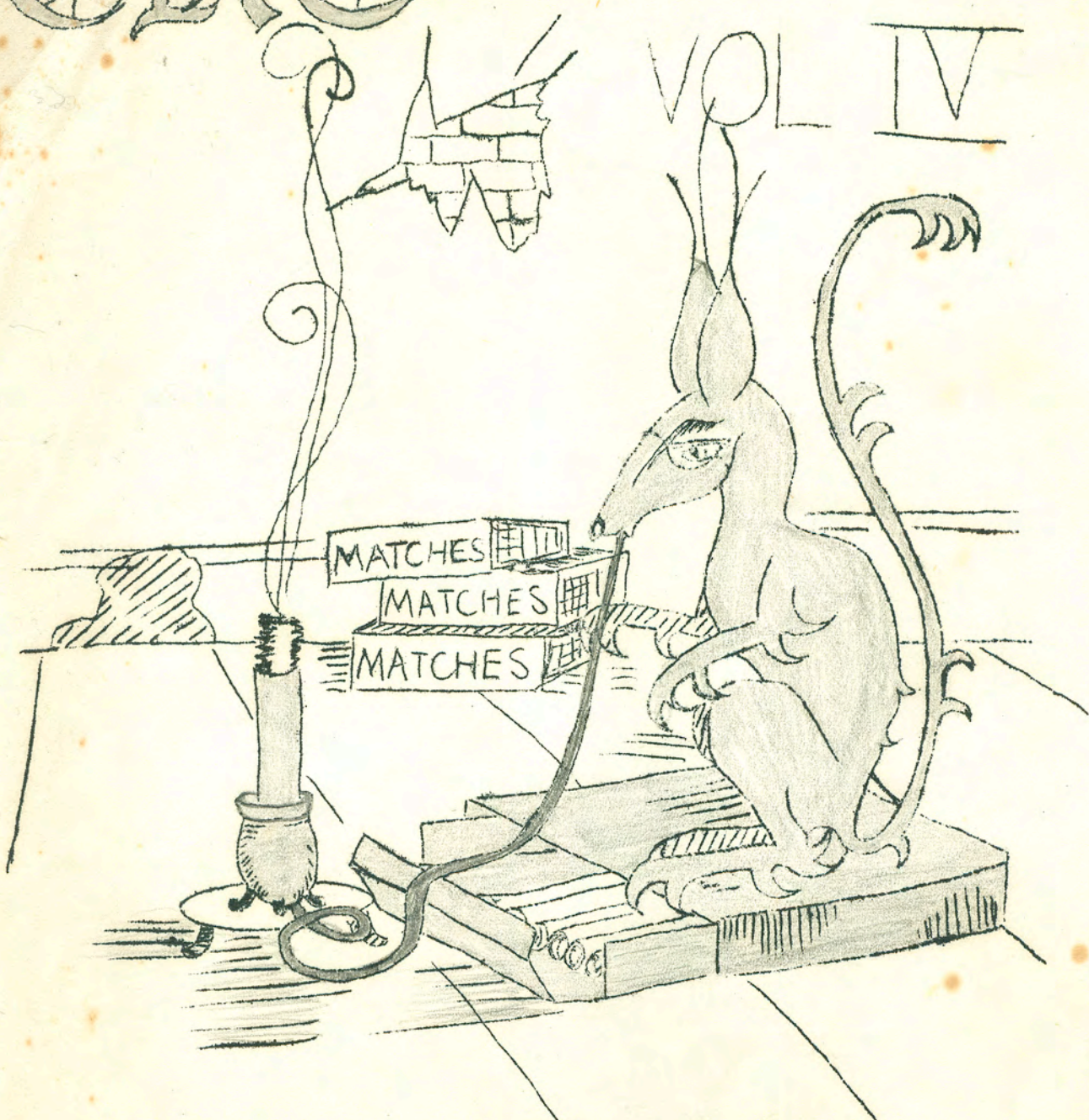


TRAC

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VOL IV



CEPHIA



## EDITORIAL

With much tribulation, the fourth volume of the Elphin has been painfully born from the combined efforts of the Editors, and the bold spirits in the School who proffered entries, to whom, whether their entries were accepted or not, we are very grateful.

The response to our appeal for entries, expressed through countless dramatic posters and polished poems, was still not wholly satisfying, but the Editors hope that the fruits of their efforts will meet with your approval.

