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The Sydneyian.

No. XXI.

A MAGAZINE EDITED BY MEMBERS OF THE
SYDNEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

OCTOBER, 1879.

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SCHOOL CALENDAR.

October 31st.—Monthly Half.holiday.

November 3rd —University Examination begins.

November 10th.—Whole Holiday.

December 8th.—*Sydneian* Box closes.

December 15th.—*Sydneian* No. XXII. published.

WE beg to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the following
Magazines :—

Cheltonian

Wykehamist

Geelong Grammar School Quarterly (2)

Cliftonian

Australian

Young Victoria

Melburnian.

The Sydneyian.

THE EDITOR'S DREAMS.

HE had been on a trip to a most favoured spot in the heart of this great and glorious land, which his uncles, cousins, sisters aunts, *and* grandmothers had resolved to call their own, and to defend against all enemies (be they Russians or mosquitoes) with their life's blood—and mosquito curtains. Think not, thou lazy one, that he who had been trained in studious habits from the "sunny, sunny hours of childhood" to the serious era in life which opened before him in his seventeenth year, think not, I say, that *he* thought it necessary to abbreviate his school days in order to enjoy a trip to that most sleepy country town of country towns—Yass. No! Far from it! In the holidays was it that the Editor began to pack his carpet-bag; in the holidays was it that, laying aside for the nonce all literary cares, the Editor descended to devote his attention to the menial objects of thought, sandwiches, cakes, buns, &c., &c., for, strange though it may seem, there did *occasionally* steal through his profound mind thoughts of such an every-day cast; and it is even to be feared that on the morning of his departure, mistaking (such was their resemblance) a raspberry-jam pot for a Horace, he frantically dived into the former, thinking, of course (also how vain our thoughts!) that all the while he was taking a long farewell to his favourite author. He may have been thus absent-minded, and if he were, who shall dare to be responsible for the freaks of an over-worked brain? Also he may have made mistakes (who will not pardon the poor fellow in such circumstances?) in his departing salutes; he may have accidentally embraced the teapot in place of the "last edition"; he may even have kissed his pretty cousin instead of his wrinkled old nurse. But here we verge upon the forbidden ground of "editorial secrets," and it is time to return to our mutton.

Suffice it to say, that after all the Editor started much in the same way as "other people" start, and got out of the train much in the same way as other people get out. But not so did he deliver up his ticket; for advancing to the guard with a pleased smile on his face, as if delighted to see an old friend, he gave him, instead of his ticket, his forefinger. The guard seized it in his usual smart manner, and the Editor, gazing absent-mindedly at it, said with that French accent for which he is so much renowned, "It won't come off." Then smiling with sweet sad smile, so suggestive of his mournful occupation, he said, "Why don't you ask a fellow for his ticket?" The guard not feeling very well at the minute, was unable to assign reasons, and things might have been unpleasantly complicated had not the questioner slid by him smoothly, whistling that most sublime of oratorios, "Nancy Lee."

His stay in the country will always be remembered by him in connection with such adventures as "B" has often put forth so pleasantly in the "columns"

(to use an uncommon phrase) of the *Sydneian*. At last it was time to return, time to quit the romantic possums and the sentimental magpies, time to return—to school. He rode into Yass and spent the last few hours of his holidays waiting for the train. (Unluckily, you see, the telegram sent by him for a special train had been received too late by the authorities and again he had to do as other people did.) At about 4 o'clock he had dinner and gave a *very* fair account of roast beef and plum pudding. Then he drove to the Railway Station and took his seat for Sydney. At night he dozed off to sleep in an uncomfortable position, the carriage being too full to admit of his putting his legs upon the seat. The heavy dinner, however, quickly sent him into the land of Nod, and station after station was passed until he was awakened by the shout of the guard "Goulburn." He woke with a start and found that all the passengers had left the carriage and only one man got in, very tall and very thin, his bones rattling with the cold quite audibly. He remained on the other side of the carriage for some time, and then his clothes gradually disappearing from his body, he seemed suddenly to have been changed to a human skeleton. Our hero trembled in his boots, ("lace-ups") and quite forgot all the "directions" for flooring a ghost, such as throwing boots at the figure, &c. But as afterwards reflected, this particular remedy would have been useless, since his boots as aforesaid were "lace-ups" and would have required unlacing, during which operation no doubt Banquo would have commenced his banquet on him. Nothing, therefore, was left but to sit still and wait for the next station. At this time, however, the train seemed suddenly to increase its speed, flying past station after station, and at last Sydney appeared. For once in his life he was glad to see Sydney, thinking that now he was safe; and was already laying plans of revenge for the intrusion. But wonderful to relate they sped past Sydney and with a few bounds crossed the Pacific and were hurrying along somewhere on the other side when he saw a large sign-board stuck up with "Isthmus of Panama" in large letters on it. And now came the hardest of that Editor's trials. The ghost or skeleton slowly crossed the carriage, his bones rattling horribly as he went. Then he took a seat next the affrighted Editor, and laying his forefinger with sepulchral gravity on his right nostril murmured deeply—

"Ah!"

The sound roused the sleeping lion in the other's breast, and with what was meant to be a triumphant shout, he whispered hoarsely,

"Who art thou?"

