellently adapted to petty wars, but not to great ones; for the fact alone that vassals need only serve for a limited number of days in the year not only prevented any conquests being made at a distance from home but also interfered with the defence of the country when it was attacked. Unless the head of the State has a force which he can easily wield and have entirely under his control, the country cannot make any great conquests; and where feudalism was in force this was not possible since the retainers of each baron were entirely subject to himself, and could not be made use of unless their lord should be willing to give his services, and since he was often sufficiently powerful to be able to defy his sovereign, the country was necessarily weaker than one which had a strong central power. Moreover, no great advance could be made in civilization so long as the country was divided into a number of small states which were frequently at war with one another, and were practically subject to no control, so that an unscrupulous baron might with impunity render the country around unsafe to a considerable distance. This want of a sufficiently powerful central government made itself felt especially in Germany (where feudalism lingered longest) for in the Protestant Revolution, long after the rest of Europe had recovered from the shock, Germany was still torn by internal dissensions, as there was no power which could in itself represent the whole nation, and decide the matter finally. Also there was a tendency on the part of the superior to take advantage of his inferior by means of his own greater power, and such feudal incidents (as they are called) as relief, fines upon alienation, and escheats can only be regarded as advantages gained by the lord through his superior strength. Besides this every man who was not a landholder was reduced to a condition of servitude, which was little better than slavery since he was bound to the estate on which he lived and passed with it into other hands when it was transferred, so that the gap between the upper and lower classes was continually being widened through the agency of feudalism, and the peasants were in a helpless condition, having no redress for whatever wrongs their superiors might inflict upon them.

We have seen then that although feudalism answered sufficiently well the purpose of binding together a society which was in process of formation, and which required some rough kind of arrangement to unite it, the system could only be of temporary use, and could not be otherwise than detrimental when its time had passed. It was the beginning of the rise of Europe from the state of anarchy and ignorance into which it had fallen, and imbued men with a sense of honour and confidence in one another, it prevented despots from trampling on the rights of their people, and cleared the way for the better state of things which was to come; but having finished its work it could exist no longer, and was swept away before the improved civilization whose progress it now hindered.
THE BOAT RACE.

This event came off on Saturday, October 15th, on the Parramatta River, the course being from Putney to One Man’s Wharf, a distance of about one mile and a-half. Only two crews competed, one from Royston College, the other from the Sydney Grammar School. The College crew got away with a slight lead at the start, which they increased to a length 100 yards further on; rowing well together they continued to increase their lead, but the Grammar School crew encouraged by the shouts of the spectators, spurted gamely and decreased the gap, but to no avail, for the College crew came in the winners by five or six lengths. The Royston College boys pulled very well, keeping good time throughout. The Grammar School crew pulled very creditably considering the short time allowed for training, having been in train but a week, this was owing to very defective arrangements; and we hope when next the Grammar School sends a crew to compete for the trophy, that the arrangements will be of a much superior order.

CRICKET

FIRST ELEVEN v. OLD SYDNEIANS.

A MATCH was played between the above on Tuesday, October 11th, on the University Oval, resulting, contrary to expectation, in an easy win for the school. The Old Sydneians went first to the wickets and put together a total of 80 runs, to which Sam Jones, by good play, contributed 44, and Roberts 16. The School Eleven then went in and succeeded in making 81 runs, with the loss of 5 wickets, Donnan making 33 and Mackay 26; both showing excellent form. The bowling honours for the Sydney Grammar School were divided between Donnan and Aitken.

CADET CORPS.

COMPANY ORDER by A. B. WEIGALL, CAPTAIN COMMANDING S. G. S. CADET COMPANY,

7th October, 1881.

No. 1.—The following Brigade Office letter is published for information:—

Brigade Office, Sydney, October 6th, 1881.

SIR,—I have the honour, by direction of the Commandant, to acknowledge and thank you for your report, with reference to the late Encampment of the Sydney Grammar School and All Saint’s College Cadet Corps.

The Commandant desires me to express his pleasure at receiving such a report with reference to the mode in which order and discipline were maintained while in Camp; as also at the absence of casualties. He is of opinion that Encampments carried out under conditions such as existed in this instance, cannot but have a beneficial effect on those taking part in them.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

W. B. B. CHRISTIE, Lieut.-Colonel, Major of Brigade.

Captain Weigall, &c., &c., &c.,
Commanding G. S. Cadet Corps.

No. 2 — The Commanding Officer has been pleased to make the following promotions, viz., Sergeant Barker to be Quartermaster-Sergeant, vice Cowper resigned. Corporal Gilham and Corporal Trebeck to be Sergeants.

No. 3 — There will be an examination for promotion to the rank of Corporal, on Friday next, 28th instant.

By command,

A. B. WEIGALL, Captain,
Commanding G. S. C. Corps.

The shooting of the Rifle Team has been very good. A splendid average is obtained at every practice.
DEAR SIRS,—I do not think you could have taken a very impartial view of my last letter. I daresay, if I had had sufficient time to finish it, I should have been able to set forth my views on the subject more fully. However, I will endeavour to do so now.

