



Dornoch Academy
Magazine



. 1950 .

DORNOCH ACADEMY MAGAZINE

1950

EDITORIAL.

Now that winter had softened into gentle spring, we looked round to see if the mild breezes, blowing away the cobwebs from the minds of the pupils, had made them dance with the lambs "as to the tabor's sound." But, alas! Although the younger ones responded enthusiastically and were soon singing in full voiced choir in praise of Spring and lambs and daisies, the older pupils, with minds less sensitive to the loveliness of Nature, and more weighed down by the prospect of rapidly approaching age, and even more rapidly approaching in-

spectors, rewarded us with only a few wailing notes. Their minds were still lying dormant in a wintry lethargy; there was no urge to sing songs to which the world might listen. But spurred on at last by the efforts of their juniors, shame made them bestir themselves, and so you, dear Reader, can judge the results for yourself.

Now having said all the orthodox things, and having praised the juniors, and berated the seniors, we shall close, being well aware that there is more tempting fruit inside.

School Notes.

The School Prize-giving took place on the 30th June 1949 when Mrs G. J. Grant, Pulrossie, presented the prizes.

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We welcome to the Staff—Miss M'Neill to the French and English Department, and Mr Laird as our new Physical Instructor.

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The following completed the Leaving Certificate (under the old regulations) in June 1949: Ishbel MacLean, John MacLeod, Alastair MacLeod, William Parker, Isabel MacKay, Catherine MacLeod and Neil Murray.

Mina Menzies, H.G. III, was successful in gaining a Highlands and Islands Trust Bursary of £20 for 3 years in the annual competition held in April 1949. John MacLeod, H.G. VI, was also successful in gaining a Kemsley grant entitling him to spend a fortnight in Sweden.

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The Literary and Debating Society broke fresh ground in June 1949 when they presented four one-act plays to the public.

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Mr Donald Grant (London) again visited the school and gave an interesting talk on the his-

tory of North America. He also spoke in more detail on the same subject to the pupils of Secondary V and VI.

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Earl's Cross Hostel for Boys was opened in August 1949 by Sir John MacKay-Thomson, Secretary of the Scottish Education Department. The prefect system has been adopted in both hostels. We congratulate the following on being appointed prefects for the years 1949-50:

Ross House Hostel

House Captain—Alice Thomson.
Deputy Captain—Morag MacLeod.
Prefects—Jean Morrison and Mina Menzies.

Earl's Cross Hostel

House Captain—Colin MacKenzie.
Prefects—Donald MacAulay J. Ross MacDonald, Thomas Murray, John Macrae.

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The Secondary Department of the Academy has been divided into three Houses for the purposes of sport and debates. These Houses have been called Murray House, MacDonald House and MacKay House. The division has fostered a keen competitive spirit among the Secondary pupils.

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In September 1949 the much-needed new Technical and Domestic Science Rooms were opened.

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New Badges and School Colours have been introduced, but we should like to see them still more prominently displayed.

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The number of school meals served in the Canteen from September to May 15th has been 43,263. The Savings for the same period amounted to £400.

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The School held three enjoyable parties at Christmas. We thank again the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland for their generosity in helping to make these parties so successful.

The Dramatic Society.

The Dramatic Society can feel satisfied in its first attempt to present four one-act plays to the public on 31st May and 1st June 1949. On both nights the School Hall was filled to capacity and the actors and actresses did of their best. A play can only be judged by the sincerity of the performance, and this was shown by the freshness and vigour of those who had to play sometimes very difficult rôles. The full cast and helpers appear below.

1. **The Bishop's Candlesticks**, by Norman M'Kinnel.
The Bishop Neil Murray
Persomé, his sister Ishbel MacLean
The Convict Colin MacKenzie
Marie, a maid Marina Gunn
Gendarmes David Murray and Donald MacAulay
Producer—Miss F. Strachan.

2. **An Improbable Episode**, by L. du Garde Peache.
Cadoc, a British Peasant William Parker
His Wife Jean Morrison
Mog, their Daughter Beatrice Fraser
King Alfred Roderick Ross
Oric, a Dane John MacLeod
Horsa, a Dane Hugh Munro
Aedgar David Murray
Producer—Mr J. Ligertwood.

The Queen's Ring, by L. du Garde Peache.
Catherine, Lady Nottingham ... Isabel MacKay
Lady Anne Bella MacKenzie
Maud, Lady Scrope Mina Menzies
Queen Elizabeth Helen Forsyth
Lady Mary Cavendish Morag MacLeod
Serving Woman Isobel Oakes
Producer—Miss F. Strachan.

It Won't Be a Stylish Marriage, by L. du Garde Peache.
Daisy Bell Marina Gunn
Mrs Bell Colleen Ross
Effic Bell Bertine MacLean
Mr Murgatroyd Donald MacAulay
Maud, a Cockney maid Marjory Munro
Producer—Mr J. Ligertwood.

* JEAN MORRISON, H.G. V.

Netball Notes.

In October 1949 the School formed a number of netball teams and began to play very amateur netball. Under the careful guidance of Miss Calder, however, we soon became more competent at the game, and formed ourselves into three houses, Murray, Mackay and Macdonald, with an A and B team in each. We played a series of matches each day between the Houses, and these helped to instil more enthusiasm into the teams. But inclement weather and the Higher Leaving Certificate Examinations held up the play for some weeks, but now that the good weather has come, we hope to have many more friendly matches.

Of the three Houses, Murray House has definitely shown itself to be the victor, but on the whole, competition was very strong, and the other two houses are by no means disgraced.

The following is the score for six matches played by each team, i.e. twelve matches for each House.

Murray House	19 points
Macdonald House	10 points
Mackay House	7 points

ALICE THOMSON, H.G. VI.

Football Notes.

The Academy Football season began well this year by the introduction of the House Matches which enabled the younger pupils to take a greater part in school football. But owing to epidemics before Christmas many of the games were postponed, and since then weather conditions and examinations made football impossible. The only game this season was played against Golspie Secondary School at Golspie where we suffered defeat.

One reason for this defeat was that we had fielded two or three very young players who had not played in a team before. But perhaps the main trouble was that we did not play football and too often we resorted to wild kicking down the field instead of finding one of our own team with a short accurate pass. The Golspie

players did not wait for the ball to come to them as so many of our players did; they passed accurately and made the most of their chances. Thus, the lack of understanding between our players gave the Golspie boys a deserved victory.)

The Academy Junior Team, however, last season succeeded in entering the final of the Paynter Cup for the third year in succession and this time winning it for the first time by defeating Golspie. Both finalists were again entertained by the General and Mrs Paynter at Suisgil Lodge.

DONALD MACAULAY, H.G. VI

The Annual Mod.

The Annual Mod was held in June 1949 in Lairg. The school retained for another year the Wilson Cup for Oral Proficiency, the cup being won by Catherine B. MacKay. The following competitors were successful:—

Translation from Gaelic to English

1. Una MacLeod.
2. Peggy MacLeod.
3. Catherine B. MacKay.

Poetry Reading

1. Barbara Sutherland.
2. Catriona MacKenzie.
3. Peggy MacLeod.

Repetition

2. Johan MacPherson.
3. Una MacLeod.

Reading Prose

1. Catherine B. MacKay.
2. Catriona MacKenzie.

Gaelic Conversation

1. Mina Menzies.
2. Catherine B. MacKay.
3. Peggy MacLeod,
Una MacLeod.

COLLEEN ROSS, H.G. VI.

