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1883.
SCHOOL CALENDAR.

Wednesday, September 19th, *Sydneian* box closes.

Friday, September 21st, Michaelmas Holidays commence.

October 1st, School re-assembles.

*Sydneian*, No. XLIX., will be published directly after commencement of next quarter.
Among the many contrasts that would strike an English Public Schoolboy on entering a Colonial school, perhaps one of the most marked would be the want of respect shown by the junior to the senior boys. The English-bred boy, accustomed to regard a member of the VIth Form as a kind of divinity, living in a moral and intellectual atmosphere, different to that of the rest of the school, and surrounded with the prestige of traditional and personal superiority, would at first find it difficult to realize that amongst ourselves so little importance is attached to position in the school, and so little personal respect felt for the members of the Upper Forms. It might be supposed, however, that though the claims of position in the school were ignored, those of size and age would at least be respected; but, apparently, even these distinctions are practically disregarded. It is almost amusing to notice the terms of easy familiarity that exist between the newly breeched infants of the school and their whiskered seniors. With what perfect assurance does five-foot of impudence address six-foot of dignity—probably by his nickname,—and with what complaisant indifference is the badinage of the small boy reciprocated by the good nature of the big boy! There can, of course, be no objection to the interchange of such civilities, which, though perhaps not very funny, are in themselves harmless; but it would be well for the older boys to remember, that familiarity proverbially breeds contempt, and that the school cannot, and ought not, to rank as a Public School—in the English sense of the term—until the older boys assert a well-grounded claim to be treated with respect by the younger boys. It is quite true that the assertion of such a claim would be worse than useless, unless it were justified by the personal character of those who make it. Assuming, however, that there are boys in the school who are entitled to assert such a claim, we would fain believe that the feeling of respect for what is worthy of respect, has not even yet been eradicated by the prevailing principles of a false democracy: for true democracy is no leveller. Meanwhile, it is quite clear, that until the senior boys of the school make a determined stand for the respect, which is their due, their influence for good will be but slight, self-government will be an impossibility, and the rule of the prefects will be a theory, and not a reality.
AN INTERESTING DISCOVERY.

A few weeks ago, I received from a friend in Brisbane a letter, accompanied by a parcel. On opening the letter, I read as follows:—“... I am sending off to you by this post a book, which may, perhaps, afford you some interest, though it is valueless to me. A French escapee from Caledonia (some few of the sort, as you are aware, are wandering about, unclaimed by their Government), begged me to give him some money, as he was starving. The only thing he had in his possession was a book, which, he owned to me, had been picked up among the ruins of the Palace belonging to M. le Prince de M——, which had been looted during the siege of Paris, in September, 1870. Being somewhat of a Latin scholar, he had kept the volume, and when, subsequently, he was arrested on a charge of political intrigue, and soon after transported, he managed to secrete this book about his person; and frequently, so he informed me, found great comfort in perusing its contents. He said I was welcome to the book, as he would only have to part with it, sooner or later. The poor fellow was evidently a gentleman by birth and education; and I did what I could towards helping him.” I then proceeded to open the parcel; and found therein a very old copy of Horace. It was all in MSS., written in a beautiful Italian hand. There were a few corrections here and there; and occasional variae lectiones in the margin. On reading it more carefully, I came upon an ode, which, so far as I am aware, has never yet appeared in any of our editions. It succeeds Ode XXI. of Book III., and by some astounding negligence has been entirely overlooked by ancient and modern commentators. I need not criticise its value as a composition; but with reference to the subject-matter, I venture to state, without fear of contradiction, that it throws more light on the social state of Rome, during the early years of the Empire, than any other single Ode by the same author; at the same time elucidating several passages of contemporary authors, which, until now, have been involved in obscurity; besides incontestibly refuting what has hitherto been accepted as an historical fact.

It is impossible to assign any exact date to this Ode; but it was probably written about the same time as Book II., Ode X., addressed to Licinius Murena: which evidently was intended to give him some advice as to being more cautious in his speech and conduct: though, apparently without avail; as Murena, in B. C. 22 was involved in the conspiracy of Fannius Capio, was condemned to death, and executed. It would seem that lines 27 and 28 allude to some notable instance of indiscretion in telling secrets. This would lead us to conclude that the Ode was written towards the end of B. C. 22, or shortly after.

