

CORRESPONDENCE.

We cannot be answerable for the opinions of our correspondents.

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

Any Old Rugbeian can have the *Meteor* forwarded to him regularly, on application to Messrs. TAIT AND SONS.

To the Editor of the Meteor.

"These haughty dunces, whose unlearned pen
Could ne'er spell grammar, would be reading men."

SIR,—I was at first very doubtful whether, such a long time having elapsed since "A. H. St. V's" last letter, I should again trouble you and your readers by reviving the now wearisome discussion on the hat. But on reading his letter a second time, I found that, in justice to myself, I could not keep silence. He has brought numerous accusations against me, which are certainly unfounded. Without commenting on the reasons which induced him to bring forward these charges, or expressing any opinion on the good taste displayed in so doing, I will at once proceed to refute some of the most important of them.

"A. H. St. V." laments my not offering any practical suggestion. I never intended to offer any; I only wished to show the argument he employed was not quite unanswerable, and that something might be said on the other side as well as on his. Wishing the matter to rest as it now does, I do not see why I should offer any "practical suggestion." "A. H. St. V." also asks why I did not condescend to defend the objections raised against the abolition of the "hat." Simply because the objections he stated were not the ones I considered most likely to hold ground. They were objections of his own coining, and I really am not prepared to defend objections, which I do not recognise as such. As to my "wilful mis-statement," I stated the discomfort attendant on a hat to be small, partly from experience, partly from the opinions expressed by those who are competent judges,—I mean those who at present wear the hat. In no part of my letter can I find the argument, which he puts into my mouth, viz.: "that as the hat is only worn for a short time it should always be worn." I have never come to such a conclusion either in writing or imagination. Sir, I am afraid I am hardly justified in sending this letter, which is only a defence of my own thick-headedness. To the *Meteor* I have not

said a word about "Cosmopolitan's" letter. But this latter correspondent left me to "the tender mercies" of "A. H. St. V.," and quietly hinted that I should remember the proverb "*Ne sutor supra crepidam.*" I know I am a poor advocate of an unpopular cause, but I could not allow the matter to be decided hastily, as once it promised to be, without raising my feeble voice. For the settlement of the question will establish a precedent, by indicating which, many of the existing institutions of the School may be altered or overthrown. One word more. Whatever we do, above all things, do not let us allow the discussion to drop into a mere exchange of personalities. If we do, it will bring ridicule on ourselves and our cause. "A. H. St. V.," I am afraid, lost sight of this subject in his anxiety to show me forth in as ridiculous a light as possible. If he wants a vent for his feelings let him find it, not in anathematising "Utter Fools," but in dreaming of that golden age, when the form will be gorgeous with white waistcoats, redolent with flowers; when the newest of new boys has his white straw sent up, from some future Pearce's, wrapped up in these pages, which contain the imbecile, and, I am afraid, futile rambblings of

AN UTTER FOOL.

P.S.—I have not sent my right name, as it is the football season, and the new fellows are, more than usually, numerous, and some very big. I have also omitted taking any notice of "A. H. St. V's." postscript; but you yourself, sir, so exposed its weak points that it is needless for me to say a word more about it. And the fewer words said about it the better.

To the Editor of the Meteor.

October, 1867.

SIR,—You kindly devoted $3\frac{1}{2}$ columns to our Hat-complaint in the last number of the *Meteor*: It was an article calculated to amuse, to instruct (*vide* the quotations), to impress; but (if you will forgive me for saying so) not at all to convince. It contained criticism, but no *argument*.

Briefly, this is our case. Hats are annoying to the new boys. Mere annoyance does no good to them, and certainly no good to others.

Which of these statements is false?

If they are true, what more is there to say?

Yours,

COSMOPOLITAN.

To the Editor of the Meteor.

SIR,—As I live some distance from Rugby, I may perhaps be pardoned for not quite keeping up with the times. But in my remote habitation a report has just reached me which I have for several years, in fact since I left, been waiting anxiously to receive. It is, Sir, of your appearance; it is, Sir, that in your person has at length arisen a reformer to Rugby, a light to shine upon the dark places (I fear this *quasi*-joke must often have been made before) and to dispel whatever darkness hangs about her.

