



The ALMA MATER

NEWSLETTER OF BISHOP COTTON SCHOOL, SIMLA.

Vol. 1 No. 2

April, 1956

'Age cannot wither her,
Nor Custom stale her infinite variety'

In the sphere of human affairs there is a remarkable duality about Time. On the one hand it strengthens tradition, and nourishes the beautiful and worthwhile. On the other it fosters decay. Wisdom lies in retaining permanence amidst change, and yet avoiding the danger of remaining static. Particularly careful does one have to be in an institution. One must keep going ahead, making plans, doing things, striving always after perfection, yet aware that perfection is not yet. So in B.C.S. this year, as every year, we are once more launched on improving the School.

Constructions: A good school must look good. Work has, therefore, been started on plastering part of the Main School building. The section around and over the Office is already done, and the effect is very pleasing indeed. A cement pathway leading to the Headmaster's Lodge, and to the Headmaster's House Dormitory, is under construction. Masons are also busy on new cement drains, where they are needed.

Classrooms: During the month, larger and better blackboards have been constructed in a number of classrooms. The lighting in most classrooms has also been improved.

N.C.C. & Social Service Work: N.C.C. training is in full swing. The cadets parade four hours a week, and are treated to sandwiches and tea or cold drinks during breaks. Smart as they are on parade, it is particularly cheering to see the wholehearted manner in which they undertake regular social service work besides. They have been painting railings and trellis work all over the School. They have brightened up the Kindergarten classroom by painting the little tables and chairs in four lovely pastel shades. Currently, they are at work on a 'pushta', and very soon they will, it is hoped, start work on the road from the School Gate to the main building. Also on their programme is the improvement of the 'First' playground. In this connection we must congratulate Mr. F. Paul, Officer in Charge, on his promotion to the rank of Second Officer.

School Council: A School Council, consisting of School Prefects, had its inaugural meeting at the Headmaster's Lodge on Sunday, the 29th April. It is hoped that the formation of the Council will lead to constructive suggestions from pupils of the School, suggestions which will lead to improvements in our corporate life.

Prayers for India: Starting with the National Anthem, the morning Assembly on Fridays is now given over to prayers for India and the School. Thus, dedicated to both the Motherland and the Alma Mater, we stand - in the words of our School song -
'foursquare, to spur us onward still'.

Early in April we were visited, for the second time in two years, by the Shakespeareana International Theatre Company. They enacted for us Shaw's most talked-about play 'Pygmalion'. Though perhaps a trifle too highbrow for school children, the girls from Auckland House and most of our own older boys appeared to have found the show entertaining.

Geoffrey Kendall, in the role of Professor Higgins, took perhaps a great deal of liberty in interpreting the part. Could one help comparing with Leslie Howard's unforgettable performance in films? But both Kendall's acting and his direction were at all times compelling by their pace and vigour.

Laura Liddell made a fascinating Eliza Doolittle, both as the common flower girl, and as the polished but heart-broken product of the Professor's art. Brian Kellett, as Alfred Doolittle, was thoroughly delightful and true to type, while John Day, in the role of Colonel Bickering, reminded one of the days of authentic 'Poonah' colonels. Wendy Beavis was good as the Professor's indulgent mother, and Jennifer Bragg looked every inch the unyielding housekeeper.

Most unforgettable of all, for the boys, must have been the last line of the play, spoken in the midst of loud laughter - 'She is going to marry Freddie, she's going to marry Freddie.' (No need of an explanation, is there?)

THE VISIT OF MR. DUNDAS

On the 24th April we were very happy to have with us Mr. Dundas, Chief Representative of the British Council in India. He went round the School, met members of Staff, and in the afternoon addressed students of the Sixth Form. He explained to us what the British Council did for Indians, both in India and abroad. He then went on to talk of public schools all over the world, and stressed the importance of the public school type of education. He himself has been round public schools in every country where they exist. We are grateful for his illuminating talk, and for the interest he and his wife took in the School.

A NEW DRIVE

To further the study of the lingua franca, a new Hindi Society has been instituted under the guidance of Mr. Shankar. Meetings will commence some time next month.

In order to assist those who wish to work, and to encourage those who are anxious to avoid it, Detention Classes have been introduced. We hope they will bring about a general improvement in our standards of work.

A general drive has begun to make classrooms, dormitories, and the School as a whole cleaner, neater, and better looking.

'LORD BABS'

The School Amateur Dramatic Society has started work on Keble Howard's three-act farce, 'Lord Babs'. The cast consists largely of pupils of the School, and the curtain is to go up on the 2nd June, at the Gaiety Theatre in Simla. We hope all parents and friends who happen to be up in Simla at the time will come and see the show.