Floreat Elphina!

Editors: G. Shorland-Ball.  
M. Hogg.  
F. Jackson.  
A. Hall.

Sub-Editors: P. Goodwin.  
Mgha. James.



The orange firelight casting its darting shadows across the white walls was the only light in the cottage kitchen.

Outside the last faint light-rays were dying and the wind, whining through the trees, made the window panes shudder, but inside, the room was warm and still and inviting.

It seemed to be waiting for someone. The table was laid and the two marmalade cats which lay curled together in the rocking chair occasionally raised their heads and looked towards the door. The grandfather clock ticked quietly and evenly, and, with the faint crackling of the fire, was the only sound in the room.

Then faintly, above the noise of the wind, came the sound of running feet. The cats uncurled, stretched, and jumped to the floor. The door was flung open and a child in a green cloak entered and shut it behind her. She was breathless, and the wind had whipped a warm colour into her cheeks. She took off her cloak and bent to caress the cats, which wound themselves round her legs. They accompanied her to the fire and jumped on to her lap when she sat on the rug and stretched out her hands to the blaze.

The simmering kettle began to blow out clouds of steam and the child rose.

The cats sat looking hopefully upwards while she ate, and then, when she had finished, buried their noses into two saucers of cream, purring with contentment and flicking minute drops up into their twitching whiskers.

The child drew the curtains and shut out the creak of windblown branches and the moaning of the wind. She curled up in the rocking chair and when the cats had licked up each precious drop of cream, and washed meticulously each golden hair, they climbed into the chair with her. There, with her hand caressing their silky heads, they lay, purring ecstatically.

The flames died gradually, until the room lay in darkness except for a warm glow that touched the child's dark hair and made the cats' green eyes glitter.

The child's book slipped to the floor with a soft thud and the dark plaits fell forward as her head bent on to the cushions. Her hand was stilled on the smooth heads, and her eyes closed slowly, till she slept and the marmalade cats were the only creatures awake, staring with shining emerald slits into the glowing fire.



S N O W

Coldly blew the sharp North breeze,  
"It feels like snow", we said.  
Roadside dykes began to freeze  
Before we went to bed.

Whirling snow-flakes filled the sky,  
And all around was white.  
Trees around were laden high,  
Snow-weighted over-night.

Its purity of whiteness thrilled  
The watchers from inside,  
Who turned their minds to sleighs that spilled  
To snowball fight and slide.

It did not stay with us for long;  
The thaw brought dirt and slush.  
Half perished birds trilled gladsome song  
And broke the wintry hush.

ADRIENNE WILSON, L.V.

Day dawns to crack the shell of sleep  
And, cat-calling ring on the fight;  
For only black and dreamless night  
With pitying peace may watch us weep.  
Though patient fear's familiar shape  
Strides dark behind, you may not turn,  
But only feel his cold breath burn,  
And flee in vain to seek escape  
For at the end is an abyss,  
Then turn, and meet him with a kiss.

G. M. SHORLAND-BALL, VIb.



John lay on his back staring at the heavy black clouds. He was hot, and there seemed to be no peace anywhere. Everything was as restless as himself. The cows stamped, and moved this way and that, trying to escape from the flies, so numberless that no flock of swallows swooping or soaring over river and field could destroy them. A slight breeze stirred the tall grasses around him, touching him with an icy breath in contrast to the stifling heat. On the hillside, a dog barked, and below, in the valley, the echo answered. Suddenly, for no reason, he shivered. He felt that the end of the world would be like this. The warmth and comfort of life, disappearing, would be gradually drawn from his grasp, and the relentless hand of fate would bring to an end all the things that now seemed to be most valuable. A few drops of rain fell, touching his hand; to John they were the cold fingers of death. He stood up quickly, trying to throw off the sensation. There was a dazzling flash and a deafening clap of thunder. The rain began to fall in torrents.

JOY SHORLAND-BALL, M.Va.



## THE LIGHTER SIDE OF SCHOOL LIFE.

### SCHOOL DAYS ARE THE HAPPIEST DAYS?

Derby Technical College appears on first sight to be a pleasant modern building. The would-be chemistry student is, however, doomed to disappointment if she has visions of modern labs and lecture rooms. On application to the office it would appear from the blank expressions of all concerned that the chemistry department is non-existent. The information that it is situated in the Art College is eventually elicited and the student finds herself trudging wearily down the road towards a depressingly ugly and dirty piece of architecture dignified by the name of College of Art.

