



The Meteor.

Edited by Members of Rugby School.

No. 8.

RUGBY, JULY 25th, 1867.

[With Extra
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LONG summer evenings, and sights and sounds of Examination, alike warn us that the end of the Term is drawing near. Long since have those who remember the old holidays begun to cry out at having to work in the hot July weather; and long since have all, old and new alike, begun to grumble at spending half the evening in their studies.

By the time, too, this reaches our readers' hands we shall be living in the close atmosphere of work which precedes the calmness of the holidays. We shall be, doubtless, as we peruse these pages, speculating on past Tutor papers, calculating on future form lines, inveighing against examiners and papers;—in a word, we shall be in the middle of Long List. It may seem absurd for us to attempt any review of our own career in the past Term. Four times only has the *Meteor* been guilty of appearance, and, according to the present *regime*, future Terms will see it no oftener. If we are to begin each Term with something of an Introduction, and end it with something of a Review, we shall certainly fall into the criticism of being all beginnings and endings.

But if the *Meteor* can claim no right to review the past, if it has no past to review, the School, to which it belongs, has passed through a career of the utmost importance. If as Meteorites we have no exploits, no history, to moralise on, as Rugbeians we have much to think of, much to be proud of. Rugby has passed through an eventful Term. It has beaten Marlborough; it has won nearly all its foreign matches; it has nearly carried off the trophies of Wimbledon; it has, above

all, celebrated its Tercentenary. Everything in the past is bright and pleasant to look upon: what can we say of the future?

The long holidays, and an extra week, will make our return late. By October nets will have vanished, Big-side goal-posts appeared. We shall have but a moment to recover our wind and order new boots, 'ere the Sixth Match will plunge us into the depths of Football. We are fully aware of the sacred nature of the ground we are about to enter on, yet, in glancing at the future, one question in connection with Football presents itself most forcibly to us: Is the present system of the game such as it ought to be, such as it is best for the School it should be? We wish not to be understood to refer to the actual rules of play; such questions we hold the Committee and Big-side Levée amply competent to deal with. But of the feeling and spirit which Football produces, and which make Football what it is,—of these what judgment can we form? Even the worst enemies of Football must allow that pluck, endurance, patriotism towards one's house, are qualities which should be justly held in the highest estimation, for at least three months in the year; that there are worse standards than these by which a fellow's character may be judged in the School; that their existence is advantageous, and not the reverse. We are not enemies, but ardent lovers of Football, therefore we concede these points completely and willingly. But the question which remains to be answered,—and which we recommend for our readers' consideration next Term,—is,

Whether these feelings are not by Football carried too far? Whether there is no brutality and utterly ill-feeling caused by the game? It is undeniable that much of that "House feeling" which "Cosmopolitan" attacks, takes its rise in Football. We believe it to be equally undeniable that our House matches at Football might be played, —as our matches at Cricket are,—as well and as thoroughly with less ill-feeling and spite than exists at present.

Our space warns us to cease our speculations and admonitions. Yet it would be hard were we not to find a place for a word of regret at the loss which the summer holidays, this year as in other years, will bring to the School. Great, we fear, will be the crowd of new faces that will crowd the chapel door the first Sunday of next Term. We shall return to great changes everywhere,—to great names in Cricket, in Football, in School, alas! passed away from us. Of them we have nothing new to say. We can only offer them, like everyone else, our best wishes and hopes, and remind them briefly of the great facilities of communication which unite Rugby with the rest of the habitable globe.

And for ourselves, readers, in spite of our confession of insignificance, we may claim a word for ourselves. What prospect is there for the *Meteor*? If we have failed often and grievously, we have learnt many lessons, we have gained much experience. If we have been rude, careless, and lazy, we intend to redeem our character yet. May we not, too, look forward hopefully to the future?

HATS! Yes, hats: tall hats; black hats! Reader, we hear that these hats are gradually sinking down from their egregious ugliness into something like a becoming and useful form of head-gear; but it is not this we wish to discuss—we wish to show that, so long as hats are hats, it is well that the new comer to Rugby School do wear one. We publish two letters on the subject in this number. Ranged against us are "A. H. St. V.," "Four Years" (dear us!), and "Cosmopolitan." Our ranks consist of "An Utter Fool." *Our* ranks, we say, for such a handle has been made of his name that we must defend him. "A. H. St. V.'s" original letter is, chronologically speaking, the first; let us examine it. He anticipates his opponents in raising up some objections which, as "An Utter Fool" remarked, he complacently