Thus the figure answered:

"I am the ghost of No. XVII."

Then the brave Editor of the "Chittywittian," in fierce tones replied,

"And wherefore art thou come?"

"For two reasons," said the ghost, with his two hands describing a graceful "lunar." 1st, to tell thee that I think myself hardly used in having been sent forth empty to the carping world. 2nd, to summon thee to a meeting of "Old Numbers."

The Editor hereupon plucked up courage, remembering how pleasant were meetings of "Old Chittywittians," and thence inferring that perhaps the meeting of "Old Numbers" might be something of the same nature.

But alas for his wishes! Hardly had the thoughts passed through his mind when the skeleton, shuffling horribly, opened a door hitherto unperceived, and admitted some 15 "old numbers," who instead of being as the Editor had fondly hoped they would be, "jolly fellows," were (some at least) even more meagre than No. XVII. The latter gentleman kindly explained that No. VI. was unavoidably absent, his utter want of "matter" or "mind" being so remarkable that he was not even "powerful" enough to crawl on the remains of his cover for the rendezvous. No I. being the oldest number present took the chair. No. VIII. rose to accuse. "Prisoner at the bar" groaned he "how long have you been Editor of Us?"

"Only since No. IX.," said the unfortunate Editor. Hereupon all the numbers up to No. IX. left the room (or carriage). Now, however, there was a diversion. For it was uncertain whether the prisoner was responsible for No. IX. or not, and No. XV. (who appeared about the strongest, *i.e.*, the least weak of the lot) ruled that the man himself could not be questioned because it was legally "a leading question." Now it was obviously to No. IX.'s advantage to stay, since he would then be Chairman according to rule, whilst if he went, No. X. would inevitably fill that high post. However the dispute was settled amicably by No. IX. consenting to take the chair with No. X. on his knee. As soon however as he had taken his seat No. X. summoning all his strength rushed upon him and after a short tussle rendered himself undisputed champion, No. IX. retiring with his skull bleeding. The business now proceeded. No. XII, now spoke.

"How is it that I was sent forth into the giddy giddy world with that weak and sombre article on "Hockey, and how to play it?"

No. XIII. "And what made you pretend to fill Me with a ridiculous list of the boys in school? Everyone knew what that meant, and No. XIV told Me that when you were taking Him round for sale, he heard a brat in II A. say: "Why, that last No. wasn't worth ½d. Ha? what about that?" (This last with a fiendish grin of triumph).

"And whose fault was it that old Scroglands, that crusty old writer in the *Setting Sun* wrote in his critique on me that he had heard many a newsboy say smarter things than you could find in Me! Me! Me!

At last No. X. the usurper got up and said:—

"Brother Numbers, I think the case is clear against the Editor of Us. Stop there Editor! not a word of defence. It wasn't your fault? Fellows won't write? XV., old chap, lay in to him."

Whereupon XV. evidently relishing the joke, borrowed a shin-bone from No. XI. (who had been too weak to offer any remarks) and raised it with a sepulchral yell.

But at this moment there was a tremendous hissing on ahead, and prisoner, judge, executioner, and audience leaped to the window. Hardly had they put their heads out, however, when the engine blew up with a terrific crash. The Editor was shot high up in the air together with the wrecked skeletons, and descending like a thunderbolt awoke to find himself rolling on a first-class carriage floor, and to hear guards rushing about with lamps in their hands shouting "M'ruan, M'ruan."

Here endeth the 1st dream.

(To be continued in our next.)

FLOODED OUT.

It was Monday afternoon, and we had been away from home ten days ; the following Friday we were to go back, and the next day, Saturday, would complete the fortnight which we had planned for a camp on the Hawkesbury River. We had pulled as far as Wiseman's Ferry, and turned off at that place to a tributary on the right hand side, called the Macdonald. Twelve miles from the mouth of this river our tent was pitched, and on its banks, about fourteen feet from its then level. It was Tuesday afternoon when that rain commenced which was the cause of the late heavy flood. Our tent was an ordinary tent, with a "fly" on the outside, which prevented the rain from soaking through the tent itself. There were five in our party, all old Grammar School fellows, save one.

The rain commenced about 2 p.m., just as we had returned from our daily shooting excursion. These shooting excursions were necessary to keep up our stores, which were in the following state, and, as you will see, not at all a pleasant supply for the misfortunes we suffered, misfortunes about which this narrative is written.

As for stores !—The bread we had from Sydney ran out the last Thursday, the butter about the same time, onions likewise. A fisherman did bake us a huge weight of bread ? at our last camping place at Peat's Ferry, but this was almost gone too. Our flour was just gone, still we had nine fresh wallaby, and a few tinned meats, some of which resembled stringy bark ; therefore two of us had to pull in the boat to St. Alban's, the township three miles farther up the river ; they returned after three hours absence with flour, potatoes, a few onions, a delicacy in the shape of a baker's loaf, some jam, and wet clothes, which did not get dry until the Thursday following. I myself spent all the afternoon in dressing nineteen parrots, our evening meal. Here is an account of our dining room : a strip of calico to keep out the rain, and on the grass beneath it our boxes, feeding appliances, such as butchers' knives, billy lids for plates, and "hold all" dishes for our soups ; above, hanging on the ridge of the tent, were dripping garments, and near one end a lovely little brook ; our roof water wending its way to the river below, for the suddenness of the rain left us no time for details. Sitting on our haunches we were half wet through, as we hurried over our tea in order to get to the tent and dry blankets. After tea everything was left to the rain, which by now was settling down very steadily ; the boat was looked to, in case a flood came, (a precaution which we afterwards saw the wisdom for) while ourselves we stowed away for the night in the tent, which defied the rain, both on account of the fly without, and the numerous flies within.