In order to reach the chemistry department it is necessary to clamber unwillingly up three flights of exceedingly steep stairs. This is due to the fact that chemistry students are banished to the top of the building to minimize the danger of an explosion damaging that part of the college devoted to the study of Art. The authorities feel that they cannot risk a number of budding Epsteins being precipitantly and lamentably removed to another sphere because of a foolish mistake on the part of some chemist. Having reached the top of the aforementioned stairs the student finds that she is at least 20 minutes late for first lecture. This procedure is not advised as it gives the lecturer an excellent opportunity to display his wit.

It may interest readers to know that during the last school year there have been four Fridays on which the Heavens have not opened in order deliberately to soak all chemistry students wending their unwilling way to a physical lecture. It is felt that this is mean of the fates or whoever controls the weather as there is enough to bear on Friday without rain. Apart from the misery of listening to a small salesman with an inordinate liking for the sound of his own jokes, Friday and rain of course, means that the lab is strewn with buckets to catch water leaking through the roof. These are liable to trip the unwary and cause an unpleasant disturbance.

Due to the antiquity of the building all the doors rattle. After about 10 minutes of this disturbance the lecturer invariably pushes something in the crack. Those who are tardy in arriving find it necessary to push on the door with such force that they are suddenly precipitated into the room, much to the class's amusement, the lecturer's annoyance and their own discomfiture. This type of entry is usually only effected by members of St. Elphin's.

Now that the session has come to an end those concerned feel that they have gained several things from their year's attendance. These are as follows:



- (1) A number of amusing memories which cannot be related in these pages as this publication cannot afford to defend a libel action.
- (2) A complete lack of awe for chemistry lecturers.
- (3) Some slight awareness of the amount of chemistry that G.C.A. students are supposed to know.
- (4) Last but not least, a degree of slimness which could not have been achieved had they not been subjected to tech. lunches, school sandwiches and a perpetual rush to catch trains.

They leave with few regrets and not a little joy. Farewell for ever.

Ex-Student No. 4750.

### THE DOG HOME

The very first thing one does upon returning to the dog home at the beginning of a season is not, as some poor souls fondly imagine, to present at the office one's case-card and licence but rather to rush to discover which stall one is to occupy throughout the coming season. Many, even of the oldest of old stagers, have never worn off their eagerness in this respect. In fact it is these old-stagers who are the most eager to know if they are to be placed in the separate pens or to govern a communal room. If the latter, there is certainly gnashing of teeth if not weeping. At the very least there is often a queer feeling of dread, or foreboding as one reads down the list of the other occupants of the room. The first night is rarely very pleasant. A queer silence descends as the Chief Occupant enters, often broken by a short raucous voice and a feeble remark about having-a-nice-time, as though anyone has ever admitted that they haven't.

This restraint soon evaporates and within a very short time everything is going swimmingly. The Chief Occupant frequently arrives to find her belongings have been tampered with in a not very pleasant manner. She therefore comes to spend more and more of her time in the wash-house where the others are.

One of the problems of the Chief Occupant is how many of the laws, bye-laws, rules, regulations and standing-orders are to be obeyed and how many conveniently forgotten. Whatever her decision a Superintendent of Sleeping Quarters is always in the doorway. One of the favourites to be forgotten is, "Thou shalt not consume illicit provender during sleeping hours" - stop, no more, the Chief Superintendent of the Dog Home, the Vice-Superintendent, the Chief Superintendent of Sleeping Quarters, the Chief Superintendent of Arrangements and many Superintendents of Training are creeping up on me.

A.D.O.G.



HEARD DOWN ORCHARDS

"Hello! what bell was that?"

" - Bluebell, the sweet little thing, she's - "

"- almost as tall as the laundry chimney,"

" - which comes in useful for opening tins, and - "

" - is much more comfortable than the last one, which was all - "

" - full of weeds, and it took us hours to dig over and only needs - "

" - tacking round the edges now."

"He was machine-gunning - "

" - the staff, who were all waiting - "

" - outside Six A in a sheepish group for - "

" - their clean pinafores, which - "

" - had furry backs and long tails, and - "

" - its meat-balls for breakfast."

