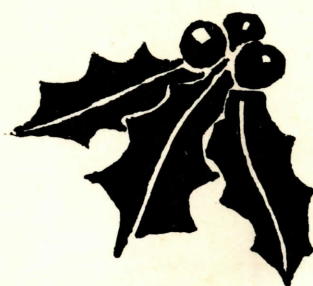


BLACK LION



only 3p



Xmas

issue

alan

EDITORIAL

The question has been asked by many Priceans, with perhaps nostalgic memories or, more commonly, with high hopes of being answered in the affirmative: "Is the Black Lion dead?" However, this is possibly the question that we should all be asking ourselves: "Is the community spirit that conceived and realised the Black Lion no longer an essential presence in our society at Price's?"

The Black Lion was originally an expression of a developing sense of community, and the conducive desire to communicate, not only amongst its own participants, but with society as a whole. It would appear that there is something lacking in our lives here at Price's if there is no more the desire to give voice to the fears, aspirations and ideals of our generation. We are planners of today, are the actors of tomorrow, and what if we are without ideals and experience when we find ourselves in a position to do something about changing society for the better? Yet it is possible even now to begin putting right that which we feel to be wrong in our society, and here at Price's we have a golden opportunity to learn about the problems and potentials of society. Therefore we ought to give serious consideration, both individually and collectively, to the community of our college and the reasons for seeking to establish a closer communal relationship.

No excuse is offered for the apparently narrow field of contributors to this particular edition, other than the fact that it is these persons who have shown the greatest interest in the function and necessity of the magazine. The editors hope that all Black Lion readers will find something of merit and appeal in this issue and, if not, that they will see fit to provide themselves with that which they consider desirable. This issue includes a programme of the events of the coming Arts Festival. Plugging like made, we'll say that each event promises to be the event of the decade and cries out not to be missed.

It has been brought to our notice that a rival magazine has developed within the School, namely the "Red Lion" (how could we miss it?). We would like to openly declare that there is no feud between these two beasts - not on our part, at least. We feel that both can exist and that it might even be beneficial to have a certain amount of friendly rivalry. (Grrrrr, gnash, gnash!)

This is of course the Christmas edition of the Black Lion, but unfortunately we don't appear to have any particularly seasonal articles, etc. That's because you didn't write any! Anyway, thanks to all those who have helped in the production of this Christmas bumper issue of the Black Lion; may it live forever.

Season's greetings and salutations.

The Editors.

(Gary Motteram, Dave Natt, Ivor Bundell).

PUZZLE CORNEROde to Samuel MorseJohn Death.IT WAS AFTER LIGHTS-OUT AT THE GREENGROCER'S.....

"We have always been berry grape friends" said Basil. "I think you're a perfect peach."

"I'll always betroot to you," replied Rosemary. "Then lettuce get married," urged Basil. "I'll buy you a 22 carrot gold ring."

"Yes I will marrow you. Will you orange the wedding? We must fix a date and I must buy some pretty cloves."

"Mind you get to the church on thyme."

They were married last week and are now living in a semi-detached crate. There isn't mushroom and the crate leeks, but they're a happy pear.

A. M. Pennycott.2C.MISUNDERSTANDING: AS SEEN BY A WRITER

A sacrifice for autumn,
 leaves that 'touch' the ground.
 A sacrifice (I hope to find)
 and hopes for those who pass.
 The open fields of melting sand
 of golden wheat, and wind
 That pours down from the sky
 to chastise an untrue friend.
 That rains could be so cruel to me
 though life remain untouched.
 How then does life explain its cause?
 if wind and sun combine,
 Stirring a reason within this field;
 a loss of God and time
 Now that I have fallen to
 this world of your divine.

Gary Meek.

SEEDS IN THE WIND

Upon a sunny summer's day,
Amongst the grass so green,
The lightest grass seeds seem to play,
With the slightest kind of breeze.

Like ballet dancers, through the air
They glide and sometimes flutter
But all of them, they need not care
For no sound can they utter.

But suddenly the wind doth cease,
The seeds drop and are sown,
And they shall lie in perfect peace
Until they're fully grown.

Chris Jones. 1B.