At four next morning we went out to see if the river had risen, but found a slight rise of only one foot from local causes, and the boat, safe and sound but well nigh full of water. At daybreak the river came down attended with the usual freight of logs, cornstalks, and rubbish of all sorts. Little did we then suspect that at 2 p.m. that same day it would be flowing over our camp.

We found our fire out, although there was a sail over it, and the damper put in at tea time the night before just as raw as when made. After another

meal similar to the one on the previous evening, a neighbouring farmer paid us a visit and advised us to move off, before we were swept away; none of us, however, suspected that the river was at all seriously affected. He advised us of a cave, distant about a quarter of a-mile, against the stream; to this, in company with another I went, with big boots on, and no socks, crossing mountain torrents knee deep, until we saw the rock. It was decided to move to this, but to save trouble we waited until the boat floated just outside the tent door, before the tent was taken down.

Silently but surely the river rose, bearing onwards all manner of rubbish, sweeping by green trees and burying them in its course, yet allowing them to rise again, only to overburden them with the next fresh. By twelve o'clock, however, it was time to get aboard, and putting on as little clothing as we could, keeping any dry clothes for comfort's sake, when we reached shelter. We had to break up our camp in a tremendous shower, and doggedly inch by inch fight the foaming and seething river for about four hundred yards. At our first spurt we went straight to the opposite side, and had to spurt from tree to tree until high enough up to shoot the stream again.

At the cave in which a family lived seventeen years, we stopped for the night, baking bread and drying our clothes. Next morning we found the river had risen six feet during the night, and had just begun to fall; our boat was safe, but was in a nice mess. Each of us had a share of wet clothes, our store rather low, our guns (we each had one) damp, the boat's sails dripping wet, not a dry pair of boots, the greater part of our clothing soaked. In spite of this, four went after wallaby, and returned with five, which we were to take to Sydney, but we were obliged to eat two on the way back.

At four in the afternoon (Thursday) we started home, as we were bound to time, and everything was just packed as another shower came to cheer us onward. Once fairly in the river, nothing could have caught us; we tore along like a steamer, dashed by our old camp, now under six feet of water, jerked now to this side, now to the other, of the roaring river. Two coasters we passed were moored on the main road, the road itself hidden everywhere, where it was close to the tanks. Farms we admired on our way up, and which were busy with men, horses, and ploughs, were now most enticing lagoons. In the midst of this grand confusion night came upon us; hurled by the river, it was with difficulty we kept our course. Suddenly we go brushing past The Oaks and land plants, poking about in the dark, strangers in a strange river, no moon to guide us. Suddenly the boat pulled heavily; as the current was blocked up we then knew the Hawkesbury was up; this was about three miles from the mouth. At times a terrific roar would reach us, which made us tremble in our little skiff. Rather close to the water's edge, with soaking garments, with a light on the banks, a farmer hailed us, and would not hear of us going farther; he even held out visions of huge logs staving our sides in. A slight majority decided to camp with him. We pulled over his farm close to his back door, left the boat at the garden fence, and stepped into his house, soon to be treated to rashers of bacon and nice damper.

When we had revenged ourselves upon such much-needed prog, we were shown the way through slippery mud to a building once used as a school-house;

fortunately a fire-place was in it, which soon was stacked with a pleasant fire, while in the only dry corner of the shed our rugs were spread, and we turned in ; this was about 10 p.m. At sunrise next morning, to our great relief, the rain had gone, and when the sun had driven away some of the haze, we were able to see before us what we had imagined the night before. The water lay in idle lagoons everywhere, unable to run off, because held back by the Hawkesbury itself being in higher flood; As this was Friday morning, and we had to pull fifty miles before three o'clock, p.m., we lost no time in getting afloat again, not even having time to have breakfast with our considerate farm friends. The river had sunk six inches in thirteen hours, and from this one can imagine the volume of water that must have been passing down to sea during the night.

While travelling on to the main river, which we could not see for the thick fog, a picture of desolation was very visible. Before we were aware of it we found ourselves in the mighty channel, just after it had played such destruction at Windsor, and at a quarter to eight we passed under the telegraph wires at Wiseman's Ferry, going like a steamer. Only one large whirlpool we saw on the way down, which would have turned the boat over straight off, had we been near it ; as it was, we got an ugly wrench which might have filled us up. At two p.m. we finished the fifty miles and landed at Barrenjuey, under the lighthouse, an hour earlier than we expected. We shall never forget the trip from the Hawkesbury mouth to Broken Bay Heads ; for an hour and a half we were between wind and water, deeply laden, a big roll, made worse by head winds and by fresh, all but breaching over the boat.