"Will you shut up! - "

" - the cows which are - "

"Running round A, practising for Sports Day, and - "

" - have forgotten to collect their bathing costumes from - "

" - Tom, who is rolling - "

" - Down the stairs to - "

" - Make sure no one is talking, as it is now - "

"Time for lights, everyone!".



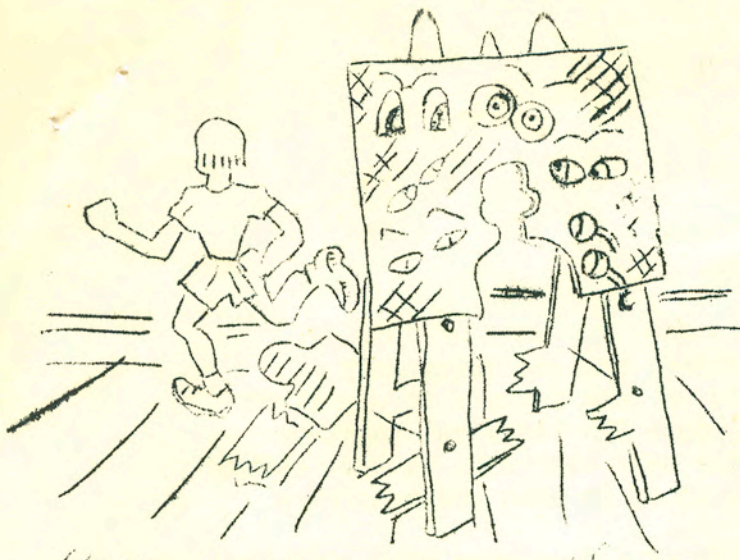
TEST PAPERS IN GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

N.B. All Candidates must be concise and accurate.

1. State your views on the Diet of Worms.
2. What would have happened if Lady Jane Grey had reigned ten days instead of nine?
3. When Queen Matilda was playing hide and seek with Stephen in the snow, where was Good King Wenceslas?
4. What is a Buda pest?
5. State some reasons why Napoleon would have been a failure as Archbishop of York and/or Canterbury in the reign of James II.
6. If Sir Walter Raleigh had told Queen Elizabeth I that her slip was showing, would the potato be what it is to-day?
7. Make out a calory chart for Henry VIII.  

