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THE GUILD OF PLAY.

One Friday afternoon last May a small girl came home in great glee. It was the end of her first week at school. "I do love school," she said, "and we have learnt such lots of things

-skippin', and dancin', and singin', and fishin'!"

A little later, when my little friend was far away in dreamland, I betook myself to the railway train, and said good-bye to our green Kentish fields and fishing ponds. In their place came great high boxes of "model dwellings," shutting out all but a narrow strip of sky from the fields between them, or tiny alleys of rambling old houses that had the greatest difficulty in standing still. And in and out of the alleys, up and down the stairs, were children, countless children; for in Bermondsey they pay but late and fleeting visits to the witching land of counterpane. Soon we made our way through a crowd round the doors of the Town Hall, and two minutes later we heard, and saw, and felt nothing but children. These children, like any little High School girl, had been "doin' lessons all the day," but at their schools there is one strange custom. Although, as any "infant" will tell you, they spend long hours over "reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic," never was one of them taught to play.

But two years ago Sister Grace founded the Guild of Play, and now May Day, the great play festival, has come. For a whole hour or more we are all as busy as busy can be. A wonderful transformation scene is taking place. But at last some one comes to tell us that downstairs the last learned gentleman is making his speech, and presently some one else says, "The speech is ended." Then the doors fly open, and the people who crowd the platform and those who throng the sides of the hall, the mothers in the gallery and the poor things mustered

under their Union Jack, one and all break out into tremendous clapping.

For through the doors, two by two, with joined hands uplifted, to old dance music, with

dainty tripping step, march two hundred little girls.

"Sit," says Sister Grace, and, before you know where the voice comes from, the maypole is surrounded with circle after circle of girls in high-waisted, blue cotton frocks, with blue bordered handkerchiefs tucked into queer little old-fashioned sashes, and crowned with quaint blue caps. But, to the children, perhaps the white tennis shoes and white cotton stockings are the crowning glory of an altogether gorgeous array.

Can your "imaginary forces" make you understand what a fine thing it is to have white and approximately-fitting shoes where, usually, at best there are only highly-ventilated fragments of boots three sizes too large? And I wonder if any nursery child can understand five-year-old Louie's delight and pride because "Mover barfed me all over in the kitchen

copper."

Well, while the blue-frocked children sit round the maypole, fifty others in white smocks and green caps stand round the piano, and begin the festival with a part song—Kingsley's "Sweet and Low." Then, at a signal, all join hands for "London Bridge is Broken Down," one of the very earliest English song-games of which fragments remain. After that comes a charming version of "Poor Jenny Jones," where a tiny Jenny, hidden behind her mother, is visited by a would-be suitor, accompanied, after the old English custom, by all his friends. But poor Jenny is always starching, or ironing, or ill, or dying; and, last of all, she is dead. "And you can't see her now," cries the mother each time. Wee Jenny's movements "bring down the house." After another song comes "Old Roger" and "There was a Jolly Miller." Then "Here we Dance Looby Loo" and "Here Come Three Dukes a-riding," followed by "Here we Come up the Green Grass" and "Oats, and Beans, and Barley," with its refrain—

"Do you, or I, or anyone know How oats, and beans, and barley grow?" For more than an hour the play goes on without a hitch. Then, as they came, two by two, with a quaint dance step, the children go away amid the cheers of mothers, and fathers, and brothers, and the wild brandishment of crutches and flags on the part of the poor things. Our visitors hasten to bid farewell to the sights and sounds of Bermondsey. We go behind the scenes, and help to hook up the ragged frocks again, all as happy as we can be. For if this festival is charming, the ordinary Guild of Play held in the Board School halls every week through the winter are really almost more charming, for then there is always a fairy tale as well as the games, and Sister Grace herself plays instead of merely looking on.

We have a very definite reason for hoping that some of the girls who read this short sketch of our play hour may be interested in it. The Guild of Play is not meant to entail extra toil upon tired Board School teachers. It is emphatically work for girls who have a big share in all this world's best gifts, and are willing to share, not only their money, and flowers,

and old clothes, but their happiness and culture with the little sisters who have none.

