

TALKABOUT

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WAGGA TEACHERS' COLLEGE.

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On Examinations

I have just calculated that during my academic career I spent approximately 460 hours in the examination room. This figure does not include such half-and-half skirmishes as mere weekly or quarterly tests but only the deadly serious, honest-to-goodness affairs. About ten or more 44-hour working weeks have been used to convince authorities that I was a keen and earnest student.

Being of fairly robust constitution, I have not suffered much in health as a result, though there have been times when even that has been affected. Nervous tension can have distressing effects which are not always obvious nor correctly diagnosed. Natural resiliency usually overcomes them, however, but there were effects which could not be overcome. My attitude to my work suffered. The examinations themselves were not so severe as the strain of preparation. My memory, because memorised facts and processes were of great importance, was asked to perform what now seem to have been prodigious feats. Not only could I not repeat those feats now, but almost all that I strove so hard to memorise was quickly forgotten.

This task was, I can see now, mainly self-imposed owing to the intense desire to succeed which I brought to the work and the absolute necessity I felt to avoid failure. I lost sight of the final purposes of my studies in an urgent and petty groping for the nearer and less worthy aim.

What I have written merely recounts personal experiences, but these have been brought to my mind by watching the development of similar attitudes among students.

Fear is not a good motivation in the schoolroom, but is there any real difference between fear of the rod and fear of the consequences of examination failure? Perhaps there is, but there is sufficient likeness to cause us to reconsider why we study.

Courses, surely, are designed with some purpose and the examination should reveal and not obscure that purpose. In every subject there are certain facts, results and processes which should be known to a pitch of almost mechanical perfection. This type of information

is intended to remain a permanent acquisition of the student. It should be learned in such a way that it can never be forgotten. This might well be described as the drill aspect of the course.

But the other side of the work aims at understanding principles, developing appreciation, interests and attitudes, yes, even love. True understanding of principles can only be tested by placing the student in a situation which demands application of those principles and letting him work his way out of it. Similarly, a discriminating taste can only be tested by giving it the opportunity of choice.

Examiners seek to test both aspects of their courses. Students sometimes fail to direct their study accordingly. They learn by heart that which they should seek to understand. They do not learn painstakingly those things which should be remembered forever. I would urge students to trust their examiners to be just and to study their work with their minds and hearts fully awake to the final purposes of courses. Since this is what the examiner wants, it is even probable that they will find that actively seeking the distant end may win for them the more immediate success they so much wish to obtain.

G.D.

Editorial

MANY visitors have come to our College recently, particularly during Education Centenary Week, and all have made some comment or other on the developments that have taken place since the buildings were used by the R.A.A.F.

Some were very interested in the modern equipment in the kitchen, some were impressed with the dining facilities, some showed greatest interest in the living quarters provided: all were agreed that the transformation of an R.A.A.F. hospital into a Teachers' College was very well planned and was something on which the Education Department could be congratulated. All were agreed, too, that the residential side of College life afforded tremendous possibilities in training for life—for complete living.

But the most pleasing comment that was heard referred to the TONE of the College. The visitor in question had been for many years a successful headmaster, and it was always the tone of his school above all other merits it may have possessed, that he most greatly prized.

I felt that if at such an early stage in the life of our College there could be seen signs of a healthy tone in the student-body, I should be a very happy Principal indeed. For tone is so closely related to that character ideal which I have always stressed as the first aim of College policy. Tone is one of those terms so frequently used in educational circles, but so difficult to define. Departmental officers often report on the tone of a school. They are referring to something they feel rather than something they see.

If it is true that these higher qualities have developed to a noticeable degree it is indeed "a consummation devoutly to be wished." The Practice Teaching periods showed how eagerly and earnestly students were attacking the professional side of their College life; the coming examinations will indicate in some measure to what extent they have developed in the academic sphere. But it is in those little things that count so much—courtesy, good manners, deportment, tolerance, generosity, sportsmanship, a wholesome pride in the fair name of one's College; these are the things that count most of all. These are the things that can make College TONE.

If the students of the pioneer session can hand down to the new students in June a College spirit developed on these lines—and I myself have seen clear indications that they will—they will achieve something really worthwhile. They will help to build up a tradition for the Wagga Teachers' College of which they will always be proud.

