

Misericordias Domini



in aeternum cantabo.

THE ABINGDONIAN.

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EDITORIAL.

OLD Boys and friends of the School will be glad to hear that the Christmas Number of the Abingdonian which we issued last term, has been from a financial point of view, a complete success. Two hundred and fifty copies

were printed, and two hundred and fifty copies have been sold; which has enabled the Abingdonian to cast off its small load of debt and have a small balance in hand.

We mourn the loss of Mr. Paul, the late energetic Editor of this Magazine, who has left us for a good appointment at Lancing College, where we understand he has developed a habit of early rising. During the five years he was at Abingdon he interested himself greatly in the games and in all School matters, and was consequently very popular. Sorry as we are to lose him, we wish him every success at Lancing.

We hasten to express our sympathy with the friends and relations of the late Mr. John Davis. He was an old Abingdonian, and a warm supporter and contributor to the School Magazine.

The Rev. Thomas Layng has been appointed to the Head-mastership of Roysse's School, which becomes vacant next term. We beg to offer him our congratulations on his appointment and our best wishes for his success in the new work he is undertaking.

The School Football Eleven has shown greatly improved form this term; the drawn games played against the "United Breweries," and Lovett's Eleven, being very creditable.

Mr. Vernon Sladen is the new Mathematical Master. He hails from Clare College, Cambridge, where in the capacity of centre forward he assisted his college to win the inter-collegiate cup for two years in succession. Needless to say he takes a keen interest in School Football, and is very popular.

Some time ago a Subscription was started to provide the School with a Clock Tower, but the amount subscribed was far too small a sum to carry out the project; and so the money about £55 has been lying idle at the Bank.

Now as there seems no prospect of a Clock Tower being erected, why should not the money be devoted to providing the School with a Workshop, which though it might not be so ornamental, would be infinitely more useful than a Clock Tower?

Of course it would have to be started in a small way. Fifty pounds would build a rough shed and provide most of the tools necessary for beginners. And then if a small subscription was charged for membership, a new and useful source

of amusement would be provided for the boys, by which the dulness of many a wet half-holiday might be dispelled.

The heartiest congratulations to the Abingdon Football Eleven on winning their Cup Tie against Marlow and thereby qualifying to take part in the Final. There seems every prospect now, that Abingdon will become the holder of the Cup. Good luck to the team!

We should like to call the attention of "Old Abingdonians" to the fact that the School has now been in existence for over three hundred years, and that as yet no "Old Abingdonian's" Club has been started. There must be hundreds of "Old Abingdonians" scattered about the world, who would be only too glad to support an institution which would bring them in contact with old School friends, and keep green the recollections of happy School days spent at Abingdon. A very small effort would be required to effect this, so why should not the effort be made?

It is with the deepest regret that we have to record the death of Mr. William Cam, the father of our present Headmaster; and we take this opportunity, on behalf of the masters and boys of Roysse's School, of expressing our sincere sympathy with Mr. Cam and his family in their sad bereavement.

We are glad to hear that Mallam has been fortunate in having the Exhibition which he gained at Hertford College, Oxford, last term, changed for a Scholarship at the same College.

Summer has once more cast her mantle of warmth and brightness over the earth, the Football has disappeared from the School ground, superseded during the last few days, by a Cricket ball, while on the river the School Four have already had a couple of good bursts.

THE FOOTBALL'S LAMENT.

The Football dropt a scalding tear
And heaved a bitter sigh,
"Alas! I've had my day I fear,
For summer months are nigh.
No more shall I in glorious fight
Be nearly kicked to pieces,
For my attraction takes its flight
As the Cricket ball's increases.
O how I hate that puny thing,
That bit of string and leather
Which has never seen a Goal-keep's
fling,
Or "Forwards" well together.
Which has never seen a clinking "pass"
Or a really good "half-volley,"
Which soon gets lost in two-inch grass,
Or such like senseless folly.
But O! for the joy of the well-fought
game,
When the "Backs" are staunch and
strong,
And each "Half" is striving to make a
name,
And the "Forwards" rush you along.
But now alas! neglected, I
Lie idle day by day,
For the Football season now is gone,
And Cricket holds its sway."
Then the Football raged with anger
pent,

And wildly bounced and cussed,
And as his rage could find no vent
He ultimately bust.

JOHN LAWRENCE TOOLE.

By G. A. SALA.