I have merely told a little about what we do to-day, but if anyone would care to know something of why we do it, and what we hope to effect by it, I shall be very pleased to send a copy of our pamphlet and to answer any questions. Is it too much to hope that before long we may see a branch of the Guild of Play started in Oldham?

The Bermondsey Settlement,

E. B. TAYLOR.

Farncombe Street, London, S.E.

"THE IDYLLS OF THE KING."

Almost every poet has tried his hand at the Arthurian Legend, and Tennyson has proved no exception. It is the story of the struggle of a band of knights—some pure, some faulty, under a leader wholly mystical—to reach the higher life, and to raise the standard of all other men. Tennyson has brought the force of his own nature to bear on the old story—the "Morte D'Arthur." The result is a series of poems, which have a distinctly moral purpose running through them, and in which Tennyson reveals much of his own philosophy of life, and gives a much refined version of the old story. All the stories—the Idylls—are somewhat allegorical. Some show us how "good will be the final goal of ill;" others—

"How many among us at this very hour, Do forge a life-long trouble for ourselves, By taking true for false, or false for true."

Everything Tennyson says is so very true. Perhaps it is this very trait of his which gives him so much power over people. We find that Tennyson has only put our own thoughts into words, but more beautifully than anyone else could express them. That is why he is so constantly quoted. On the other hand his philosophy is somewhat aggravating to some people. Everyone has not such a fine wide nature as he had. He thinks that—

"We needs must love the highest when we see it."

Thus, for this reason, Tennyson has been accused of merely dallying with words, and of lack of deep understanding. The keynote of the Idylls is chivalry, and that word comprises the three virtues of faith, righteousness, and duty,—faith that all righteousness will conquer all evil when men do their duty to their God and King. It was the aim of the knights to—

"Live pure, speak true, right wrong, follow the King— Else wherefore born?"

Tennyson had a special gift for making his poetry beautiful. It is a pleasure merely to listen to the sound of the words, without paying attention to the sense, though that is entirely worthy of the words it is clothed in. In his poetry Tennyson betrays another of his characteristics—his keen observation of nature. For example, there is a perfect description of the murmur of a crowd afar off in "The Marriage of Geraint," where he says—

"And out of town and valley comes a noise As of a broad brook o'er a shingly bed Brawling, or like a clamour of the rooks At distance ere they settle for the night." The dedication of the Idylls is to the Prince Consort, and Tennyson's wish for the Queen-

"The love of all thy people comfort thee 'Till God's love set thee at his side again!"

at the end of it, has a special interest this Jubilee year, for one feels that it has been quite answered. As one reads through the Idylls the knights divide themselves into two classes—the Real and the Unreal. Arthur, with his mysterious birth and mysterious passing away, seems more like a dream of strength, beauty, and goodness than a really living man. Sir Galahad, too, is more of an ideal personified than a breathing creature. One cannot imagine Sir Percivale upon earth; he was too passionate and eager in his search after perfection to belong to this world. But as for Lancelot: he is so noble, so sinful, and yet so very real, that one can quite love and pity him. One feels the same, also, towards Gareth, Geraint, and Tristram. Gareth, too, so patient under his lady's taunts, and longing only for glory as one of Arthur's knights; Geraint, brave, too, yet so mistrustful of one who had proved herself worthy of his trust; and Tristram, who sinned so deeply; for all these we have a great admiration and pity, for they were men, and exposed to temptations greater than those we have to face.

In all these tales Tennyson has differed from the "Morte D'Arthur" in giving us more the nineteenth century ideas of right and wrong; not the ideas of the Middle Ages, when the legends grew up. All Tennyson's women are real and very womanly. He sets before us very

high ideals of a wife's duty. He would have her loving and obedient-

"'Till at the last she set herself to man Like perfect music unto noble words."

And this earthly Paradise which Arthur has tried to set up on earth. Could it last, or do any lasting good? We can find the answer to that in Arthur's own words—

"But in His ways with men I find Him not; I waged His wars, and now I pass and die. Oh, me! for why is all around us here As if some lesser god had made the world, And had not force to shape it as he would!

For I, being simple, thought to work His will, And have but stricken with the sword in vain."

But again his faith that all in some far distant day will come right rises clear, and he passes away triumphant in the thought that by his life and example he has done something to help it forward—

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new, And God fulfils Himself in many ways, Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

I have lived my life, and that which I have done May he within himself make pure!"