Had I the room I could fill half *The Sydneian* with incidents just as startling, and more so, than these, but in saying farewell I could recommend any venturesome boys to take a boat, get it carried to Broken Bay, and launch it there ; they will find a fortnight's amusement and change of living, the best remedy for those who work hard and want a change.

TOMMY HAWK.

OUR RIVALS IN CIVILIZATION.

NO-ONE who has any conception of the depths of his own ignorance will be surprised to hear that there is at present on this earth, co-existent with mankind, another race of beings immeasurably exceeding ours in numbers ; some, at least, of whose nations also much exceed many races of man in the quality of their civilization. Little as a superficial abserver may be disposed to believe it, ants—for it is to them that we refer—are in the enjoyment of a highly complex social order not very different from our own. Their government is a free Republic, all citizens being equal ; there are no revolutions, and apparently very rarely any crimes ; they have an elaborate military system ; they construct public buildings, roads and bridges of vast size ; they understand the laws of property, keeping cattle, and cultivating the soil ; they often substitute slavery for the more barbarous practice of killing prisoners taken in war : they have a rational language. In a word, they are civilized.

The ants have already attained in perfection that state which is believed to be the best attainable in the future for ourselves ; a state, that is, in which

every individual acts solely for the good of the community, without any regard for his private interests. No one can doubt this who has seen the undaunted courage with which ants from a nest disturbed will advance to certain death. At such times the more warlike kinds cannot possibly be driven in by any earthly means. The same principle is apparent in the behaviour of an ant who happens on something good to eat. A human being would probably eat it; an ant carries it home if he can; if not, he does not touch it, but after inspecting it all round, and forming a mental estimate of its size, quality, and the number of hands required, he rushes off for help. It is impossible that he could explain these facts without language. It is easy to watch the process, for instance, in the case of the little red house ants. As the explorer gets into the track of his countrymen, he stops each one he meets and rubs antennæ with him; the first few receiving the information proceed to spread it in like manner; in ten minutes or so appear from the nest first two or three skirmishers, then a company, then more skirmishers and another company, all going without hesitation directly to the place indicated, until sufficient numbers are engaged. On such an occasion it is easy to test their capacity for conveying other kinds of information. For instance, kill a single ant at a weak part of the line; ants before and behind the spot immediately scent the accident, and run away as fast as possible to give warning, touching each one met with their antennæ, the recipient of the news instantly bolting home, or, if very inquisitive, advancing very cautiously and gingerly a short distance to test the truth of the report. At the same time the party ahead are withdrawn, but always by a circuitous route, carefully avoiding the fatal spot.

The military system differs in different species. Many employ the Prussian plan of universal conscription for service of all able to bear arms. Others, however, maintain a standing army of soldiers, employed to fight only, whilst the main body of the populace are employed as mechanics and do not fight, relying on the soldiers for protection. If the workers are disturbed at their task, they fly for refuge to the nest, whence almost immediately issue the soldiers at full speed, always easily distinguished in such cases by their much larger heads and powerful jaws. Some species have also a certain number of larger and more powerful individuals who act as officers, marshalling the column of attack, and distributing themselves at intervals along its flanks. Australian ants are not skilled in military manœuvres, but the South American and African foraging ants have definite tactics; their armies on a foray are often composed of many millions of individuals, and march either in a dense column of irresistible weight, or an extended line, sweeping the country, and concentrating itself readily on any requisite point. Before these dreadful hosts snakes and such other creatures as cannot escape are consumed almost instantly; the elephant and the lion fly for their lives; nothing is left alive in their path. Mr. Bates, in his "Naturalist on the Amazons," mentions that he sometimes saw the ants engaged in these expeditions halt for rest and recreation, leaving the ranks, strolling about or playing together for a time, and then resuming their devastating progress. This is a remarkable and suggestive observation, as it is held that the enjoyment of recreation is the main incentive to voluntary work, and the

practice might be expected to lead to a sense of their connection. Some kinds with undeveloped eyes, habitually construct an arched tunnel along their line of march, formed of fragments of earth, so that their progress is always in darkness. In this case the labour expended would seem to be greatly in excess of the result obtained, as it is not apparent what necessity exists for this precaution. A march thus conducted must be a very laborious undertaking, and may justly be compared with that of the old armies of China, which were occasionally known to halt for the purpose of sowing and reaping a crop.

The armies engaged on these foraging expeditions are usually in quest of provisions for the community, but of recent years we have become acquainted through careful observers with the habits of the slave-making species, habits to which there is no parallel except in human history. Certain kinds of ants have developed their warlike tastes to such an extent that they take no practical interest in anything but real fighting, and it therefore becomes necessary to employ menials for the domestic duties of the establishment. For this purpose they are in the habit of making war upon other weaker species, whose pupae they plunder and afterwards rear up in their own nest. The ants thus reared become accustomed to captivity and readily adapt themselves to the work of their masters; they perform the whole duties of providing food, repairing the works in connection with the nest, and so on, and in some cases even carry their masters in their mouths when the latter are too lazy to walk; but they are not permitted to take military service. The dominant race are thus enabled to concentrate their whole faculties on the study of war and the art of slave-catching, in which occupation they manifest extraordinary zeal and interest, not to say ferocity.