A CHRISTMAS STORY

"Now that we are gathered,
Here on CHRISTMAS DAY (hooray),
Please remember Munchkin,
So sadly passed away", they sang. (To the tune of:
"Three bright pennies a' lying on the floor")
They were outside Munchkin's door. He was an elf
and he had just died. His story is this:

Munchkin had just returned from collecting logs and twigs for his fire, had debated upon the pyro-possibilities of the "DANGER KEEP OUT" sign, and had slammed his door shut, the purple paint already flaking and falling like snow from the door onto the snow which had fallen off the door, which had now fallen off, long ago.

The sun was slowly setting and Munchkin knew that when it rose again it would be the beginning of Christmas Day, and that was the day when he could put his foot up. He was confined to a wheelchair as a result of an unfortunate accident which had befallen him before this time.

His rule was, "Give pennies to your friends at Christmas". This was chalked in chalk upon the wall. (This wall formed one side of the cave. Behind a picture (which had been painted by one of his friends and was a picture of him, minus the wheelchair, because it always reminded him of his accident and upset him almost as much as he had been, just after the unfortunate mishap which had cost him his famous right foot and he had realized that he would never play football again, long ago), there was a sign saying, "Big brother is watching you" and sure enough, he was, through a hole in the painting where the wheelchair would have been had Munchkin not expressly shown his desire for his wheelchair not to have been immortalized along with him in the same picture (for reasons explained previously).

Unknown to Munchkin was the fact that Munchkin's brother, Silas, had also commissioned this painter to paint a picture and had it hanging over his fireplace. It was called "A portrait of Silas" and really was. It was most amazing in its photographic correctness and looked just like him.

Silas's house was empty because he was hiding behind Munchkin's picture and his wife had left him to marry a dentist.

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Anyway, all of a sudden, thousands of Munchkin's associates burst in through the door which they had opened previously and looked at him. Before he could say "What do you want friends?" or "Merry Christmas" they had gone up to him, and, whilst still looking at him began to hit him and after what seemed like hours to him he was dead. Then they stopped. They took his wheelbarrow, his spade, his record of "Jim Reeves plays Bert Weedon", 20 of his KENSITAS (he smoked Kensitas when he wanted to), and his wheelbarrow. His spade, and also his wheelchair, plus his fags and his L.P. His brother remained hidden because he realized that they would hit him also, and in the same manner, with quite possibly the same outcome when they finally ceased, if he had told them that he was there. He never found out why they didn't take Munchkin's watch, however, which had been a present somebody, no doubt, had given to him because he was his friend, or just liked him, or thought that he deserved it. Silas knew that his brother (at this point the awful truth dawned on Silas and he sniffed as a tear fell out of his eye. His brother was dead). "Oh! no!" he cried.

Silas knew that Munchkin had not found the watch or had it thrown at him and so was greatly relieved when Nigel said "Don't fret Silas, I gave it to him!" also "I promised never to steal it from him".

AFTER SILAS HAD PAID FOR THE FUNERAL

He found that there were many pennies left and spent all of them on:

FANCY CLOTHES

A GUITAR

A FAST CAR

A RECORD OF SOME OF HIS FAVOURITE MUSIC AND HE

WISHES ALL OF HIS READERS MERRY CHRISTMAS (from the bottom of his heart).

A. Little.

UNHAPPY MEETING

Loneliness, a young girl in a pure white dress,
 Riding a pure bred stallion.
 Torn by love and her upbringing
 Wandering in a chance wood, they met,
 A lonesome happening.
 Herself, beautiful, radiant, long dark hair,
 He a boy, crippled by nature and by pomposity.
 Showing themselves, future people, not yet orientated,
 'Tart' and a young boy.
 Wandering off while croquet is played with two sports,
 Unhappy puberty.
 The chance meeting, is unfollowed, on a planned white horse,
 She is a child of the earth, he also,
 They are grown-ups of the sky,
 They don't know the mysteries of love.
 There will be no more wars.
 There will be no more love.
 Life is paralleled, war will soon be over.
 Life is a chance of forgotten meetings;
 How does one continue, but one must
 Life is lived for something.
 Beautiful girl riding her confused stallion
 Is the catch of ordinary man, searching his universe,
 The stallion rides his universe
 The rein unwilling in his hands.