Cricket - started on the 2nd April with the Headmaster's XI versus School Probables match. Seven matches have been played so far, one of which was against the Punjab Accounts XI, which we won. Two matches were between the Headmaster's XI and the School Probables, both of which were won by the Headmaster's XI. The other four were mixed matches, and were very interesting.

So far, Mr. Brown has got a scintillating 86 scored in just over half an hour, Inderjit Singh Ahluwalia hit up two sparkling centuries and A.S. Dulat got a patient 59. Amarjit Singh, Chattar Singh, and V.R. Sud have bowled well, while Gurpratap Singh is quite a discovery. Vinod Nayar has been really alert behind the stumps.

Meanwhile, the School Set is practising very seriously for our fixtures against Lawrence School, Sanawar, scheduled for the last week of May.

Swimming - has been postponed because of a few cases of Influenza in Simla and in our School. The health of the School, however, continues to be excellent.

Boxing - has been postponed, and instead the boys are kept busy at extra Carpentry classes in the evenings.

Debating Society - met on the night of 20th April. The bone of contention was 'In the opinion of the House the best years of one's life are before the age of thirty'. Curzon and Lefroy Houses were pitched against each other. It was particularly pleasing to see no less than thirteen members speak from the floor of the House, thirteen inexperienced young lads find the courage to speak. Three minutes on the stage are said to be worse than three rounds in the boxing ring! Eventually, Curzon carried the Motion with 29 votes to 27 - a very close issue indeed.

The Organ - in the School Chapel has been repaired, and once more we may really lift our voices in hymns to God.

Cinema Shows - that kept us entertained this month were:
 7th April: Fort T I. (George Montgomery)
 14th April: Young Bess (Jean Simmons)
 21st April: Happy Time (Charles Boyer)
 28th April: Dark Man (An Arthur Rank mystery)

Anderson Library - Among the new books received are the following which are of general interest:

Gold of their Bodies	- by Charles Gorham
Tree Tops	- by Jim Corbett
Bugles & a Tiger	- by John Masters
Bhowani Junction	- by John Masters
Sixth of June	- by Arnold Shapiro
Island in the Sun	- by Alec Waugh
South Col	- by W. Noyce
Olympic Runners	- by Evans
Instructions to Young Swimmers	
Six Great Aviators	

Heard in School: Mistress to 1st Boy: 'Why are you late?'
 1st Boy : 'I was asleep, Miss.'
 Mistress to 2nd Boy: 'And why are you late?'
 2nd Boy : 'I had to wake him up, Miss.'

Acknowledgements: We have received the newsletters of the Modern School, Delhi, and of the Birla Public Schools.

THE COTTON SOCIETY

At the 108th meeting of the Cotton Society, held on the 18th April, the guest speaker was Mr. Asrani who gave a most interesting talk on Journalism. He divided his topic into three sections - the actual production of a newspaper, the power and influence of the Press, and Journalism as a career. It was a very knowledgeable talk, since he has himself been a journalist. We learnt a great deal, and are grateful for a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

Besides Mr. Brown (Vice President) and Housemasters and their wives, the following thirteen new members were present:

Messrs. Hirinder Singh, R.L.Sud, Anil Sikand, Ravijit Singh, Inderjit Singh, R.K.Malhotra, A.K.Lamba, Ajit Singh, Vinod Nayar, Satinder Singh, Patanjali Nanda, S.S.Ahluwalia, and Surinder Pal Singh.

Ajit Singh
(Hony. Secretary).

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OLD COTTONIANS ASSOCIATION

R.Puri (R: 1949-54) will shortly be proceeding to the U.S.A. to join the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Prashida (R: 1951-53) visited the School for a day. We were glad to have him with us.

Raja Virbhadra Singh of Busharh has been blessed with the birth of a daughter. Our heartiest congratulations to him.

New Addresses:

J.C.Ross - c/o Western Circle, Survey of India, Mt. Abu.

Atamjit Singh - 669, Model Town, Jullundur.

Baljit Singh - 2701, G.C.Baljit Singh, Kohima Company,
Military College, P.O.Premnagar, Dehra Dun.

A.S.Khullar - 2276 'Charlie Squadron',
National Defence Academy, Kharakvasla.

Members of the Association in Bombay are very keen to run a Bombay Branch of the O.C.A. I hope to be in Bombay in the second week of June for the opening of this branch. Will those interested in the scheme please contact Rattan D. Tata, 'Ivanhoe', Backbay Reclamation, Bombay.

F.M.Brown,
(Hony. General Secretary)

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir - I could fill this whole letter by merely repeating just one word, 'Congratulations'. The Mitre is a stroke of genius, and I enjoyed every word in it. All this information would have taken me a lifetime of letters. Keep it up, Mitre!

R. Gupta,
(Ibbetson, 1952-54)

(Thank you. We are very happy to be of service to you and to)