The British public have been for a considerable time past, familiar with the principal events in the career of this universally popular comedian. Everybody—who is anybody—knows that Mr. John Lawrence Toole is the son of a well-known civic toast master, and respected employé of the Honourable East India Company, (part of whose duties necessitated his wearing a most portentous cocked hat, and a scarlet waistcoat richly laced with gold, in which glowing garb, in my small boyhood's days, I have often gazed with awe and admiration on Mr. Toole père, standing in the defiant attitude of Ajax defying the lightning, beneath the portico of the Old Indian House in Leadenhall Street); and that the future contributor to "the gaiety of nations" was born in London in 1830, and soundly educated at the excellent City of London School. It is equally well known that after a brief probation in a wine merchant's counting-house, (was not David Garrick likewise for a time in the wine trade?) young John Lawrence joined a histrionic club in the city, and made his first public appearance at the Haymarket Theatre, on the occasion of a benefit given to Mr. F. Webster. Shortly afterwards he went on the stage, professionally, for good

and all; commencing his career under Mr. Charles Dillon, at the Queen's Theatre, Dublin. In 1854 he was fulfilling an engagement at the St. James' Theatre, London, then under the management of the late Mrs. Seymour. Thence he went to the Lyceum; and, at the opening of the New Adelphi Theatre, Mr. Toole was engaged as leading comedian. People at once began to talk of "Toole and Paul Bedford," just as they had previously been accustomed to talk of "Wright and Paul Bedford." The mantle of Wright (who had it from John Reeve, who had it from Liston), descended on the shoulders of Mr. Toole, who continues to wear it right royally, as manager and actor at Toole's Theatre. There are no shreds and no patches on the mantle; and its brilliant hues have never been smirched or tarnished while the vestment has been in Mr. Toole's keeping. As to his life during the last quarter of a century, it has been an unbroken succession of dramatic triumphs; but otherwise it has been happily uneventful. I had some thoughts of "interviewing" Mr. Toole on the American system before writing this notice; with the intent of ascertaining whether he had fought any duels, whether he had ever been blown up in the Hounslow Powder Mills, or wrecked in a catamaran, or snowed up in a train on the Rocky Mountains, and whether he had ever been a Chartist, a Nihilist, a Rebeccaite, a Luddite, a Know-Nothing, or a member of the "Rum Pum Pa's." On second thoughts, I concluded not to interview

Mr. Toole, remembering, first, that he had already been interviewed by reporters both in England and the United States; and next, that albeit he is not a colossus in stature, he looks muscularly as though he were well put together, and were able to hit straight out from the shoulder—or, haply, even straighter out with a well-booted foot—were too narrow enquiries made concerning the last time he was vaccinated, and whether his theatrical wardrobe is insured in the Law, Life, or the Queen's.

With respect to his career as an actor, I suppose that most of us have seen and admired him in "Paul Pry" and "Uncle Dick's Darling," in "The Pigskins," "The Spitalfield's Weaver," and the "Area Belle," and the "Birthplace of Podgers;" and that we have appreciated him as much in the wonderfully droll character of "Mr. Doublechick" in the "upper crust" as we do in the exquisitely pathetic part of "Caleb Plummer," in "Dot" in which he is so zealously and so artistically supported by Mr. Billington as "John Perrybingle," by Miss Eliza Johnstone as "Tilly Slowboy," and by Miss Zillian Cavalier as "Dot" herself. It is the rare privilege and rare gift of Mr. Toole to be as much a master of pathos as he is of humour; but in his emotional impersonation he never forces nature, and never attempts to extort tears from his audience by unworthy tricks of maudlin claptrap. He plays the part of "Tackleton's submissive Drudge" in a thoroughly realistic but unexaggerated manner, and exhibits a picture of character most

delicately finished, but never overwrought. I remember that Lord Roseberry, when he took the chair at a dinner offered at Willis's Rooms, to Mr. Toole, prior to his departure for the United States, remarked that he could pride himself on having, perhaps, spent more guineas for stalls to see Mr. Toole in "The Pigskin," than any other young man in London. I hope that the young noblemen and gentlemen of the present epoch, have, in their patronage of "Walker," been mindful of the spirited example once set by the Earl of Roseberry. But the talent of Mr. John Lawrence Toole appeals to all classes; and he is every inch as popular with the gallery as he is with the stalls and private boxes. For the rest, it may be no violation of the social proprieties to say, that Mr. Toole is as much respected in private as he is admired in public life. I never heard that he had any enemies; and I am sure that he has not gone the way to make any. He is eminently "clubable," a sparkling conversationalist, the owner of a rich treasury of droll anecdote, and as full of fun as a school boy. Some time ago he had a great sorrow, and hosts of friends commiserated him as though it had been one of their own kindred that had been summoned away. But time has been good to him; and to those friends he will be spared, I hope, for many years, to the fostering of innocent mirth, and the awakening of gentle and tender feelings among those who witness his performances, be they grave or gay.