The cattle of the ants are aphides or green plant-lice so called, which they do not indeed breed, but assume a protectorate over them. These little insects, which may be observed in any garden, possess the power of exuding at will from their bodies a sweet-tasted drop of liquor, of which the ants are exceedingly fond, and which they only distil when an ant comes to fetch it. In return for this arrangement the ants keep careful watch over the aphides and protect them from other enemies who seek to devour them, showing a most jealous care for their welfare. In Australia a species of black ant has domesticated, so to speak, the caterpillar of a blue butterfly which may often be noticed on wattle-trees; this caterpillar produces a similar fluid to that of the aphides, and is usually so thickly covered with its friends the ants that it is difficult to secure a specimen. The principal risk which unprotected caterpillars run in this country is from predatory ants, which devour a large proportion; hence it is of advantage to these to maintain a standing garrison of interested defenders. Probably we may yet learn many other such singular instances of mutual agreement and understanding.

The internal arrangement of the common citadel in which they live is exceedingly neat and elaborate, but cannot generally be examined without destroying it. These dwelling are sometimes very extensive. Mr. Bates describes the fortresses of the Saüba ants in Brazil as being sometimes forty yards in circumference; these fortresses are the centres of huge systems of subterranean galleries, extending deep below ground for hundreds of yards, and communicating at intervals with the open air by broad shafts, each of

which is covered and protected by a smaller mound, similar to the great central dome. These tunnels and excavations are of admirable workmanship, smooth and polished internally. The domes are thatched by this species with circular pieces of leaf, about the size of a sixpence, deposited in layers and fastened down with cemented earth; this precaution is adopted to protect the nests against the heavy tropical rains of the wet season. The destruction of leaves for the purpose is prodigious; so extensive indeed, that as this species generally plunders garden trees, it renders some things impossible of cultivation in the regions which it infests. Almost all the ants who live together in sufficiently large numbers have discovered the advantage of made roads, and such may be seen diverging in every direction round any large nest, the saving of labour in carriage being very perceptible. One kind of Australian ant, which is weak and defenceless physically, fortifies its nests by surrounding them with a circular steep ridge of loose grains of earth; ordinary ants are unable to mount this, as the loose grains roll away under their feet, and the fortification is in fact unassailable to most of them; the species that constructs these earthworks has remarkably long legs, which it uses with great activity, and is thus enabled to surmount its own walls by an energetic rush; to this shelter it scuttles away on the least alarm.

Some remarkable experiments have recently been made by Sir John Lubbock in England to test the character and mode of thought prevalent among ants. The foreign policy of ants bears a close resemblance to the foreign policy of the Chinese in the last century; it consists, that is, in the absolute exclusion of all strangers from the community under pain of death. According to these experiments, the ants never failed to discriminate between countrymen and strangers. Individuals removed from a nest and kept separate for months were immediately recognized and warmly welcomed on their return; whilst any stranger introduced, although to our perceptions indistinguishable from the natives, was instantly attacked and slain. The following interesting experiment was instituted to discover whether the feeling of hatred or affection was strongest in them. Some individuals were abstracted from a nest and enclosed in a glass bottle, the mouth of which was covered with muslin; this was then placed in front of their native dwelling, to see whether any ants would give them assistance, but though a few looked at them, no particular notice was taken and no attempt made to release them, although the imprisoned ants were in a high state of nervous excitement at their capture. Then in front of the same nest was placed a similar bottle, containing half-a-dozen ants of another nest. No sooner was this put down than the native ants were thrown into a violent commotion, evidently considering that, as they were unable to get into the bottle immediately, their neighbours had invented a new mode of fortification, and availed themselves of the invention to form an entrenched camp in the heart of their country. From the moment of its deposit a guard of ants was set at the muslin cover, and a desultory attack was kept up on it and maintained with more or less vigour for nearly forty-eight hours, the assailants endeavouring to tear away the muslin, and also snatching at the legs of the besieged whenever an incautious individual approached too near. On the third day the native ants succeeded in effecting a practicable breach in the muslin covering,

and immediately stormed it in overwhelming numbers, when the besieged were all put to death. The bodies of the slain were not carried off, but left on the spot as they were, showing that the attack was induced by pure hatred and not by any cannibalistic tendencies. This experiment was repeated several times with different nests, and always with the same result; whilst in no case did the ants make any effort to release their friends from captivity, although they might have done so quite as easily. Hence it is inferred that the ant has not yet developed any of those feelings of humanity which are characteristic of the higher grades of civilization; and considering the rapid rate of increase in numbers, and the little value set on individual life, as shown by the recklessness with which it is thrown away, we can readily understand, adopting the theory of the formation of instincts by ends, that the loss of a few individuals may be accounted even as nothing in comparison with the loss of the military prestige on which the safety of the whole community is made to depend.

