Walthamstow High School Magazine.

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Our Farewell Meeting.

DEAR,

You can well imagine my feelings when I realise that soon I shall be bereft of all my children, and although I am told my nerves could not stand them much longer, yet the parting, I am sure, will be my death-knell.

Will you come for the last time on Wednesday, 16th April, at 8 o'clock and bid me farewell?

My dear, I am getting very old and feeble, and it would give me no joy to see you in your fashionable clothes. I want to see you as that little girl I knew in my young days, in the good old times.

Will you let me see you as you were some time between the ages of seven and seventeen and then my dim old eyes will easily recognise you?

Please do not disappoint the last desire of Your affectionate OLD SCHOOL.

DEAR OLD SCHOOL,

Thank you for the splendid farewell you gave us, it was quite the best way you could have chosen. If there was any pain felt it was from sides that ached or facial muscles that were unduly strained; and another link was added to our chain of happy memories.

How delightful it was to see the original occupants of the desks and realise that the school girls of the past are still with us, only they are transformed into young women by longer frocks and turned up hair.

And so we part on the best of terms, and if we look somewhat coldly at the young Georgian beauty who has spread her rosy skirts on the grass beside you, doing her utmost to supplant youwho can blame us?

Farewell Old School you will often be fondly recalled when you too have departed to the Land of Memories.

AN OLD PUPIL.

TIME was behaving in a most erratic manner at the gates of an old house in Church Hill. First he was rushing back twenty years or so, then running back till he was about ten years behind the accepted year of 1913, and dodging through all the years between. He stopped at about 1903, to let three preparatory children, with dolls, enter the gate and turned a somersault back a few more years for their companion.

They found the hall of the Magic House, thronged with school girls, some of whom were to them, when outside the gates, quite grown up. The Magic House was a school, and gradually, with much noise, a class of ninety or so assembled in the largest room. There were mistresses who might have been very cutting and stern about the label in the usual way but as it was only a magic school they merely laughed at it. Every one inspected everyone else. Indeed the kilted skirts and sailor blouses, baby-yoked frocks, severely simple shirt blouses, and those with voluminous sleeves, of the assembly presented an odd picture. Exclamations of delight greeted the socks of one small child and the orange of another.

After shouting themselves hoarse and ringing the tuneless old school-bell the mistresses at last obtained comparative quiet and an examination paper was announced. With the memory of the papers which the School had just struggled with, the "Preparatory" received

pencils and paper with mingled feelings. There was about one pencil to every five girls. The questions taxed the ingenuity of even the geniuses that all "High School" girls naturally are.

As time had gone back a few years he did not mind running forward a century or so and so the "new idea" that "everyone does her best on all occasions" was acted upon and great trays of prizes were brought in and distributed without speeches, every girl receiving one.

There followed a meeting in which a very youthful secretary read the minutes. The business transacted was too advanced for Preparatory to understand and so the writer must leave it out. It had something to do with "electing." If any impression was made it was soon effaced by – supper!

This proved a rush for tea and cakes, and as the demand exceeded the supply, the result was most exciting. When the eating, or watching others eat, was over, the room was filled with sets of

"Sir Roger," and never was it danced with a better will or more laughter. When that ended the strains of "Auld Lang Syne" filled the room and then after cheers, the crowd gradually lessened till there were left only the mistresses in the building of a school that had broken up.

The O.G.A. Examination Paper.

Mathematics:

- 1. Take a bone from a dog- What remains?
- 2. What is "The limit"?
- 3. Find the value of £ s. d. from the equation £ s. d = (P.C.)
- 4. How many penny buns in a dozen? How many halfpenny?
- 5. A sack of coals cost 2s. What does a ton come to?
- 6. A man can carry 20lbs. for five miles in two hours. How far can he carry 200lbs. in one hour?

Botany:

- 1. What did you understand by the following terms?: chestnut, peach, daisy, gooseberry, a bed of roses, crumpled roseleaves, a thorn in the flesh, a wallflower.
- 2. Describe the best ways of protecting plants from (a) your neighbours' cat, (b) our own cat, indicating also the method of treatment of the animals in (a) and (b) respectively.