Sports News.

For the second successive year the Dornoch Academy team of athletes excelled themselves, when at Golspie last June in the Inter-School Sports, they carried off the Clyne Bowl with a total of 80 points against the runners-up, Sutherland Technical School's 43.

In beautiful sunshine a large crowd watched teams compete from Golspie, Brora, Dornoch, Helmsdale, Lairg, Bonar-Bridge and the Sutherland Technical School.

The success of the Academy is mainly due to the following competitors:—Mairie Grant, Violet Munro, Isobel Macleay, Marina Gunn, Beatrice Fraser, Dennis Bethune, John Murray, Peter Murray, John Macleod, David Murray.

The Academy Sports were held in the Meadows Park on June 28th 1949 under favourable conditions. Outstanding performers in the senior sections were:—Sarah Macleod, Isabel Macleay, Marina Gunn, Beatrice Fraser (School Champion) and Mina Ghillie; David Murray (School Champion), William Parker, Peter Murray, Garry Thom, John J. Murray and Hugh Munro.

In the Primary Department Mairie Grant and Sheena Macdonald gave outstanding performances in running while the following showed considerable promise:—Alistair Ross, Gordon Currie, Colin Macrae, Sandy Mackay, Derek Oakes, Gordon Fraser and Willie Melville.

DONALD MACAULAY, H.G. VI.

Golf.

The Llewelyn Hacon Challenge Cup competition took place once again during June 1949, and its arrival roused the school to a state bordering golf fanaticism. Big and small, golfer and would-be-golfer, entered their names on the sheet, and proceeded to the Links to put in a spot of practice. The excitement on the day of the draw was tremendous. The competitors crowded round the Notice Board, and any innocent spectator might have thought the draw to be for the "Open Championship."

There and then the favourites became the talk of the school, and before the last bell, several players had been assured of their certain

victory. Out of the numerous entries, however, three figures seemed to predominate: Hugh Munro, it was felt, was the most skilful and experienced competitor; Garry Thom and Donald Baxter were felt to be almost as accurate, but not so experienced.

The contest began on the stated date, and the first two rounds went without much comment, except for Thom's victory over Baxter to the tune of 4 and 2. The semi-final aroused a little more excitement, however, the semi-finalists being Hugh Munro v. John Macleod and John Gunn v. Garry Thom.

Munro disposed of Macleod by the surprising margin of 6 and 4, and to the chagrin of his supporters Thom was beaten 4 and 2 by Gunn. The final came round at last, and many wondered if Gunn could complete his giant-killing and so win the competition; but Munro was just that little bit more experienced and managed to beat Gunn by the narrow margin of 2 and 1.

NEIL MURRAY, H.G. VI.

A Literary Discovery.

Great excitement was caused in the literary world through the discovery last Wednesday by the eminent Professor Niall Moirreach of two hitherto unpublished fragments of Sir Francis Bacon and Charles Lamb. The manuscripts, which were discovered lying under the dust of centuries in the window cupboard of classroom 7, had been mutilated by the ravages of time and of rats, but we have been able to piece them together sufficiently to present this priceless treasure to our readers.

Bacon thus writes of his rival Lamb: "Lamb serves for delight, for discomfort and for irritability. Its chief use for delight is in fields and among daisies; for discomfort is in groanings and agonisings after surfeiting, though Cicero saith "*cenae quid melius crure agnae*,"¹ and for irritability is in swotting and preparing for examinations.

To spend too much time with Lamb resulteth in indigestion; to gaze too long at his frolicking revealeth "*mentis inanitas*";² to know only Lamb spelleth disaster to the scholar.

Some Lamb is to be looked at, some is to be

eaten, and one Lamb is to be silently endured; that is, some Lamb is to be admired in the natural state, some is to be swallowed, but not in excess; and some few "agnae sermones"³ to be examined wholly but with distaste and dilatoriness.

Charles, however, was not a man to suffer in silence, so he did not spare his rival's bacon. He decided that it was as well to be hung for a sheep as for a lamb, so he went the whole hog.

"Of all the torments for the "mundus scholasticus,"⁴ I will maintain it to be the most wearisome—"princeps pestilentiarum."⁵

I speak not of the "sine qua non"⁶ of the breakfast table—natural companion to the fried egg—that of which Cicero said "prandio nil melius porco,"⁷ but of the essayist—that bugbear of the senior scholar.

Bacon—let me speak his condemnation—is no less disagreeable to the appetite than he is indigestible to the childish intellect. The swot may batten on him, but the dilatory understandeth not his extreme logicity.

His style must be considered. Decidedly a few archaisms, dished up with epigrams and paradoxes, and a mild dash of Asyndeton. But banish, Dear Reader, the whole Baconian litter.

Unlike to Addison, he is shrivelled throughout. No part of him can outdo the other in sheer dryness. He stultifieth—as far as his petty means extendeth—all around. He is the least nutritious of mental food. He is no pupil's delicacy."

Footnotes have been furnished by the well-known philologist and poet, Dr Domhnall Mac-Aoidh.

¹When housewife's in a jamb,
For an item for the dinner,
Let her think of leg of lamb
As a meal for any sinner.

²A blankety blankness of brain.

³Bleatings of Lamb.

⁴The brainy spuds.

⁵The prime worst.

⁶The "what we've gotta have."

⁷What better to waken to
Than egg and bacon too?

Extract from "The Butchers' Quarterly."—
Literary Supplement.

H. C., VI.

The Forsinard Sales.

The narrow, dusty road to Forsinard is blocked with tall green and wine stock-cars out of which come avalanches of frightened lambs. Men and women wildly wave their arms to drive them down the one-way track into grey, lichen-covered pens, some of which are already filled with lambs that have been walked up from the Strath at dawn. The air is filled with the strong but not unpleasant smell of oily wool, of petrol from faulty tanks in lorries; the yelling of Gaelic commands from the hill shepherds and crofters to black and white collidogs who, being made too excited to listen by the noise and confusion, bark viciously at the legs of the lambs; the sad, bewildered chorus of the lambs; the constant noise of lorries and horns blowing; the dogs fighting with horrible snarls and yelps at each other as they roil over and over in the dust: bedlam let loose, it seems, in this quiet spot.

To-day is, of course, the great day—the day of the Forsinard Lamb Sales. Although this sale ranks next to the Lairg Sale in importance as a one-day sale, it has as its setting a lonely hamlet, overshadowed by Beinn-a-Griam; a railway station, a low, rambling, white-washed hotel and a handful of houses.