Continued

How does one fly from this - this consciousness
 Oh to be a stream of life,
 Working its way down to the open-sea
 Cutting, gliding, splishing, splashing.
 Dying of man and of disease of man,
 Please, my god help me.
 For as you help me now I will reward with my mind of life
 Prophet, preacher, sage,
 My young girl
 On your white steed, floating, being called away,
 By some mishap of suffering.
 How long do memories of faded days last,
 I think forever, this is then life hereafter.
 Sadness in my eyes, joy
 This, is prayerful, let it not be forgetful.

G. Motteram.

Moment of despair:
 When all hopes of growing closer fly from me;
 When all the gods I've strived for abandon me;
 When every living truth I've held is torn from me;
 The painful void.

Thin fist clenched, white
 Teeth set fight
 Eyes closed for the moment's darkness.

Paul A. Gateshill.

ELEGY

Sleep soft, sleep still,
 And we shall meet
 In sleep so sweet,
 As music from the songbird's bill
 Fills the woodland on the hill,
 To breathe of beauty so divine
 We ne'er again be chained in time.

Ivor Bundell.

"There is some corner of a foreign field that is under compulsory purchase
 for a new autobahn?"

Rupert Morley.

THE SMOKE

Thompson took his seat on the bus. It was his usual seat upstairs, on the left hand side looking forward, right at the very back. He had always sat in that seat, ever since he had begun work at the foundry in Watford as an assistant clerk. Anyone who dared occupy that seat would receive a short, sharp, sarcastic word of reproach from Thompson. But not many people except Thompson used that seat. It was in a dark corner of the bus, sheltered from light by the old-fashioned solid metal luggage-rack, and it seemed to attract cigarette smoke like moths to a lamp. Passengers preferred to sit further forward in the bus, especially if they didn't smoke or wanted to read, or something.

Thompson liked the smell of cigarette smoke. He smoked almost continuously during the day. The front of his hair was beginning to look the same acid yellow as his fingers. The centre of his lips and the teeth inside were tinted by the persistent stain of twenty years continual smoking. He hadn't started smoking until he was twenty. He had been a member of the local Temperance Brass Band, and they didn't allow smoking or drinking. He had also played Rugby a lot, and valued his health more than his blue Band uniform. When his parents were killed in the First World War he had been turned inside out. He sold his cornet, left the Band and the Rugby Club, and began drifting around from city to city, frequenting local night clubs and paying his way by helping in the kitchens at peak hours. It was then that he began smoking.

Cigarette smoke was not the only resident aroma which accompanied Thompson wherever he went. His foul breath was supplemented by the smell of whiskey. He had acquired the taste for whiskey soon after he began smoking. He hadn't particularly liked the taste of cigarette smoke in his mouth at first, and took to whiskey to wash it away. He liked the taste of whiskey almost as much as he liked cigarette smoke.

As Thompson quietly worked his way through his last packet of twenty Players, he began taking stock of the other passengers on the bus. The same old faces, he thought, scanning the backs of their heads. Sitting at the back of the bus, Thompson could recognise people by the backs of their heads. A dubious talent which he had acquired over the years. He would try to imagine the faces of any new passengers by examining the backs of their heads. He was nearly always wrong, as they turned and faced him before getting off the bus a few stops further on.

He glanced out of the steamy top-deck windows at the brilliantly illuminated shop displays and flashing signs. Although he was some miles from the centre of London, Thompson liked to think of himself driving through the West-End in a chauffeur-driven Rolls. He was brought back sharply to reality by a sudden jerk in the ponderous motion of the double-decker bus through the thickening London traffic. He cursed the driver for his incompetence and the traffic for hindering his voyage.

Thompson adjusted his sitting position and sank back into a half-world of thought, sliding a few inches into his dark raincoat. He watched the faces of the passing motorists, and passengers of the countless black taxis and private cars. He imagined where they were going. He guessed as to the size of their families and houses, and even to the type and strength of the relationship each had with their respective wives or husbands.