G. L. BLAKEMORE,
Principal.

"TALKABOUT"

Editor: Alan Fryer.

Sub-Editors:

June Scott, Dave Rummery
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Wagga Lexicographa

Interest in speech is positively rife in this College. In our wanderings we have gleaned a few local ambiguities, which, for purely scientific reasons, we feel should be recorded. Unhappily, one speech habit has us by the throat since we came here: We don't need to state what it is.

Scales live on filleted fish and also run up and down the piano. Impecunious studes envy the latter variety because they just seem to go from dough to dough.

Freshe(r)s are inexplicable things which come down rivers. Another variety perambulates on two legs and arrives in this district in June. Latter should be exterminated by vigorous student action.

Ties are tiesome things which occur on men lecturers' necks, in horse-racing and in finishing the milk first in the dining-hall. The first variety is the loudest—sometimes they positively shriek.

Paste is a grain. It lives in the arts and crafts room but because of its proximity to the bio-lecturer's office often develops crafty habits in Arts' room.

Coles are things generally supposed to be heaped on people's heads. "Around here, however, they usually end up heaped on people's shoulders. Time to glow slow here, I think!

Cats on the campus are of two kinds—stray and stude (feminine form). The former are fe-lines, the latter good-lines. One habit common to both is the way they make a bee-line for the dining-hall. Bill the gardener informs us that catnip is a plant and not the bite Sheba gave me last night. Sorry! We didn't do this on purr-puss.

There are two kinds of goldfish at College. One variety swims in water in the bio-lab. aquaria, and the other sits on toast at breakfast time. We regret that we can't comment on the sterling worth of the silver species but they just didn't come up to the standard achieved by their auriferous brethren.

Hammer-heads are a sort of shark not related to Riverina wolves. A second species lives on handles kept by the P. and R. staff. They become very agitated and make a loud noise during lecture hours.

Eating stick-jaw is a pleasant occupation. The same term is used here to describe the expression on the student countenance when practising its diphthongs.

A Couch is a sort of settee. Sometimes it lectures in education. An alternative name is sofa but at this sort of thing we find that we can go sofa and no further.

"The dentist told me I had a large cavity that needed filling."

"Did he recommend any special course of study?"

Doctor: The source of your trouble is this ear.

Patient: This 'ere wot?

Book Reviews

"Experimental Psychology," by Professor Foothtawn, University of Cincinnati West. Chicago, 1948. Cloth, 87/6.

This remarkable book casts a new light on the whole field of experimental psychology and opens up realms undreamed of by the statistician and the physicist. Professor Foothtawn has carried the experimental technique into every field of psychology. To do this he has constructed a machine known as the Tooth-tawn Total Reaction Recording Apparatus. The machine is housed in a whole wing of the University of Cincinnati West, and an aerial picture of it is shown on page 96 of the book. It has 9,469 miles of wiring and 2,000 indicators, while mechanical needles can record 700 graphs simultaneously. A further part of the machine combines these 700 graphs into a composite one on a logarithmic grid, so that all the 700 simultaneous reactions of the person being tested can be seen at a glance. "Precision," says Professor Foothtawn, on page 846, "is everything."

The person to be tested is strapped to a table which has 700 wires connected with the machine. The adjustments require squads of skilled psychologists since the machine measures everything from the temperature of the epidermus at three levels, the pupillary refraction of the eye, the flow of saliva, the rate of secretion of the sweat glands of the palms of the hands to the heart, pulse and breathing rate. Minute reactions inside the brain are measured also, and this necessitates the piercing of the brain with the cerebro-bellamic seven-point indicator. This is usually done under anaesthetic and in general no permanent harmful effects on the patient are noticed. The insertion of tubes into the stomach requires care also.

When the patient is ready and the 700 wires adjusted, the machine is set in motion, and a complicated series of 300 tests administered to the patient in swift succession. The 700 graphs in combination show the "total" reaction of the organism to each test.

In this way, Professor Foothtawn claims, psychology can attain the precision of a science and can leave forever the fogs of personality analysis and the fearful fallacies of Lavine. It is in every way a remarkable and astonishing book.