In both he is a Master in his Art.

FOOTBALL NOTES.

After a long series of defeats the School broke the spell of ill luck which had been weighing upon it, and when, at the end of last term, it encountered a powerful team of the "United Breweries," it astonished its supporters by playing a most creditable drawn game, in which the School had the worst of luck in not scoring the extra point required for a win.

On returning from the Holidays the School kept up its improved form, and Lovett's powerful team failed to lower its colours. Nay more, though handicapped by the absence of their Captain, W. Morland, the School XI overthrew the Town 2nd XI with the score of 8 to 3, and though subsequently beaten on two occasions, the School easily defeated a powerful Hertford XI.

Though we have every reason to congratulate ourselves on the above results, it is impossible not to be alive to the fact that, there is a most lamentable lack of "*esprit de corps*" among the members of the eleven.

On more than one occasion when a most important match has been on the card, players have absented themselves sometimes on the very shortest notice, to play for other Clubs, and have thereby aided in the downfall of their School. Unfortunately the small number of boys in the School renders it impossible for these to meet with the treatment they deserve, that is expulsion from the team; but we hope that when they have perused

this article they will be awakened to the sense of what "Alma Mater" expects from her sons.

With regard to the individual play of the team, we think that in nearly every case there has been a great improvement. Forster in goal, by his activity and mighty kicks, has materially assisted his side, in fact, the School record would have been very different without his services. Anwyl at back is a tower of strength to his side; he combines weight with pace, but his kicking is sometimes erratic. Shopland, his partner, is a plucky player and a neat kick, but lacks the pace of Anwyl.

Individually, the halves are distinctly good; W. Morland has worked hard throughout the season, and has on more than one occasion played a brilliant game. Shepherd and A. Morland have both played a good defensive game. But collectively, the halves have one great fault; they will not play on their forwards, and though their defence is excellent, it avails nothing, since the forwards are left "unfed," and therefore are quite incapable of scoring goals. It has been of frequent occurrence during the past season, to see the backs and halves grouped gracefully round the home goal, while the home forwards have been paying a perfectly harmless visit of inspection to the visitors' custodian. But this is a fault which can be easily remedied, if the halves will only remember that it is just as important to feed their forwards as to stop the rushes of the enemy, and

that by coming too far back they muddle their own full backs, and thereby endanger their citadel. With regard to the forwards, collectively and individually they are distinctly good. W. Holmes in the centre, throughout the season, has played a keen, hard game; he has kept his forwards well together, is a capital shot, and during the absence of W. Morland, has captained the team in a most satisfactory manner. P. Holmes is a fast, tricky forward, with the happy knack of shooting goals when they are most required; but is too fond of passing out to the wing when near the enemy's goal. Lovett is a smart and promising outside left, who has played well in every match this season. Batten is a speedy forward, but very selfish; if he could be induced to pass more, he would be a most useful member of the team.

Brown has only been able to play for the School during the first part of the season; his energy and pluck are inversely proportional to his size.

In the Scratch Games we were glad to notice some very promising youngsters, some of whom will no doubt in time find places in the School eleven.

Before closing this article we must congratulate our friends the Abingdon Town football eleven on the progress they have made in the Junior Cup competition, and we have great hopes of cheering them when they issue victorious from the final ordeal.

Below is a list of the matches, with dates and results.

On December 14th, a very interesting match was played against the United Breweries F. C. The play throughout was of a most even and exciting nature. At half time the "Breweries" were leading by 2 goals to nil; but after changing ends the School pulled itself together, and by some dashing combination and play, in which every member showed to advantage, twice lowered the colours of the Brewers. In spite of the strenuous efforts of Read and Skurray, the Brewers could never again get the lead, and a splendid game ended in a draw.