Thompson wasn't married. Although he liked children in a way, he had never been able to make conversation with a female unless it was to tell her to get out of his seat. He regretted this deeply, and had resorted to visiting immoral women in shady back-alley bed-sitters whenever he could afford it. This activity had given him something to look forward to when he was younger, but he was better-off then - at least, he earned a few shillings per week more. Now he was middle-aged, thinning on top, growing wider elsewhere. He also earned less as an assistant clerk than he had a few years previously as a salesman. But he didn't regret giving up his job as a salesman. He found it difficult in

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extreme. His success was hampered by his inability to converse with women.

Thompson paused in his thoughts to relight the cigarette he had half-smoked. The conductor had taken the fares of the other passengers on the top deck and was making his way back to Thompson past the empty seats.

"The usual Mr. Thompson?" asked the ageing conductor, punching two neat nicks in the six-penny ticket.

Thompson handed him two grubby three-penny pieces and took the ticket without offering a word of thanks. The conductor turned and made his way slowly down the stairs.

Thompson folded back the flap on his old leather purse and returned it to his pocket, exchanging it for his packet of cigarettes and box of matches. He took out and lit another cigarette, blowing smoke in clouds from the side of his mouth.

With well over half of his nine-mile bus journey complete, his thoughts strayed back to his own problems. No doubt the landlord would press him for more payment as soon as he reached the door of his flat. Hardly a flat - two small dark rooms at £2 a week, but the best he could afford. To hell with the landlord, he thought, and sank another couple of inches into his raincoat, closing his eyes wearily.

Thompson fell asleep, the momentum of the bus keeping steady as it made its way along a straight stretch of suburban road. He dozed for only a matter of seconds, and as the bus pulled away from a stop he was awakened by someone coming very slowly up the stairs of the bus. It was a woman, he noticed, and she sat in the empty seat across the aisle from him. Thompson studied her carefully. She was middle-aged like himself, perhaps a little younger than he, but very attractive. She had blonde hair, cut short but wavy. She wore a black coat and a blue silk scarf, and carried a blue hat in her hand, placing it carefully on the seat beside her as she sat down. Thompson continued studying her, and as his eyes travelled further down her figure to her legs he noticed something he hadn't seen before which totally revolted him and sent a chill through his plus-fours. She had a wooden leg. Her left leg was severed at the knee and from there downwards was an artificial limb. An attempt at covering this leg had been made, but not wholly successfully, and Thompson looked away, his mouth dry.

Shouldn't be allowed to mix with the public, he thought coldly, his revulsion making any attempts at pity impossible. The woman pulled her coat down self-consciously over her leg casting a nervous glance in Thompson's direction. But he wasn't looking. He didn't like looking at women; they embarrassed him.

Although there were two more stops yet before his, Thompson stood up and made his way down the curved stairway of the bus. He stood next to the conductor on the platform, and as the bus came to a jerky halt, the latter bade him goodnight. Thompson muttered a reply and stepped off the bus.

He turned up the collar of his raincoat against the fine, misty rain, and decided he would walk the rest of the way home, perhaps stop at The George for a whiskey. As the bus pulled away, he thought he could see the face of the woman looking down at him through the back window of the bus. But he couldn't be sure, the tears in his eyes had blurred his vision.

A. Justice.

Mary had a little clock,
 She swallowed it one day,
 Now she's drinking Epsom Salts
 To pass the time away.

Mary had a little lamb
 Who had a sooty foot,
 And into Mary's bread and jam
 His sooty foot he put.

S. Reed.

I had a little budgie:
 A lovely little lad,
 But when he went and flew away
 I thought him rather bad.

Cedric Crumhorn.

MORNING EVERBORN

From restful sleep I wandered in the world
 And heard far off the mill stream turn the wheel
 That ground the autumn corn; my sight impaired
 By dense cloud of strange form, and as I stared
 The mist enshrouded massive silhouettes
 That lurked in silence; all about me pressed
 The heavy presence of primaeval power.
 I felt my heart pound in the ghostly hour,
 The morning scarce attaining reception
 To beings' minds in which the golden sun
 Had long lain forgotten; the palish moon
 Still lingering in the prehistoric light
 That swallowed up the startled pigeon's flight.