People are now drawing in towards the sale-ring. The auctioneer steps up on a dais in front of a rude hut, grey worn with age, in which two business-like clerks wait to note down the buyer, seller and number of lambs sold, and after the sale they distribute the cheques. The sale at which the Strath people sell their lambs is Hamilton's Auction Mart, and is known as the "up-sale"; the "down-sale" is Reith and Anderson's, and to this mart people from other districts bring their lambs. Men, women and children stand round the ring or perch precariously on the wooden enclosure, while the fat, prosperous-looking buyers sit on rough benches inside the ring. Some shepherds lean on the gate, ready to open it when required, their brown, strong-smelling pipes cupped in their broad, thick, bronzed hands, and a walking-stick hanging over their arms. They are tall and broad-shouldered men wearing rough,

brown tweed jackets, corduroy breeches, and strong, black boots turned up at the toes for hill wear. They watch now with shrewd, experienced eyes, as the first man enters the ring with some of his lambs. He hands a slip of paper to the auctioneer who tells the buyers whether the lambs are ewe or wedder and how many there are. Bidding is slow at first, but soon it goes more quickly. By a flicker of an eyelid or the slightest nod of the head these men indicate that they want to buy the lambs and the eagle eye of the auctioneer sees every movement. One after another, in order of their pen numbers, the crofters enter the ring, all the while turning the lambs round and round, and invariably shaking their heads with a "No, no, they're worth more than that," when bidding stops.

But after a while the sale grows monotonous up here. The voice of the auctioneer, the continual coming and going of lambs, do not hold a casual onlooker's attention for very long. We must go down through the yard which is now becoming churned up by the non-stop flow of lambs, people and dogs. Another stock car is waiting to unload its precious cargo at the gate, so we must wait until the lambs are penned. Down we go by the narrow, grassy path to the hotel. Here the crofters, having procured a good price for their lambs, taste joviality to the full, while Hughie fills the flowing bowl. Someone is giving a slow, interrupted rendering of "Mairi Bhoideach," a violinist is playing a more stirring lilt, and then, from another corner, with sublime disregard for the soloists, some men break lustily forth into "Beinn Dorain." At the wide, red-painted door one man is urging another more wary fellow in and with little delay both join the revellers inside. Here, in the grounds of the hotel, an ice-cream vendor and a fish and chip van, from the chimney of which puffs of black smoke are issuing, await hungry customers.

All day the voices of the auctioneers have been heard; but now the sale is nearly over; a feeling of weariness has taken hold of all. The lambs, sold to Lowland dealers, go quietly to the trucks waiting at the station. There is just an occasional bark of a dog; cars and lorries crawl off slowly, and soon the sounds will melt into the quiet twilight. Forsinard, by nightfall, is deserted and still under the shadow of Beinn-a-Griam.

JEAN MORRISON, H.G. V.

A Soliloquy.

WITH APOLOGIES TO W. SHAKESPEARE, ESQ.

To smoke, or not to smoke: that is the question:

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The rows and ravings of outraged parents,
Or to keep smoking, spite their tide of wrath,
And so by smoking stem it. To smoke: to puke;
No more; and by our puking say we end
The heart burn and the fearful flatulence
That 'Turf' is heir to, 'tis an ebullition
Devoutly to be wished. To smoke, inhale;
Inhale; perchance to swallow; aye, there's the
rub;

For in that choking cough what gasps may
come,

When we are filled with smoke of 'Caporal
Sweet,'

Must give us pause
Thus smoking doth make dullards of us all,
And thus the native hue of schoolboy's face
Is sicklied o'er with pale cast of weed;
And athletes, full of enterprise and pith,
With too much 'Cogent' slink along the track,
And lose the victor's palm. Soft you now!
The fair Miss Brown! Nymph, at thy busy
chores

See not our smoke rings rise!

RODERICK ROSS, H.G. V.

A Real Thriller!

"SMOKING SIX-SHOOTERS AND TWANGING CATAPULTS."

The ruddy sun was rising in a blazing ball over the eastern horizon and the large clumps of mesquite threw long shadows over the trail which wound its tortuous way from the rip-roaring town of Pullocork to the most dare-devil of dumps in that wild and woolly west—Haveanip. In the background the mountains rose in a series of forbidding ranges which seemed to fill the vast basin with a sinister sense of foreboding and expectancy.

Suddenly through this vast panorama of grim and gorgeous beauty came riding at even faster pace than Class V lipping La Fontaine's feeble fables three desperadoes whose villainous appearance would have frozen the heart of the dangerous Dan MacGrew. As they rode pell-

mell down the trail, even the buck rabbit and coyote scurried for shelter, for were they not these same three noted desperadoes who, although the dice of luck was loaded against them, had by sheer bravado and recklessness pulled off an amazing number of hold-ups and had crushed the morale of the region into pulp?

Now they came galloping down the sunset trail fitting on black and evil-looking Halloween masks, as they crashed ever forward to their rendezvous with their other companions of the Owlhoot Trail. Both parties of outlaws were converging on an extra large clump of mesquite which bordered the highway, and, as their horses loped listlessly along with muffled hoofbeats a sound broke the eerie silence of the morning.

It was the stage coach, as it came thundering down the mountain trail, like an avalanche let loose, gathering momentum as it crashed ever onwards towards its doom. Behind the mesquite clump the bandit leader, Sippy Shoot-em-up, whispered his final injunctions to his crew of deadly desperadoes who by now looked like a resplendent military arsenal, what with water pistols, pea shooters, pop guns and Sippy the chief's favourite weapon—a catapult.

Ever onwards thundered the stage coach. Feverishly Sippy and his pards drew their deadly weapons, the chief fitting a marble on to his catapult with eye defying swiftness. Swiftly he drew a bead on the driver, known throughout the locality as Al Cohol. At his stentorian command of "Hold your horses," the stage coach slewed to an abrupt halt and Al Cohol bit the dust, as he crashed headlong from his box into an extra prickly sage bush. Swiftly Sippy and his cadaverous crew closed in for the kill, but imagine their surprise to find the stage coach empty save for a large expensive looking oblong box marked "Fragile with Care."

Scarcely able to suppress their jubilation the bandits let off a few squirts from their water pistols for good measure, while Chief Sippy, who was by now jumping up and down with excitement, got entangled in the elastic of his beloved catapult and ended up up ended.

However, extricating himself from the entanglements with amazing alacrity, they loaded the box on to Sippy's horse and with the aforementioned riding behind his second-in-command Dan Druff, they set off up the golden trail to their plastic hide-out, while from the sage bush curses both deep and loud floated up into the humid atmosphere, as Al Cohol made furious but ineffectual endeavours to rub off the

bead drawn on him by Sippy and extricate himself from his adverse surroundings.

On their arrival at their secret prefab. in Catapult Copse, the rowdy roughnecks set about opening the mysterious box. Seizing a rusty nail hanging like the sword of Damocles from Dan Druff's red roan's well-worn iron shoe and from Sippy's saddle bag a broken pen-knife with which he was wont to pare his nails, this was soon effected, and imagine their surprise when

(A special booby prize will be awarded in our next magazine to the reader sending in the worst ending. Age, Stupidity and Mis-related Participles taken into considerations.)

ED YUCATION, H.G. V.

"The Literary Society."

With apologies to W. S. Gilbert.

When a Rector's not engaged in his employment,

Or maturing his scholastic little plans!

His capacity for innocent enjoyment

Is just as great as any other man's.