3. Of what do the following remind you? Miss and Mrs. Pankhurst – a burst pipe - a Hospital. A suffragette's exclamation. A geometrical tree.

French:

1. What is the French for: ripping, my hat. Everybody's doing it – Hitchy Koo?

Geography:

- 1. To describe a sailor's trousers what two French Seaports would you name?
- 2. If you liked a quiet life, what district in Essex would you avoid?
- 3. How did Mrs. Pankhurst feel when she came out of prison?
- 4. What part of History would an Arab always know? Correlation.

History:

- 1. What king was careless about his laundry?
- 2. What king's name would a homeless woman say to her husband?
- 3. What would have been the probable effect on the Spanish Armada if the Bowling Green on Plymouth Hoe had been destroyed by Suffragettes?
- 4. Of what siege does a painful tooth remind you?

Literature:

1. Before what would a militant suffragette like to stand armed with stones and a hammer?

Empire Day.

EMPIRE DAY was celebrated at School this year on May 23rd, as the 24th was a Saturday.

Friday morning dawned rather cloudy, but fears of a wet day were relieved when Miss Hewett declared all forecasts good, and finally dispelled when the sun shone out brightly before mid-day.

In the morning the School sang "God Bless our Native Land," and the usual prayers were replaced by a special supplication for the country, after which lessons continued till "break." Then the two downstairs rooms were rolled into one and the whole School assembled. Everyone wore some emblem to show appreciation of the day, while the flower vases had been decked for the occasion with the colours of the Union Jack. Soon after eleven the School stood up and we began our celebrations

by singing "Land of our Birth." After the hymn, two little people, Edie Lampen and Eva Jones told us very prettily in turn, about the trees and birds. The old English song, "Come Lasses and Lads," was sung by everyone, and a solo and several recitations were given by girls in the Upper School. "Rule Britannia" followed, and then much to everybody's satisfaction Miss Hewett herself addressed us for a few minutes.

She reminded us that upon this day of all days we should resolve to become good citizens, and she showed plainly that true love for our country does not consist in singing lustily the National Anthem or Rule Britannia, but in serving her loyally by working steadily every day, and that we do not add to England's virtues by extolling them to overshadow those of other countries. Miss Hewett brought this fact nearer by saying that the good reputation of the new School will depend not only on how much we proclaim abroad its qualities, but on the conduct and personal appearance of every individual girl.

"While we may well be proud of the splendid heritage left us by our forefathers," she continued, "we must remember that many dark spots still remain to be cleared; each girl should feel in some degree responsible for their removal and ought therefore to set to work at once, bearing this in mind, that if ever the privilege of helping a good cause is to be hers, she must be fittingly equipped."

Miss Hewett hoped that her scholars would not be numbered among those who denounce Walthamstow by grumbling that the houses are too symmetrical, the railway route uninteresting, and its passengers not always of the select class. "Never be ashamed of a man who is soiled by his work," she said, "if he was *too* clean, you might."

Miss Hewett concluded by mentioning Walthamstow's chief charm - the forest where we proposed to drive in the afternoon. The programme was then continued by a song, "The Flight of the Earls," from Forms VI., V. and IV., and after another recitation the school sang the National Anthem which brought the morning celebrations to a close.

At two o'clock we reassembled to find brakes waiting for us. These carried us to a part of the forest near Epping, where we all got out and had a regular leaf-fight, pelting one another with leaves to such an extent that all one could see was flying leaves and waving arms and legs. After we had packed the little ones into the brakes to be driven to High Beech, we set out to walk through the forest. Everything looked

lovely and we enjoyed it thoroughly.

On arriving at High Beech we settled down to a welcome tea, after which our amusements were somewhat varied. Some went on roundabouts, some had swings, some donkey rides; some walked to the Church and others went into the Nursery to inspect the glorious rhododendrons.

We were driven home through Chingford, where we left some of our number. We sang national songs, and as we neared the School, we stood, at the peril of being jolted from the brakes, to sing "The National Anthem."

C. M. K. W.

The Old School

RELUCTANT echoes still the farewell song, The tread of eager feet soon dies away, Vibrant the cheer and laughter long The bell's worn tongue has said its say.

The door shuts with a weary bang
The shaky walls awaken with a start,
The trembling windows loosely clang
The house is desolate - apart.