knocks down again: but he rather reminds us of one hitting at the cushion of a dynamometer, which gives with the blow, and then, at the touch of the proprietor, springs back again; only, in this case, "A. H. St. V." is proprietor as well, and does not give the required touch. For he seems to think the objection—"It is an old custom"—quite sufficiently answered by the question—"If an old custom cannot distinctly be proved good, why retain it simply because it is old?" You will see that this is rather Ultra-Liberal, but we will defend the objection later. The second objection—"It reduces new fellows to a sense of their inferiority"—we presume he raised for the diversion of crushing. Does he really think new fellows an inferior class of beings? for he does not deny their inferiority, but only the success of the hat in reducing them to a sense of it. How liberal! He does not make much of the third objection—"It enables new fellows to be recognised at once"—for he suggests the substitution of some other distinction, to get rid of the annoyance the hat is to a new fellow; declining to see that it is not the hat that is the annoyance, but the fact of the hat being the badge of a new fellow. After all this, "A. H. St. V." brings forward his reason for wishing the custom abolished. "That the hat is a decided nuisance at any time, but especially in summer, and only an encouragement to others to knock it about." We suppose he means the hat. But we thought the race of *ursa Rugbeiensis* was nearly extinct. "An Utter Fool" has shown him his mistake in thinking that new boys would be less bullied in straw than silk hats. Let us see how "A. H. St. V." upholds his case by his letter in the present number. Half a page of invective is followed by two crushing arguments. The first is—"It is evident," without proof, we suppose, "to any one who will consider the matter, that, so far as the question of bullying goes, it is the hat which really brings the annoyance upon the wearer, and not, usually, the wearer himself. The hat, by its peculiarity, must at once attract notice." (He has forgotten that he proposed the substitution of some other peculiarity.) We cannot think the truth of this statement as evident as does "A. H. St. V.," and have an idea that the fellows who want "taking down" would still get taken down in a straw hat, and that the fellows who do not want taking down, do not often now get bullied in a silk one.

After a few discursive surmises on "An

Utter Fool's" early life, he comes back to the point; at least he accuses him of a wilful mis-statement, which civility, he seems to think, looks neater without any proof.

In the *postscript* of his *second* letter, "A. H. St. V." gets out his reasons for objecting to the custom. "The hat is expensive;" perhaps so, but we cannot agree with him that a silk hat wears no better than a straw one. We think a fellow would want two straw hats his first Term.

"Faulty," because it is a great nuisance; this he says, requires no proof, so gives none.

"Disagreeable." To support this he says—"In winter, at punt-about, there are usually lots of fellows in hats who doubtless would prefer house caps if they had time to get them." We can only reply that in winter, at punt-about, there are usually lots of fellows in *straws* who doubtless would prefer house caps if they had time to get them.

"Untidy, because no one cares to keep his hat neat when he knows that it will probably be knocked off in the course of his walk down to lessons." We ask—Who do these things? Who is so easily amused as to care to make a buffoon of himself by knocking off a new fellow's hat? not every one, we think. Reader, our discussion grows dull; excuse, as garnishing, a quotation, dipped in inverted commas for use:—"A hat which has been *popped*, or exploded, by being sat down upon, is never itself again afterwards." True; but a straw has a like tendency, and, unluckily, hat brushes have not the same salutary effect on straw as silk. Another bit of garnishing—"The hat is the *ultimum moriens* of respectability. *Ultimum moriens* is old Italian, and signifies last thing to die." Yes, with new fellows, when clothes take quite too much time to brush, the hat often gets a rub round, and looks respectable. We know that a new fellow's hat is not generally supposed to be a very tidy object. It is not, but a new fellow's straw would be still less so. It may be said, why not all wear hats, then. No: the thing is that when a boy comes to Rugby he is set loose from the ties and restrictions of a private school, and, amongst others, that of keeping himself neat; and it has its effect upon him for a short time until he regains his balance—which takes some boys not long, if they ever after lose it, and others some years.

"Cosmopolitan" (let us take this opportunity of thanking him, in the name of our public, for such admirable suggestions as he

made in our June 13th number, on house feeling) seems to have been dreaming; for he begins (cf. "Cosmopolitan's" letter) by talking about some Reactionaries (cf. Johnson) whom he accuses of adopting a new tone—becoming deprecatory instead of contemptuous; plaintive instead of blustering. Now, at present there has only been one letter on the opposite side of the subject to his, so how can *they* have changed about so? But perhaps he has had a conversation with somebody about it.

He afterwards asks "Why should flowers be to any a forbidden fruit? Why should not young aspirants to knowledge read the hall newspapers?" We cannot see. There are several reasons why they should read the newspapers, and none, we think, why they should not wear flowers; but there is a class of animal that, after being at Rugby a year or so, selfishly sets itself in its own small but effective way, to make those who have been sent here a little later than itself as conscious of their inferiority (?) as possible. We once knew a boy who actually invented a code of coxiness, which, having been here himself about a year, he instilled into those who had come after him. It is really not the old customs, generally, that are oppressive, but these new ideas worked in by the selfishness of would-be patriarchs.

