

Term 1865, and a similar honour in the final classical School in Michaelmas Term 1867. Both Mr. Barratt and Mr. Case were educated at Rugby—the former at the Rev. T. W. Jex Blake's, and the latter at the Rev. R. B. Mayor's, now J. M. Wilson's, Esq.

There is a talk of a School match with a Twenty from Cambridge, next Saturday. None but Old Rugbeians are going to play, and we are sure that it will meet with the same success that attended Mr. Harrison's match last term.

The *Eton College Chronicle* contains a leading article on "Reform at Eton." The Eton Collegers complain that they are in school too much; that they have a great deal too much to learn by heart; that chapel every day is not conducive to attention to the service every day in general, and on Sunday in particular; that, at Eton, Sunday is not a day of rest. Such are the grievances of the Etonians, which are evidently intended to impress the new Headmaster, although, as is usual with school periodicals, they introduce their subject by solemnly affirming that they "do not intend in the least to touch upon the prerogative of the Masters."

HOUSE NEWS.

THE REV. T. W. JEX BLAKE'S.

The Debating Society held a very successful session last term. Besides those recorded, the following motions were carried:—"That the cheap Press is beneficial;" "That the pleasures of day are preferable to those of night;" "That the introduction of a Cat Tax would be a beneficial measure." The following were negatived:—"That the literature of modern times is superior to that of ancient times;" "That works of fiction are not beneficial to society."

The Football Challenge Cup last term was won by F. Tobin, ma.

J. M. WILSON'S, Esq.

This House had a paper-chase last Thursday, round by Brownsover, Clifton, and Hillmorton, the distance being about 7 miles. The hares were Lloyd and Francis. Of the hounds Scott came in first, Bulpett ma. second, and Peake third, the rest being close up.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Contributions will be received at the *Advertiser* Office, or at Mr. Pepperday's, under cover to the "Editor of the *Meteor*."

To the Editor of the *Meteor*.

DEAR SIR,—On the strength of that old saying that "three heads are better than one," I venture to add my suggestions to those of your two former correspondents, in the hope of helping to settle the old Fives Court grievance.

"O.R. who was in the Sixth" hardly made his defence of the Arnoldites good. That they play more puntabout than other Houses is easily accounted for: they have private ground and balls. The fact of their playing more cricket than other Houses, is only a further argument for the alteration of the present system of "bagging" ground and courts, for they have almost as entire monopoly of the best ends as of the fives courts.

For your correspondent to make his "voluntary games" theory good, he must prove that they play more bat-fives and racquets than other Houses; but how will he do it?

If there is good reason for saying that the Arnoldites have a monopoly of after-dinner fives courts, how is the matter to be remedied?

The objections to all the School running from the Doctor's wall are—

(i.) That it would be such an awfully long race.

(ii.) It would make fellows liable to be late for dinner.

(iii.) Old Big-Side would be hardly a clear enough course for a race at 1.30, either during the Football or the Cricket season, because of the House matches and pie matches.

I would suggest that the *School Bath* would make a good starting-point for all running at dinner time, for these reasons:

(i.) It is pretty equally distant from all the things to be run for—fives court, bat-fives court, or ends.

(ii.) It would not necessitate such a trying race, spoil fellows' comfort at dinner, or make them so liable to be late for it.

(iii.) It would not be too near the ends to prevent the possibility of a fair race for them, as starting from Arnold's gate now does.

(iv.) The course for the race would be out of the way of all games generally.

The small gate by Arnold's is too near the ends, and too far from the bat-fives courts, to be suitable.

But fellows may say—After all I think we are not so badly off; we can always get Arnoldites to run for us if we want a court, and it really saves us a good deal of trouble in not running ourselves.

Very true. The Arnoldites certainly are very obliging and ready to run when asked, but why should we impose upon their good nature in this manner? It must be an awful nuisance to their good runners to be asked day after day to run for other people. In common consideration for them we should abolish the system.

Then again, a fellow must have an acquaintance in Arnold's, or else he has no hope of his court.

I suppose you will say "Very good thing that; encourage School-feeling, and knowing fellows out of your own House." Well, I only hope it does good in that way, for it does not in any other.

But then yet once more: The Arnoldites of course (very properly) take courts for their own house before other houses; and when there are only some half-dozen to be taken, it does not give much scope to outsiders.