N. NEILD.

TENNYSON.

Alfred Tennyson, one of England's best poets, was a man and a poet whom any nation might have been justly proud to own. He was born at Somersby in 1809, and was the youngest of three brothers, all of whom were poets. At the early age of twenty he received the Chancellor's medal for a poem on "Timbuctoo," and at twenty-one he published his first volume, "Poems: Chiefly Lyrical," which contain many well-known poems, such as "The Dying Swan," and "Recollections of the Arabian Nights." Three years later he issued another volume of poems, which contains "The Miller's Daughter." When Wordsworth died in 1850 Tennyson was made Poet Laureate. After the lapse of nine years appeared his "Idylls of the King," which is undoubtedly the best of his works. The whole conception and rendering of these stories is wonderful, and no one is surprised at their great popularity. Tennyson also

wrote the well-known poem called "The Princess," which gave popularity to the question of woman's education. In 1833, when his greatest friend, Arthur Henry Hallam, died, he began to write a poem, afterwards published as "In Memoriam," which is one of the most touching and exquisite poems written in the English language. In his old age he took to writing dramas and ballads. His ballad, "The Revenge," is one of the noblest and most vigorous poems England has ever seen. His best known dramas are "Harold," "Queen Mary," and "Becket," the latter having been written when he was seventy-four years of age. In 1882 he was created Baron Tennyson, and died ten years later, having spent the later part of his life in Italy and the south. His style is very varied; he is equally at home in the slowest and most tranquil, the saddest, and in the most impulsive and vigorous of his works. He tried many new metres and many new methods of rhyme, and he succeeded in them all. Everywhere in his works the sound is made to be "an echo to the sense"—that is, the style is always in perfect keeping with the matter. Some of his lines have gone straight to the heart of his readers, so sweet and pathetic are they. Such as—

"But, oh, for the touch of a vanished hand, And the sound of a voice that is still."

His language is highly polished, pure, and rich; sometimes luxuriant in imagery and sweet music; at other times severely simple; but always noble. Many of his lines are very well known and often quoted. None are more characteristic of the poet than the following, with which I close —

""Tis better to have loved and lost Than never to have loved at all."

"Howe'er it be, it seems to me
"Tis only noble to be good;
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood."

LAURA LEE.

WHERE I SPENT MY HOLIDAYS.

II.—The Isle of Man.—Peel.—Four of us went to the Isle of Man for our holidays. We went by the Fleetwood route across the sea. The voyage over was not very pleasant, as it rained most of the time, and the sea was rough. The only pleasant part of it, to me, was watching the seagulls following the vessel, as they picked up the pieces of cake and biscuit that were thrown overboard. We arrived at Peel, and found it a very clean and pretty, but small, fishing town. It is noted for the ruins of a fine old castle that was built in the Saxon period on a small island. It is very interesting, as some of the Bishops of Man were buried there, and the guide tells a great many wonderful tales about it. Along the coast there are also a great many small caves, all of which people can enter at low tide. Of course, we went to see them. We walked to the caves over some very steep cliffs, and we had to help each other over the steep paths. It was a very warm day, and we stayed a long time watching a porpoise sporting in the water quite close to the beach. Niarbyl Bay is a very wild and rocky place, where you may spend some time looking at the sea, and then have tea at a little cottage near.

Snaefell is the largest mountain; it is 2,000 feet high; the summit of it can be reached by an electric railway. The whole island can be seen from the top. Near Peel is Corrins Hill. On the hill top is an old tower, a monument erected by a gentleman named Corrin in memory of his wife. There are also many very pretty glens. The prettiest one, I think, is Glen Helen, in which there is a beautiful waterfall, and many pretty ferns and flowers to be found. One day, when we were out walking, we came across quite a family of lizards basking in the sun on an old stone wall. We were very sorry when we had to return home again and leave all these delightful places behind. We had a very pleasant journey home again, the sea being very calm to make our holiday happy to the very end.

E. H. M. POWELL.

THE LITTLE BROWNIES.