It has been hitherto vulgarly believed that the worship and cultivation of this “Chief of the Goddesses” as she is styled in the text, was peculiar to America, being unknown in Europe, before the time of Columbus. This Ode, however, clearly disproves this impression, by enabling us to give a true interpretation to that well-known passage in Strabo, which has previously baffled the ingenuity of all critics. In his Geography of the Ægean Sea, he
relates as follows:—μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα ἐς τὴν νῆσον, Νικοτίαν καλονύμενη καταγόμε-νου, τῶν πλείστους τῶν ἑνοικοῦντων φύλλου τι γεωργοῦντας ἁσθόμεθα, ὥστε, ὅσ γε ἐφαινοῦ, ἐμπροσ τίνες ἀπὸ τῶν Σήρων πάλαι εἰσήγαγον τοῦτο δὲ ἐν νάρβηκε ἀπτόμενον τοσοῦτον τὴν φρένα εὐθραίνει, ὡστε τοὺς Ἀθηναίους, ὅσ ἱκουσαν, ἐμπορίαν ποιήσασθαι.

Of course now it is clear from the allusion above, that the word Nicotina (line 43) is derived from the Island Nicotia, or Nicosia, in the Ægean Sea: where, as Strabo tells us, the inhabitants cultivated a herb, which, when burnt in a pipe, afforded great pleasure to the senses: and this herb, he distinctly states, was introduced by Chinese merchants. The Athenians, hearing of its wonderful properties, immediately opened up a trade with this island: and it was through them, of course, that it became known to the Romans.

And we may fairly conjecture that it was to check the immoderate use of this luxury that the Opian Law (Lex Opii) was passed B.C. 71.

Now we can understand that line of Virgil (Ec. I. 2), “Sylvestrem tenni Musam meditaris avena.” Tityrus is contemplating the “Wooden Muse with her slender Pipe,” i.e., per hypallagen, the “Muse (Nicotina) with her slender wooden pipe.” The “avena of Virgil, and the “νάρβηξ” of Strabo, being identical. There is no saying whither our fancy might lead us, when we remember that it was in a “νάρβηξ” that Prometheus brought his stolen fire from Heaven. Now we can understand the metaphor “fumum bibere.” Book III., 8). Now we can penetrate the meaning of that fragment of Asinius Pollio, wherein is written “Hoc anno, Augusto Lauto, et .Enerico Parco, coss, privatus quidam fanum Nicotinae in media Urbe sedicandum curavit: in honoris tamen deæ id fecerit, an sui causa luceri, ambigitur.” Now we know that Lautus and Parcus were consuls B.C. ’82; This temple was, therefore, erected seventeen years before Horace was born. The only difficulty that meets us in this ode, is the locality of the “Australis axis” mentioned in line 45. We know that the spot, wherever it was, was used as a place of exile for those banished from Rome for political or social crimes. In illustration of this, we quote from the works of Strigulus, a poet of the Silver age.

Est locus Australi—dicunt Nova Castra coloni—Litore, * * * * * * * * * Qua solvunt sceclera, haud memores solvenda per annos. Hic Sceleris genus omne olim gliscebat, ibidem Gens infesta hominum, patriaque expulsa, catenis Mille laborabant: fratrem cum fratre videre Consortem sceleris, vincii consorti * * * * * * * * * * Where this “Southern Shore” was, we do not exactly know; probably some barren rock outside the Pillars of Hercules.

It is evident that the subject of this ode was in high esteem at Rome, and that too, with both sexes. Nicotina has a place assigned to her amongst the Muses, “the last, and yet the first,” and has a magnificent temple dedicated
to her worship. We may picture Horace, after a good day's work, lazily enjoying himself, while the thunder is crashing, and the wind blowing outside, with his "Avena," and "interior nota Falerni;" the logs piled high on the "focus," and the Penates enwrapt in the fragrant smoke. How naïve are his remarks about the youths and maidens, the stern fathers, and the anxious mothers. It is with great delight that we are able at length to restore this ode to its proper position in the literature of the ancient world.

AD DECIMAM MUSAM.

Quo mihi venam tenuem camenny,
Principem si non celebro dearum?
Te canam, nulli prius invocatam
Rite, Tabaco.

Liberum laudent alii, et trinodem
Herculis clavam, Venerisque amores,
Et sinnum flave Cereris feracem,
Mercuriumque.

Te, tamen, cordi est memorare nostro,
Ultimam primamque decem Sororum,
Carmine; et laudes meritam ter amplas
Tradere natis.

Territant non jam Jovis obsoleti
Fulmina, et venti reboantis iræ;
Namque te surgente colam sereno
Vespere voltu.

Me juvat fessum solito labore
Celibem fumo relevare mentem,
Et tuo ditare lares benigno
Numine parvos.

Pellis insanos animi tumultus,
Efficax suadere levem soporem,
Hauserit quisquis tibi temperati
Pocula Bacchi.

1. Cf Ep I. 5. Quo mihi fortunam,
   non conceditur uti?
2. Var. lec. Tobago, Tobacco.
13. Jovis obsoleti. It is interesting to notice the atheistical tendencies of the times.
18. Celibem mentem. cf platanus que celebs. Od. 11. 15. 4.
20. parvos Horace is frequently referring with mock humility to his poverty.
22. Efficax suadere: for Constr. compare blandum ducere Od. i. 12 11.
Reddis et mutum satis eloquentem,  
Qui parum faustos numerabit ultro,  
Per jocos, ignes, reteticque secretas  
Ora potentum.