Our society with objects literary

Meets on Friday night at seven of the clock,

So he's there to see we do not get contrary,

And to keep a watchful eye upon his flock.

When our English teacher's finished marking papers,

And a week-end is ahead of her once more,

She is always keen to help us in our capers

And assist in bringing Drama to the fore.

Of the histrionic art she is a master,

And she coaches us in words and actions too,

So between them both they keep us from disaster

Which can happen when you're slow to take a cue.

But our efforts aren't confined alone to acting,

And we've other interests taking up our time,

For debates we often find to be exacting,

If ridiculous or possibly sublime.

So with quizzes and with talks on sundry matters

We are always fully occupied you'll find,

But don't think we've got too much on our platters,

For our motto's "Healthy body and sound mind."

ISABEL MACKAY, H.G. VI.

An Apology for Idleness.

When it was decreed that I must write this apology, I could not help wondering whether there was a little irony behind the edict. Was I more competent to do so than anyone else in the class? Had I more experience of the subject? My efforts to dispel this unworthy thought were balked by unbidden memories which rose up in my mind, memories of the blissful hours I had spent behind my book of "Significant Events in History," with a beatifically blank mind; of the horror I had felt, when the clock struck the midnight hour, reminding me that my History examination was one day nearer and that I had not memorized one significant event. However, I scotched my troubled conscience by counting those I already knew and called it a good night's work. The memories of my elaborate self-apologisings made me realise with a start, that, even then I might have comforted myself with the knowledge that I was not yet a hardened sinner, that I still had a conscience to soothe. But as time went on, as my mind became more and more dormant under the increasing influence of idleness—one of the beauties of this habit is that although it is a good one, it needs no laborious cultivation as good habits usually do, but grows as quickly as weeds do in a garden—even the effort of apologising to myself became too great for me. As I remembered all these things, I saw that my conversion was complete, and that I was ready to take up arms on behalf of idleness.

Firstly, I must impress upon you that idleness is not a vice. It is a fine art; it is almost an occupation. Surely it takes great inner resources, great strength of mind to do nothing, to dream away the hours. Picture the hard-headed business man who has spent his life in a feverish race for wealth suddenly stripped of all the things most dear to him—his accounts, his ledgers, his ready-reckoners—and left to his own resources in the middle of a desert. What will he think about? Now picture your idler in the same circumstances. What does he care for the lack of accustomed surroundings and everyday things? His mind has risen above the dull and ordinary affairs of life; he can lie down and gaze up at the sky and people his castles in the air with perfect beings. He is quite at home.

Again, this art, this occupation is surely the most catholic, the most comprehensive of all arts and occupations. Compare it with Mathe-

matics and the humanities. How many advanced mathematicians realise that there are vast fields to be conquered in the realms of Literature? How many learned scholars of the humanities can tell a set-square from a pair of compasses? These men live and die under the impression that the world is composed of squares and cubes and irregular semi-deponent verbs. Meanwhile your idler, who has neither the wish nor the energy to concentrate on any subject, sees them all as they are; he stands at the window and watches the world going past. His creed can be summed up in the words:

"What is this life, if full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare."

CATHERINE MACLEOD, H.G. VI.

"Excelsior."

The first red streak of early dawn
Sees Rhoderick stride forth to the lawn,
With bagpipes ready for the fray:
And this his first word for the day:
—"Excelsior!"

Scarce heard, a faint thin wail first came,
Of music hardly worth the name,
Then louder squeak and babbling groan,
And still the piper chanted on.
—"Excelsior!"

The "Woodland's" life began to stir,
From out the leaves the birds "go whirr,"
Yet still the bard with measured pace,
Strives for his goal quite pitiless.
—"Excelsior!"

And now through sleeping Bishopfield
The growing music slowly pealed,
The sleepers wake from one nightmare
Into another. Does he care?
—"Excelsior!"

The growing crash of sound spreads wide,
Engulfs the city in its stride,
And slowly wafts to Littleton,
Still chants he, marching up and down
—"Excelsior!"

Now comes the tune in earnest blast,
Pibrochs slow and strathspeys fast.
A piper this? Perhaps, who knows,
How famous will be Rhoderick's blows.
—"Excelsior!"

"AN ADMIRER," H.G. IV.

Impressions of a New Life.

Like Charles Lamb I am naturally shy of novelties; perhaps I am too indolent, too attached to the one place, to my old friends and my own lazy habits. "My household gods had planted a terrible fixed foot, and were not to be uprooted without bloodshed." Thus it was with indignation that I was compelled to leave the easy-paced existence to which I had grown accustomed to take up residence for one year in a Boys' Hostel—immediately I anticipated a kind of Bastille—and to attend an Academy—the austere word somewhat repelled me.

Grudgingly on a genial August noon, under a sweltering sky, I reached my destination at the end of a gloomy wood, but the reality rather surprised me. It was a large modern house, white-walled, with brownish slated roof and looking out to sea. The inside, though I am no connoisseur in art, was also decidedly attractive.

I soon became reconciled to the routine of a new school, but it took longer to grow accustomed to life in a hostel. For the first day or two I felt overwhelmed by certain new duties; and, being of a lethargic nature, I found it hard to rise at 7 a.m. to the summons of a shrieking whistle, to sweep my room, to make my own bed (which by the way was not fashioned for my lengthy limbs), to set tables for breakfast, to brush my own shoes and to wash dishes, duties which I had once considered were the glory and privilege of the weaker sex—surely I was being tutored for a future bachelordom—then, in addition, to assume the austere rôle of a prefect and become a shining example of proficiency to the younger fry.

A year has now almost passed, and soon I shall no longer be a prefect. Perhaps I walk to-day with a more dignified air. I may have grown into gentility perceptibly. Certainly I have shaken off dull sloth; but always, up to a point I have found the chains of discipline somewhat irksome. To-morrow I am bound "to fresh fields and pastures new"; yet there, too, I expect I shall not be allowed to roam to my delight, but tethered once more by some chain.

ROSS MACDONALD, H.G. VI.

Impressions of the Truly Great

(H.G. V and VI.)

Foreword—"We few, we happy few, we band of brothers." (Shakespeare)

R-ss M-cd-n-ld

"Fresh as a bridegroom; and his chin, new reap'd
Showed like a stubble land at harvest home." (Shakespeare)

R-d-r-ck R-ss

"Great wits are sure to madness near allied." (Dryden)

-s-b-l M-cK--

"I am the very pink of courtesy." (Shakespeare)

P-tr-c-a Ph--ps

"Her voice was ever soft
Gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman." (Shakespeare)

N--l Murr-y

"I am not in the roll of common men." (Shakespeare)

H-l-n F-r-y-h

"What charm can soothe her melancholy?" (Goldsmith)

T-mmy M-rr-y

"Eternal smiles his emptiness betray." (Pope)

M-rj-ry M-nr-

"Look, where the youngest wren of nine comes." (Shakespeare)

J--n M-rr-s-n

"Here comes the lady—O, so light a foot
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint!" (Shakespeare)

D-n-ld M-c--l-y

"The man that blushes is not quite a brute." (Young)

C-th-r-n- M-cl--d

"Prouder than rustling in unpaid-for silk." (Shakespeare)

D-n-ld M-ck-y

"All hell broke loose." (Milton)

C-ll--n R-ss

"She never told her love."