It was a bright, sunny afternoon, and the boys, just dismissed from school, shouted with glee. One little fellow whose name was Arthur hastened down the road till he came to a little ivy-covered cottage. The little cottage made a pretty picture, the green ivy forming a delightful background to the brightly-coloured mass of marigolds, hollyhocks, stocks, &c. At the door sat a little cripple boy named Percy, deformed from birth, and unable to move without crutches. Percy's face brightened considerably when he saw Arthur. These two were insepar able companions, notwithstanding the one's deformity. Arthur ran up the pebbled path, and sat down at Percy's feet. Percy at once began to tell him in a low, eager tone the strange events of the previous night. "Arthur, listen!" said Percy. "Last night I was suddenly awakened by the creaking of the door. In walked a little man dressed in brown from head to foot. He signed to me to be silent, and, creeping to my couch, whispered to me to get up and follow him. I found I could walk without my crutches! The door was open, though I am sure my mother locked it before going to bed. We passed from the road into the wood, and suddenly I heard the tinkling of bells and the chattering of many voices. I saw dozens of little Brownies dancing and skipping about to the music of the little bells. The little men were very friendly, and I enjoyed myself very much. At dawn my little Brownie brought me home, and he is coming for me at midnight again." Arthur vainly tried to persuade Percy that it was all a dream, but Percy was not to be persuaded; and, in order that Arthur should be convinced, he told the latter to meet him, when midnight struck, at the entrance to the wood. A few minutes before twelve Arthur stole out, and after waiting a short time he saw, to his great surprise, his friend Percy coming towards him without his crutches, and evidently chatting gaily to some invisible person. Arthur joined Percy, who did not, however, notice him at all, and they went on their way in silence. After a few minutes' walk they came out on a green grassy mound. Here Arthur's astonishment knew no bounds, for Percy capered and danced about as though mad. When morning began to appear the unseen guide conducted them home again, and (so Percy told Arthur) promised to come again for them the following night. All the next day Arthur's thoughts were far away from school, and he had to be constantly reproved by his teacher for his inattention. School over for the day, he hastened down to Percy's home, but was surprised not to find his friend in his place by the door. All was silent, and, feeling frightened, he quietly pushed open the door and peeped in. Percy lay, pale and still, in his mother's arms, while his father sat at the table, his head bowed on his hands. Mechanically the father beckoned for Arthur to enter. Percy was awake, and smiled sweetly at Arthur, who knelt down by his friend. "The little Brownie will not be long," whispered Percy. Arthur nodded his head in response. The cripple fell into a quiet sleep, but soon after, suddenly sitting up and clutching Arthur, he said, "See, Arthur, he is at the door." Then, as if in answer to some question, he stretched out his arms and said, "Yes, I am ready." With his eyes fixed on the door he fell back dead.

M. S.

H.G.S. LITERARY SOCIETY.

DEBATE ON "NOVELS."

On Wednesday, July 7th, a debate on "Novels" was held at the 15th meeting of the above Society. The debate was opened by A. Jagger, who brought forward the following proposition:—"All novels should be serious—either historical, or with a definite purpose." A comic description of a novel was then given by B. Fryer in support of this motion, in which she declared that "Novels are books which cost from 1d. to 10s.; when they cost less than a penny they are novelettes." Then followed a description of the general form of novels. Miss Mitchell supported the proposition, saying that "All books which do not instruct us or enlarge our sympathies with our fellow creatures, or help us to understand characters higher than our own, are worse than useless. Good novels, then, are studies of human nature in its best aspects." The question of novels having a definite purpose was brought up, and extracts given to suggest the unreality of many of the characters in novels. C. Dobell read a paper on the choice of novels, supporting the reading of Scott's works, as giving life-like pictures from

history, and also of modern novels such as Rider Haggard's works and those of Weyman and Conan Doyle. Readings were given from Miss Austen's "Emma" and Shorthouse's "Sir Percival" by Miss Bott and Miss Fox. Miss Semmens then said that if novels simply cheered the reader by giving beautiful pictures of life they were worth reading, even if not historical or with an aggressive "purpose." The proposition that school girls' reading should be limited was then discussed, supported by Miss Kerly, A. Dodd, L. Lee. N. Nield said, on the other side, that no girls of sense would think of being influenced by the light novels they read; therefore, let them read all they felt interest in. Louie Dodd thought, however, that promiscuous novel reading was dangerous for girls with strong imaginations, but not for ordinary people. After a little further discussion, a division was taken, the first proposition being lost by 26 votes, and the second winning the day by 24 votes. The meeting concluded with the National Anthem.