On January 25th, W. Lovett, Esq. got together a powerful team to do battle with the School. The School team was strengthened by the presence of Mr. V. H. Sladen at centre forward, whose splendid dribbling and passing were to a large extent responsible for the satisfactory result. In this match the team exhibited the same pluck and combination as they did against the Breweries F. C. When half time arrived the score stood (0-0), but shortly after the ball had been re-started, some pretty combination among the home forwards enabled Mr. Sladen to put in a clinking shot, which quite beat the visitors' custodian. After this some very even play took place in mid-field, when Mr. Cowell met with an accident to his knee which placed him for the time hors-de-combat, and the visitors taking advantage of this scored their only point, and the match ended in a draw (1-1).

On January 23th, the School inflicted

a crushing defeat on the town 2nd XI. The home XI. were without the services of the Captain, W. Morland, at half; and H. Anwyl at full back. Notwithstanding this, the School kept up its former reputation, and won easily by 8 goals to 3. Mr. Sladen was responsible for four goals, W. Holmes for one, and P. Holmes for three. S. Blandy performed the arduous duties of referee with great spirit and ability.

On February 1st, the School journeyed to Thame, to try conclusions with Lord William's Grammar School. We were again without the services of our Captain. The School was quite at sea on the small ground of its opponents; in fact, Forster our goal keeper several times kicked from one end to the other. After a poor game, in which the School played shockingly, we retired beaten by 5 goals to 2. We forbear to say more about this match.

On Wednesday, February 8th, W. Russwurm, Esq. got together a powerful team against the School, and, with the able assistance of Skurray at centre forward, who was responsible for every goal kicked in the match, won by 4 goals to nil.

On Saturday, February 11th, a team from Hertford College, Oxford, journeyed to Abingdon to try conclusions with the School. The visitors showed a remarkable turn of speed, but lacked combination, and retired defeated by 6 to 3. On the right wing, Irving gave a splendid exhibition of sprinting. In this

match, the School seemed to have regained some of the form displayed against Lovett's XI. and the Brewers, the combination and defence being at times extremely brilliant.

On Wednesday, February 15th, G. H. Morland, Esq. with a mixed team of Brewers and Consumers, lowered the School colours to the tune of 5 to 2. Skurray and Read again created great havoc among the School backs, while the Visitors' Captain also contributed to the number of goals scored against the School. The home team were without the services of Anwyl, which accounts in a great measure for the School's defeat.

ROYSSÉ'S SCHOOL v. THAME GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

On Saturday, February 27th, the Thame Grammar School XI. journeyed to Abingdon to play their return match with Roysse's School. In the first match, played on the Thame ground, Roysse's School were defeated by 5 goals to 2, so that the result of the return match on the Abingdon ground was highly gratifying to the supporters of Roysse's School.

The visitors won the toss and elected to defend the town goal, and W. Holmes kicked off for Abingdon. Thame at once assumed the aggressive, and three minutes after starting Meyers put the ball through, scoring the first point for Thame, (0-1). But W. Holmes obtaining possession shortly after this, put in a splendid run and a clinking shot,

which completely beat the visitors' custodian. Thus equalizing, amid loud cheers from the School partisans, (1-1). Shortly after this Thame again went a-head, Corbett beating Forster with a fairly easy shot, (1-2), but immediately afterwards, a pretty combined run between the School forwards enabled P. Holmes to bring the score level, (2-2). On resuming play the visitors' forwards at once invaded the School territory, and Winship and Anwyl had all they could manage to repel them. A hot shot from Meyers struck one of the posts but the danger of the rebound was neatly averted by Forster. This pressure continued until within a few minutes of half time, when the Abingdon forwards broke away and W. Holmes shot a neat goal; but this was dis-allowed on the plea of "off side." The score at half time remaining unchanged. On changing ends the home eleven seemed to suddenly wake up, and began to play with great dash. From some loose play in front of the visitors' goal, Batten rushed the ball through, the home side for the first time getting the lead, (3-2). Directly afterwards P. Holmes scored again for his side, (4-2). Roused by this last reverse the visitors made a plucky effort to retrieve the fortunes of the day, but the Abingdon back division playing grandly, returned the ball into the visitors' territory, whereupon W. Holmes gaining possession scored a fifth goal, (5-2). Shortly before time P. Holmes put in a long high shot which went through the visitors' posts, well out of reach of their custodian, (6-2). No

further point was scored, and the School won a brilliant and well deserved victory by 6 goals to 2.

For the visitors, Meyers and the Corbett's were best, while for Royse's School, the brothers Holmes and Winship played grandly, but Anwyl and Forster were palpably off colour.

On March 4th, the School met a very weak team from Hertford College. A poor and uninteresting game ended in favour of the School by 5 goals to 1.

SCRATCH SIXES.