Without wandering into the realms of fiction, and such imaginary tales as those of the parasol ants, who carry pieces of leaf to shelter their heads from a tropical sun; or funeral ants, who carry forth their dead to decent burial in uniform procession of double file, and execute those who do not take part in the ceremony; or volunteer ants, who adopt a system of military discipline, line fighting, and concerted tactics from accurate observation of the volunteer regiments on Wimbledon Common. Without these, we have said enough to show that the ants, "who have no king, yet go they forth all by their bands," are a people not to be despised. If they were a little larger, understood pointing, and possessed a free Press, they might yet conquer the world and start a new era. Meanwhile, eight persons out of ten might well adopt the advice of Solomon, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard, and be wise."

DEBATING SOCIETY.

FRIDAY EVENING, Sept. 12—Mr. Weigall took the Chair. The Premier (Armstrong) opened the debate—"Whether Female Franchise is justifiable or not," in the affirmative. The following then spoke on the subject:—

<i>For—</i>	<i>Against—</i>
Halliday	M ^r Intyre
Day	Tarplee
Mr. Field	Street
Heath	

On a division, 15 voted *for* and 14 *against*, the Ministry winning the debate by 1. Mr. Field's able speech was no doubt the means of gaining the debate, which was the best we have had this quarter, more speeches being made, and much greater interest being taken in the proceedings.

FRIDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 19TH.—Songs and recitations. Mr. Field in the chair. A better attendance than usual. The following programme was then gone through:—

1. Recitation—"Burial of Sir John Moore"Heath
2. Reading—"What is Time"M'Kay
3. Recitation—"Sergeant Thin"Moore
4. Song—"Nancy Lee"Jones
5. Reading—"The Doctor's Fright"Anderson
6. Recitation—"The Grave-digger"Moore
7. Song—"Parody on Nancy Lee"Jones
8. Recitation—"Charge of the Light Brigade"Heath
9. " "—"The World for Sale"O. S.
10. Song—"Little Brown Jug"Jones, Anderson

An O. S. then brought forward the debate—"Which was the better of the two, the Legal or Medical Profession?" This was continued with some spirit, and the result of the division was for medical, 8; for legal, 6.

The conduct of some of the members was anything but gentlemanly, they, while at the meeting behaved themselves very badly, and even after leaving tried to disturb the proceedings in every way. The absence of these members is far more preferable than their presence, and before attending another meeting we hope they will learn to behave themselves.

FRIDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 26TH.—No meeting (Michaelmas vacation.

FRIDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 10TH.—J. E. M'Intyre, V.P. in the chair. After the minutes of the previous meetings were read and confirmed, Armstrong gave notice that on Friday, 17th October, he would move—"That one entertainment be held in every month instead of in every three weeks."

Rich also gave notice of moving on Friday, 17th October,—"That the debate be not postponed on the monthly half-holidays."

The debate—"Whether the International Exhibition will be for the ultimate good of the colony" was opened by Rich in the affirmative.

The following also spoke:—

For—Armstrong

Against—Butler.

Result of division—For, 8; against, 5; majority for Ministry, 3.

FRIDAY EVENING, October 17th.—J. E. McIntyre, V.P., in the chair. Rather small attendance. After the Secretary had read the minutes of the previous meeting, it was proposed by Armstrong and seconded by Rich, "That one entertainment be held in every month instead of in every three weeks."—Carried. Rich also proposed and Armstrong seconded, "That the debates be not postponed on the monthly half holiday." This was also carried. The Premier (Armstrong) then opened the debate—"Which is the better of the two, a classical or scientific education," in favour of the classical. The following also took part:—For Classical—Rich, Heath. For Scientific—Butler, Tarplee. On a division, 3 voted for classical and 11 for scientific education. Armstrong then resigned on behalf of the ministry, being defeated by S. J. Butler, as leader of the opposition, was then called upon by the chairman, and accepted the task of forming a new ministry. The following is the ministry:—Butler (Premier), M'Intyre, Shute, Cormack. On all these occasions Sergeant Hagney, with his usual kindness, lent us candles, as the gas could not be lit.

THE FOOTBALL SEASON, 1879.

ANOTHER football season has passed away, the list of matches played in that period we have already published, all that now remains for us to do is to append the following remarks on the players. We have, however, to congratulate our team on the success that has attended our efforts. Our defeats were as usual the result of want of practice and training on the part of some of the team. Great improvement has been made and a better system adopted, but we wish our team to understand that in them is centred the honour of the school, and that they must strive to uphold this. Great praise is due to the Committee for the energy and perseverance they have displayed in the general arrangements of the matches. May the efforts of our next team meet with still more success !

CHARACTERS OF THE FOOTBALL TEAM OF 1879.