HETTIE THACKERAY, Secretary.

OPENING SPEECH AT THE LITERARY CLUB DEBATE.

"Novels."

The subject of novels is rather a difficult one to discuss, because there are so many different kinds. Novels should not depress you, and, at the same time, should not influence you to be ridiculously frivolous. Historical novels are very good for girls, especially school girls, for, while you are enjoying the story, you are, at the same time, revising the events which happened in the reigns of kings and queens long gone by; and, apart from that, I think events which have really occurred are much more interesting than fiction. Some of the trashy novels of to-day, which are so popular with girls, are nothing more or less than rubbish. Novels should show a purpose, pointing out the difference between good and evil, and ought not to be merely fictitious. My idea of a novel is that it be historical, thoughtful, and with a purpose.

AMY E. JAGGER.

THE SCHOOL ENTERTAINMENT.

On the last day of last term— July 28th—an entertainment was given by the girls of the School The First and Second Forms gave an amusing play, called "Before Nine," by Miss G. Toplis. In it are two school girls, Hilda and Daisy, who fall asleep over their lessons, and dream they are visited by Shakespeare, Joan of Arc, &c. Hilda (E. Mallalieu) and Daisy (A. Broome) are finally carried off by their nurses, after their strange visitors have all departed. V. Philipps as Shakespeare, A. Bradbury as Alfred the Great, and E. Wardle as selfish Old King Cole, were very amusing, and everyone felt sorry for poor Mad Rohese (F. Wainwright) and Robinson Crusoe (M. Wooster). The action song, "Butterfly Wings," by the Junior Singing Class, was extremely pretty and effective, the limelight giving a greater charm to the scene. One of the most important items on the programme was the cantata sung by the girls of the Senior Singing The four chief characters were Proserpina, the Queen of the Flowers, Ceres, and the Shepherd, taken by E. Elliott, L. Rye, A. Cooper, and E. Tweedale. A few interludes in verse were interposed to give variety in the cantata. They were spoken chiefly by the gorgeous Sungod. The dresses were very pretty, and added much to the charm of the piece. The Queen of the Flowers, in pink, formed a pretty contrast to the Shepherd in his costume of heliotrope; and Proserpina's friends were charmingly robed in white. All the girls rendered their parts well, especially those who sang solos. Between the first and second acts a dance was given by "Sunbeams," in yellow. One of the most successful items was a song composed by Miss Mitchell, acted by V. Dobell and L. Shaw, entitled "The Rats." In this, also, the costumes were very striking. It was very much enjoyed, and was, like the rest of the entertainment, a great success.

C. DOBELL.

E. HAGUE.

SCHOOL NOTES.

The following girls have entered the School this term :—

FORM IV. (B).—A. Gallimore, M. Faull, M. Hall.

FORM III. É. Anderton, A. Éaton, B. Holt, L. Lancaster, E. Johnson, A. Cockroft, H. Cocker, E. Stott.

FORM II.—M. Hanson, L. Corns, M. Fletcher, H. Wooster.

FORM I.—E. Nield, M. Rothwell, M. Maw, M. Broome.

The total number of girls this term is 108.

The following girls left the School last term :-

FORM IV. (A).—C. Inglis, E. Wade, *H. Thackeray (Prefect).

FORM IV. (B.)—B. Feber, A. Kenyon, L. Dodd, A. Cooper.

FORM III.— E. Henshall.

FORM II.-L. Shaw, N. Watson.

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On October 19th Miss Foxall held a General Meeting, when she proposed that a Hockey Club should be formed if a sufficient number of girls sent in their names. At a meeting held October 21st by the members of the Hockey Club to elect the officers, it was decided that for the present the Club should have a Committee of five, and a Secretary and Treasurer, with power to add to the number. Committee: Miss Fox, Miss Bott, E. Tweedale, A. Wormald, M. Lawton. Secretary and Treasurer: E. Thackeray.