(Shakespeare)

M-r-g M-cl--d

"Whom neither shape of anger can dismay,
Nor thought of tender happiness betray."

(Wordsworth)

H-gh M-nr-

"He never says a foolish thing
Or ever does a wise one."

(Rochester)

Al-ck M-rr-y

"The fool of nature stood with stupid eyes
"And gaping mouth, that testified surprise."

(Dryden)

Al-c- Th-ms-n

"The woman that deliberates is lost."

(Addison)

S-ndy M-cr-e

"Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman's fair?"

(Wither)

C-l-n M-ck-nz--

"O my Luve's like a red red rose
That's newly sprung in June."

(Burns)

Thoughts on the National Mod.

The National Mod of An Comunn Gaidhealach is now a firmly established feature of the Scottish National life. The word "mod" is the Gaelic word for "meeting," and the National Mod is attended by people not only from all parts of Scotland, but from Highland communities in many parts of the world. It has come to be universally recognised. It is, indeed, the National Mod.

I attended two National Mods, one at Glasgow, and the other at Inverness, but the one which remains foremost in my memory is the National Mod at Inverness held in October 1949, where I was not only a competitor, but a spectator. It was indeed a great occasion for

me, and left me these somewhat scattered impressions.

Everywhere in the old Highland Capital there is a flash of colour: the green, yellow and red of the kilts contrasting with the white of the children's blouses; the long striped peasant skirts and dark shawls of the Stornoway choir in their action song; young and old rushing from one competition hall to another; a stalwart Highlander carrying his bagpipes. At one corner outside a hall the Stornoway junior choirs stand practising the words of their songs in their soft lilting voices; at another corner the Glasgow junior choirs doing the same; not as the "leodhasaich," however, but in very "Englified" Gaelic.

Gaelic is heard everywhere. On the competition platforms men and women are singing Gaelic songs; in the smaller halls queues of children are being catechised in the labyrinths of Gaelic spelling; in the hotels the waitress will take her orders in Gaelic; even the policeman on his beat is probably a Gaelic speaking Highlander, who has arranged with his Gaelic speaking Chief Constable that he shall be on duty at the Mod that week. Inside the hotels, too, there is great rejoicing and merriment; and from the open windows the slow uninterrupted strains of "Mo Dhachaidh" or "Cruachan-beann" reach the ears of the passers-by.

I never had the privilege of attending the most impressive ceremony of all of the week—"The Crowning of the Bard" when the Gaelic "Invocation" is sung by massed choirs. There, I am told, is revealed the highest expression of Gaelic spirit; but my visit to the National Mod has made me vividly realise that the language and spirit of the Gael (despite the fact that fewer people speak Gaelic to-day) is still as fresh as ever. For me, one of my greatest regrets is that I do not speak Gaelic fluently, but my ambition is that one day I may master that Celtic tongue which surpasses all others in richness and beauty. We, in the Highlands of Scotland, should not be content to hear people say that the Gaelic language is dying out in Sutherland and the North. We should begin to do something about the matter, and once more become the Highlanders of by-gone days, who were proud to speak their native tongue. Then when asked if we can speak Gaelic, we shall not shamefully reply "Chan'cil" but proudly answer, "Tha, gu leoir."

I. J. MATHIESON, H.G. IV.

In Praise of Class IIIa.

When you visit our Academy,
To you we truly say
That all its brains and energy
Are found in Class IIIa.

At English they are wonderful,
You know by their blank looks;
But really 'tis a miracle,
When all have brought their books.

And French they speak "full fetishly,"
Their words you cannot tell;
But they tell you quite happily
"Nous parlons French très well."

In Latin all are brilliant
Except when they are sinners;
To see them you think "audiant,"
But they dream of their dinners.

In Science, History, Geography,
In knowledge they excel;
Just ask them who was Wellesley;
He made the Daniell Cell.

Listen to them at singing time,
When each one "has a go";
They look so simple and sublime,
When they can hit high Doh.

And now for Art and Geometry,
They see no sense in graphs;
An artist's name's a mystery
They say "Pythagoras."

At drill they play so merrily,
And vault the horse with grace;
And some can most cleverly
Outstrip the "laird" in pace.

So when you leave our class behind,
I'm sure you will agree
A famous future's in your mind
For each one in Class III.

SARAH MACLEOD, H.G. IIIA.

The Burning of Dornoch Cathedral,

The late Autumn twilight falls softly over Dornoch. Silence hangs over all the mellow buildings and in the old churchyard the gravestones are just visible in the gathering shadows. An owl hoots eerily, a gentle sigh of wind shakes the trees and all is silent again. But far in the distance I hear faint sounds and cries. Nearer and nearer rumbles the sound—I hear the wail of bagpipes, the clashing of steel, and wild, inhuman shouts. But who are these wild Highlanders with their long, unruly hair and their shaggy beards? They are the wild Mac-kays of Strathnaver, who are trying to take the town unopposed. But the Murrays are marching against the attackers in defence of their home town; the thunder of feet grows louder, the pibrochs become shriller, and the noise increases, as the two forces surge madly towards each other, shouting their battle cries and brandishing their claymores. They have met! The two forces rush towards the cathedral and the desperate struggle begins. The air is filled with the moans and groans of the wounded and the dying, and the loud curses of the clansmen. Within the cathedral and without the fearful battle rages fierce and furious for a long time. Now, I can see wisps of smoke floating out of the cathedral and being wafted upwards. Streaks of flame are now appearing; they are swelling, and now they are leaping far up into the gloom. In the glow, I can see the roadway strewn with the bodies of wounded and dying Highlanders, their faces bloody, their hands still clutching their claymores. Parts of the walls are beginning to collapse, and there are heaps of rubble and broken glass in the roadway. But the cathedral still stands.

Gradually the sounds of battle grow fainter, the flames dimmer, and at last the vision fades altogether; and I find myself looking up at the old cathedral standing there in the twilight, majestic, beautiful, and as always, invincible.

ANNE MUNRO, H.G. IIIA.

The Sitting of Exams O!

It fell about the end of term,
 And a grey time it was then O!
 When we poor souls had exams, to sit,
 And we started on the pen O!
 The draughts blew cold from room to room,
 Of brains there was a lack O!
 More wintry storms o'er our heads will burst,
 When papers we get back O!
 But our troubles are not ended there,
 For our records we've to get O!
 And then we're shaking o'er with fear,
 But mother says, "you'll do better yet O!"

CHRISTEEN CLARKE, H.G. IB.

A Story.

When we look at a map of Scotland, we can see a tongue of land belonging to Ross-shire which juts up into Sutherland. A very curious story is told about this piece of land which was once the object of a feud between the old Highland lairds.

These lairds were always quarrelling about the extent of their territory, and it so happened that the lairds of Ross-shire and Sutherland disagreed about the boundary line. When they failed to settle the matter between themselves they decided to ask the oldest inhabitant of the two counties where the boundary line had been in days of old. These lairds and the old "bodach" decided to meet on a certain day at this place which is a few miles from the small village of Elphin.