Ebrios dulci recreas veneno,  
Quos procax fugit redivit Lyde;  
Quis Chloen post te metuet minaci  
Voce furentem?

Saepe te tentant pueri, latentis  
Nescii fraudis; subitoque querrunt  
Intimas tecti latebras, dolentque  
Pallida fata.

Quin et indulisse proterva gestit  
Pyrrha (proh mores) genio, tuique  
Plena, odoratum roseis vaporem  
Spargere labris.

Te, nefas, odere patres severi,  
Teque matrones, trepidae juvencis,  
Ne tu success Nicotina, mentem et  
Corpora lcedant.

Exulem Australi positum sub axe  
Tu foves, frustra patriam gementem,  
Et laborantes operum catenis  
Fallere gaudes.

Imminens Hortis tua surgit ædes,  
Quæ frequens cultor monumenta sumptu  
Gratus effuso tibi dedicavit  
Consule Parco.

Sis comes terraque marique vecto,  
Sis comes lato miseroque presens,  
Sis comes quocunque mihi per annos  
Munere functo.

27. Var. lect. retegisque. For the allusion, see above.
29. dulci veneno. It is barely possible that Milton copied this oxymoron, in his Comus "The sweet poison of misused wine?"
37. Pallida fata. A good instance of hypallage. These stanzas show that there is nothing new under the sun.
45. Australi sub axe. See above.
47. Fallere operum. A Græcism, compare Od. ii. 13, 38, laborum decipitur.
49. Hortis. These gardens, or parks were in the middle of the City.
JACK HARKAWAY IN AUSTRALIA.

WARRANTED THE VERY LATEST AND LAST OF THE SERIES. BY THE AUTHOR
OF "THE BOUNDING BURGLAR OF BURWOOD," "THE SANGUINARY

T'was a beautiful day in the middle of the night. The stars twinkled, the
sun and moon arose simultaneously, while a kangaroo and emu fought fiercely
on the crest of the country.

Bang! Bang! Poof! and a rifle shot entered the beak of the emu (who
was just then getting the best of it), and after a rapid digestion, passed in like
manner through the frame of the kangaroo.

"Hurroo! Advance Australia" came a voice, as Jack Harkaway, his sons,
grandsons, and remote relations came on the scene, and quietly proceeded to
scalp the kangaroo.

"Rob his nob to get a bob," quoth Jack Harkaway the junior, a poet of
no small fame, (kangaroos then fetched one shilling a scalp), and playfully
producing a boomerang, he whizzed it in the air. Down came eleven 'possums
and several native bears to his unerring aim. But scarcely had he skinned,
tanned, and made these into a rug, with the skill of an experienced
taxidermist, when another native bare came running towards him.

"Bugaboo warra garra boo!" was all he said. It was enough.

Enough is as good as a feast.

At it they went, the natives pouring in arrows, spears, and Papuan im-
precautions; Jack Harkaway and progeny bringing the memory of past deeds
to sustain them in the emergency.

Jack Harkaway's infant son, aged 3 months, performed prodigies of valour.
Sitting in his perambulator, he faced the savage chief and simply yelled.
The effect was magical!
With a wild cry of "Anathema Maranatha" (a sort of blessing I am told
amongst these curious people), he took to his heels.

Jack Harkaway's youngest son but one electrified all beholders.
Seizing a pin, he struck it to the hilt into the leg of a native.
Who expired on the spot.

The rest of the family having now each slain, skinned and eaten the remain-
ing blacks, once more silence reigned supreme.
But silence also gives consent.
It was the dead of night.
All was sombre.
All was more or less serene.

When scarcely audible footfalls could be heard creeping towards the
sleepers. In another moment, one by one twelve gaunt, grim and ferocious
beings approached the camp, each with a bowie knife in hand.
They meant mischief.
Murder is brewing in the air.
Will it be nipt in the bud?
I dunno!
Silently and solemnly each approached the still slumbering forms of the loudly snoring Harkaway family!

My word!

With ghastly precision each takes his station at a convenient nearness to a victim, and apparently awaits the signal of a leader.

Their leader is the famous bushranger, "Yellow Jack."

Yellow Jack was a schoolfellow of Jack Harkaway’s, expelled for assassinating all the masters, and conspiring to dynamite the establishment generally.

Slowly he raised his hand for the fatal signal, his knife is about to plunge deliciously among the well-lined ribs of his hated rivals, when —

(To be continued.)