I saw a giant stride across the fields
 And heard the springy turf such at his heels;
 I could not lift my voice into the air
 To cry aloud, the lonely stranger
 Forging on into the sudden distance,
 His lofty frame a solemn countenance,
 I stood in awe, gazing after him,
 And wondered where he might be journeying,
 Though daring not to follow in the sea
 Of time motionless mist; and ponderously
 I dwelt upon this omen's prophecy:
 "Are the ancient soldiers of middle-earth
 Returned to reclaim the land of their birth?"

/continued

9.

And peering through the overpowering gloom
I perceived the majestic unicorn
Who stood upon a bare outcrop above,
Then in an instant gone; and on I strove,
Staff in hand, in half resolve of pursuit,
Wary of each deformed tree, hidden roots
That tripped, and sable eyes of evil hearts.
In airs echoing of strange songs apart
I stood, intruder upon immortals,
Venturing and enactment of grave tales;
The whispers of near movements quietly stoke
Into the dulling drifts, and I alone,
Alien witness, as dead to them as stone.

It seemed the lifetimes of my birth were here
Reduced to tiniest moment; to fear
The ageless lives thus deified was apt,
And valour from my heart and limbs was sapped
As volition from the unbodied drunk;
And near, yet far, the loud footfalls that sank
Into the sodden turf and plashy earth.
A golden bier born solemnly, a dearth
Of gaiety, oppressive mournfulness
Upon brows pensive; brave figures confess
Only nobility, their pride no less
Strong, if not increased by great victory;
Warriors everborn fade silently.

Ivor Bundell.

ICELANDIC SAGA

Two hundred miles of sea we claim
Off Scotland, to call our own.
For, here, beneath the sea, we find
The oil to heat our homes.
'Tis strange, then, in our "cod war", we
Should find some cause to disagree
With Iceland, who, it's plain to see,
Could be content with just fifty,

John Death.

Tourist, male, in Russia: It's raining.
Tourist, female, in Russia: It's snowing.
Tourist, male, in Russia: It's raining.
Tourist, female, in Russia: It's snowing.
Rudolph, Russian Guide: It's raining.
Tourist, female, in Russia: It's snowing.
Tourist, male, in Russia: Don't be silly,
Rudolph the Red knows rain dear.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES AT PRICE'S
 ++++++

Price's School Dramatic Society
 presents
'THE THWARTING OF BARON BOLLIGREW'
 by
 Robert Bolt

A play in two Acts, I and II, in keeping with the Christmas Spirit. On stage three nights running: 13th, 14th and 15th December, beginning at 7.00 p.m. Tickets price: 15p, 20p, and 30p. Produced by Tony Johnson.

oo000oo

"FOLK CONCERT"

At Price's School, Monday 17th December, starting at 7.00 p.m. Tickets at the door, 15p, (proceeds in aid of Charity).

In order of appearance:	Janice & Friends
	Pint
	Heritage
	Julie Haighte
	Orpheus
	Nick & Andy +
	Leslie & Jacqui
	Andy Vores & Co.
	GRAND FINALE

oo000oo

Bob Gilbert and his Senior & Junior Choirs will lead the congregation in a revelry of carols in the School Hall at 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday, 18th December.

Warning: All those who come will be expected to sing for their supper."

oo000oo

L.C.E.
 Proudly Present
'THE MISTLETOE DANCE'
 at
 Price's School
 featuring
 'BUCK'

Wednesday, 19th December, 1973. 7.30-11.30 p.m. Tickets 35p and 40p (on door). Open to all members of V and VI of F.G.G.S. and Price's. Tickets available especially from Andy Morley.

oo000oo

HIGHLY DEEP SUNLIT GRAVE

Scent that would waft
 Seemingly softer than reflected buttercup,
 Or a lily, gliding softly, very softly
 By the water's edge on a glassy pond.

So much more than a bit of crumpet.

Pretty, not beautiful,
 Gently lustful,
 Full of sparkle.

Japanese flower,
 Cheerily in the wind,
 Smiling;

And eyes that shine like modern chandaliers,
 In happiness,
 Walking against dusty Victorian ironmongery.

Legs that are a maiden's dream,
 But a whores common property.
 Sweet.

Petite.

And feet that could only be Cinderella's.

