

THE MITRE

No. 9

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Annual Subscription, 5/-, due on 1st January

Foreword

Spring is here, and what better season could have been chosen for bedecking "The Mitre" in a new and more becoming garb? It was Polonius who said "Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy . . ." and it was Will Curtis who showed us that it was well within our means to have "The Mitre" handsomely printed, as befits the journal of our Association.

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So much for the outward appearance of these pages. Their contents follow the traditional pattern except that some of the news may be somewhat out of date because of the long time that has elapsed since the previous issue appeared. The remedy, of course, is that "The Mitre" should be published more regularly—say twice a year at least, but this cannot be done unless two important conditions are fulfilled.

The first is that subscriptions which are due annually on January 1st should be paid promptly and, if possible, without demand, so that ample funds should be available to meet the cost of printing. The second condition is that more Old Cottonians should overcome their pen-shyness. We are not thinking of the many members whose letters to Raymond Wood have provided most of the raw material for the following pages. As a source of information their letters are always warmly welcome.

We are thinking, rather, of other Cottonians who have left these shores to lead exciting lives abroad in places like Canada, Malaya, Rhodesia and Kenya—places that are pregnant with news. It needs very little imagination to realise that the events of the daily round, in places like these, are far from humdrum when viewed from 5,000 miles away: in fact they are bursting to go into print.

Are there no Cottonians, then, who will send us, without duress, an article on "A Day in the Life of a . . ."? Must we set the example—we, whose travels are bounded by the daily return trip from Putney to the Bank? It is up to you Cottonians. The ball is in your court.

* * * *

Most Cottonians will have heard, with deep regret, of the death last year of Mrs. R. E. Wood, but we cannot overlook this opportunity of paying tribute to the memory of a true friend of the Association. Her devotion to the O.C.A. was valued the more because most of her work was done quietly behind the scenes. Surely the best way whereby we can express our appreciation of all that Mrs. Wood did for us is to remember that we can help to lighten the duties of the Honorary Secretary by keeping him posted and by replying promptly to his letters.

The Honorary Secretary's Letter

Dear Cottonians,

First, I must apologise for not having replied to all Old Cottonians who have written to me during the past ten months. Unusual circumstances have deadened the inclination for correspondence and I trust that all will accept this letter in lieu of individual replies. My sincere thanks go to all who have written me letters of sympathy during the trying months I have experienced.

The past year has been a very successful one for the O.C.A. At our Annual Dinner in October 1951 there were 85 at the festive board under the chairmanship of Rev. Canon F. R. Gillespy, who was Headmaster of the School from 1918 to 1922. The oldest Old Boy present was W. G. Dollman (1882-1890) who, I am sorry to say, passed away in February 1952, three months after his wife had been killed in a road accident. The guests of the evening were Mrs. Tilley, Hon. Secretary of the Old Sanawarians' Association, and Mr. Perry, of Ghora Gali. For every Old Cottonian who was present on this occasion there were many absent friends who were with us in spirit and I would like to thank the 87 Old Cottonians from every quarter of the globe who sent us greetings.

In January 1952 a special meeting was called to welcome Mrs. Fisher, wife of the present Headmaster, who was spending a short holiday in England. Twenty-seven Old Boys, representing B.C.S. over 61 years (1890-1951) were present. Mrs. Fisher gave us an interesting and encouraging picture of the School today and showed us a grand collection of photographs. It was very gratifying to learn of the successful efforts that were being made to preserve and, indeed, strengthen the independence of B.C.S. On behalf of Old Cottonians in the U.K. may I assure Mr. and Mrs. Fisher that we are eager to give practical, though necessarily modest, help towards this end, and a note elsewhere in this issue records what has been done by way of a first instalment.

On July 7th, 1952, we met to welcome the Rev. J. Kingdon who was on the Staff from 1920 to 1923. Those who knew "Punch"—and those who did not—had an enjoyable evening. Here may I say that I hope we shall have the opportunity of welcoming other ex-members of the Staff. If they will let me know when they are likely to be in London, I'll do the rest.

The A.G.M. was held on 5th April, 1952, under the chairmanship of Mr. A. C. Brabson (1904-06) and a short account of the meeting is given elsewhere in this issue. Once again I found myself entrusted with the two jobs of Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer.

It gives me great pleasure to report that G. Baldry (1911-12) has now left hospital. Our thoughts go out again to Eddie Bee (1917-23) and Colin Lincoln (1929-30) who, at the time of writing, are still in hospital. It was learnt with regret that A. F. Brooks died in April 1952 and on your behalf I sent letters of condolence to relatives.

A number of chaps have left the U.K. to take up appointments

abroad. They take with them our best wishes for their success and we hope that they will keep in constant touch with us.

Now I must touch upon a very important practical matter. "The Mitre" is costing the Association at least £25 to print and despatch to the four corners of the earth and I make a special appeal to all members to send the annual sub (5/-) as early as possible so that we may balance our accounts.

Be not overcome with coyness but please get down to it and write me a letter. We enjoy our beer and sandwiches at our monthly meetings at "The Feathers" but we do not really start living unless we have plenty of news of old schoolfellows to nourish us. May I mention that the Editor of "The Mitre" is always glad to receive material for publication.

Finally loyal greetings go out to the Old School. Long may it continue to flourish.

With my best wishes and salaams to the present Headmaster, the Staff and scholars at B.C.S., all ex-members of the Staff and all Old Cottonians wherever they may be.

Yours sincerely,

RAYMOND E. WOOD

("LUMBOO")

RIVAZ 1920-23.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND REUNION

5th APRIL, 1952

Most people try to avoid annual general meetings for fear that they might be asked to do this or that, or be elected to serve on a committee, but this was not true of the meeting held at "The Feathers" Hotel on Saturday, April 5th. Rain threatened to keep down the numbers, but when the time arrived a large gathering settled down to cheer the proceedings. We really did appreciate the effort made by those Old Boys and ex-members of the Staff who came from long distances. This special effort is a real source of encouragement and an example to all Cottonians who live in London and the suburbs. It is a good example of the splendid spirit which is characteristic of B.C.S.

To open the proceedings Mr. Brabson (1904-06) was elected to serve as Chairman and the business of the meeting was soon in hand. Before the presentation of the Association's financial statement, a vote of thanks was moved to Mr. O. Drummond who had to relinquish the office of Hon. Treasurer in March, 1952, before leaving England to take up an appointment in Bulawayo, S. Rhodesia.