Now night draws near, and o'er the walls And old bare boards the moonbeams steal, And 'mid the duskiness there falls The shade of things intangible, unreal.

Spirits of long-past laughter thinly gleam
And gently glow the shades of rare dim tears,
The ghosts arise of every childhood dream,
White souls of girlish loves and hopes, and
fears.

Swift from each room they dance and slide

They race the corridors along, From hearth and cupboard silently they glide

And down the staircases they throng.

But short their time and brief as youth
The shimmering dance and elfin
song,

The dawn like some unwished-for truth

Shews its grey light and shadow long.

Hark! echoes faint upon the cool night

breeze

The sound of games of distant summer hours.

And from the gloomy rustling trees
Young faces sway and droop like flowers.

But thou stand'st quiet in a calm repose Enfolded in the ivy's kind embrace, Which as thy loneliness more deeply grows

In loving reparation clings about thy grace.

As ivy strong our love shall round thee dwell,

Nor even in our hearts thy memory cease In hearing of the sounds thou lov'st so well O worn and lowly mother rest in peace.

D.G.

Marriages

REED-REEVES.-On March 31st, Helen Mary Reed to Mr. John Herbert Reeves.

DONKIN-ROLLO.-On July 3rd, Constance Donkin to Mr.

William Rollo.

SCOTT-CLARKE.-On July 5th, Florrie Scott to Mr. Frederick

William Clarke.

WILDASH-SIMONDS.-On July 8th, Dorothy Wildash to Mr. Stuart Rant Simonds.

MERCER-BALFOUR.-On July 19th, Helen Mercer to Mr. J. B. Balfour.

A Good Afternoon's Work.

THE scene was a long narrow room with far too many people and far too much furniture in it. True, there were six window's and upon that occasion they were open, for it was a mild afternoon in early November, but this was an exception to the general rule.

The occupants of this room were nine members of the gentler sex; they were all busy and for once in a way the conversation was not relative to the way the pile of a velvet frock should be cut; what he said; or, anyone's latest ailment. All to be heard was the snap of a pencil and the rage of its owner, figures being called over and checked, and the occasional tearing of a piece of paper.

Suddenly a girl in a corner of the room shivered softly, "Look, look, there's a mouse!"

Prompt measures were taken, the junior was sent out to beg, borrow or steal a mouse trap and cheese, and the rest sat with their feet up, and skirts well off the floor.

From one seat in the room it was just possible to see where the intruder went and rather closer investigation shewed a biggish hole. The rooms on the other side of the passage were occupied by three managers, and it was the duty of one of these to attend to the needs of his neighbours across the way. It was the work of a moment to ask if the hole could be filled.

"How do you know it's a mouse hole?" said he.

"Please, we saw a mouse come out."

"Well, we've got some poison somewhere about the place"; and with that the agitated ladies had to be content. A real effort was made to settle down, especially after the mouse trap was set and everyone had forgotten the visitor when the trap went over with a heart-rending snap and everyone's nerves jangled in unison. The poor wee beastie was put in a pail of water, and for a time all was well. Not for long though, there must have been something very attractive in that corner for in less than half an hour somebody's chair scraped and a startled voice said, "Well, I'm blest if there isn't another mouse under my chair."

"H'm! Come to find the other I suppose," said an apparently calm senior, though it was noticed that her skirt was a long way off the floor.

The trap was fetched in, rebaited and set, but for an hour and a half that little wretch scurried over the floor at large and for a corresponding time everyone sat, expecting each minute to hear the snap of the trap, and grimly determined not to yell.

It was nearly dark when someone said warningly, "Look he's nibbling the cheese, the trap's going over n-. "Too late, the yell was out but the mouse was fairly caught.

After the funeral rites, the gentleman from over the road came to find out what had happened. He never asked, but as surely as anything unusual occurred he needed a price urgently.

"Have you brought that poison?"

"No, we haven't got any, but you've caught your mouse, what more do you want?"

"We've caught two mice."

"Well, I call that a very good afternoon's work. I should be satisfied with that if I were you. Did you say sixpence for moulding those lids? Thank you!"

Social Life in France as seen from an Official Circle.

AN impression of French social life seen from a Préfecture is necessarily limited to social life in Official circles.