On Monday, February 27th, a meeting of the Football XI was held to make the necessary arrangements for the Annual Scratch Sixes. It will be seen that Anwyl was exceptionally fortunate in the draw, a fact which removed much of the interest attached to the contest, and also produced a great deal of disappointment and some ill feeling among the rest of the players. This, whenever Anwyl's six took the field, was manifested by the very audible comments of the spectators, which occasionally were hardly in good taste. In the final, Anwyl's beat W. Holmes' six by 2 goals to 1.

The following is the result of the draw.

- (1.) P. Holmes (capt), Shopland, Blandy, Bradfield (I), Bradfield (II), Eagle.
- (2.) S. Forster, (capt), Powell (I), Batten, Lovett, Midwinter, Daly.
- (3.) Shepherd (capt), R. Prowde, Esq., Shepherd (II), Brown (I), Lay, Aldwinckle (II).

(4.) W. Holmes, (capt), Winship, Challenor, Newman, Brown (II), Cam, Badcock.

(5.) H. Anwyl, (capt), V.H. Sladen, Esq., W. J. R. Cowell, Esq., Rickarby, Aldwinckle (I).

1st. ROUND.

Anwyl's VI. v. Forster's VI.

This match was played on a ground resembling a quagmire, which of course was greatly in the favour of the heavy six; and in spite of the plucky efforts of Forster's forwards, Anwyl's six won by 8 goals to nil.

W. Holmes' VI. v. Shepherd's VI.

Played on February 27th, and resulted in a splendid game, in which Holmes' six were victorious by 4 goals to 2. Holmes played a splendid game and was well backed up by his men. For the losers, Brown played pluckily, and Mr. Prowde made desperate efforts to win.

P. Holmes' VI. — a Bye.

2nd. ROUND.

Semi-final.

P. Holmes VI v. Anwyl's VI.

Played on March 2nd. In this match P. Holmes played grandly, but his side had no chance against Anwyl's, who won by 8 goals to 2.

FINAL ROUND.

Anwyl's VI. v. W. Holmes' VI.

Played on March 3rd. Holmes' six, well backed up by the spectators, made a gallant bid for victory, but Anwyl's six again showed their superiority and won a close game by 2 goals to 1.

THE LITTLE WIDOW.

She was the widow of a wealthy brewer.

She was young, beautiful and fascinating, and had twenty thousand a year in remembrance of the late lamented purveyor of malt liquors.

We all knew her—everybody knew her. At her house, some miles from Cambridge, where she lived with her mother, she gave the most *recherché* little dinners. She was very fond of us "Boys" as she called us, and we, without considering the twenty thousand a year, were very fond of her.

She had received innumerable proposals from sentimental undergraduates, to some of whom I fear the snug little income was as much an attraction as the little widow herself. But she would listen to none.

"I tell you, my dear boy," she said to one love-sick swain, "I'm my own mistress now, and I have no intention of giving up my liberty to any one, unless——." But here she stopped herself and went off on something else.

Mrs. Carruthers, for that was the little widow's name, was an ideal hostess, and whenever you were fortunate enough to receive an invitation to Clayton Court, whether it were to tennis, dinner, or anything else, you could count on having a good time of it.

She was a sensible woman too, and allowed the butler to purchase her wine, and the butler—well the butler was an excellent judge.

The little widow and I were warm friends, so I was not very surprised when one morning, as I was finishing a late breakfast, my bed-maker brought me a note.

"Just left for you at the Porter's Lodge, sir," she said.

I opened it. It was an invitation to a quiet little dinner at Clayton Court that evening, and the postscript said "Important."

Now I am very fond of little dinners at Clayton Court, so I determined that my presence should not grace the board of the festive Boddgers, who had a big wine on in his rooms, and accepted the invitation.

I told Perham about it.

"Lucky dog," he said, "the wealthy widow has evidently taken a fancy to you. It's always you quiet chaps that make all the running, the rest nowhere." And he strolled off to inspect a terrier which he was thinking of purchasing. I hired a trap from the livery stables, and punctually as the clock struck half-past seven drew up at Clayton Court.

In the drawing room I found the little widow waiting to receive me.

"My mother is laid up with a bad headache," she said, "You won't mind having no one to talk to except me?"

I hastened to assure her of the pleasure I felt at the prospect of a *tête-à-tête* dinner with anyone so charming as my hostess.

"That's very nice of you," she said with a smile, "I wrote and asked you to come over here this evening, from what I am afraid you will consider, is a purely selfish motive. I want your help and advice on a most important matter."