The Hedgehog

A very intensive study,

By Bernard and Darwin and Ball,
Has conclusively proved that the hedgehog

Is not blessed with a father at all;
And further exhaustive inquiries

Have incontrovertibly shewn
This state of complete contradiction

Is enjoyed by the hedgehog alone.
May be listed—Speech Books—Poetry
—Fourth Class—Animals.

News From Armidale

Dr. Bassett, Principal of Armidale, has written to Mr. Blakemore on the matter of Students' Medical Fund. It has been found necessary in Armidale to take steps to alter the scheme since hospital rates have quadrupled. The students at Armidale pay a fee of £2/2/ per year, of which 10/ is allocated to the Medical Fund. This fund met expenses as follows: Hospital Intermediate rates, up to three weeks; Medical, up to £7/7/- for operations and 7/6 for individual visits, less for subsequent visits. The fund did not meet vacation medical expenses, pharmaceutical expenses, dental expenses or optical expenses.

Dr. Bassett writes writes that this fund leaves no margin and a reserve is necessary against emergencies. With the increased costs additional to this, a higher levy will be necessary.



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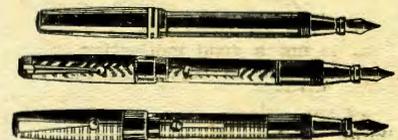
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Of Mice and Men

[Editor's Note: This plaintive plea was written by the other half of a College lecturer.]

There's a certain block in Turvey Park,
A Teachers' College they say,
Where the lecturers work the studes so
hard
That they seldom have time to play.

I listened to that staff last week,
As I sat there so quiet and meek,
And though I may seem to be bold
Their innermost thoughts to you I'll
unfold.

Like volcanos erupting the exposition
began
On the College in Turvey Park.
They were still haranguing, unabated they
ran
As daylight gave way to dark.

"And what do you think of Bradman?"
I said.
Whereupon one pondered and nodded his
head.
"No one called Bradman in 473 . . .
Bradman . . . Bradman . . . who can
he be?"

So I tried to change the subject around,
And I mentioned the mouse plague just
for a chat,
Then came the discourse most profound
On one called Sheba the College cat.

I thought of the news in the "Sunday
Sun."
"What about U.N.O.?" I started to
shout.
Then they all decided one by one,
That that wasn't mentioned in
"Talkabout."

Oh, famed Valhalla with golden walls,
You cannot compare with College halls,
And the gods who lived in perfect peace
Must surely now be wrung with grief.
They didn't know a year ago
Of the pioneer seed as it started to
grow.

But now if you come by Wagga way,
And a group of lecturers is having a say,
It doesn't matter in daylight or dark,
They're discussing their college in
Turvey Park.

J.J.

New Verses For New Faces

When History's values are sung
Then reserve to the four winds is flung,
And he makes airy flights,
To poetical heights,
But then, you remember, he's Young.

Oh mother, my head's in a whirl,
For a graceful, athletic young girl
Has arrived at the place,
But I'm not in the race,
And I find I'm Brownd off by this pearl.

Mr. Ashworth has dazzled our eyes
With his wondrous collection of ties,
But his bloodthirsty cobber,
By name, Gobberslobber,
We adore with Sinatra-like sighs.

If M. sees an insect she'll nabbit,
For such is her usual habbit.
The wogs that we throttle
She puts in a bottle,
And a rabbit, she'll grabbit and stabbit.

In prac. music you strive not to yell,
And sing your scales sweetly and well.
"Now try number four.
No. Do it once more.
That's much better," says Miss Cornell.

NOTES ON CARE OF GOLDFISH

Goldfish should not be kept in a round bowl as they never get anywhere. They are affectionate creatures and respond to kind treatment. Grimaces and uncouth gestures outside the glass distress them and cause profound psychological reactions. They should be fed occasionally and encouraged with water bugs.

For variety the scenery on the outside of the glass should be changed three times a year. This is the same to the goldfish as going away for a holiday. They should also be watched for signs of falling health. Sometimes a goldfish will sink slowly to the bottom and lie without moving for several weeks. In this case it is dead and should be removed.

Amy: So you and Jack are to be married. I thought it was only a flirtation.

Angela: So did Jack.

Garden Amours

With apologies to Gaudeamus and dedicated to the "little white crosses in the garden."