Members of the Administration are not received with open arms by any but those of their own persuasion and are barely tolerated by the old French nobility and the big manufacturers (les industriels) whose interests are quite Anti-Republican. If the outlook is restricted to Official circles it is at least fairly comprehensive, men holding Government appointments of more or less value make up with the Army officers a huge proportion of the male population of most French towns.

Such a large circle must, of course, have many sub-divisions, and in this paper some attempt will be made to describe social life in a Préfet's family.

The Préfet of a large town is a very important person; he represents our lieutenant of a county. His title is taken from the town in which the Préfecture is situated but his jurisdiction extends over the "departement," and over the several sons-préfets who hold office under him in the other towns in the "departement." There are Préfets of three grades, first, second, and third class, according to the importance of their prefectorate. During Clemenceau's premiership a higher grade still, "Préfet hors de classe," was created; but this dignity is attached to the man and not to the place.

Since a Préfet looks for preferment from the Ministers in power and he, in turn, is able to further the cause of any lesser government employé, there is much wire, pulling, that often appears very despicable.

A man has very little opportunity of advancement without someone who can "pistonner" him and he will often suffer many indignities at the hands of this all-powerful one to obtain protection at the moment when there is a "mouvement" in Administrational circles. The death or disgrace of a Préfet in office gives rise to such a "mouvement." A wave of excitement and suspense sweeps over

numberless members of the Administration who hope to profit in some remote way by the great game of General Post which ensues.

A Préfet requires much tact and determination and if his wife is a help to him in the social world is much to be envied.

Madame la he Préfète then has many duties, she must visit at the New Year every government official of any social standing in the town. Her visits are short and if the distances are not too great she will call at from twenty to thirty houses in one afternoon. This, she will describe as her "corvee," and such indeed it is. In a Provincial town, in her hasty flight from house to house, she will mount *miles* of stairs; for it is rarely, except in quite new buildings, that lifts are to be found, and the less well-paid officials are usually installed as near the roof as possible.

She will be received by an embarrassed hostess, generally quite unprepared for callers, for the Préfète during her New Year's visits pays no attention to reception days; and five minutes will be spent in a cold and unaired salon where Madame la Préfète catches that cold she always indulges in at this epoch.

The New Year brings also to a Préfet his social duties. On the 1st of January, the General of the Army Corps (should the town be a military base) pays a call at the Préfecture at the somewhat early hour of 8.30 a.m. This visit, an amicable one, though the two men are usually diametrically opposed in all their views, lasts only a few minutes and the General departs to his own home where, almost immediately, he receives the return visit from the Préfet, and then the two go together to call on all the principal officials in the town. This round of gaiety lasts until about 5 o'clock in the evening and a New Year has begun with all appearance of entire unanimity between State and Army.

After the New Year visits are over Madame resumes her usual round of about a dozen calls a day. She has a printed pamphlet containing the names, social position and reception days of the more important people in the town and her regular visiting list includes all officers wives from the grade of Captain and upward, and the wives of all the chief government officials. Her life, until the end of May, when reception days are put aside until the longer evenings begin, is one continual round of visit and reception.

She has her own day once a week when she receives from twenty to thirty callers, and if she is of a talkative nature one wonders how the throat of even a "Meridionale" can cope with such incessant exercise.

The Prefecture is usually a huge building well-furnished but without any personal note. This last however is imparted by reigning Préfète. She is perforce a bird of passage; nor would she wish otherwise, for if her husband is to make his career a success they must be ever moving on.

Their household goods are not numerous but sufficient to convert a public residence into a spacious but characteristic home.

Each year the town votes a certain sum of money for the upkeep of the Préfecture: a wise Préfet and an ambitious Préfete will see that the sum is quite expended; the former from motives of prudence and a wish to ensure a farther generous supply, the latter from a desire to make her "installation" as perfect as possible. Every convenience is then at hand and there are none of the drawbacks to comfort so frequently found in the French middle-class establishment; all sanitary arrangements are of the best; the lighting, electric, is perfect; and the "cuisine" is usually excellent.

At any moment a visitor of some importance may come to the Préfet's bureau, and if not an inhabitant of the town, must be received to either "déjeuner" or "diner." The meal must be excellent, therefore the kitchen staff is forcedly very superior.