Let us suppose Congress met in the Sixth-Form Class-room. The members might sit round a table in the spare space, and the visitors find accommodation in the desks. I venture to think that this would answer the purpose quite as well as a gallery, if not better.

You could not have understood my proposal for the election of the members for the Lower School. It was this, “that three candidates be returned to Congress by the whole of the Lower School to be their representatives.” If the whole of the school had a hand in the election where would the unfairness be?

I should like to know what is to entitle the Lower School to eight votes, while the Upper School only have seven.

Abandoning the above plan I now lay before you another, which I hope will succeed; viz:—Let every Form in the school elect a member, but let each member, have the same number of votes as his neighbour. There could be no advantage in clubbing then.

I will refrain from saying anything about the “Commission for enquiring into the squandering of the public money by the Prefects.” Of course it is understood that a Speaker should be elected, and invested with all the powers of that office, such as calling an unruly member to order, &c. Congress will have sufficient discretion, I dare say, to decide whether or not a small tax be levied on the school for the purpose of helping to defray the expenses of sending a team to Melbourne or elsewhere.

Let me show a few of the many benefits that would be derived from this system. It would teach the boys to express their opinions and how to receive and combat with an argument; in short, to debate.

I would propose that at the end of each term, a paper showing the state of the finances be read to Congress, and then either put up on the screen or published in the *Sydneian*. If published, it would, as you say, greatly increase the circulation of the paper. In this manner the school will be able to see how their subscriptions are disposed of, and what balance remains over.

Will you kindly mention a few of the political difficulties that would be met with? For my part, I think, that a difficulty might be more easily overcome by Congress than by the “Chosen Few,” that seem to have the management of the funds.

Before closing my letter, may I ask you, for the sake of “Public Spirit, which you advocate so much, to use your influence to get a public meeting called as soon as possible, for the purpose of taking votes for and against my proposal of Congress. I would also ask you to get some of the masters to express their opinions on the subject; and I hereby invite any boy in the whole school to do likewise.
I feel sure that you will not fail to do as I have asked you, for you will plainly see that by calling the meeting you will be encouraging the first tokens of returning "Public Spirit."

I am, &c.,

BOWLER.

To the Editors of the Sydneian.

Sirs,—I do not think I am wrong in addressing you under an assumed name, especially as I am actuated by no unkind or improper feeling in so doing.

I read the Sydneian, and I regret to observe in No. 36, in the "Editorial," these objectionable words—"Handicap," "Log-rolling," and "Stone-wall," the definitions of which I transcribe, viz.:

"Worcester."

Handicap.—1. A sort of vehicle for travelling.
2. A kind of pace; a sort of game.

Log-rolling.—1. The act of rolling logs; mutual assistance in rolling logs to the river after they are felled; used by the lumber-men of Maine.
2. A cant * term for a system of manoeuvring or mutual co-operation in legislating, &c., to carry favourite measures.

Stone-wall.—A wall made of stone.

"Imperial."

Handicap.—In horse-racing. A stake for horses of all ages.

Stone-wall.—A wall built of stone

* Cant.=Vulgar inelegant, affected, habitually and improperly used, applied to language.

Note.—The affectation of some late authors to introduce and multiply cant words, is the most ruinous corruption in any language.—Swift

It may be quite proper to use cant words on the racecourse, in the Legislative Assembly, or in reports in newspapers,—the literature of which is quite unworthy of imitation—but certainly not in the columns of a "Magazine edited by members of the Sydney Grammar School," an institution, that it might reasonably be hoped, would use the best and purest English that could be taught, in any article emanating from it.

I am, &c.,

A FORMER SYDNEY COLLEGIAN.

[We have kindly inserted this letter (although anonymous and therefore entitled to no consideration), that our readers may form their own conclusions as to our correspondent's sanity. We suspect him to be suffering from an attack of dictionary on the brain.

For the benefit of those who may be doubtful about the proper use of language, it will be sufficient to say that such words only are slang as are not to be found in dictionaries, (which is admittedly not the case with those in question); and that all words thus formally introduced into the language may be employed not only in a sense of bald literalness, but also in many and divers metaphorical and other figurative significations, regulated only by the canons of common sense and good taste; in respect of neither of which will we submit to dictation.—Eds.]
THE ORIGIN OF THE "SYDNEIAN."

To the Editors.

DEAR SIRS,—Could you not manage to persuade some one who remembers the circumstances, to write an account of the starting of the "Sydneian," so that we may know in whom the idea of starting it originated, how it was done, and other particulars, which must be of great interest to all who call themselves Grammar School boys? Some years hence, perhaps no one will remember what happened before the first copy was published, and then, the birth of the "Sydneian" must ever remain one of the mysteries of the past. Doubtless the past, present, and future members of the School will be pleased to know of such an important occurrence in their School's history, and to see it immortalized by being recorded in the columns of your journal.