It is not perhaps customary to introduce into School Magazines paragraphs or extracts borrowed from other papers. Yet the following short passage taken from the lecture of a learned Professor, may not be out of place in the columns of a paper supported by schoolboys, nearly all of whom have been born in the land of kangaroos and opossums. Nor will it be uninstructional to observe how strong an argument in favour of the Darwinian Theory of Development or Evolution, is furnished by the passage that we have ventured to copy:—"Again, a notable example of this theory is presented by the kangaroos. It is now generally admitted that they were originally a human race of schoolboys, who have gradually degenerated into their present condition, through a mischievous and ungainly habit of plunging their hands into their trousers pockets, in the street and the study, in playtime and in prayer. For these almost alone of all animals wear each a pocket, and that no small one, but of portentous capacity, two having been knocked into one through excessive use. Their arms being thus naturally enfeebled, have shrunk up, as compared with the hind legs, and their hands are dwindled to mere paws, the tails alone being developed in strength. Their brain, moreover, as might be expected, has grown miserably weak, so that they are now the most stupid of all quadrupeds; a fact to which the keepers of the Zoological Gardens have borne unanimous testimony. And whereas man has been well-defined as an archencephalous perissodactylous* animal, these poor creatures are on the point of becoming anencephalous and adactylous* For their brains are already grown sadly simple, while not only their fingers, but even their hands and arms will, it is to be feared, soon totally disappear. And thus the more noble the original boy, the more terrible failure, it would seem, is the resulting kangaroo."

*Members of Form VI., will kindly give the exact meaning and derivation of these "sesquipedalia verba," for the benefit and instruction of their weaker brethren. Critical papers please copy.

[Since we are unable to recall a single instance of a "male" kangaroo being blessed with a pouch, we conclude that the "Learned Professor" inclines also to the Pythagorean doctrine of Metempsychosis, which, we believe, was no respecter of sex. However, it may be that the word "schoolboys" should be "schoolgirls."—Eds.]
EPIGRAM.

Tu, delator, ades, nostram delatus ad oram;
Heu miser; ignoras, hospes an hostis eris.
Utraque te spurcum Victoria respuit horrens;
Exsilium, exul, aves? exululatus, ave.

JOURNAL OF AN EXCURSION TO TORRES STRAITS.

PAPER No. 1.

Towards the end of last June I was so fortunate as to get a few weeks holiday, so—without delay—I made up my mind to visit a friend, who is connected with the pearl-shell fishing in Torres Straits, and who (having been settled there for several years) has erected a comfortable dwelling, and is able to invite an occasional visitor to enliven the monotony of his existence. Having taken my passage * by one of the regular steamers, called the "Venice," I accordingly found myself on board one fine morning, steaming out of the harbour at 8 o'clock.

"The ship was cheer'd, the harbour clear'd,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top."

When we got outside Sydney Heads some of us were very pleased to find that the sea was smooth and quiet—indeed, the motion of the steamer was scarcely perceptible, and, in consequence, all the passengers—with the single exception of a lady,—had excellent appetites for breakfast.

The first day of our voyage passed off quietly, without our seeing anything of which to take note. The coast was in view all day, and we could easily distinguish the position of Newcastle by the heavy canopy of smoke which overhung the town.

There were not many passengers in the saloon, and of these, most were—like myself—bound for Thursday Island, the Government settlement in Torres Straits, and the head quarters of the mother-of-pearl shell fishing industry.

The lack of first-class passengers was, however, fully made up by the immense number of Chinese on board. These were men, who by their patient industry, had made a little money in the colonies, and were now going home to China to enjoy the fruits of their toil, intending to return and work for more when all was spent. Among these were two who had been so fortunate as to secure white women for their companions in life—each of them was blessed with a family of four or five children, all of whom resembled the mother very much in appearance.

It seems a very perverted taste of white women to marry Chinamen; it is said that the reasons are, a desire for smoking opium, which the Chinaman is willing to gratify, and also the pleasure of having their own way in domestic affairs, for he is usually obliged to submit; he is also more thrifty than a white man, and saves more money for them to spend.

*Return fare, £22 8s.
The catering for all these Chinese passengers is generally done by two or three cooks (all Chinamen) who are employed by the ship. The cooking is done on deck, on the forward part of the vessel, in a little shed erected close to the bulwark, in which are a couple of boilers securely bricked in. Their food consists of rice, with occasionally a little meat or fish, and some vegetables, but they are not at all particular as to what they eat—indeed in their own country, dogs, cats, rats, and even earthworms do not by any means come amiss. It is an amusing sight to see them at meal times, sitting in little groups, each with his little bowl and chopstick—which latter they handle so vigorously that a basket of boiled rice soon disappears.

There is also an interpreter attached to the ship, who is supposed to be their spokesman, and to attend to their wants; but it often happens that his knowledge of English is inferior to that possessed by many of the passengers.