When a Minister visits the district, he and his suite are entertained at the Préfecture which often has a special wing reserved for this purpose. During his stay huge déjeuners and diners are held in one of the large salles-àmanger and then indeed is the Préfète well Calling occupied. is abandoned and interminable interviews with the head cuisiniere takes its place. A well installed Préfete will be able to give a dinner to thirty persons without outside help but these functions often comprise twenty to sixty guests and then caterers and florists are requisitioned.

The whole trend of life is one of change and excitement; entertaining, if only two or three people, takes place every day. At about 11 o'clock the telephone bell is heard and the Préfet announces the advent of two or three unexpected guests. If they are of sufficient importance (from a political standpoint) the menu is hastily altered from four to seven courses, the flowers are placed in more advantageous positions, the family don more seductive attire and at 12 a.m. the guests accompanied by the Préfet arrive for "déjeuner."

The menkind make their stiff salutation and in a few moments a podgy valet-de-chambre announces that "Madame est servie." A solemn procession passes from "le billard," a handsome tapestried apartment through the salon to a little salle-amanger. The men wear gloves, usually of dark and often shabby kid, which are not removed until the "hors d'oeuvre" is presented to them, and the English mind involuntarily conjures up a French version of Puss in Boots.

Should the guests have boys of an age to go to school, exhaustive enquiries are made as to which class they are in at the Lycée and as to their respective ages; while all present speculate at what age they will present themselves for the baccalauréat, which will be their first step in whatever career has been decided on for them.

If a child be found to be a year behind in his studies, the fond parent will go into minute details as to each ailment that has caused an enforced absence from school and for some minutes the conversation is turned from the eternal political channel which obtains at each and every meal.

Literary subjects appear taboo and in our Prefecture no books on any subject beyond a few volumes on the district presented to the Préfet by the author, an aspirant for "decoration," were to be found in any of the living rooms. Needless to remark that the volumes were uncut.

Drama and opera can however take the place of much of the lighter forms of literature and at the theatre a Préfet has his own "loge" with often a private entrance and little salon. During the winter months, a "troupe" who play Opera are established in the towns, and Operas by Wagner, Massenet, Delibes, etc., are played at least four times a week and the Préfet's "loge" is usually occupied on two of these evenings.

Madame la Préfete feels it incumbent upon her to appear fairly often at the theatre, and if sometimes, after a weary round of visits and a hastily arranged déjuener for six unexpected guests, her eyes will close, she is surely only resting them and enjoying to the full the music she has heard so often before.

But her day may have had still other occupation. She is dame patroness of the "écoles maternelles" and has, perhaps, been at their fete, distributing prizes and toys, hearing interminable discourses and receiving great sheaves of flowers; or more tiring still she has

been to a Committee Meeting of the "Croix Rouge," where she has met the wives of Army men who have not hesitated to snub her for they have no love for the administration and its officers and show their dislike quite openly if their husbands have no immediate need of a Préfet's protection.

Added to her many preoccupations, the Préfète who is a coquette, or in other words wishes to be well-dressed, has a thousand cares as to her toilet. She is to attend the "Concours Hippique" or the "Courses," and what can she wear. Her costume will be observed by all, and fashion decrees the sylph-like form with which nature by some unexplained oversight has omitted to endow her.

The wives of the Reactionnaires will all be there, and in a carping mood; how shall she robe herself to at least escape contumely, and at best merit the highly eulogistic paragraph; that will surely appear about her in the Republican organs.

And so the days go on- social function follows social function, and the hard pressed wife of a busy Préfet longs for the days when her husband shall have his "retraite." The Prefecture shall be left behind to house gloriously other Préfèts while she will, contentedly, retire into private life, occupying herself solely with her husband, who needs her care, for his indigestion has become permanently impaired by the innumerable banquets he has endured (and this is a "mot juste").

The days may glide uneventfully away, and though she will perhaps occasionally regret some moments of her early life, yet she is a French woman and her "menage" will always be her pride and her care; thus in her cosy "apartement" surrounded by those she loves, her portion will be one of placid content.

Women's Printing Society, Ltd, Brick Street, Piccadilly.