1. AMESS.—One of our most promising players. Light but active, plays a good quarter back. Dodges and collars well. He was hurt early in the season ; his loss was felt.
2. BAYLIS.—A good all round player, best in the backs. A splendid drop, collars well and is very fast. (A cap this year.)
3. BOWMAN.—One of our best men plays best at forward and quarter back. Dodges and runs well. Collars well. Plays a hard game. (Cap, 1878.)
4. BUTLER.—A promising colt. A good back also, plays a hard forward game. A good dodge and collar, but not fast. Good drop. (A cap this year.)
5. FAIRFAX.—A fine colt, plays a hard and plucky game, both quarter and forward.
6. FARQUHAR.—A heavy forward, runs fairly, collars well. Plays a hard game at times.
7. —GORRICK.—A hard forward, always well on the ball. Collars well, a fair dodge, good kick, runs slow. Has improved very much this year.
8. GRAINGER.—A very good quarter, rather rash at times. Very fast, collars well. Poor dodge, plays a hard game. (A cap this year.)
9. HIGGINS.—Our heaviest man. A good forward, but best as deep quarter. Slow, but shepherds well with his hand. Collars well. Not fond of scrimmages. (A cap, '78.)
10. JONES.—A forward, plays well on the ball. Collars well, runs fairly. Good drop. Not fond of scrimmages.
11. KENNA (a new man).—A heavy forward, plays well on the ball. Runs fairly, collars well.
12. McPHILLAMY (a new man).—A heavy forward, always first on the ball. Plays a very hard game. Collars well, runs fairly.
13. MARTIN.—An active forward, runs fast and collars well. Dodges fairly. Not fond of scrimmages.
14. ROBERTS.—A forward. Plays well up while he lasts. Collars fairly. Improved lately.
15. THOMSON.—Our best all-round man. Plays half back and deep quarter. Hard to catch. A very good collar, a good drop. Our place kick. (Cap, 1878.)
16. WILTON.—A small but active man. Good quarter back and fine collar, runs and dodges well. Fast. Only lately found out.
17. Mr. FIELD.—A good forward, our strongest man. Collars well, runs very strong. Can break through a scrimmage with ease. We miss him in school matches.

List of players obtaining touches-down and goals during the season :—

<i>Names.</i>	<i>Goals.</i>	<i>Touches-downs.</i>
W. Amess	0	1
F. Baylis.....	1	4
E. A. Grainger	0	1
A. L. Gorrick.....	0	1
T. M. Thomson	4	2

WIMBLEDON HALL.

At the end of last quarter a meeting was held to appoint the officers for the ensuing Cricket season. The club has since played four matches ; and aided by the splendid bowling of Martin they have won the four. Until the end of this quarter there are matches arranged for every Saturday, and on Wednesdays we intend to play other Schools and Form clubs. Great interest is taken in them, since the best average man in batting for ten matches is to get a small trophy presented by the club.

Last Monday a library was formed, and most of the boys have already done much to help it.

BOULOU-PARI.

CADET CORPS.

DURING the past quarter the Corps kept up to its full numbers—about 120. The drill has been very good, and the team-shooting excellent. All the members of the old team that are still in the Corps are shooting very well—making scores ranging from 25 to 40, at 400 and 500 yards ; and some of the young Cadets are coming on well—evidently determined to keep the bugle in safe hands

The carbines have also been greatly stimulated by the £20 which has been offered in the form of prizes by the Rifle Association.

The average-prizes for the past quarter were won by Corporal Hill, Quarter-Master Sergeant Baylis, Cadet Barker, Lance Corporal Helsham, and Colour-Sergeant Bowman in the Rifles, and Cadet Kenna, Cadet Tibbitts, Bugler Hulle, Corporal Sands, and Cadet Chauvel in the Carbines.

These prizes which ranged in value from 15s up to £2, were presented to the winners by Captain Weigall at a full-dress parade, on Friday, the 17th October.

The Corps needs only one thing just now to make it as thriving as possible—that is to get rid of about half-a-dozen skulking fellows, who hide in classrooms, and do any other sneaking thing to avoid the usual weekly drill ; and then, when they come to full-dress parade disgrace the whole Corps by their unsteadiness in the ranks. Unfortunately some of our genial but ignorant critics take these louts as specimens of the whole Corps, and assert that we become Cadets to show off our handsome uniforms, not to become soldiers. It would be interesting to find out how it is that these sweet youths generally are the tail-ornaments of the Civil Service and Lower Modern Forms. Perhaps the Critics and they are simply different species of the same great family—Snobs.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of "The Sydneian."

SIR,—In your last issue there appeared a remarkable letter signed by one "Lepus." It is easily seen that he merits the title that he has assumed, but slightly modified. Who but a March hare, or one equally demented, would propose a game which cannot possibly be played in a country like Australia? Instead of the meadows and stretches of common required for a good run, there are only rocks and steep hills, which are sandy and covered with thick scrub. Instead of the "pub." which is such a convenient goal, there is only perhaps a dirty farmhouse. Where are those dykes which cool the ardent hound so effectually, when, after making a wild spring from the bank, he alights up to his waist in mud and water? Where are those hawthorn hedges which tear one's clothes so playfully, and remain decorated with ribbons? Where is the gorse with its beautiful yellow flowers and strong thorns so pleasant to the hound or hare to pass through? Where are the ploughed fields and the sown fields so pleasant to dash over, pursued by the anathemas of the farmer? We answer—nowhere! And since all the accessories which make the game what it is are wanting, it is out of place to propose it, and we beg to request Mr. Lepus to divert his talents into some other more rational channel, and remain yours,

CANIS.

To the Editor of the Sydneian.