Several days before the meeting the Ross-shire laird had a talk with the old man and bribed him to say that the boundary line ran down by a burn, this giving Ross-shire more land. The old man, who was a God-fearing man, was reluctant to accept the bribe but the lust for money overcame all his scruples.

When the day arrived, the "bodach" filled his boots with Ross-shire ground and, standing on the bank of the burn, swore he was standing on Ross-shire soil.

The man's deceit was not known for several years, until on his deathbed he confessed to his wicked deed.

The line has never been changed, and now

this place is well known to fishers from southern Scotland and England. An hotel stands on the Sutherland side of the burn, which is now named Altnagialgach, meaning the burn of the deceiver.

SHEENA MACLEOD, H.G. IA.

A Rabbit's Day.

I awoke one morning in my burrow,
 Full of joy and free from sorrow,
 Out of the dew covered field I ran,
 I was ever so happy and feared no man.
 For Summer had come back to the glen,
 And the sun shone down on each But and Ben,
 Primroses were where they weren't before,
 Cowslips and daisies and many more.
 The birds were back in their summer nests,
 And the young birds were having their flying tests.

The notes of the cuckoo and songs of the thrush
 Came to me from a distant bush.
 My Summer's day was full of gladness,
 Gone was the winter of grief and sadness.
 At length when the sun went down to rest,
 And birds were chirping in their nests,
 I ran away back to my burrow home;
 On the next lovely day again I will roam,
 Back in the fields and down in the glen,
 Where the flowers are so sweet in the sun and rain.

ELIZABETH LEVACK, H.G. IA.

History Re-Viewed.

- 1946 — Bunions' Re-peel of the Corn Paws.
- 1949-50 — The "Norman" Conquest.
- 1950 — Abolition of Rationing by N. O. Poyntz.
- 1951 — D'Airy's Bill of Wrights.
- 1952 — Pasturisation of Fairways by T. T. Cowe.
- 1954 — Treatise on Home Rule by Hen Peck.
- 1956 — Reflections on Complete Revolutions by Jay See Ell.
- 1960 — Une Tante Cordiale by Charley.
- 1978 — D. I. Vorce's Treaty of Wed More.
- 1978 — Publication of Classical Ballads by "Nuts in May."

"ZERO."

A Sea Voyage.

The Minch is supposed to be the stormiest part of the sea around Scotland. I am going to tell you about a voyage across the Minch.

After coming off the train at the Kyle of Lochalsh, we went along to the pier. It was about seven o'clock on a day at the beginning of August. The sun was setting with a red lurid glow and in the harbour it was very calm. Nothing save the squeaks of a crane broke the silence.

We climbed up the gangway on to the boat which was called the "Loch More." I went very early to my cabin that night as I was very tired.

At six o'clock next morning I was awakened by the boat's horn to find myself being tossed about in my bunk as the sea was very stormy. I quickly dressed and went out on to the second deck where I found my father waiting for me. It was raining heavily. The seagulls were flying about, probably for scraps thrown from the ship.

There was no land in sight except for a few far-away islands until we came to Scalpy. Breakfast bell rang at eight. After finishing my breakfast, I went out on to the second deck alone. At the stern of the ship there was a Union Jack flying. Along near the bow of the ship there was the engine room. In it were great pistons, huge boilers, massive springs and compasses. Out on the bow there was a bridge on which there was a steering wheel. In front of the bridge there was the hold.

The sun was coming out now, therefore I decided to go up to the top deck. The seagulls and gannets were flying about. Getting tired of being on the top deck I went down to the second deck where I heard we were near Tarbert, Harris. There furniture, boxes, barrels and many other things were being loaded into the ship's hold with the aid of a small crane.

About three o'clock we came to Leverburgh where we anchored. The water was too shallow for us to go in, so a rowing boat had to come out with mails and such like.

At four o'clock we sighted Lochmaddy pier in the distance, and a quarter of an hour later we landed there.

ANGUS GILLIES, H.G. IB.

The Seasons.

Daffodils beneath the hill
Whisper in the wind so chill,
Sunshine sparkles on the rill.
Spring is here!

Many are the flowers in bloom
The day is hot, the month is June;
Children play in the dazzling noon.
Summer is here!

Golden corn with poppies red,
Apples on the ground are spread,
Now the rustling leaves are dead.
Autumn is here!

Cold the air and clear the night,
Peaceful snow gleams soft and white,
A silent world by pale moonlight.
Winter is here!

BARBARA SUTHERLAND, H.G. IIIA.

My Trip to Sweden.

The trouble with writing this article is not so much "What can I say?" as "What will I say?" So many incidents of the trip flood to my mind that it is difficult to pick out those most suited to fill my short space. There are my impressions of the country itself (such as the general cleanliness of the country and the abundance of food); and again the little incidents (such as the American lady who wanted to know what—if anything—Scotsmen wear under their kilts, and the black eye I collected playing football).

One of the most prominent features of Swedish life to a visitor from dollar-starved Britain is the extensive "Americanisation." American cars were to be seen everywhere, American goods were in all the shops, while American clothes were generally worn. Another outstanding aspect of Swedish life is the widespread use of electricity. The railways are almost entirely run by electricity and this cuts out grime and smoke, while it increases speed and acceleration.

The language did not present much difficulty to us, as nearly everyone spoke English. Even small boys spoke English (up to a point), as we found at a children's holiday camp that

we visited. The trouble was that non-English speaking people kept cropping up at the most unexpected moments. On one occasion, after we had been in Sweden for about a week, and I was convinced that everyone in Sweden spoke English, I went into a shop and asked for a hat. The girl behind the counter, after several futile attempts at sign-language, said "Sprechen Sie Deutsch?"—which I did not. I then produced the dictionary, and by indicating the appropriate word, managed to convey my meaning to her. She then indicated another department (I was at the stocking counter, ladies' department) where I found another girl. Well, I wasn't going to make the same mistake twice—oh, no! This time I produced the dictionary immediately and pointed out the word. The response was immediate—"Oh! you want a hat!"—in perfect English.

The greater part of our stay in Sweden was at Stockholm—a most amazing city. It is built on islands, the result being, that if you want to go somewhere, you must almost invariably make a wide detour, via the appropriate bridges, to get there. There is a sort of water-bus service, and also tram-cars, but we still had to do a lot of walking, and the weather

was the hottest I have ever experienced. The tram-cars are rather different from the usual type in this country, being single-deckers, running in chains of up to three. There is a driver in the front tram and a conductor in each of the others, which are pulled by the one with the driver. There is no "Pass right down the car, please!" or "No standing on the platform!" As a matter of fact, you can hang on to the outside, or sit on the roof, for all the conductor cares.

Stockholm is the cleanest city I have ever seen. I believe the streets are completely swept every day, while the absence of smoke (due to the use of electricity) from factory chimneys lets the buildings retain their "schoolgirl complexions."

The whole trip was a most enjoyable experience. Altogether we were in Sweden about eleven days, and spent a day and two nights on the boat each way. There were fifteen of us altogether in the party, and I think it would be true to say that "a good time was had by all."

JOHN MACLEOD (Former Pupil),
IM, EDINBURGH.

From the Wee Ones.