Gladolus, Bathurst Burr,
Crossbred Maize and Populus,
Rhododendron, Myoporium,
Liquidambar, Leptospermum.
Let's conserve our humus,
Let's conserve our humus.

Who'd be sent for Dolichos,
For Virgilia's bouquet?
To Daphne add Malar Ros,
Orchid spray add Tuberose,
Madame Abel Chatenay,
Madame Abel Chatenay.

Wheat and Oats from golden west,
Prunus, Oleander,
Lasandra, Juniper,
Rondeletia, Lavender.
Named in Linnaean order.
Named in Linnaean order.

Long live, hedge Photinia,
Tend it well, ye gardeners!
We want Rose and Violet,
We want Stock and Mignonette.
Tempt us all with flowers,
Tempt us all with flowers.

"MARC."

GARDENING NOTES

Stray cats should be well treated with a mixture of arsenic and ground glass and then planted out on the shady side of the garden. Sowing at about three feet is recommended and the ground should be firmly stamped down.

"I want a man to do odd jobs about the house, run errands; one who never answers back, and is always ready to do my bidding," explained a lady to an applicant for a post in the household.

"You're looking for a husband, ma'am, not a servant!" said the seeker for work.

"What's repartee, Dad?"

"Repartee, my boy, is what a man thinks of on the way home."

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Music Notes

Music is an essential art for the cultivation of the all-round person. Recorded music appeals to the membranes of the inner ear. All recorded music is good except recorded flutes. Hence singing lessons are important in schools. The following notes and hints have been devised for the assistance of students and teachers of music.

NOTES FOR THE SINGING LESSON

Step 1.—Breathing Exercises.

Children must each bring a feather or balloon to the classroom, and these are held before the lips. At a given signal the children blow strongly and chase their feathers or balloons, blowing strongly. Too much time must not be spent on this step. Desks should be removed in the preparation step to avoid damage. Injured children should be taken out before proceeding to step two

Step 2.—Voice Exercises.

(a) Volume: Strength of lung is essential for cheerful and lusty singing. Let the children cry Fiso, Milko and Piper Lidy as loudly as possible, both in unison and individually. Windows should be opened beforehand to prevent echoes and splintering of glass.

(b) Pitch: Ascending scales to oh fie and descending to oh my. Staccato to ah!

(c) The Glottal stop should be manipulated musically while the teacher stamps time with the foot. If he wears rubber soles he should strike the board with a shovel, map stick, ruler or tuning fork.

Step III.—Modulator Work.

Take up a determined stand before the modulator with a pointer firmly grasped in the hand. Then start the children on a strong tone after gravely warning them to follow you. You must be quick, slick and unexpected. The idea is to trick the class, and modulator work can be motivated by using the play device of follow the leader. Generally the teacher wins. All children who do not end the race should be soundly beaten with mapsticks or recorder flutes.

Step IV.—Scales.

These must never be missed. "Many a minor scale," said Melba, "has major sing well." They should be attacked firmly and sung with the teeth open. It assists if one pushes upwards on the diaphragm when ascending and downwards when descending. The exercise involved in this sometimes makes prima donnas big, but Ars Gratia Artis.

Step VI.—Teaching a Song.

This is done in three ways. (1) By ear, (2) by tonic, (3) by rod and staff.

(1) Teaching by ear means the teacher must sing the song to the children. If he can't sing he must use a wireless. If he has no wireless he must play the piano. If he can't play the

piano this method becomes difficult and is often a trial to both teacher and pupils.

(2) Tonic is sol fah out of date that it should only be used in emergencies of the gravest kind, such as a key with four sharps.

(3) Staff is the mainstay of the modern singing lesson. Only easy keys with one to three flats should be used, and no accidentals. Children can be encouraged and motivated by dressing them up as notes—the boys as crochets and the girls as quavers. The tune should be sung to "ah" and the words taught by ear. They are then combined, which is always an interesting step. Sometimes it turns out well.

Step VII.—Conducting.

This should be done with verve but not with abandon, with feeling but not with passion. The conductor should never lose patience, and should beat rhythmically from the hips. The feet should be kept on the ground at all times while conducting. Violent gestures such as hair tearing are deprecated. Chn. must also be trained to gaze fixedly at the conductor while singing. This has a hypnotic effect and prevents the mind from wandering.

Step VIII.—Appreciation.