"Cosmopolitan," later on, brings forward some opinions—marked 1 and 2—which he attributes to what he calls "these Conservatives" (hardly the word, we think). They are most barbarous. If there be any who hold these articles, we beg to disclaim any connection with the gang. It was, we think, hardly necessary for him to overthrow the first; but his objection to the second he has put into such true words that they must do great good.

We are conscious of having left the objection, "It is an old custom," undefended. Trees cannot flourish without roots, nor can institutions be satisfactory without them, and roots do not grow in a day. "Let us expand a little." We will impersonate our Liberal and our Conservative, calling the latter, child A., and the former child B. Both these children have a small piece of land, say a flower-box, and both have in it, at first, some good healthy flowers, and some weeds. They both begin by pulling up the weeds. After this child A. tends and waters his flowers, and is contented, letting them bloom in their proper season; but child B. soon roots up his because one day there were

no flowers on them, and goes and gets cuttings from most beautiful flowers, which he sticks into his garden, without any roots. The effect is very good; and though they soon fade, child B. runs off and gets some more most beautiful flowers, and so on.

This way of managing is, perhaps, satisfactory, but it must take a great deal out of child B; and, after all, there is something of hollowness in his showy best-of-all, is there not, reader? Let us be child A.

The following subscriptions have been received for the organ since our last:—

	£	s.	d.
G. H. Purves	1	1	0
A Friend	1	1	0
H. G. Purves	10	0	

£2 12 0

ERRATUM IN OUR LAST.—Page 4. Mr. S. W. Bromfield obtained a first-class in Mathematical moderations, not in Final Mathematical Schools.

The Rules published in our last, for the regulation of Football House Matches, were passed through Bigside Levée, on Thursday, July 18th, without a division, although it must be explained that in Rule 1, only one representative is to be chosen from the Caps of each House, and not an indefinite number. Also the representative is to be chosen by Bigside in the House, not by the whole House. In Rule 3, we cannot think what will happen to the House which does not scratch during the first week after drawing. We should have suggested "That Houses not wishing to play, be requested, &c." Rule 8, which has been the subject of so much derision, empowers the Committee to give the victory to the House which appears to be the best, although the other may have had a slight advantage.

The School Single Hand-fives have been won by Gwatkin; 2nd, Haslam.

The following Eleven is going to play at Derby and Burton next week:—Gemmell, Bicknell, Browne, Clark, Collins, Eaden, Gardner, Gwatkin, Gray, Rowden, and Steward.

Two large holes are the only signs at present of the new pavilion.

The Examiners for Exhibitions are the Revs. P. Chase, T. Mayor, and T. Ward.

The Swimming took place about a week ago. The heats were won by Gordon, Russell, and Crofts. The final heat was won by Russell, Selous being second.

The Diving was won by Hudson and Prevost, equal, who both brought up 11 eggs.

HOUSE NEWS.

REV. T. W. JEX BLAKE'S.

The Challenge Cup given by A. Babington, Esq., for best average in House Eleven, has been won this year by Tobin, ma., with an average of 39.—The Double Racquets have been won by Gray and Fletcher; the Double Handfives by Tobin, ma., and Johnston.

REV. C. B. HUTCHINSON'S.

The Single Handfives have been won by Yardley, and the Double (buttress courts), given by F. E. Kitchener, Esq., by Yardley and Wilson.

NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY.

Meetings were held of this Society on June 29th and July 13th, the President in the chair.

On the 29th the Secretary, G. B. Longstaff, read some notes on "Galls upon the Rose," and the Rev. T. N. Hutchinson read a most interesting paper "On the structure and habits of Sea Anemonies." He illustrated his paper by exhibiting living specimens, brought at some risk from his own aquarium, and the Society were introduced to some young sea anemonies not 24 hours old.

F. Hawker was elected an Associate.

On the 13th a fine sketch in water-colours painted by W. C. Marshall, was presented to the Society. It represents a curious contortion of the Lias at the Newbold Lime pits, and was explained by Mr. Wilson.

Dr. Oldham, Superintendent of the Geological Survey of India, made an address on the difficulties of that undertaking, and generously presented to the Society all the publications as yet issued by the Survey, and promised to gradually complete the Series.

Among many exhibitions of interest may be mentioned the beak of the Sword-fish, extracted this year from the planking of a vessel on its arrival at Liverpool. This was exhibited and described by F. R. Smith.

J. Lowe and J. M. Lester were elected Members, and W. Sutcliffe an Associate.

The Society will not meet again this Term.