With the adoption of the school bath as the starting-point, the School-house monopoly of the bat-fives court would disappear; and all houses would have an equal chance of taking either grounds, ends, bat-fives, Eton or Rugby fives-courts, and bilious fellows would be deprived of one of their highest pleasures—a good grievance.

A. M.

THE SCHOOL ATHLETICS.

To the Editor of the Meteor.

DEAR SIR,—There are two classes of complaining people: the one everlastingly declares that things are not as they were; the other does not say that things are any worse than they were, but that they might be better than they are,—not doing so for the sake of finding fault, but in order to suggest a remedy. Now I claim to belong to the latter class. My troubles cannot be laid on the shoulders of the present generation, though the present generation can cure them. The subject is an important one, being no less than the School Athletics. My complaints

are two in number: 1st, that the arrangement is bad; 2nd, that winners are not allowed to win the same race a second time.

1. That the arrangement is bad. I can give an instance on good authority. Last year there were three or four trial heats for the half-mile hurdle race. As you may know, Sir, a half-mile race is rather distressing to ordinary mortals. At least half-an-hour ought to intervene between the last heat and the final one. Now last year barely a quarter of an hour intervened, so that the winner of the first trial heat had as much if not more than as much time again to regain his wind, as the winner of the last trial heat,—no small matter in such a short time. Who were to blame for this? Certainly not the Stewards: they had to get a certain number of races into a certain fixed time, and did the best they could. The fault lies in trying to do too much. We must be contented with having fewer races on the day. Our long races are beaten in time by nearly every large School in England, and why? Partly I allow owing to the fact that we run upon grass, but chiefly owing to the excessive overcrowding of the races. It stands to reason that if a fellow runs, let us say the deciding heat of the mile in the morning, the deciding heat of the half-mile flat an hour or two later, and a trial and deciding heat for the half-mile hurdles later on in the afternoon, he cannot run the last race as fast as if he were comparatively fresh. "*Hinc ille lacrymæ*," this is the chief reason why we hear so many complaints about the times of the long races at Rugby, and not that we are any worse runners, as some of our Big-Side runs will testify. Either some of the races must be omitted, or else they must be spread over a longer space of time.

2. That winners are not allowed to win a second time. I think I can show that this is unfair. Let us suppose for the sake of example, that A. wins the mile, half-mile, half-mile hurdle race, and the quarter of a mile; and that B. is second to him in all these. Next year A. is not allowed to win a second time; B. wins all the four races, and, supposing there is no other claimant, gets the cup in preference to A., inasmuch as counting firsts and seconds, he has got six firsts to A.'s four. And yet we may safely suppose that A. is the better runner. As far as I know, no such case has ever happened, but there is no reason why it should not. It is always said that the English are averse to reform a thing till they

have received some actual harm from it, but let us belie our character in this respect, and, it may be, prevent a great deal of confusion and ill-feeling at some future time.

Besides these complaints, I have two suggestions to make. The first is that greater care be taken in measuring the races than has been done hitherto. Last year it was commonly reported—with what amount of truth I am unable to say—that the mile was from a hundred to a hundred and fifty yards too long.

My second suggestion is that a small entrance fee should be charged for each name entered for a race. This would both have the effect of preventing fellows from putting their names down who do not intend to run, and the much more important one of making the prizes larger, which at present, for the long races at least, are very small.

Trusting in your kindness to insert this, inasmuch as I believe that the subject is really an important one, I remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,
DOL. (O.R.)

To the Editor of the Meteor.

SIR,—I venture to write on a rule which appears to me to be a great fault in our Athletic Games. I mean the way that winners count towards the Cup. For instance: In 1868 A. and B. start in three races, say the 100 yds., 200 yds., and the quarter-mile; in each of these races, A. is first and B. second. Therefore A. counts *three* towards the Cup, and B. *one and a half*. In 1869 B. wins the same three races (A. not being allowed to run, having won them already), and counts therefore *four and a half* towards the Cup, whereas A., who has proved his superiority to B., counts only *three*. This is obviously most unfair, but how can it be avoided? The following plan might be tried:—Let any winner in one year run again in the same races in the following year, and, if he win, let him count those winnings *again* towards the Cup, but do not let him take the prize a second time. Of course the same rule should apply to jumping.

The object of my letter is not so much that my particular suggestion should be carried out, as to induce others to propose plans, which might put an end to this fault in our Athletic Games. And with this hope I beg to sign myself,

Jan., 1868.