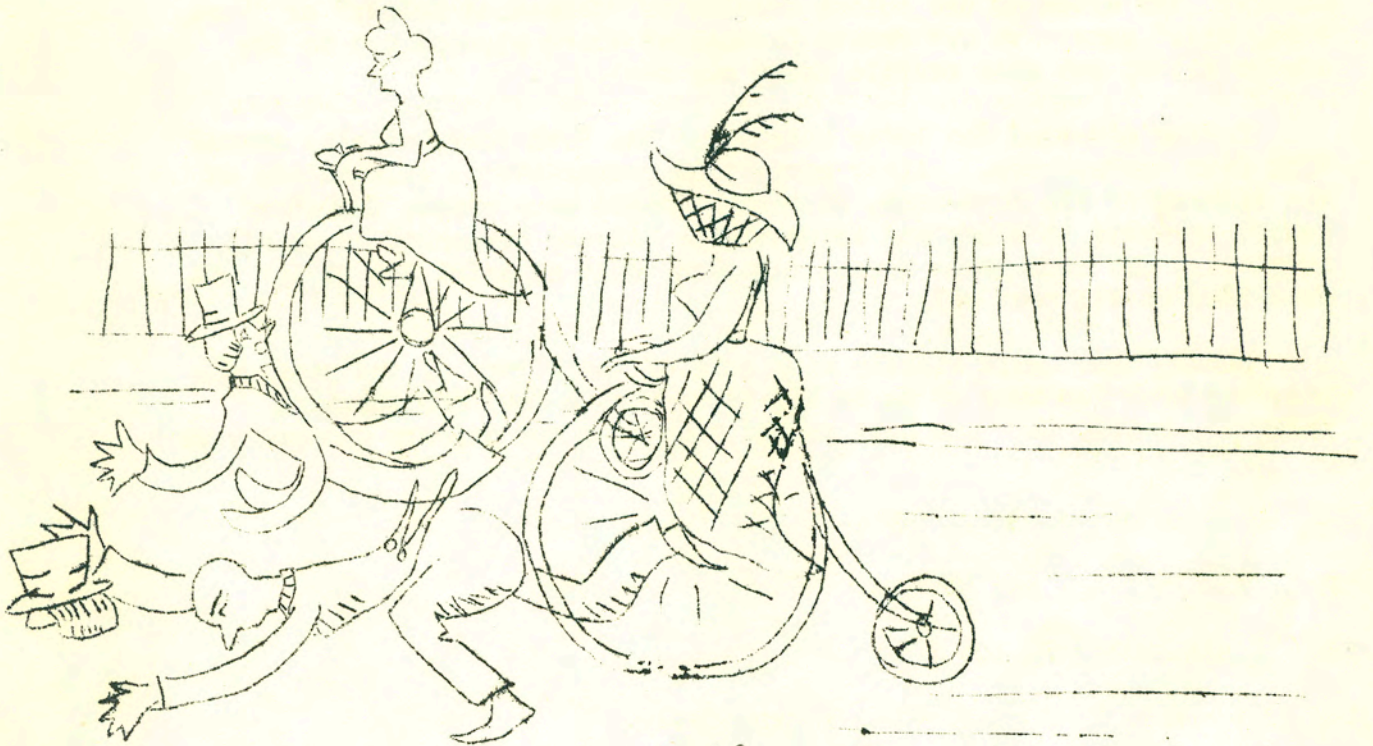
(N.B. Candidates need not answer this question unless they take Physics)
8. What is the connection between the Duke of Wellington, Dunlop and School Jelly?
9. "Some are born great, others achieve greatness, some just grate." Give three examples.
10. When the Ashes belonged to the Holy Roman Empire, before the discovery of Australia, name the English team who played them in 1496.
11. Was the object to William II noun clause or otherwise?
12. "Mark Antony!" Is this an old war-cry of the hockey-field?
13. What was the hobby of Henry VIII?
14. "Honi soit qui mal de mer." Suggest remedies.
15. "Hosannah!" Be brief.
16. Caedmon or S. Augustine? Be preferable.
17. If you went into a barber's shop in France and said "Singe" to the barber, give some indication as to what he might say to you.
18. Why are reflexive verbs reflexive? Do they reflect?
19. Make notes on (a) Bluebells (b) Wordsworth (c) Fotherington-Tomas.





THINGS THAT  
COULD  
BE TAKEN  
LITERALLY

Keep your eyes on the  
board while I run through it.  
(F Jackson, U. V)



Lets just run over Castlereagh  
and Lanning again  
(f Jackson, U. V)



## LOWER Vith

Vith form is synonymous with one thing, and one thing only - Annexe Tea. With what expectations did we look forward to our first lukewarm chips, and cold beans, now, despite the resultant hangover which is barely dispelled in time for the next week-end, we have learnt to consume more and more and more, but, alas, it also costs more -

We have discovered the essentiality of a form room with curtained windows. When warned by our spy (a browbeaten Lower IVth) we now have time to jettison most of the knitting and a fair proportion of the magazines in time - -

There is, of course, the other side of school life - WORK. Naturally we have fully covered our syllabi (witness the value of Latin), and will, no doubt, pass all our exams.

During laborious hours of work in orchards one learns much of human nature; how often do the dulcet strains of "Unchained Melody" or "Veni, Vidi, Vici" penetrate our remote fastnesses where pigeons coo on the window sills, and mice scuttle round our feet.

Having attained the lofty heights of the Vith form, we also attend Vith form conferences. After gargantuan preparations, culminating in the tidying of VIb form-room, an unprecedented occurrence, the other school arrived; a blank and impenetrable silence descended on us all, eventually one courageous person remarked "What an awful day it is" and from then on all went well.

Having thus dealt lightly with some of the events of the year, the time has come for many of us to bid the school a fond and thankful farewell, hoping that you have gained much from our sojourn amongst you.



## BACK TO NATURE

Being two hard-working Vith formers, we decided to have a garden; for two reasons - (1) we required gentle relaxation in the open air, (2) as usual we were broke.