Now, Sir, it was my fate, when I left Rugby nearly five years back, to be launched at once on the broad ocean of life without the intermediate course of University life, which the greater number of my school-fellows used to look forward to. Nothing struck me more when I was free from the atmosphere of our noble School, than the great difference between it and the world I entered in respect of fairness. At School, as a rule, I was very fairly treated: I used often to get licked at calling-over it is true, but it was generally when I had been foremost in scrummaging and in making a ring; when I was small and used to stand in goal I used to get kicked sometimes, but then I generally had my pockets full of crackers; when I worked I got out of my form; when I played well I was allowed to follow up: certainly Rugby was very fair. The other side of the picture, Sir, you know the world too well to need me to paint: fruitless labour, misunderstood motives, unfair distinctions, &c., &c.

Now I am writing to you, Sir, in order to protest against a practice which has come to my ears, and which I hold utterly contrary to the spirit of fairness of which I have been speaking: a practice which, if Rugby maintains, after thought and deliberation, she must have changed her character since I left. It is this, Sir. Within a few months after I left, the new racquet-court and fives-courts were opened. I took great interest in their building, but as I have said, was forced to leave before they were completed, and before the rules for their use were fixed upon. About a year ago I had occasion to visit the habitable world, and among other parts of it I visited Rugby. Of course one of my first cares was to inspect the new racquet-court and fives-courts, and to inquire, after my inspection, into their success, their appreciation by the School, the rules by which they are

managed. What was my astonishment to find that for a great many of the best hours in the week they virtually belonged to and were in the power of one house! "Which house," I asked, "plays most at hand-fives?" "Oh! Arnolds' of course," was the reply, "they can always get a court."

Is it not, I ask you Sir, possible to put a stop to this great injustice? Even in my day I remember it as a blot on the fairness of Rugby, that some Houses had more advantage than others in getting ground for ends. But this, which I have mentioned above, seems to me far worse, far more flagrant; the number of fives courts is smaller, and they are the only means of the game; whereas we could always get ground fairly enough for our matches.

I found that on half-holidays the old method of height in the School was used. But it seems to me Sir, that these half-holidays—when cricket, football, &c., are going on—are by no means so important times for fives-courts, as the long spare hours which much of the School has after dinner on whole-school days.

Let me urge that some place, such as the white gate, be appointed from which all must start; for surely it is fairer that a fellow should have a court because he is the best runner in the School, rather than that he should have it because he happens to be a member of the nearest House?

I remain Sir, yours,

HILLMORTON.

P.S. Should my letter be replied to in your columns, my opponent must not be surprised if he has to wait for an answer, as it is several day's post from Rugby to my home.

To the Editor of the Meteor.

SIR,—All the School write to you for assistance in all their difficulties. I also write to you, if perchance you should think fit to publish this. My grievance is that the rule, which was proposed in the Easter Term, respecting the throwing of the ball out of touch, and which was tried for last Term, has been allowed to drop into insigni-

fiance, and that even the question of its continuance is not mooted.

The rule simply implied, "that the ball, when thrown out of touch, must not be run with, until it has touched the ground." Now, I wish to ask your enlightened readers, at least, the football-playing portion of them, what was its irremediable failing, which has hurried it into oblivion, without giving it another chance. When the rule first came into action at the Easter Big-Sides, it naturally took a little time before it was fully realized and understood. Afterwards, however, when it was understood, I must confess that I never heard such abuse poured upon it, as would justify its being thrust away, by the unanimous, though silent, decree of Big-Side.

Now I would ask, what are those objections which have caused this good rule to be abolished? To me it appears to be a thoroughly good one. My reasons are, that it prevents that old nuisance of mauling close to touch; and that it gives more scope for skill than merely by catching the ball, and wasting time over useless wrangling.

I hope in your next number to see a thoroughly convincing letter from some football hero. If the rule should be brought forward again and carried, you will have been the means of eternally benefitting

THE SLOPE.

To the Editor of the Meteor.

SIR,—It must be plain to all that some measures should be taken to ensure the attendance of Caps at "Big-Sides," the smallness of which last year was the subject of general remark. Is there no way in which this object may be attained? An absentee, by the present regulations, ought to make his excuse to the head of his side: but as he is seldom the same two consecutive Big-Sides, frequent absence passes un-noticed, and consequently the rule is of no effect. Our suggestion is, that since now there is a committee devoted exclusively to Football, the power of reproving or even, if necessary, of depriving offenders of their caps, be given to it. And let this rule apply to Sixth and School alike.