The aim of appreciation is to lead children to recognise the instruments of the orchestra, and to teach them that a saxophone is not a basic instrument. They must also know the difference between a symphony in a flat and a rhapsody in four sharps.

A.A.

[Editor's Note: It is only fair to warn students that these notes were NOT prepared by the Music Department.]

The following essay was written allegedly by a schoolboy who was asked to write on the discovery of America.

"Columbus was a man who could make an egg stand on end without crushing it. One day the King of Spain sent for him and asked him:

"Can you discover America?"

"Yes," Columbus answered, "if you will get me a boat."

"He got the boat and sailed in the direction of where he knew America was. The sailors mutinied and swore there was no such place as America, but finally the plot came to Columbus and said: 'Captain, land is in sight.'

"When the boat neared the shore Columbus saw a group of natives. 'Is this America?' he asked.

"Yes," they replied.

"I suppose you are Indians," Columbus went on.

"Yes," said the chief, "and you are Christopher Columbus, I take it?"

"I am."

"The Indian chief then turned to his fellow savages and said: 'The game is up. We are discovered at last.'"

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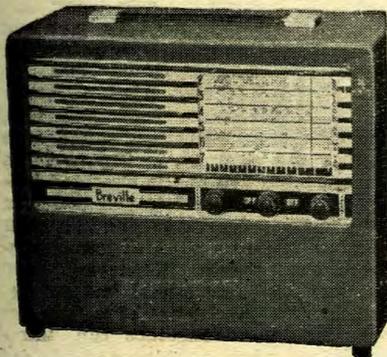
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BOX 143

Education in Malaya

There are three types of English schools:—

(i) Primary schools—which act as “feeder schools” for one main secondary school in each of the larger urban areas.

(ii) Purely secondary schools which recruit their pupils from the “feeder schools.”

(iii) Combined schools which have both primary and secondary departments.

The Government has adopted the “feeder system,” which effects economy in staff and buildings, while aided mission schools as a rule maintain the “combined method,” preferring, on mainly religious grounds, to retain the pupil from infancy to adolescence. Small Government schools in rural districts are of necessity of the combined type, as are also all girls' schools.

The curriculum follows closely the English course of education. The secondary work of the schools consists chiefly of preparation for the Cambridge Local Examinations. Malay is one of the subjects allowed.

Preparation is also given for the Matriculation Examinations of London and Hongkong Universities, the Singapore Medical College, and the London University Intermediate Arts and Science Examinations.

Instruction is given in elementary manual work. All schools have regular medical inspections. Physical education, playgrounds, sports, the encouragement of Boy Scouts and Cadet Corps, all receive due attention.

All schools have their annual athletic carnivals. Malayan, Indian and Chinese boys compete against each other in all the events. One of the most popular items is the climbing of the greasy pole.

Empire Day is always celebrated. The service is identical to that of Australian schools. I attended a service at the Port Dickson Public School (Negri Sembilan) in 1941. The English principal made the school sing the National Anthem through seven times before he was satisfied with it. Not wishing to appear unpatriotic amongst all the Asiatic children and teachers, I had to sing it through seven times too. I think this must be an all time record for an Australian.

Most of the aspirants for the Government service and the sons of rajas and chiefs are educated in English at the Malay College (Kuala Kangsar, Perak).

There has been a marked increase in recent years among all races in demand for English education for girls. This is still largely the concern of the missionary bodies, there being only two Government girls' schools, one in Singapore and the other in Penang. There is no definite policy of co-education, but, where no accessible girls' school exists, girl pupils attend the lower classes of boys' schools.

There are approximately 130 private schools. These are usually small registered schools of lower educational efficiency, which cater for over-age and

backward pupils. They receive no financial support from the Government, but are inspected from time to time by the Inspector of Schools.

TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

Singapore, Penang and Kuala Lumpur run Government evening classes where such subjects as building construction, reinforced concrete construction, electrical and locomotive engineering, machine drawing, sanitary service, surveying and plumbing are taught.

The Agricultural Department runs a School of Agriculture at Serdang.

There are a number of Trade Schools in Malaya. Their courses extend over three years and train boys to be motor mechanics, plumbers, fitters and electricians. The Federated Malay States Governments pay apprentices at their schools a subsistence allowance. Preference is given to Malays who have finished the primary course of an English school.