On the second day after leaving Sydney, June 28th, we passed the following places, of which I took note—Smoky Cape, and Trial Bay. In this bay there is a convict settlement, the convicts being employed in building a breakwater, in order to form a harbour of refuge—as yet however, they have not made much progress with their work.

Behind Trial Bay the Macleay range of mountains can be seen rising up. We also sailed very close to the Solitary Islands. These islands, known as the North, South, and South-West Solitaries, are very bare and barren—in fact, the last named is merely a mass of rock. There is a lighthouse on the South Solitary, and some pretty little cottages in which the keepers live.

Just at this spot a brig called the "Annie Ogle," was lost some time ago; she was supposed to have capsized and foundered. The captain wrote his will on the fly-leaf of his bible, and tied it with the ship's papers to the cabin-door. This was washed ashore, but all the crew perished.

At dusk we were off the Clarence Heads, and saw the light flash out from the lighthouse, as the keepers lit it after sundown. I was told that there is a strong current setting down this part of the coast. It comes across the ocean from America, and reaches the Australian coast just off the Clarence River. It runs from north to south at the rate of about four knots an hour, and is a great boon to sailing vessels caught in a southerly gale, as it carries them off the coast, which is then a lee shore. The country is well wooded all up this part of the New South Wales coast, and the hardwood obtained here is very good.

June 29th.—Early in the morning we sighted Moreton Island, and about midday were abreast of Cape Moreton, having made a run of 51 hours from Sydney Heads.

Moreton Island is a long barren island, about twenty miles in length; it is composed almost entirely of sand, and is covered by scrub on the south side. On the north the vegetation is of larger growth.

The only buildings on it are those connected with the Pilot Stations, and there are two pretty little pilot villages, one of them on the south entrance to Moreton Bay, and one called Bulwa on the north shore. The pilot as a rule does not live long on the station, but cruises about the entrance in a small schooner, in order to be in readiness for any vessel which may arrive.
To Moreton Bay there are two entrances, one at each end of the island. The south entrance is very dangerous, being full of rocks and shoals. As it is a short cut to the head of the bay, it is much used by small steamers. The other entrance used by larger boats has also its dangers, as there is a reef of rocks off Cape Moreton, and a solitary sunken rock whose position is marked by a buoy. On this rock a vessel struck some time ago, when it was unknown, and did not appear on any chart. A party was accordingly sent out to take soundings and determine its exact position, but it was three weeks before they could find it again. Moreton Bay is a wide open bay resembling Port Philip in appearance. The passage up is very tortuous, as it is full of shoals, and the vessels are directed in their course by a multitude of buoys and beacons; at night it is very well lighted. This bay was discovered by Captain Cook in 1770, but he did not make any thorough exploration of it. Matthew Flinders made a slight examination of the place in 1792, but was not able to make a complete survey, and the task was not undertaken until 1823, when a government party in a cutter called the "Mermaid" arrived here, discovered the Brisbane River, and found the locality suitable for a penal settlement. Accordingly in 1825, a batch of the most desperate convicts was sent there, and settled at Eagle Farm, near the spot where Brisbane now stands. On the north shore of the bay there are some curious conical hills, shaped like sugar-loaves, and called the Glasshouse Peaks.

As the water was not deep enough for our steamer to enter the river, we anchored in the bay at a distance of about twenty-five miles from the town, and were pleased to see that the lighter for which we had telegraphed from Sydney was fast approaching. This little craft was an old steam-launch in a very cranky condition, and very top-heavy, having a high poop erected aft. As she came alongside she so bumped against the steamer, that we half expected to see her capsize; this catastrophe was however reserved for a future occasion, and she delivered up the cargo and Chinese passengers which she had brought us in safety. A very smart little Chinaman came on board here, and made the round of the ship. He, as I afterwards learned, was a detective, who came to examine the Chinese on board, being employed to trace out a man who had recently committed a large robbery of gold, and who was supposed to be trying to escape to China. This detective had formerly himself been turned out of Fiji for theft; there is nothing like "setting a thief to catch a thief." However, he did not find his man on this occasion, and we proceeded to sea again, and left Moreton Island behind at dusk.

June 30th.—We were still favoured with fine bright weather and a smooth sea. The land breeze, which had been blowing hitherto, was now replaced by the south-east trade wind, before which the steamer was gliding comfortably along with all her square sails set. By noon we had passed Sandy Cape and were off Breaksea Spit. This is a long sandy spit running out from the cape away out to sea, and vessels require to keep well out in the open to be clear of the numerous shoals. Sandy Cape is the northernmost point of Great Sandy Island, behind which is situated Maryborough—the port of shipment for the Wide Bay and Burnett District.
The portion of the coast which was visible to-day appeared to be very barren and sandy, and had not at all an inviting appearance.