I have a little brother; his name is Hugh,
On his next birthday he'll be two,
Sometimes he's good and sometimes he's bad,
But he's the best little brother I've ever had.

BARRIE MACLEAN (Age 6).

I like my milk for supper
I like to drink it up
There is such a pretty fairy
At the bottom of my cup.

PAT MACDONALD (Age 6).

MY PET LAMB

I have a little pet lamb
With a spot above its tail,
It drinks out of a bottle
That's how it is so tame.

WILLIAM A. GORDON (Age 6½)

MY PET

I have a little pet,
It is a pussy cat,
It's coat is nice and soft and warm,
And it is all black.

MARY LEWIS (Age 6).

I have a little garden
Where the daffodils grow
Their lovely golden heads
Make a very pretty show.

FREDA KING (Age 6½).

When I was in London last year with Mummy I saw lots of things. One day we went to the Zoo. There were lions, tigers and other wild animals in cages. I got a ride on a camel. I had to hold on to the camel's hump. Then

I got a ride on a lovely pony. How big the elephants were, and what a lot of food they ate! But the monkeys were the funniest of all. We stood for a long time watching the very funny things they did. Oh! the snakes were horrid I would not like to see one on the road here.

ANNE MACLEOD (Age 6).

JACKIE

I have a dog called Jackie
His coat is black and white,
He loves to play with Rhoda
And was never known to bite.

RONALD FRASER (Age 5).

RORY

I had a lamb called Rory
His coat was very white,
To end my little story
He disappeared one night.

RHODA FRASER (Age 5).

I have a little black and white dog. His name is Teddy. I called him Teddy because when he was a puppy he looked so like a teddy bear. Each morning I fetch him from his shed and have a game with him before going to school. He likes to play ball and we have lots of fun together.

JOHN MUIR (Age 7).

I like going to school
I travel by bus
I like my dinner
And my teacher
Although she makes an awful fuss.

ISOBEL FRASER (Age 6).

VISITING THE ZOO

One Saturday morning I went to the Zoo
I saw a camel, a giraffe and a kangaroo,
Fishes, birds and butterflies,
And a dear little monkey too.

JEAN BURNS (Age 7).

I have a little doggie
She is very fond of me,
For I give her little titbits
When we are at our tea.

She is a clever little dog
I love to make her beg,
I hold a chocolate sweetie up
Then she wags her two front legs.

JAMES BEGG (Age 6).

I had a little dog
His name was Corry
He used to hide my toys
Which really was a worry.

KENNETH C. MACLEOD (Age 6).

My dog is a little fox terrier
His coat is black and white
And though he's very playful
He never tries to bite.

JANET MURRAY (Age 5).

MY PET

I have a little ferret
A funny pet, you'll say
I feed it every morning
And sometimes give it hay.

GEORGE MACLEAN (Age 6½).

I have a little rabbit
He lives in a hutch
I give him corn and carrots
And he likes it very much.

HELEN FRASER (Age 6).

When I am a man, a very big man,
I'll be a driver if I can.
I'll drive a bus or maybe a train
To Inverness and back again.

JACKIE PATERSON (Age 6½).

I like to stay up late at night to see the stars,
Venus, Jupiter and Mars.
I read about them all you see
In children's books by Arthur Mee.

IAIN BREMNER (Age 6).

I have two lovely tabby cats,
They are grand at catching mice.
One is fond of pancakes,
The other is fond of rice.

ROBERT MACKAY (Age 6).

MY PET LAMB

I have a little lamb
With coat as white as snow.
With one black spot upon his back
By which I always know
My own lamb when he's calling
And then I quickly run
To feed him with a bottle
Which I think is lovely fun.

IAN GRANT (Age 6).

Early every morning
I make this a rule.
Feed my hen and chickens
Before I go to school.

ROBIN MACDONALD (Age 6½).

From the Junior Room.

MY PAL DONALD

I have a little playmate
His name is Donald Grant,
We go to school together
With our school caps on at a slant.

We leave our homes in Bishopfield
Shortly after nine
And manage to reach the Academy
When the others are in line.

And when the school bell rings at night
We hurry down the brae
As Donald and I have a call to make
On dear kind Mrs Macrae.

She always greets us with a smile,
And hands us both a bun,
Then when we have a joke with her,
We make for home and fun.

DUNCAN BETHUNE (Age 7).

THE BROWNIES

Last year I joined the Brownies
Oh! what fun it is to be
A girl in Brown without a frown
Just as happy as can be.

I try to do what I am told
And lend a helping hand
For that is a Brownies' Promise
And the Motto of our band.

MOLLY MACGREGOR (Age 9).

MY DOG

I have a little dog
I call her Sheila Brown
She often visits Alice at school
But never goes to town.

HELMIA GUNN (Age 7).

GARAGE

My Father has a garage
 And it's one of my greatest joys
 To be there on a Saturday morning
 Helping out the Boys.

There's screws to pick up
 And tools to hold and many an errand
 to run
 But there you will find me on Saturday
 Having the grandest fun.

SANDY MACGREGOR (Age 7).

A BIRD'S NEST

There's a bird's nest in my garden
 With four little eggs in it
 I go to look at it every day
 And out I go to play
 Now the eggs are hatched
 And the birds have flown away.

MICHAEL ROBERTSON (Age 7).

SPRING

Of all the seasons of the year
 I dearly love the Spring
 To wake up in the morning
 And hear the birdies sing.

The daffodils and lilies
 In all their bright array
 The budding leaves upon the trees
 The little lambs at play.

WILMA URQUHART (Age 8).

HOLIDAY CATCHES

When my cousins were here, we were playing Robin Hood down on the beach. As we played among the rocks we saw a lobster, orange in colour, in a pool. We tried to catch it on a stick but could not. When we went home and told what we had seen we were told we should have brought it home. Another day I was

along playing with a boy who gave me some frog spawn. I took them home, put them in a big jar and filled it with water. I have had them for about a week and two days, and they are now tadpoles. They are quite big and I give them clean water twice a day and fresh weeds every Saturday.

FRANKIE CARMICHAEL (Age 8).

MY TWO LITTLE BROTHERS

I have two little brothers, the elder being Haemish who is three years of age, and Alasdair who will be one year old first June. Haemish has nice fair hair and blue eyes but as Alasdair has hardly any hair yet I do not know what colour it will turn out to be. He has brown eyes and rosy cheeks and is a jolly little fellow. When I wake in the morning I try to read a book only to be interrupted by Haemish demanding one too. I have then to get out of bed, go to the book-cupboard and get a book for him. It is not very often that I take the book he wants so he growls at me pretending to be a tiger. When I am ready to go to school Haemish gets an old shopping-bag and goes to the biscuit tin for a "piece." He then puts it and a book into the bag and pretends that he is coming to school with me. I sometimes have great difficulty in getting him to go back from the end of the road. When we go Alasdair waves his hand and jumps up and down in mam's arms. He also waves his hand at his reflection in the mirror thinking it is another baby. At half-past ten he goes to sleep in the garden and usually wakes when Haemish is listening to the children's programme on the wireless at quarter-to-two. If Haemish thinks that mam is not looking he takes one of his toy doggies and runs down to dad's shop where he gets an old scooter which he calls his bike. Alasdair loves crawling on the carpet and tries to climb up on chairs. We have to be very careful that there is nothing on the floor as he puts everything into his mouth. I am kept very busy on Saturday looking after my two little brothers.