SIR,—In a recent issue of the School magazine "Paul Pry" has taken upon himself the role of sanitary reformer, and has called attention to certain defects in the æsthetics of the school accommodation. There is undoubtedly ample scope for criticism in these particulars; but in justice to our Sergeant, who has to make the best of the very indifferent materials placed at his disposal by our governing body, I venture to point out, that during his tenure of office additional, though still inadequate, provision has been made for "the drinking accommodation" of the boys, and that instead of the old allowance of one towel, more or less clean, generally less clean, per week, an absolutely clean towel is provided daily. This is not a luxurious allowance, it must be granted, but still it is an improvement, for which we have to thank the the Sergeant. In passing it may be well to mention for the information of the more athletic portions of the lower school, that this towel is not hung up with the intention of supplying within its folds a comfortable lounge, nor the seat of an extempore swing: still less is it adapted for the indiscriminate absterction of young gentlemen, who have been so unfortunate as to fall bodily into the mud holes, with which the landscape gardening taste of the Trustees embellishes the school premises in wet weather.

In reference to the alleged offensiveness of the latrines, it may be allowed that the plentiful use of chloride of lime does not emit a pleasant smell; but there are other smells that are just as unpleasant and not quite so wholesome.

I sign myself,

PETER PRIOR.

To the Editor of the Sydneian.

SIR,—I was pleased to find in your last number that a correspondent calls your attention to some of the defects of the school, some of these defects that want to be looked into ; but in writing he forgot to mention about the front of the school by the stone steps. In wet weather this is simply disgraceful, a person cannot walk straight in from the street to the school but he must step from stone to stone just as if he were crossing a brook. This should not be in an establishment so largely attended as the Grammar School. Surely this could easily be repaired by levelling the ground, and then putting asphalt or stone down with little drains at the side ; but this never seems to be thought of, and from year to year the same thing continues, and we still have to put up with it. Hoping that attention will be given to this, and that we may soon walk on “dry land,”

I am, &c.,

H. S.

Sydney Grammar School, 12th September, 1879.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE Debating Society seems to be sinking lower and lower, the members do not attend so regularly nor show the same amount of interest as before. The entertainments are failures, and we think they should be discontinued unless they are better supported.

THE debates too, last quarter, were not successful, although the subjects were interesting and not one-sided. The junior members, as is usually the case, keep silent and permit the seniors to monopolize the debates. We think compulsory speaking would in some measure remedy this evil, but surely there is no need of this measure? If, however, they will not speak, they can at least behave themselves, for the conduct of some of them was very obnoxious at a recent meeting, and we sincerely hope it will not occur again, as it tends to lower the tone of the Society. Let then the junior members commence this quarter with the resolution of speaking or taking some more active part in the proceedings of the Society. We should like to see all the members strive to raise the standard of the Society and not let it go down for lack of attention.

THE photos of our cricketers who played in the International matches of 1876 and 1877 with the Melbourne C. E. Grammar School, are now hanging in the 6th Form class room, and are no small ornament to the walls. We have been requested to ask those boys who played in the last match to forward their photos to F. Baylis, the Hon. Sec. of the Sport's Committee.

WE notice that one of the articles in the September number of *The Nineteenth Century* is written by Mr. T. Jacobs, a former pupil of the school. Though Mr. Jacobs has been absent from the colony for several years, it is evident that he does not forget the old school, as he has forwarded a copy of the magazine in which his article appears to the head master, “with the author's grateful compliments.”

WE are pleased to see that Grammar School boys have again distinguished themselves at the last meeting of the S. A. A. Club, T. M. Thomson winning the Schools Maiden and Strangers' race, and F. Baylis the Schools Champion race.

WE have received the following information in reference to T. H. Murray, who was Captain of the school in 1878, and who went from the school to Brighton College. We quote from a letter recently received from Lady Murray: "He will try for an open scholarship at Oxford, probably next November. He was put into the 5th Form the first day, but was removed the next to the 6th. He was first in the Lower Division, but at the Christmas Examination he came out second of the *whole* class in classics, and first in mathematics, and he gained a prize, the only one given that year for general proficiency; you can only get *one*. The next term he was made a prepositor and editor of the magazine. He came out first in classics, mathematics, and science, but he was only counted as second because the head boy was absent. He gained two cups for throwing the hammer and putting the stone. He also gained the "first choice" of special prizes offered by Dr. Bigg for holiday work. He has missed nothing as yet, and the masters speak of him as an honour to the school and the colony that he comes from."

IN the annual reports of the High School of Edinburgh for the session ended July, 1879, the name of George Littlejohn occurs, as having obtained an extra prize in the fifth class for excellence in Latin, Greek, and English. As Littlejohn had only attended the High School for half the session, he was, we believe, debarred from competing for the ordinary prizes.

A CHEAPSIDE TAILOR, having picked up the phrase "Men's conscia recti" from his son, who was at school, thought it an excellent motto to demonstrate the perfect integrity of his business transactions; and he accordingly had it painted up conspicuously over his shop-door. A rival tailor who lived nearly opposite perceived this inscription, and thought that it was some new article that the other was advertising. He was puzzled as to the exact meaning, but was determined not to be outdone, and accordingly he advertised in the same way as the rival, over his shop-door "Women's conscia recti."

SCHOOL NOTICE.

Rolin and Poolman have been added to the list of Prefects.