"I am sure," I answered, "that any service I can render you will be more than a pleasure."

"Thanks, I knew I could depend upon you. You see it is a matter in which only a man can help me, and I seem to know you so much better than other men of my acquaintance. I suppose it is because you don't make love to me for the sake of that wretched fortune I possess, that I trust you. Anyhow

t's awfully good of you to say that you will help me. Come, dinner is waiting. I'll tell you all about it afterwards."

I was very curious to know, and tried hard to imagine what kind of service the little widow could require of me. I thought, could the little widow by any possible chance have taken a violent fancy to *me*, and had she invited me to this little tête-à-tête dinner to tell me so? A thrill of manly vanity ran through me at the thought. However, I felt it would be rather embarrassing if it were so, as there was that little affair with my pretty cousin to be considered.

But my fears were dispelled, and at the same time I must own that my vanity was somewhat crushed, when, having finished dinner, the little widow *did* tell me what she wanted me for.

"It is a beautiful evening," she said, "I'll have the coffee brought out into the verandah and then you can smoke, which I know you are longing to do."

So we had the coffee brought out into the verandah, and I lit my cigar and smoked contentedly in the cool stillness of the summer evening.

"You are no doubt surprised," said the little widow presently, "You are no doubt surprised that I have never married a second time?"

"Well it can't be for want of an opportunity," I said, glancing at the piquant face and graceful girlish figure leaning back in the big chair opposite me.

"O no, I have had heaps of offers, but the right one has not turned up yet."

I again began to have suspicions as to the intentions of the little widow, but her next words dispelled them.

"Do you know," she said, suddenly chang-

ing her tone and leaning forward in her chair, "That years before I met my late husband, I was the affianced wife of another? No, of course you don't," she continued without giving me time to reply. "It's a sad chapter out of my life, but you shall hear it."

"Not if it gives you pain," I said, "What good in opening old wounds?"

"It is connected with the service you have promised to render me," she said.

And then she told me the story of her life.

I had always regarded the "Little Widow" as one of the butterfly type, light-hearted and happy, passing through life as if it possessed never a care. I had thought her frivolous though kind-hearted, without any great depth of feeling. But now as she sat in the dim twilight of the summer's evening, telling me her story, with the slightest quiver in her sweet voice and something very like tears in her glorious eyes, I knew that I had misjudged her. Frivolity was gone and in its place reigned the woman.

"Years ago," she said, "before I met my late husband, Tom Hardinge and I were friends. He was at Cambridge at the time, and in the vacations was a frequent visitor at my father's house. Well, after a time he asked me to become his wife, and I, who loved him with all my heart, accepted him.

But my father objected to the match. Tom was poor and had not yet made his way in the world, and I, I must do better than throw myself away on a man who carried brains instead of bullion. And so, poor old Tom was forbidden the house, and everybody, except Tom and myself, who swore to remain true to one another as long as we lived, considered the engagement at an end.

Tom went to India, and soon after this a Mr. Carruthers, a wealthy brewer and old

enough to be my father, began to pester me with his attentions.

He proposed to me, and I refused him.

But instead of being discouraged by this he only became the more persistent.

My father was very anxious that I should accept Mr. Carruthers, and did all in his power to bring about an alliance, which would so enhance his credit in the city.

For a long time, true to my own love I withstood, till at last utterly wearied by the persistency of my elderly lover, and the bullying tone which my father had of late assumed, I yielded, and became the wife of a wealthy man whom I did not love. But my married life did not last long; barely a year sufficed to see my husband carried off by a sudden chill, and I was left at the age of twenty-three, a widow with a large fortune."

"And Tom Hardinge," I said.

"I have never heard from him since he went to India. But the other day I heard by chance that he was once more in England."

"I think I understand," I said, a sudden light breaking upon me. "You would like to see him again, to have a chat about old times. In fact you would not be at all adverse to an accidental meeting with this Tom Hardinge? Perhaps I can help you."

She held out her hand. "I knew you would help me," she said.

"But don't you think it is rather rough on all of us poor chaps?" I asked.

"O nonsense, I regard you all as very nice dear boys, that's all," she answered, laughing. And the little widow was herself again.

As I drove home that night I pondered deeply on the complexity of matters mundane, and thought what an interesting experiment it would be, if some learned professor could

accurately analyse that most complex of all things—the mind of a woman.