Will not one of the old masters, or boys, take upon himself the trouble to furnish you with the story of the origin of the "Sydneian"?

I remain, &c.,

August 13th, 1881. PETER POTTS.

To the Editors of the "Sydneian."

DEAR SIRS,—In the brief report of the ex-Secretary of the Debating Society, which appeared in your issue of April last (No. xxxii.), he says: "On Thursday, March 16th, a meeting of the Debating Society Committee was held. * * * It was decided that the books belonging to the Society should be put away until wanted," &c. Now, does it not seem a pity that the books should be put away? Can no use be found for them, and would it not be better that they be temporarily lent to one of the form libraries than that they should lie idle in some dingy corner, where they may perhaps become mouldy and worm-eaten? I hope, that if the D. S. does not re-start soon, or if it has not already commenced business, the above hint will be taken by the late Committee.

I am, &c.,

August, 1881. PETER POTTS.

To the Editors of the "Sydneian."

SIRS,—In reply to the meaningless jargon of "Saltator" that appeared in your last number, I beg leave to lay before you a few facts, not facetious. I think it is scarcely fair to the delinquents (if delinquents they be) to shower down on their unfortunate heads such a torrent of undeserved abuse. It is all very well for "Saltator" to make his jokes about "boy's conscience polke." &c., which may be all very funny, only I can't see where the fun lies; but as there were only two, or at the most, three boys who absented themselves from the cricket ground, I must say, I think, the remarks are rather personal, and we all know the old adage that "Personal remarks are odious," and it is rather hard lines to expose to ridicule one or two inoffensive youths by pointing at them the finger of scorn. It must be remembered that the day in question was not an ordinary day for cricket, and it was only at the eleventh hour that a few of the team were informed that the match had been postponed till the following day, when it was quite possible other engagements had been made. No doubt "Saltator" would say these engagements should have been ruthlessly cut. But, I put it to you, would the boys have been boys, nay, would they have been human beings, had they struck such a heavy and totally unexpected blow on the hearts and affections of so many anxious bosoms, without some notice to soften it? Human nature murmurs "no."

No, Sirs, you will not find, I am sure, amongst our schoolfellows, many of that stamp of boy, rightly condemned by "Saltator," who would voluntarily make the duties they owe to the school give way to their selfish idiosyncrasies.

I remain, yours, &c. &c.,

ANTI-SALTATOR.
To the Editors of the Sydneian.

Sirs,—In your last issue there appeared a long letter written by “Saltator,” on the subject of two or three boys who were picked to play in the First Eleven, not turning up but going instead to a dancing lesson. Now before discussing whether the action of these boys was justifiable or not, I should like to say a few words about the letter itself. In one part of his letter “Saltator” says he dances tremendously himself, a little later on he calls dancing “the eccentric cirplings of a grotesque whirligig.” How he deduces any argument whatever from the fact that he himself goes in tremendously for “the eccentric cirplings of the grotesque whirligig” is an involved mystery to me. Under ordinary circumstances the “principles he strikes for” would be well enough, but the occasion of this cricket match was quite exceptional. Cricket matches are generally played on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and of these matches sufficient notice must be given beforehand to allow of the boys keeping themselves disengaged for them. The match in question had been duly notified for Wednesday, but owing to unfavourable weather was indefinitely postponed; on Thursday morning it was given out that as there was a general half-holiday in the afternoon the match would be played then. Now, one of two courses was open to these boys, either to give up their dancing lesson, “a necessary part of their education,” or their cricket. They determined reasonably enough, as I think, to sacrifice cricket on this single occasion, the more so as the cricket match was an unimportant one, and more for the purpose of practice than for anything else. So, all things considered, I think this is an occasion on which “Saltator” need not have wasted so much righteous indignation and so many fine phrases, as it is extremely improbable that it will ever occur again. It will be seen, I hope, from my letter, that I am not preferring dancing to cricket; but what I mean and what I have endeavoured to express is that on this occasion dancing had a prior claim to cricket, since Thursday afternoon had been set apart for it. Hoping you will insert this letter, I remain, &c.,

JUSTITIA.

SCHOOL NEWS.

We are gratified to be able to notify that Parker has carried off three “All School Races” in succession, the first at King’s School, the second at Hunter’s Hill, and the third at the University Sports.

We have likewise much pleasure in recording, that mainly owing to the exertions of Mr. Newbury, the School has obtained a cricket pitch on the Association Cricket Ground.

The Prizes for the Handicap Examination, held in April and September of the present year, have been awarded as follows:—Upper School—English, Layton; Arithmetic, Layton; Greek, Sendall. Lower School—Arithmetic, Thompson 3; Latin, Taylor 1.

The Windeyer English Essay Prize has been awarded by His Honor Mr. Justice Windeyer, the donor of the Prize, to Pratt. The Essay sent by Murphy was also commended.

Il y avait sept personnes dans une chambre; personne ne dit mot. Qui est le supérieur.

Réponse
Le silence, parce qu’il est général.

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