July 1st.—On coming on deck early in the morning I was informed that we were now well inside the Great Barrier Reef. The sea was smoother than ever, if possible, for this reef acts as a grand breakwater; and the water was of a bright green colour giving one the impression of its being shallow. This must have been due however to muddiness, for on the return voyage it appeared deep and blue. The passage by which the route inside the Barrier Reef is reached is called Capricorn Channel. There is also a group of small islands of this name, and a cape on Curtis Island is called Cape Capricorn, having been so named by Captain Cook on account of its being immediately under the Tropic of Capricorn. Curtis' Island forms one side of Keppel Bay into which flows the Fitzroy River. On this river, about forty-five miles from the mouth, is situated the town of Rockhampton.

The Barrier Reef is an immense coral reef or Atoll extending up the Australian coast for more than 1300 miles. It begins off the coast in about the same latitude as Curtis' Island, and reaches well up into Torres Straits. It is for the most part entirely covered by water and only rises above the surface here and there in the shape of rocky reefs, and low, flat, sandy islands, some of which have a few mangroves growing on them.

Vessels are by no means entirely imprisoned when they have once entered the passage inside the reef, for there are several places where any vessel can gain the open sea again.

The navigation of the inner channel is in places plain enough, but in others it is very dangerous on account of the immense number of detached portions of the reef and the numerous rocks. Great care is necessary, and it is dangerous to proceed after dark during part of the voyage.

The width of the passage varies very much, sometimes it is fully 100 miles wide, sometimes only ten.

As this reef is entirely formed by the growth of coral and rises up out of very deep water, there are places on the outer edge where the depth is exceedingly great; indeed, I have been told that a line of 280 fathoms has failed to reach the bottom there.

The sandbanks and islands on the line of the reef all the way up the coast are the resort of the bêche-de-mer fishers, who erect their little smoke sheds on the spots which are most suitable, and live there until they have filled their schooners with this curious article of commerce.

The bêche-de-mer, Trepang, or Sea Cucumber, of which there are thirty-three varieties, is a species of Holothuria. In shape it resembles a prickly cucumber, it has a tough leathery skin and possesses the power of expanding and contracting at pleasure.

The length varies very much in the different varieties; some are about seven inches long and some are so long as two feet, but they are very much reduced in size by the curing process to which they are subjected. Their colour is also changed by this process; when fresh some are whitish brown, some are dark red, and some black, but when they are cured all seem black.
Its body, which is covered by numerous excrescences, lies generally buried in the mud or sand above which it waves the feathery tentacles which adorn the head. It lives in all depths of water, from two or three feet up to five fathoms.

The preparations for market consist in its being split open and gutted, boiled for a few minutes, dried and smoked, which last operation is conducted in a close shed, the fish being spread out on shelves above the fires, and distended by little pieces of stick.

Great care is necessary in all stages of its preparation, and every process must be carried out with the greatest despatch. If the heat used be too great the fish blisters and becomes porous, if it be insufficient the fish will putrefy in the course of a few hours. At all times it must be carefully kept from exposure to moisture, as it is very hygrometic and becomes pulpy and flacid.

The bêche-de-mer is sold by the ton and has a very considerable value in China, where it is used in the preparation of a very rich soup.

(To be continued.)

THE AGE OF BLACK COATS.

Is it not remarkable this prevalence of Black Coats? At the theatre or in the ballroom, at church, or at business, at banquets, levees, funerals, the majority of men go dressed alike in the ugly, cheerless, monotonous Black Coat. The average citizen, who wishes above all to keep unharmed his character of respectability, lives under strict conventions. His trousers may be of any shade from the lightest to the darkest of any pattern checked, striped, or crossed, it matters not how; but his coat must be black—the customary suit of solemn black. Now such uniformity amongst men of all different tastes and fancies cannot come by chance. What strong compulsion it is which prescribes for man that one poor colour which is the dullest, ugliest and most repulsively sombre of all—a colour lending no charm to flowers or trees, contributing no share to the beauties of nature, but such that its true quality is expressed in this, that it has been in all ages the accepted emblem of mourning, woe, and death. Be this as it may men wear black, the uniform as it were of the quiet citizen who submits to the powers around him. Why should they wear a uniform at all, and why above all things should that uniform be black? The wearing of a uniform seems to me to be closely connected with the ideas of the age. Under the teachings of science we are democrats perforce; it is at once the condition and the ambition of a state which is truly democratic, that men should be like one another in thoughts and tastes and feelings; they are made so (and this process we amongst others are rapidly undergoing) by the abolition of the distinctions which sever man from man; amongst distinguishing marks which have gone are the differences in dress owing their origin either to private taste or fancy, or to public convenience and institution. There was a time when a man's rank or trade could be seen by a glance at his garments; but now, all separate class uniforms having been put away, there is but the one great uniform left, the uniform of
the democrat who dresses not directly to please himself but to obey the orders of social fashion.