* * * * *

A few days later, having obtained an exeat from my tutor, I ran up to town and made my way to the New Oxford and Cambridge Club, where I heard Tom Hardinge was staying.

On the steps of the club I ran against my brother.

"Hullo!" said he, "What brings you up to town?"

"I want to get to know a man called 'Hardinge.'"

"What! Not Tom Hardinge, who used to be up at the Hall in my time."

"That's the man," I answered.

"Why," said my brother, in astonishment, "what on earth could have made you come up to town to make the acquaintance of a man whom you have never seen in your life?"

"I have private reasons," I answered.

"Private reasons, humph, there's a woman at the bottom of it, my boy."

This is the conclusion to which my brother Bob invariably comes concerning any matter which seems to him mysterious or out of the way. I am quite convinced that if anyone were to inform him that the Atlantic Ocean had suddenly dried up, his first remark would be, "Depend upon it my boy, there is a woman at the bottom of it."

In my own case, however, he hit the mark.

"Well," he continued, "Tom Hardinge is dining with me this evening, so if you want to meet him you had better join the party."

"Thanks, but look here Bob, you needn't let Tom Hardinge know that I have come up from Cambridge specially to make his acquaintance."

"All right. I must leave you now. See you at seven sharp;" and he hurried off to keep some engagement.

I dispatched a telegram to the little widow to say I had found my man. And that evening at dinner I met Tom Hardinge for the first time.

Tom Hardinge was what is known as a fine man. He stood over six feet in his stockings, with huge shoulders and plenty of muscle. His sun-burnt, clean-shaven face, though not handsome, bore expression of such honesty and good humour, that anyone meeting him would have at once pronounced him "a rattling good sort."

He told me that he was home from India on six months' leave, and I soon found that like most old 'Varsity men he cherished many a fond recollection of his College days.

We had a very pleasant evening together. Tom Hardinge was the best of company, and entertained us with accounts of sport and adventure in the East.

Before we parted I said to him,

"I see you have not quite forgotten your old college life. Why not renew it for a few days and have a look at the old place again. I shall be very glad to put you up if you will come."

He gladly accepted my offer, and next day accompanied me back to Cambridge.

* * * * *

It was a bright summer's morning, a few days after my excursion to town. Tom Hardinge and I, in all the luxurious ease which is afforded by flannels and big pipes, were sprawling lazily in a Canadian canoe, which borne on the bosom of old father Cam drifted slowly though the college "backs."

Presently Tom Hardinge sat up.

"What are you going to do this afternoon,"

he said, "Tennis?"

"Well to tell you the truth," I answered, "I had intended to drive over to a place, a few miles from here, to see an old friend of mine," I had almost added "and of your's," but I didn't. "Why not accompany me? I know Mrs. Carruthers will be glad to see you if —."

"Carruthers," he interrupted, "I seem to know the name, O yes, I remember."

"Do you know her?" I asked. "She is a widow."

"O there are heaps of Carruthers in the world," he said. "She is probably no relation of the one I used to know. Anyhow, I shall be glad to accompany you."

So that afternoon we drove over to Clayton Court, and were duly ushered into Mrs. Carruthers' drawing room.

While we were waiting for the appearance of our hostess, Tom Hardinge little suspecting what was in store for him, walked about the room admiring the knick-knacks which adorned it.

For my part, I felt nervous and had a presentiment that something strange was about to happen.

Presently the door opened and the little widow, looking O so sweet, in the daintiest of summer costumes, entered.

Tom Hardinge started back as if he had been struck.

"Dolly!" he gasped.

"Tom!"

Then I felt that I was not wanted, and went out into the garden and smoked a cigar.

Half an hour later, Tom Hardinge and the little widow joined me, and by their happy faces I could see that it was all right.

And when Tom Hardinge almost crushed my hand in his hugh paw, in his endeavours to impress his gratitude upon me, my impression was confirmed.

"So the right man had turned up at last, and the little widow was happy.
Then we went in to tea.

OXFORD LETTER.

As this is the dull term at Oxford, I am afraid I have not much news to impart. Our Rugby match against Cambridge last term ended in a draw, but we were more successful under Association rules, as Oxford won by 3 to 2. Magdalen won the Association Cup, beating Wadham in the final. We are also glad to see that Old Abingdonians in residence at Oxford are doing good service in their College teams, and we hear that Mallam has been lately distinguishing himself. With regard to rowing, all Abingdonians past and present will be glad to hear that Pembroke the mother College made four bumps in the Torpids, thus getting into the first division. I am glad to say the 'Varsity boat is going well and strong, and we have great hopes of beating Cambridge. At the New Theatre, the "Two gentlemen of Verona" has been drawing large houses; and we have also had some good provincial companies. Old Abingdonians up here have expressed great satisfaction at the School's enterprise at being the first to start a Christmas Number, and more so as we hear it has proved such a success.