In the Straits Settlements candidates of all nationalities have equal claims for admission to the Trade Schools, which charge instructional fees of \$3 a month (about 9/-).

There are also a number of Carpentry Trade Schools. They are designed to train Malay boys in carpentry, which has hitherto been the monopoly of the immigrant Chinese craftsman. Pupils are admitted on passing out of the vernacular school. No knowledge of English is required for admission, although enough English is taught during the course to enable technical terms to be understood. The course extends over three years and tuition is free in the majority of these schools.

The Methodist Mission has been a pioneer in girls' education in Malaya. Besides the teaching of Christian ethics, dramatic art is considered an important subject in the curriculum.

The children study famous national plays, e.g., a famous Chinese play, “Lady Precious Stream” was presented by the Chinese students of the Methodist Girls' School in 1941.

VERNACULAR EDUCATION

The training of Malay male teachers is carried out at the Sultan Idris Training College (opened by the Government in 1922). This residential college accommodates some 400 students, who receive board and education free. All instruction is in Malay, and the curriculum of the three years' course includes the Malay language and literature, history, geography, arithmetic, simple geometry, hygiene, general knowledge, Moslem religion, basketry, physical training, rural science, art and the theory and practice of teaching. Attached to the College is a vernacular school under a European. This is used as a practising school for lessons in teaching and criticism.

In the rural science course special emphasis is given to practical work on the soil, and the students are given instruction in plant physiology and methods of combating plant and animal pests.

One-year post-graduate courses in art and crafts are given to selected students.

One of the most valuable adjuncts to the College is the Translation Bureau,

which, in addition to Malay school textbooks, has in recent years produced the Malay Home Library Series—translations of popular Western tales—which are distributed free to village schools throughout the Peninsula as the nucleus of village libraries.

The growing importance of practical work in Malay Schools is shown by the variety of handicrafts practised by the pupils in the higher classes. The main craft is basketry, but the following crafts are also taught in the various centres: Carpentry, pottery, net-making, wood-carving, book-binding, weaving, sunblind-making and haircutting. Several schools have their own experimental rice plots and a few maintain poultry farms.

The tendency among Malays towards the seclusion of girls and a certain prejudice against female education has for a long time rendered the education of Malay girls a difficult problem. The curriculum of girls' schools includes cookery, clay modelling, paper cutting, lace making, embroidery, laundry and hygiene. Needlework is the most popular subject. A training centre for Malay women teachers is established at Malacca.

TAMIL VERNACULAR SCHOOLS

The Tamil is a coolie from Southern India. Most of the Tamils in Malaya come from Portuguese Goa, one of the poorer States of India. They are employed mostly as rubber tappers.

The Labour Ordinance provides for the maintenance at the expense of the employer, of schools on all rubber estates where there are ten or more children of any one race between the ages of seven and 12 years. All Tamil vernacular schools are mixed, about 30 per cent. of the pupils being girls.

CHINESE VERNACULAR SCHOOLS

Most of these schools are maintained by committees who collect funds from the public, while others are maintained by individuals, by associations of people from the same district in China, or by Christian missions. Education is not compulsory for Chinese children. Most of the teachers have been educated in China. Colloquial Mandarin is the almost universal language of instruction. English is taught in almost every school. There is no systematic training of Chinese teachers in Malaya.

Education in all Government vernacular schools is free. School fees for English primary schools are \$3 a month and for secondary schools fees range from \$6 to \$9 a month per pupil.

J.M.A.

(To be continued.)

Juvenile Magazines

New Zealand figures on the popularity of out-of-school magazines read by children are worth noting. The two most popular magazines by a big margin are "Champion" for boys and "Crystal" for girls and the latest New Zealand educational researches deal with this aspect of juvenile reading.

It is a familiar fact that children in the primary school read large numbers of these magazines; they are known to buy, exchange and talk about them. It has probably not before been realised that the habit is so widespread among pupils in the post-primary schools and persists for so long. At the age of 13 two-fifths of the boys and more than half the girls were reading the "Champion" and the "Crystal" respectively; at the age of 14 about two-fifths were still doing so. These proportions are unexpected enough; but it is startling to find the habit persisting in so many boys and girls as late as sixteen. At that age nearly one boy in seven and more than one girl in seven still had it. Even at 17, seven per cent. of the girls recorded readings of the "Crystal."