EQUITY.

To the Editor of the Meteor.

SIR,—In looking at some old Athletic Cards I can find no race longer than 200 yds. which is not open to all. If we had some such races as a mile, or half a mile open to all under, say, 5ft. 5in., we should have more training among the smaller members of the School, and in a short time the good effect would appear in the mile open to all being accomplished in less than five minutes, a fact, to my knowledge, not yet recorded in Rugby annals. There are only two substitutes for objections to this plan:—1st, that the School cannot afford 30s.; 2nd, that the athletic card already contains more contests than can be decided in two days. The first I scorn to believe. The second is easily answered. Let the small race either take place some evening, or at the same time as the races remaining after the second day of the Athletics are run off.

I also perceive that there are three races of 200 yds. and only one of 100 yds.

If you think this worthy of publication you would greatly oblige,

Your obedient servant,
A. TH. LETE.

To the Editor of the Meteor.

SIR,—Would you kindly allow me space to ask why the R.C. should include members of the XI. and XXII., without regard to the fact whether they play racquets or not? I cannot see that cricket has anything to do with racquets. Why should not the Club as well include all the caps? I could mention three, if not more, of the XI. and XXII. who never go on the Court. May I at the same time suggest that, in order to offer to those who are not members of the Club more opportunity of practising, fellows be allowed to go on the Fives Courts with racquets, as at Harrow, subject to the same rule which is in force there, viz.:—That any fellow who wishes to play hand-fives may turn off another who is playing racquets.

Yours truly, DIKE.

THE RIFLE CORPS.

To the Editor of the Meteor.

SIR,—I wish to say a few words about the Rifle Corps. As I was talking to a friend the other day about the School Rifle Corps, he mentioned to me a plan which is carried

out with great success in a school corps of which he was a member. Instead of each fellow paying for his cartridges on the spot when he gets them from the Armoury, as is the case at Rugby, the amount of ammunition used by the whole Corps is, at the end of the term, added up and divided equally between all the members, and then, with the Headmaster's consent, this sum is put down in the bill.

The advantages of such a system seem to be these. In the first place, fellows are much more induced to go down and shoot when they know that they will have to pay whether they do so or not. Again, it not unfrequently occurs that a fellow is unable or unwilling to go and shoot, owing to the reduced state of his funds; such a fellow might be in the Wimbledon Eleven or near it, and his not being able to practice might seriously injure the Corps at Wimbledon. It may be said that it is unfair for those who do not shoot to pay for those who do, but the amount would be very small when divided among the whole Corps, and I think we ought to do everything in our power to get as good an Eleven as possible to go up to Wimbledon. At present there are not more than a dozen fellows, on an average, who practice regularly. There are nearly 100 on the muster roll. This is not the way to get the *best* eleven; it cannot be done if so very small a proportion practice.

I would ask the Rifle Corps authorities to consider the subject seriously, and that without delay, and I would ask the Corps, as a whole, to remember that everyone has a chance of the Wimbledon Eleven; and that if a fellow doesn't shoot, because he thinks he can't, or because he thinks he has no chance of success, he might just as well take his name off the roll to-morrow.

I am, Sir, your obt. servant,
C. O. R. V. C.

To the Editor of the Meteor.

SIR,—It was with some astonishment that I read in your last number a letter signed by "An Energetic Cobbler." Your correspondent begins by asserting that he and his class are dirty, slovenly, and generally obnoxious (to say nothing of the battered hat, the rumpled collar, and the greasy cravat, which may be the effect of extreme poverty, and therefore no reproach), and he concludes by begging you to lend your powerful aid in

trying to persuade the Town to admit him to their games.

I put it to you, Sir, is it possible to reconcile these two things; and would it not be an extraordinary perversion of philanthropy to compel gentlemen to associate with—yes, I must use the obnoxious word—louts?—for what can be more loutish than slovenliness and dirt?

With regard to his statement that he is the real Rugbeian, and that therefore he has a right to the Close, I beg to remark that large sums of money have been and continue to be spent on improving and keeping up the Close, to none of which does the Class excluded from games subscribe a single penny.

If the Close got no more support from anyone than it does from Energetic Cobblers, it would soon be better fitted for the game of marbles than for Football and Cricket. When it has attained such a condition owing to the refusal of the School to subscribe to support it, then, and not till then, will the "real Rugbeians" have a prescriptive right to enjoy the "common property" of the School.