Wishing the School every prosperity under its future head master.

DARK BLUE.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Dere mister editors of the Abingdonian.

Ive been meening to rite to you for a long time, but other things cheifly lines and imperishens, have stopped me doing it till now. We musint expect very much from the cricket 11 this year considring last seson and remembring how many of the old 11 have left. I hope the capting will have plenty of pick ups for the juniors to play, becos ime quite shore some of us wood be very good players if we were only encuridged. I hope the stewerds of the sports will manage the starts well so as to give the juniors a fare chance in the handycapes, so that the big boys wont win all the events, becos I think the juniors ort to have a fair chanse in evrything. In football, I think the scool has done pritty well considring, but I think there ort to have been a few more pick ups for the juniors to play all thow some of them wont play wen they have a chanse; I suppose they want to imetate a few of the big boys who do the same sum times. And I hink we ort to try and get a good refere, whot coold allwes be there at a mach, all tho I suppose this woud be hard to get or else they woud have got one befor. I think the sixes at football are a very good thing and I hope they will have them evry yere, all tho there is a good dele of luck sumtimes in droring the sides. I hope the masters are as good at crickit as they are at football, Riting this letter has taken a lot of truble, and praps there are to or 3 mistakes in the spelling, but I think its all rite. Hopping the next number of the magizene will be as good and intresting as the larst.

I remane yore obedent servent and frend,

JUNIOR BOY.

Mr. Editor,

I am surprised that all the years Roysse's School has been in existence, the Old Boys have not organized a Football Club. It would bind past and present close together by a common interest. The Football teams are now acting wisely, in following the example of the Cricket teams, and bringing past and present into a healthy and vigorous rivalry, calculated to stimulate the School to higher deeds of renown in the field of sport. I hope the present like to see the Old Boys' faces as much as possible.

AN OLD BOY.

Dear Mr. Editor,

May I encroach upon your valuable space to draw attention to what I consider a great defect in the School football team? That is, the way in which the half-backs refuse to feed their forwards. It is quite impossible for the forwards to score goals if the half-backs do not co-operate with them. The School half-backs, except in this respect, play a very good game, so if you could through the medium of your columns impress this on them, you would be doing the School eleven a good service.

Yours truly,

ONE OF THE FORWARDS.

NOTE.—This matter has been touched upon in the Football article.—*Ed.*

Dear Mr. Editor,

The boys in the School lately have been talking about trying to start a workshop. Why should this not be done? for on the wet half-holidays boys lounge about the building all the afternoon doing nothing. This would not be the case if they had a workshop to go into. I hear there is £54 17s. *od.* which was collected for a tower clock,

lying idle at the bank, might this not be utilised as something to start building a small workshop on?

Yours truly,

CHISSELER.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF THE ABINGDONIAN.

At a Meeting holden on February 3rd, Mr. Sladen was elected on the Committee in the place of Mr. Paul who has left us. It was resolved that the ordinary issue of the "Abingdonian" should be enlarged by four pages, and that a short story should be one of the features of the Magazine during the present year.

The following are the Officers :—

Mr. Cowell, Chairman.

W. Holmes, Hon. Secretary.

W. Morland, Hon. Treasurer.

Mr. Sladen	} are also on the Committee.
H. W. Anwyl	
P. Holmes	
H. Morland	

OBITUARY.

JOHN DAVIS,
DIED DECEMBER 29TH, 1892,
THE LABURNAMS,
LITTLEMORE.

WILLIAM CAM,
DIED MARCH 7TH, 1893,
THE SCHOOL HOUSE,
ABINGDON.

THE ABINGDONIAN.

BALANCE SHEET.

No. 8.

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February 22nd, 1893.

W. T. MORLAND,
Hon. Treasurer.

OFFICERS FOR THE ENSUING SEASON.

CRICKET.

W. O. HOLMES ...	...	<i>Captain of First Eleven.</i>
T. H. E. MORLAND ...	...	<i>Honorary Secretary.</i>
H. W. ANWYL ...	...	<i>Honorary Treasurer.</i>

BOATS.

H. W. ANWYL ...	...	<i>Captain.</i>
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