It seems easy for any man to break away from his station and to steer in the direction he likes, but he can only do so in running a gauntlet of criticism and censure. He will hear himself laughed at as peculiar, pitied as odd, reproached as conceited, and finally condemned, scouted and abused—all this for acting in a way which hurts no one, and gives a slight gratification to himself. Under such an infliction most men's independence fails; though they may adventure a short voyage on their own account, they sooner or later put back to the port of conformity from which they started. There is then a compulsion to wear the uniform of society, not violent, but effectual and strong; but why as we asked before should this uniform be black? Eighty years ago the gentleman of fashion could delight himself with coats of divers colours, of bottle green or scarlet, or mulberry or blue. Why should not any of these colours rather than black have been retained to the exclusion of the rest? Supposing blue had been. What then? There are many shades of blue, and all men would be in doubt as to the real shade commanded. There would be men in light blue coats and dark blue coats, and men in dark blue, trimmed with light, and so on throughout the whole range of possible variations, and so we should have a confusion and a non-uniformity as complete as before. Instead of presenting all men alike, it would make them appear most different, the thing which society studiously avoids. Decidedly blue is not the colour for the social uniform, nor is green, &c. The only two colours fitted to the purpose are white and black, and as white in this dirty world is with difficulty kept white, whilst black is always black, the vote of society has been unanimous for black.

And so men are in mourning always, and cheerful colours are banished, and all assemblages are made ugly, and life is robbed of half its picturesqueness. For so society wills.

FOOTBALL.

On Thursday, 26th July, a Football match was played between the Sydney Grammar School and the Crew of H.M.S. "Diamond," on the Association Ground, Moore Park.

Play was commenced at 3·30, the Grammar School, having the Southern goal, had to kick against the wind.

After playing for about ten minutes, first try was scored for the Grammars by Cameron (ex-student). Wood tried the kick but missed the goal; after the ball was kicked out it was soon brought back, and Hungerford obtained the second try for the Grammar School, and this kick Woolcott tried but failed to score. Soon afterwards Townsend got the ball and, by a good run, secured a try for the Diamonds, from which a goal was kicked; nothing more was obtained on either side before half time, when the Diamonds had the advantage by one point.

After half time, Cameron, who was playing splendidly, got another try which Wood tried to convert into a goal, but failed; another try was obtained
by Lee, who also took the kick but failed, and had another kick from a try
which Watt got, but did not kick a goal. Neill then got hold of the ball, and
took it nearly up to the goal line, when, being collared, he passed the ball to
Wood, who alone had followed him up, and he ran in and scored try number
six for the Grammars; this kick Cameron tried but he missed the goal;
Cameron again got the ball, dodged through nearly all of them, and got another
try, from which Woolcott tried to kick a goal but missed. The crew of the
Diamond waking up, rushed the ball down to the Grammar's goal, got a try,
and when their man failed to get a goal from it, followed up the ball so well
that they got another try, from which also they failed to kick a goal. Three
more tries were obtained for the Grammar School by Mackay, Johnson, and
Horne; from the tries of Mackay and Johnson no goal was scored, but
Cameron kicked a goal from the try obtained by Horne, the S. G. S. thus
winning by 1 goal and 9 tries (23 points) to 1 goal and 2 tries (9 points).
Those who were remarkable for good play were, for the vanquished, Fligg
and Kyngdon; and for the victors, Cameron, Clapin, Kenna, Neill and Wood.

SPECTATOR.

[We regret that this is the only match of which an account has been
forwarded to the Sydneian. And even this account is not an official one. We
would urge the Sports Committee to ensure a regular contribution to the
Sydneian of notices on matters appertaining to the Sports, and interesting to
the School at large.—Eds. J]

THEATRICALS.

On the last Saturday of the past Term some private theatricals were held at
Port View House. Considering the time in which the actors had to prepare
the piece, the play went off remarkably well.

The piece that was chosen for the acting was that which I daresay all our
readers have read, viz., the Trial Scene in the "Pickwick Papers," Pickwick v.
Bardell. The grave dignity of the judge was very becoming, and does him
great credit, while the eloquence of Sergeant Buzfuz produced profound
sympathy for the plaintiff. Meanwhile, by fits and starts, wailing and
moaning came from the corner in which the plaintiff and her witness sat.
Sam Weller was also very good, and the tact which he displayed in answering
the lawyer's questions deserves to be noticed.