I remain, Sir, your obt. servant,
NE SUTOR SUPRA CREPIDAM.

To the Editor of the Meteor.

SIR,—Will you allow me a little space in the *Meteor* for a suggestion which, if carried out, will, I am sure, be warmly supported by most members of the School. It is, to get up some Theatricals at the end of this Term, either in Big-School or the Town Hall (the latter would be preferable, as it would hold more people), in aid of the Organ Fund. I am naturally of a sanguine disposition, and therefore venture to hope that Dr. Temple might be prevailed upon to allow them for such a praiseworthy object, for, from all accounts, the new organ is wanted as soon as possible; and I think that the proceeds from one or perhaps two nights' Theatricals, at the end of this Term, would materially assist in obtaining sufficient money for the purpose. I fix upon this Term as being more free than any other from Examinations, and there would therefore be less ground for objection on the plea of the work being interfered with. As regards actors, we saw sufficient talent displayed at the Speeches last summer, in more than one instance, to shew that there are some very good actors in the Sixth, and I am sure that there are others in

the School who would shine if they had the opportunity. How do we know but what Rugby may be fostering another Macready?

Hoping that all objections to the carrying out of my suggestion may be easily overcome—for objections undoubtedly *will* turn up,—and apologising for taking up so much of your valuable space,

I remain, Sir, yours,
O. S. A. N.

To the Editor of the Meteor.

SIR,—I was aware that the Arnold Library was infested by scorpions and snakes and other vermin dear to unnatural science, but I thought they were for the most part potted, if not in an advanced state of decay; too decomposed, at least, to occasion any serious alarm. There is the fish also of protuberant digestive organs, who confronts me whenever I enter the room. I wish he were gone. He is a warning to me. He shows me what evil my flesh is heir to, if it does not control its propensity for fluid. Misguided bloater! he had drunk too much, that was what did it. He has a half protesting, half repentant air,—as if to say that his stuffer has stuffed him with more straw than is his due: while he acknowledges that if he could recover his vertebrae and be an innocent fish once more, he would be more prudent and drink less.

Again there is the bogie in the corner, to which I always try to turn my back whenever I go into the forbidden compartment. It makes me creepy. I am sure that melancholy mummy has a history. He too went out to buy a hat that he might go to a wedding and got unexpectedly sewn up. I am told that Mr. Wilson ogles him with a view to dissection as soon as physiology comes in. He longed to dissect rats, and tried the unsavoury experiment, but found they wouldn't keep. The mummy has kept long enough, he thinks; so perhaps he will cut him up quick, and we shall get rid of him.

These are everyday dangers. But, Sir, I was not prepared to be assaulted by a venomous beast when sitting in a confiding manner before the fire. I was reading a stolen newspaper, with my feet raised against the chimneypiece, after the custom of Americans, as I have gathered from travellers in that country. There was nothing above my head

but my hair and the roof. Suddenly, and as I think unwarrantably, the brute fell from space upon my shoulder, and what was worse, stuck there. He brought part of his nidus with him. It consisted of detached cobwebs, with dust adhering: not impossibly the delictus of human shoes. I could not be too confident on such a point, but at first sight I did think it was so.

How did I behave, Mr. Editor? Well, I was not demoralized. I rose to the occasion and my feet. I looked at him, and cautiously shook him on the floor. I then called a courageous friend who happened to be in another part of the room. He came. We examined the creature, trod upon him twice, and with the tongs threw him upon the fire. He crackled, and I can tell you no more.

Now, Sir, I ask the Natural History Society, Mr. President and Messrs. the Members who correspond to him, what was this venomous beast, and why did he crackle? I believe him, and so did my friend, to have been an enterprising, if deluded, wasp: but I do not like to dogmatize upon this point any more than the other. But granted he was a wasp, why did he crackle? Is it a way they have on the application of heat?

I assure you that the facts are as I give them. I have just been to inspect the garment upon which he fell, and though the delictus is no longer there, yet the garment is. This clearly proves the truth of my story. Ask my friend. I would give you his name, but he is singularly ingenuous, and would blush to find his courage famous. I would enclose my card, only I am given to understand you don't receive them.

Your obedient servant,
February 6th. NERVES.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"Balgovind."—You will see that alterations have already been made in the Racquet Court system.

"Amator."—Your views are by far too charitable.

"Cavalier."—Your letter, although in a good cause, is too personal for insertion.