These two papers come from the Amalgamated Press, London, a concern which also publishes some thirty others for boys and girls, and for very young men and women. During the last ten years a process of incorporating some of its magazines in other more popular ones has been adopted by the firm. The "Gem," the "Triumph" and the "Champion" have now become the "Champion"; likewise the "Schoolgirl" has been incorporated in the "Crystal" and the "Schoolgirls' Weekly" in the "Schoolgirls' Own." One paper, the "Magnet," whose author has the distinction of having created in Billy Bunter a famous, minor Dickensian character, has ceased publication. Stories about the public schools, with their class atmosphere and emphasis, are now much less popular than in the past. Belonging to a quieter and more stable era, the older school story of the "Magnet" and the "Gem" has become old fashioned in the present world of juvenile fiction, a world of gangsters, gestapos, commandos, tommy-guns, Spitfires, death rays, atom secrets, sleuths and fifth columnists. So the "Magnet" and the "Gem" have gone and the "Champion" is the publishers' attempt to exploit these wider interests.

A similar widening of range has been occurring in the "Crystal." Only one school story is now usually published in it, and three serials, apart from complete stories of a series. The stories deal mostly with the adventures of young girls of an indeterminate age who seek to uncover spy rings, who get entangled in mysteries on the Island of Silent Statues and other exotic places, and settle sticky little problems involving someone else's reputation or future.

The popularity of these magazines is so great that teachers must take them seriously. The starting point in the task of developing in boys and girls an appreciation of good books is a thorough understanding of their strongest tastes. A knowledge of the quality and nature of the appeal of these two papers should tell us a good deal about the real emotional and intellectual level of the pupils.

Perhaps the most striking fact about the "Champion" is that its world is peopled entirely by men. In none of the stories is there any woman or girl of any age or condition. There is also no portrayal of the emotional attach-

ments between boys or men as we get in "Tom Brown's Schooldays," "The Hill" and "St. Winifred's." The atmosphere is the astringently unemotional and objective one of "Stalky and Co.," and the themes are in keeping with it. The emphasis is always on vigorous physical action—fighting with weapons in war and with your fists in your own affairs; sports, mainly professional football; practical jokes; crime and detection.

A child's reading is done to get either compensation or experience or both. These stories supply little but compensation. The characters are merely channels for boyish fantasies that help to restore a balance disturbed by difficulties of adjustment to the concerns of daily life. In all the stories the plots move with the ease of a well-organised day-dream. They depend upon maintaining in their readers' minds the childish division of people into two kinds—"goodies" and "baddies."

In contrast with "Champion" the girls' paper "Crystal" introduces young male characters. They frequently play only subordinate parts, for the chief characters, of course, are girls. There is hardly ever any suggestion of feelings stronger than purely comradely ones. But the presence of males as companions and audience is apparently necessary to make a story satisfying for girls. Girls would be an unwelcome intrusion in boys' stories; boys, it would seem, are indispensable in girls' stories.

Being accounts of girlish adventures, the stories in the "Crystal" are naturally less violent and dramatic than those in the "Champion," and the central character or characters much more intimately concerned with personal relationships. The economic aspects of life, however, are ignored as they are in so many adult magazines. Compensation again is supplied, but no experience.

The mature adult who has learned to take himself and others with a grain of salt is not, of course, satisfied with the either-or portrayal of character that is basic in these stories, knowing it cannot be true. Children, however, demand it, partly because that is how they tend to see people, more perhaps because, while their own moral ideas and habits of behaviour are still somewhat unstable, the character with whom they identify themselves must be portrayed as good and brave and never troubled by doubt of himself or his duty. As they grow older and learn to accept themselves and others more as they are, their concept of character becomes more complex and sober-hued. They begin to be more interested in the ideas and feelings of the characters in the stories, in their motives for action, and in their value as members of their community. Then the simple "Champion" and "Crystal" lose their appeal and are discarded. The persistence of a taste for them far into adolescence can, therefore, be regarded as evidence of retarded emotion or intellectual development.

Child, seated on father's knee: "Do you remember when daddy used to wear his stripes the other way round, Mummy?"