Style: not of a gangster lady,
 (editor Vogue:estd: New York 2000);
 nor the country spinster,
 nor the girl about town
 wearing plastic boots and working at the supermarket,
 nor the giggling little girl,
 whose nauseating accent,
 loud and vulgar,
 can be heard at the other end of the high street.

Sweet.

Petite.

And feet that could only be Cinderella's.

Magic in infinite happiness,
 Could it spread through my veins,
 Could I be brought back from the self cast out,
 Where love is always but a dream
 For one like one?

Is there such a Cinderella
 Of the same thought and quietude,
 Who is also so happy
 As to remove my permanent hangover?

I shall be the King's courtier.
 No. only the courtier's fool.
 Even the deepest dreams
 Are awoken at twelve.

She would be like black coffee
 And a fresh lemon.
 Champagne sipped to an unknown sermon.

Sleeping late, cold water early,
 Fresh air, and a stream running spritely,
 A dress with pleats,
 Round white old fashion collar,
 Neat.

Sweet.

Petite.

And feet that could only be Cinderella's.

/continued

12.
Anyhow,
Why should I seduce
A flower to mourn with me,
In my dark, dank grave,
And sit,
Unlit,
Begrovelled.
Why should a happy bird
Be caged unhappy,
With a dark face,
Six feet deep?

Hazy sunshine, and a bird sings,
Living in an air that is life,
Happiness in life that is company,
(3's a crowd),
Love in company that is understanding,
Six feet
Deeply
High.

Free!
Happy
With the bright face of a bird,
Tweet.
So sweet.
Petite.
And feet that could only be Cinderella's.

Times pass,
And the whirlpool of love does not reach into darkness,
Where there is light in darkness, stretched taut,
Balancing my coffin.
All I remember, is Christmas and Nicaragua.
The sheep bleat
And I look for someone
Sweet.
Petite.
And with feet that could only be Cinderella's.

I am obsessed with money but despise it,
I value goods before love, and for this I am passionately sullen,
I am more possessed by ideals than by people, and am raged by it;
And I expect a woman to share with me my disclosure,
So that I may spread my disease of remorse.

I am at the beginning of a bottomless pit,
At the other side of the unbridgeable gap,
Where no rope may reach me nor darkness penetrate,
The bottom of my abyss is quick sand, and I sink deeper.
It is touchable, and yet unrelative.

Sunlight penetrates my mind in spasms,
I know not how, in my chasm.
I shall dig sideways, discreetly.
Sweetly,
Petite,
She has feet that could only be Cinderella's.

Take my hand,
And I shall walk upon the golden sands,
Dreaming.

HAVEN

Sitting at the cafe table, he watched the grimy clock's second hand carelessly sweep away the seconds with slow deliberation. His cup of tea was by now cold. It was pale grey and like nothing else he could think of. "Not so hot," he thought, and grimaced at the irony. Blob of tomato ketchup stain. "No..." Fag smoke. The reek of very old fat frying. Sizzle.

The drizzle of rain on the windowpane.

"Anything I can...?"

"Same again."

Scratched at an itch on his neck. He restrained a sigh, got up and walked to the window. It was a filthy day, yet only two others sought this haven of cheeriness. Perplexed, his forehead creased. He shivered; slightly. Having returned to his table, the second cup was placed before him. A crack haired at the handle. Of this he took no more notice for he had a feeling of no longer being alone. "What a bad-forsaken hole," he thought and then realised it had to be. A cough corrupted the silence. A tantrum of rain tormented the quiet. His solitude was incomplete. A breath whiskered its way past his cheek. It caused him to shiver.

His thoughts moved forward; he could see the night spread out before him. The wintry fog would lap, even as the waves lapped, against the stone walls; and it would be dark, very dark. The small port had little lighting. He thought he might spend the evening at the pub, though perhaps not after all. The thought of coins chinking, men drinking, women winking did not alter his disposition one iota. He closed his eyes and kept them so.

