



The Meteor.

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THE past three weeks may be said with justice to constitute the true dead season of the Rugby year. The time has come round again when, in the words of a Rugby poet of by-gone days—

“The autumn leaves come fluttering down, the trees
are left all bare;

And Diver roams across Big-Side with a scornful,
moody air;

And cricket has all vanished from its eminence supreme,
So Hobley's sweet shop vanishes in some Tantalean
dream.”

The last Big-Side has been played in a somewhat listless manner, the last Foreign Match has passed almost unheeded, Football is not yet legitimate, and the right of Big-Side Runs to put in an appearance so early is looked on by some as questionable, while many regard them—at such a pitch of degradation have we arrived—as a species of harmless fanaticism, and treat them accordingly! Racquets have created a little sensation, on account of the new *régime* which has just come into force, and the New Pavilion has created a small amount of interest, but there is not the faintest excitement created by any of these, and the *Meteor* is even unable to follow the example of the *Times* of this period, and take up a controversy, as—fortunate mortals—we have no grievance to be rectified! The conversation on all sides is not of the present, but consists entirely of anticipations of “the ensuing campaign” as a *Contemporary* is pleased to style our football season. As usual, we hear every one expressing his decision about the two houses, and about the poor show of caps that the School will make for the Sixth Match, and we feel that we are doomed for the next three months to be hedged in on all sides by, and to breathe, the

atmosphere of pure undiluted football “shop,” which will flow on steadily and without intermission until Christmas. But, as a set-off against this gloomy prospect, let us remember that this is, of all times of the year, the most prolific of Old Rugbeians, and though there was an alarming deficiency in the number of well-known faces last year, we may with reason ascribe that for the most part to unfortunate arrangements, and not to lack of will on the part of the absentees. Let us hope, then, that the unpropitiousness of the elements on Saturday, Oct. 3, may not prove ominous, but that the Football season of 1868 may pass off with as great *éclat* as any of its predecessors.

FROM its birth the *Meteor* has carefully shunned all politics but those of the School, and has held it its sole office to be of Rugby—Rugbeian. But it has not deemed it inconsistent with that office to recommend to its readers the pursuit of what Rugbeians, since the days of their second Founder, have been taught, as well by example as by words, to regard as one of their highest duties—the study of Politics. Last Term the *Meteor* advocated the founding of a School Debating Society. A better time for its institution than the present it would be hard to find. Now, if ever, fellows must regard traditional or inherited politics with suspicion, for we shall have to look at most questions for the future in quite a different light to that of our defunct Whig and Tory ancestors. How many fellows in Rugby will find in the old political principles of their families a key to the questions of Trades Unions, Compulsory

Education, the Ballot, or the Tenure of Land?

Now, though we hardly expect our readers to have arrived, at 18, at any definite conclusions or deep knowledge of these questions, it would be as well if their daily newspaper reading were turned to some immediate use.

We know that we never read anything more carefully than when we have some immediate object in knowing it; that we think much more steadily and deeply when we have one particular object to fix our thoughts on, than when we are merely taking in general ideas. How many of us, in the ordinary course of things, ever think at all till we have some special reason given for thinking? Where there is no demand for political knowledge there is no likelihood of a great supply. Let a Debating Society establish a demand; there is little danger of the supply failing in times like these, when politics are the most exciting life and death questions.

The House of Lords is threatened. How many fellows could explain its constitution to-day? What a torrent of information would be poured forth in its defence, were it fixed as the subject for debate a fortnight hence. Our experiences would tell us that the School is keenly alive to political interests: a Debating Society is just what we want to turn it to good account.

We hope that before many days such an institution will give those of us who wish it a chance of fitting together our stray ideas, and of making both wider and more accurate our knowledge of events going on around us; only remembering always that we have come to test our theories, not to abuse our opponents, and that our object is not the immediate triumph of our cause by a majority in division, but the gradual establishment of our opinions by honest argument and candid recognition of valid objections. We are probably all of us by nature Tories. Let us all come prepared to sacrifice our feelings, when they are proved contrary to expediency and justice.

D.

RUGBY SCHOOL CONCERT, JULY, 1868.

There can be little doubt that, as a general rule, a long preface, be its subject what it may, is an evil. Few readers will deny that it is a bad sign on taking up a new book to find that the author has thought it necessary to occupy a dozen pages or more in this

way. And this is true almost universally. Good news, like good work, needs no preface: and we may generally suspect there is something dark in the background—some, perhaps, slight defect to be pointed out—where we are only led to our real subject in hand through a long train of introductory remarks.

This will be our excuse for beginning without delay our observations on the Rugby School Midsummer Concert of 1868. Where the success was so complete, so universally acknowledged—where the strain that we have to take is throughout one of commendation and praise—where the journalist's task of criticism has to be laid aside, and the pleasanter task of showering honours upon undeniable merit has to be entered upon—we have no right to indulge any secret fancy we may have for a long spun preface. And that our last Concert was a success there can be little doubt. The selection of the music was judiciously and artistically made; the performance of the music was creditable to the highest degree, revealing that which we are ever glad to welcome in our School doings—*progress*. The company was large and unanimous in its plaudits; the feeling that examination and its cares were over gave fresh spirit to the performers, and everyone, perhaps, excepting half-a-dozen poor wretches who could scarcely keep their minds from wandering to a certain list to be read out upon the morrow, felt that they could justly sing, in the words of Mr. Moberly's capital song,

"Ergo fratres gaudeamus
In loco desipiamus."

The Concert opened with Farrant's stately anthem, "Lord, for thy tender mercies' sake," the simple strains of which lost none of their effect by being followed by music of a more modern and florid style. This was followed by a selection from Sterndale Bennett's "Woman of Samaria," which, together with several other new works, was produced for the first time at the Birmingham Festival of 1867, and met with an unequivocal success. That this oratorio will maintain its position among succeeding generations of musical critics, or that it will take its stand with the sublime masterpieces of Mendelssohn, or the now time-honoured works of Handel, it may be almost too much to hope, but the chorus, with its beautiful introduction for the tenors, produced a marked impression, and may be expected to do so wherever it is heard.

After the brisk and pleasing anthem, "I