LEONARD D. WILL (Age 8).

From the Senior Room.

A FUNNY INCIDENT

One Saturday as I was walking through a field, I heard jackdaws cawing very loudly. I then gathered that they had nests. Fortunately I had rubber soled shoes so I scrambled up the trunk and sat on a branch. Looking directly opposite I saw a hole. I peered in and saw at the bottom five bluish green eggs with brown and black spots. I rolled up my sleeves and put my hand in. I felt a smooth surface touch my hand and so I closed my fingers on it. As I was taking the egg out very carefully to examine it more closely I discovered a piece of paper sticking to the egg. I pulled it off and it read "The Budget." So that means that jackdaws too are interested in the politics of the country. Also perhaps the jackdaw wanted to see if sitting on the budget makes eggs hatch out with better fertility.

RUTH MUNRO (Age 10).

A BUDDING BOTANIST!

Apart from protoplasm the living substance common to all living things and the fact that all living things begin life as one single cell, plants are a distinct department of the World of life. For convenience plants are divided into groups having similar likenesses. Those are called Thallophyta, Bryophyta, Pteridophyta and Spermophyta. It would be impossible for me in the short space of an essay to deal with all the groups. For this reason I shall confine myself to deal with one, the spermophyta. This group belongs to the higher orders of the Plant Kingdom and is divided into two kinds called Non-Flowering Plants and Flowering Plants or they can be named gymnosperms and angosperms. This group consists of multicellular cells, and each cell has a nucleus which is its centre. It also consists of Plastids which are produced by the living substance, protoplasm. These Plastids make starch which the plants eat. Another Plastid is called chromoplast which produces chlorofil the green colouring matter of the Plant. The Plant is also useful to man. For instance the whin produces the truth drug spartan, also

the nettle produces an acid useful to chemists. So you see the structure of the Plant is very large, though you would not think so.

WILLIAM WICKHAM (Age 11).

MY FIRST DAY GOLFING

That little ball so round and small
And Oh, so hard to hit.
I take my stance
And with a glance
At those who stand around,
I take a swipe
And land upon the ground.
The first shot I had was not so bad
But with many a fix
I got in in a six.

SANDY MACKAY (Age 11).

THE GOVERNMENT

The Elections verdict was very exciting
But the Liberals total could be more enticing,
The great M.P.s with their troubles did dine
While the polling in booths went on until
nine.

The Labour Government is in power
The Tories wish that it was their hour;
But they chatter and mutter and say angrily
Down with the Labour Party's Attlee.

The threepence on taxes is really intolerable
And the tax that's on tea is utterly horrible,
The increase on petrol is Cripps's new sop.
But the increase of ninepence doesn't half
make us hop.

Now the Budget is over, it really is sad
Though I don't think that really the Budget's
so bad,
So now we wait for another year,
And hope the next brings more joy and cheer

COLIN MACRAE (Age 11).

MY GRANNIE

Granny is very old. She has many wrinkles and her hair is quite white, but her eyes are like two stars and even more beautiful. She looks at you mildly and pleasantly and it does you good to look into them. She can tell the most wonderful stories. She does a great deal of knitting and sewing and she has a beautiful gown made of heavy silk. My Mammy and Daddy often go over to see her. I love my Granny very much, because she is very kind to us.

ANNE MELVILLE (Age 10).

A DAY IN THE HOLIDAYS

One misty day during the holidays my mother and father and I went fishing. We thought of going to a loch in the hills. My mother and I went a little way with my father and then we sat down and he went to look for it. After a while we heard a shout of "Ahoy, ahoy." It was my father who had lost his way and no wonder because the hills were so alike. I saw him first. He was over on the other side of the valley. We shouted back and he heard us, but he could not see because his spectacles were covered with rain. He soon got to us by the sound of her shouting, and we were together again.

CATHERINE MACKENZIE (Age 9).

PIPING

One of my favourite musical instruments is the Scottish bagpipes. It is my ambition to be able to play them. To my great delight I was allowed to go to Kenny and be taught. At first I thought that it would be quite easy to play the correct notes, and I was astounded to find that after hard blowing and almost bursting my cheeks, I could only produce a few weird noises. At last, to my great relief I succeeded in producing the correct sounds. Gradually I went through all the exercises until I came to my first tune, "Highland Laddie," and then I felt like a real "Highland laddie" myself.

IAIN LIGERTWOOD (Age 11).

TIMID ANIMALS

I like a mouse, when he's not in my house,
And a rat when he goes nibble-nibble like that.
I like a mole, he's a kind little soul,
And a stoat with a smudge of snow at his throat.
I like a shrew with his nose in the dew,
And a hare, for he runs everywhere.
I like a fox with his little white socks,
And rabbits and squirrels and other brown things, I love them all
So furry and frightened and small.

GEORGE SINCLAIR (Age 9).

*The Qualifying Class.***MAKING FLY HOOKS**

Making fly hooks is my hobby. The first thing I do is to buy some bait hooks from the local shop. Then I have to look for some brightly coloured feathers, and usually I have to write to a dealer's for them, but sometimes I have managed to get some hens' feathers and dye them, but an old Indian headdress serves just as well. Next I cut the hairs off the stalks, and bind them to the hook with special silk thread. When my hook is made it looks very colourful and fascinating to me, but

I suppose it will be more fascinating to the poor trout. I have to be very particular about the flies I use. For instance I must use a bright fly for dull water, and a dull fly for bright water. I find that small hooks are the best because the trout swallow them and so I have more chance of an unlucky victim. I have found my flies to be very successful. Many a trout have I caught with them but my best catch was a one foot salmon which I caught near my home.

ANGUS MACKAY (Age 12).

OUR TIME-TABLE

Monday for sums
 With hoes and hums,
 Tuesday for spelling
 All jotters are swelling.
 Wednesday for reading and poetry too;
 Oh! what a terrible hullabulo!
 Thursday it's drill,
 Oh! what a thrill!
 Friday for Test,
 We all do our best.

MARGARET MACLEOD (Age 11).

MY CAT

I have a little pussy cat
 The name of it is Niger,
 It has a sister, black and grey,
 And we used to call it Tiger.
 I have a little doggie too
 It barks at everybody;
 The reason it makes all that noise
 'Tis cause it's fed on toddy.

MARY MACLEOD (Age 11).

TREES IN SEASON

In Spring I like to watch a tree,
 This is the most interesting time to me;
 The sap is rich, the buds are growing,
 And every day more leaves are showing.

In Summer a tree is in its glory,
 A lovely time to tell its story;
 The blossom is just beginning to go,
 And the lovely green leaves make a lovely show.

In Autumn the leaves change to golden and brown,
 The wind brings them fluttering gracefully down,
 Their work is done and they are content
 Now it is time that the little leaves went.

In Winter the leaves stand cold and grey,
 Patiently waiting for Spring so gay
 To set them dancing once again,
 Restoring the beauty to field and lane.

JANET LEVACK (Age 11).