Therefore, having with great labour dug over a tract of virgin land, with breathless care, and many anxious fears, we consigned some lettuce-seeds to their appropriate holes. We covered them with well crumbled earth, first removing a small cache of toffee papers left by some well-meaning person, and collecting the slugs ready to deposit on neighbouring gardens should the need arise - -

Every day we surveyed the barren ground anxiously, at last a faint green sheen appeared,- we hung over it with bated breath - alas it was moss.

Discouraged we hoed vigorously, and then at long last were rewarded by six valiant lettuces. Surrounded by slug-killer, netted to prevent the birds from consuming them, wrapped in cotton wool on cold nights, they had every chance, and eventually they grew, they sprouted and finally were ready to be picked.

This was the moment we had waited for, armed with spades, forks and trowels we went out, gumbooted and sun-hatted - we removed them with utmost care. They were sold to six fortunate people and we were once more able to do some work.

After all our efforts we made 1/6d.,- during the celebrations which ensued on the payment of our bills we spent 5/-.



THE GARDENER'S COMPLAINT

A poor old gardener said, "Ah me!"  
Me days are almost done.  
I've got rheumatics in me knee,  
And now it's 'ard to run.  
Me ears are blind, me eyes are dumb,  
I don't know what I'm doin'.  
The only thing I know I've done  
I've got rheumatics in me thumb.

JOYCE TANNER, L.IVa.

TO THE LAUNDRY CHIMNEY

O mighty monument, from afar  
Dark against the evening star  
I see thee tower'ing to the clouds  
Rending apart their misty shrouds.

Thou Rock of Ages, in thy shade  
The school's foundations first were laid  
Volcanic rocks were hewn for thee  
Thou smokest still for all to see.

St. Elphin's girls do pass thee by,  
Or gaze at thee with jaundiced eye;  
Although they at thy beauty sneer  
To me thy worth is ever dear.

MARGHARITA JAMES, M.Vd.



CORRESPONDENCE COLUMN

Omsic.

Dear Zir,

Vonce again, my fiends, I redress you in ze hope that my little artichoke on ze life of ze lower spotted sticklebackle will be accepted. Zis year peraps you will 'ave lowered your standard. I 'ave ze delight to inform you I have awarded myself ze Knobble Prize vor research into ze lower lifes.

I zend you ze gruntings of my fiends ear, who all conglomerate you upon the Elphin.

ZE LOWER SPOTTED STICKLEBACKLY

Ze sticklebockle is zeldom used for food, because of its stickly backle. Zis may zeem ztrange, bot ze sticklebackle gives us all a lesson in family monument.

Ze small sticklebockles are very like ze parent stocklebickles, except that they are smaller.

They usually exhume beetles, and sometimes ze dragonsflees, zus performing a useless office.

(The Editors regret that the rest of Professor Stittlewortle's manuscript has been confiscated by the censor).

I relapse,

Yours honestly,

STANISLAV STITTLEWORTLE (Proff.)



St. Custard's.

Munda.

Dere Editors,

Fotherington Tomas hav written a pome (chi chi) for the skool mag. It is utterly wet and weedy just like Foth. T. It go like this -

Once I sar a buttercup  
A-sprouting in a mead  
She turned her yellow petals up  
This most delightful weed.

It went on like that for severn verses, only WORSE.

Pearson and me tell him it is only ghimlies wot write for skool mags, he cry and sa he will write to his mater. We larf. Half an hour later Grabber come and sa "Molesworth you skunk! Fotherington Tomas hav run away." We larf some more and sa "So perish all traitors" (crib from our set pla!).

N. MOLESWORTH.



HOWLERS

The chief crops of Northern Ireland are flax, potatoes, cattle and sheep. They make their own clothes.

U.Vth Geography essay.

The climate of North Africa is mainly equilateral.

U.IVth examination.

Il se leva, et allume une bougie -  
He got up and saw a bogey man.

L.VIth Examination.

There are two types of trees, one is carnivorous.

Macbeth was the Thane of Glooms.

Unter den Gästen sitzt ein Engländer.

(This really means "The Englishman sits among the guests")  
The Englishman sat under the gas-stove.

When it was discovered that Miss Helen Darbishire was coming to give away the prizes on Speech Day, a member of the L.IVth was heard to say, "Oh, the Beauty Queen?"

The main export of Sheffield is its stainless inhabitants.

The five mile Act said that no-one who was a Catholic might go anywhere, nor might he teach when he got there.