* *

A re-election of the Literary Club Committee gave the following results:—Secretary: N. Neild. Vice-President: E. B. Elliott. Librarian: A. Sergeant. Committee: E. Thackeray (IV. A)., A. Wormald and D. Mellalieu (IV. B.), A. Jagger and A. Sugden (III.).

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Two Literary Meetings have been already held this term. The subject of the first one was Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient Rome." The programme consisted chiefly of papers on the above subject, and recitations and one piano solo. The second meeting was held on October 27th. The book chosen to be read was "Plutarch's Lives." Scenes from "Julius Cæsar" were acted, and these, with two or three papers and one song, formed the programme. A large number of the old pupils was present.

The Literary Club is now in a very flourishing condition. New committee members have been elected this term. Nellie Neild is the new Secretary, Alice Sergeant the Librarian, and Emma Elliott continues to hold the office of Vice-President. A large proportion of the new girls in the Upper Forms have joined the Club. It is expected that the Club will not be opened to Form III. next year, as our numbers are now so large.

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The Committee of the Literary Society held a meeting October 10th to decide upon the programme for the term's meetings. It was decided "That all members not having read the books chosen shall not be admitted to the meetings." This rule the Committee has decided to enforce strictly in future. It was also decided "That a portion of the funds of the Club be reserved for the purchase of a bookcase for the Library, instead of the whole being expended on books." The Programme for the autumn term is as follows:—

October 27th.—Plutarch's Lives of Brutus and Cæsar, with scenes from Shakespeare.

November 17th.—Debate, subject to be decided by vote.

December 15th.—Discussion on Dickens' "Christmas Carol."

We offer congratulations to A. Sergeant and H. Thackeray on gaining the lower certificate of the Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board. We congratulate the School prize winners also, on their success.

We have received the following paragraph from the "School Music Review" of October 1897, about our entertainment last term. We give an account of the entertainment elsewhere:—

"Hulme Grammar School for Girls, Oldham.—The programme of the entertainment given by the pupils of this School at the end of the summer term included the cantata, "Proserpina," by O. King;" "Butterfly Wings," by A. Moffatt; and an action song, "The Rats," by A. M. Mitchell. The performance was a decided success, and the effect was heightened by the use of limelight of various colours. The singing of Miss Emma Elliott, as Proserpina, and Miss Lilian Rye, as the Queen, was much applauded. Miss A. M. Mitchell, A.R.C.M., was the conductor."

The Prefects for this year are: -N. Neild, A. Sergeant, M. Siddall, E. Thackeray.

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Some very pretty holiday work was laid out for our inspection last Wednesday. One or two of the prize articles were especially pretty—H. Thackeray's silk magazine cover and J. Lawton's glass box.

At four o'clock on Tuesday, October 26th, quite a long crocodile of girls started from the School, to the amusement of those pedestrians taking their walks abroad at that hour. The crocodile wound its way to St. Thomas's School, and there disappeared. Miss Foxall had very kindly invited the girls to hear a missionary address from Miss Storr, and we were all well repaid for our journey. We heard stories from Japan, from China, and many other mission fields. Some of them made us sad, some made us merry—all were most interesting. At the end of the lecture Miss Storr begged us to try and make happier the lives of girls in other lands, and gave us very practical hints as to the way in which we could make our gifts most acceptable.

All information for the School Notes must be sent in to the School Correspondents, Emilie Thackeray or Olive Garfitt, at the School.

THINGS EDITORIAL.

We are glad to find we are again almost crowded out of our own pages, and congratulate our contributors on the improvement in style of the papers sent in for this number.

We hope to publish in our next number a complete list of the prize winners in the Holiday Work Competition this term. Want of space prevents us from doing so in this number,

A full list of those who have obtained prizes during the School year ending July, 1897, will also be published in our next.

We are glad to welcome papers from our old girls, and hope to receive more contributions still. The Literary Club is open to former members of the Society, but the Magazine opens its pages to all old pupils. Let us have your names there!

We shall be glad to have correspondence for the next Magazine on "The Best Way of Spending Christmas." The Editor hopes to peruse a warm discussion on the subject appropriate to the occasion.

The Editor begs to acknowledge with thanks the following magazines:—"The Oldham Hulmeian," "The Pauline" (July), "Our Magazine" (July).

A few copies of the last Magazine may be obtained by application to the Editor, at the School.