Hoping that something may be done to remedy this great evil,

We are, yours, etc.,

TRIO.

To the Editor of the Meteor.

DEAR SIR,—I see that the Sixth Match is not to be played till October 19th, a week later than usual and a fortnight later than first Little-Side. Why this change? Do the Sixth wish to deprive themselves of the assistance of their Old Rugbeians, and avoid, by an immediate defeat, the dangers and perils of a longer match?

The 19th, the day fixed for the match, is also the day on which most University men are obliged to go up, a proceeding which is hardly compatible with playing football. Let me also ask, why should the Football season, always found too short to play out all the House Matches, be curtailed by a week. I have heard of several startling changes at Rugby lately, but surely this is the least expedient of all.

Yours truly,

OLD RUGBEIAN.

To the Editor of the Meteor.

DEAR SIR,—Many disputes have arisen concerning touch line on Little-Side and the Dunchurch piece; would it not be better to have a touch line cut.

Yours truly,

BELOW CAP.

To the Editor of the Meteor.

DEAR SIR,—Old customs are very desirable to retain, but still a change is often refreshing. Why should not Punt-about sometimes happen on the lower side of the Pontines? If it were sometimes moved down, the grass would be spared, and a good deal of dirt avoided.

Yours truly,

NOVELTY.

To the Editor of the Meteor.

SIR,—Will you kindly allow me to make known to the School, through your columns, the Accounts of the Rifle Corps for the present year.

Yours truly, F. TOBIN.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR NEW RIFLES.

	£	s.	d.
Rev. T. W. Jex Blake.....	10	0	0
Rev. C. T. Arnold	5	5	0
Rev. J. Robertson	5	5	0
Rev. C. B. Hutchinson	5	5	0
F. E. Kitchener, Esq.....	5	0	0
Rev. P. Bowden Smith	3	3	0
H. Lee Warner, Esq.	3	3	0
Rev. L. F. Burrows.....	2	2	0
Old Rugbeians.....	15	0	0
Oxford ditto	4	0	0
J. S. Philpotts, Esq.	1	13	7
	<u>£59</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>7</u>

EXPENSES OF NEW RIFLES.

	£	s.	d.
To J. Hollis & Sons, Birmingham, for 12 Hay Rifles.....	47	17	6
To London Armoury Company, for 1 Navy Rifle (on trial)	4	10	6
Carriage of Rifles, &c.....	1	6	6
Sergt. Caldwell, special instructor	6	2	1
	<u>£59</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>7</u>

SPECIAL EXPENSES OF CORPS, JANUARY TO MIDSUMMER, 1867.

SUBSCRIPTIONS.

	£	s.	d.
J. S. Philpotts, Esq.	7	7	0
Members of Corps	4	5	0
	<u>£11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>0</u>

	£	s.	d.
Expedition to Lutterworth for Shooting	4	17	6
Town and School Challenge Cup unpaid	2	0	6
Uniform belts, repairing, &c.....	1	4	0
Sergt. Tait to Wimbledon	2	0	0
Sergt. Tait, expenses for arranging Matches, &c.....	1	0	0
	<u>£11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>0</u>

Debt contracted previous to the present year, due to Sergt. Tait..... £8 10 0

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

“Excelsior.”—Your *nom de plume* is not well chosen. You are evidently not aware of the insuperable objections.

“A. C.”—We should give our decision for your side in any case.

“Fair-Play.”—You certainly should bring so serious a matter before a School Levée.

The present holder of the Big-Side Bags is A. Scott (J. M. Wilson’s, Esq.), who has received them from S. P. Bucknill.

At a Big-Side Levée, held on Tuesday last, it was carried *nem. con.* that Reynolds’s Field be hired for football purposes for this Term, and that goals be put up. Mr. Bucknill also proposed and Mr. Yardley seconded, that network be stretched over the glass roof of the new Eton Fives Courts, in order to keep off the glare of the sun in Summer, and to protect the glass from the stones by which it has hitherto been broken.

Though we have frequently expressed our determination to meddle only in the School’s, and not in the Masters’ business, we think ourselves justified in stating that at length the Masters are freed from the opposition that has met them so long, and that the purchase of the whole ground to the corner of Lawrence Sheriffe St. has been concluded.