Sufficient thanks cannot be given to Mr. Willans, who kindly took the part
of Pickwick, and kept the court in roars of laughter, and who after the play
was over, caused continued merriment by his imitation of catching a fly, as
also by his comic songs. Mr. Giles entertained the company with various
musical instruments, which we suppose are somewhere among the category of
the lute, harp, sackbut, &c. About half-past ten the party broke up, and the
visitors retired to their respective homes.
The following are the Dramatis Personæ:—

**Dramatis Personæ.**

Mrs. Bardell (plaintiff) ... A. T. COX.
Mr. Pickwick (defendant) ... Mr. WILLANS.
Judge ... Mr. CARTER.
Sergeant Buzfuz ... E. B. TOOTH.
Mr. Simpkins ... Mr. GILES.
Sergeant Snubbin ... R. MACARTHY.
Mr. Phunkey ... E. WHITE.
Mr. Winkle ... C. O. MANT.
Sam Weller ... R. W. THOMAS.
Mrs. Clappins ... E. B. T.

We have lately had a handsome present of books for our library from Mr. G. Mant, our catalogue now containing about 50 volumes of Scott, Kingsley, Lytton, Ballantyne, Blackmore, &c.

**OLD BOYS.**

J. ST. CLAIR MACLARDY, Esq., B.A., and S. WRIGHT, Esq., have lately been appointed to school Inspectorships. T. H. BARKER, Esq., has just passed with distinction the final examination for graduation in medicine at the Edinburgh University. There were 43 candidates, of whom 6 passed with distinction.

A. B. PIDDINGTON, Esq., B.A., has been appointed Classical Master at the Sydney High School.

Owing to the exertions of the chairman and board of trustees the school was on Thursday 26th July honored with a visit from the Hon. G. H. Reid, Minister for Education.

**NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.**

We have received some silly enigmas from "Mihi;" they are supposed to be in rhyme, so much so that "pigeon" rhymes with "Spurgeon," "poacher" with "preacher" &c. The metre is ridiculous, and the answers are grossly personal, not to say impertinent. Upon these considerations, we do not publish them. [Eds.]

We have received a communication from a correspondent signing himself Peter Potts. We beg to call his attention to the notice that no communications can be published unless accompanied by name of the author.

**CORRESPONDENCE.**

To the Editors of the Sydneian.

SIRS,—Excuse me for trespassing on your valuable space, but having a proposal to make I thought I could not do better than draw attention to it through the columns of your paper. As there is a cricket and foot-ball club at the school, I do not understand why a lawn tennis club should not be formed; as numbers of boys who pay their sports fee do not play football I think that most of these
would only be too glad to join, and if a meeting were held to consider the advisability of starting it numbers of the boys would join. About a ground. There is in the play-ground as most of you know a lawn tennis ground where the masters used to play and I think that it would serve the purpose in a manner quite satisfactorily if only tried. Hoping that this will receive some attention.

I remain, dear Sirs, yours, &c.,

P. W. J.

To the Editors of the Sydneian

DEAR SIRS,—In your last issue you referred to a letter about lawn tennis. and I think that something might be done with the asphalt court in the play-ground. Would it be too much to expect the Sports' Committee to provide a net and balls? or rather balls, for I believe there is a net somewhere about the School. There is surely no reason why foot-ball and cricket should be considered the only games; if then the Sports' Committee provide material for these games, why should not they give to lawn tennis players their share of the funds to which they have an equal right with the devotees of cricket and foot-ball. Tennis is a fine healthy game with a great deal of the excitement and none of the roughness of foot-ball, in which bruised limbs and black eyes seem the order of the day; but so infatuated are foot-ball players that if one day they get a black eye on the next they rush to make things straight on the principal of "similia similibus curantur" by getting the other black also. But whither all this? Simply to induce the Committee to give tennis players their share of the funds at their disposal.

I remain, &c.,

TENNIS PLAYER.

To the Editors of the Sydneian.

SIR,—In the last few issues of your journal I have noticed letters from various persons concerning chess and tennis clubs. These are very good enjoyment for those who have learnt the game but for those who have not they would not be the least good. What is sorely needed in the school at present is a debating club in which all might join. There was a debating club at the school before and there is no reason why there should not be one again. Hoping that some of the captains or masters of the school will notice this.

I remain, &c.,

SCHOOL BOY.

[We quite agree with "Schoolboy" that a debating club is sorely needed in the school; and if he will refer back to his old Sydneians he will see the numerous letters that have been written on the subject. It is easier, however, to complain of a defect than to suggest an efficient remedy. It is scarcely possible that a debating club should meet except at night, and in a day-school it is scarcely possible for this to happen; therefore, it is scarcely possible that a debating club should exist at all in a day-school. Instead of a debating club (which is essentially an exclusive institution, being confined to the few who have the "gift of the gab," we would suggest a Literary, Dramatic, and Musical Association, the combined efforts of which might secure an "interested audience," for two or three nights during each quarter.—Eds.]
The Editors beg to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the following Magazines:

- Ulula
- The Auckland
- The Cinque Port
- The Rossallian
- The Reptonian
- The Lorettonian
- The Columban
- The Durham University Journal