...as to be able to jump the stream was strong and brave, yet when he fell no-one picked him up and he lay there, a little piece of summer. The sun shone in undeniable truth, so brightly near, yet far from finger reach. Each morning when he woke he felt the pain on his eyes. Even when the clouds bored the sky, he knew the sun was behind them. Not now. His mother had spoken like that once. To jump the stream was good. If you did that Mary Whitechurch kissed you, but she had mumps. And there were the clowns and all their paint; they made you laugh at the circus, so the others said. They all laughed when the doll's head fell off; he was one of the shepherds. His mum and dad laughed too. He had to pick it up. When he did he kissed it. All the people were looking at him, grinning.

The scene:

Front left: shepherd boy standing solemnly.

Back right: the rest of the characters, as designated, in tableau.

The strains of very faint pipe music may be heard.

Cash register rattle re-opened his eyes. He got up and went over to an oldish man sitting five tables away.

"Good afternoon, I hope you don't mind if I come and join you. I'm here on holiday. Nothing like a bit of fellowship on a dismal day, eh?"

The man with hand poised by saucer, did not stir. He was hard of hearing.

Dave Natt.

AN AXE TO GRIND

In recent months, there has been much criticism levelled at the standard of the Black Lion; in my opinion most of this criticism is justified. The Editor of a magazine, such as the Black Lion has a great deal of difficulty in producing a good magazine from a rather poor response to appeals for contributions. The point that should be raised is this; is there a demand for such a magazine in the School? I personally think so, others obviously disagree.

When the Black Lion first appeared, it was a magazine for the pupil in which he could have published any article that was fit to be published. For some time there was considerable interest. This was a step in the right direction, to produce a magazine, which could be a basis for a strong artistic, literary, breakaway from the normal 'humdrum' of school-life. For a time it succeeded, there was interest and a general push for the arts to be recognised within the School; this interest waned. All that is now left are three Editors who try to produce a magazine that is comparable with, if not better than before, against very difficult odds. Admittedly, you have a right to let this magazine drift into obscurity and by the lack of contributions I have received, this seems what you obviously intend. I think this is very sad.

When I first arrived at this School, nearly one and a half years ago, to join the Sixth Form, I expected the School (especially in the upper years) to be a hive of artistic activity, in which I was itching to join. Before I became accustomed to the pattern of school life, it seemed to be true, but my illusions were gradually shattered, and to my horror the interest in the arts, which I value very highly, is sadly lacking and this is epitomised by the lack of interest in the Black Lion.

I feel that the arts have lost the direction that was heralded by the birth of this magazine, and are wandering in a void searching for a new path. I am very sorry if this issue is not up to the standard which you, the reader, have the right to expect. But I feel that a new attitude is needed in all areas. As I write this I have a feeling that I am talking into a vacuum, but if you have managed to reach this point in the article and have been stirred in any way by it, do not hide away in a corner, show yourselves and be stirred all over the place.

Gary Motteram.

WARMTH

Sweat has gathered
 Along fine fair hairs:
 A starry sheen
 Upon spider-spun snares.
 Tangled prisons trap
 Perspiration.

A heavy heart heaves;
 Belly
 Swells in undulation.

Tinted, as if with torchlight, lies
 Sweat;
 Cold from the toil of birth.

Arises from the loins
 A bright new child
 Flushed pink from its first forced breath.

Dave Natt.

THE BEGINNING

The dark black sea
Runs in shining lumps
Vanishing toward the far horizon,
Quietly, without trace.

The deep, velvet night
In which no star shines
Is large and yet nothing
Hidden in its own darkness.

No life is here,
For God is beginning,
And in the East, slowly,
A star appears.

B. T. Skinner.

CONSCIENCE

Why. Why the leaves flutter,
Even as my mind flutters,
From the trees?
For nobody sees,
Nobody cares,
What mental snares and esoteric pleas
Are fluttering in my mind,
Even as the leaves flutter
From the trees.

Terry Jagger.

I WONDER.....

Sitting alone with myself I consider my life:

I over indulge in eating, smoking, consuming alcohol. I have little self-control in that I swear profusely, I lose my temper often, I fight. I bear grudges against people. I hate. I am cruel, spiteful, even savage. I lust. I would gladly break most of the Ten Commandments. I will easily be deceived, led astray. I would even bear on my right wrist the mark of six hundred and sixty six.

BUT I AM NORMAL.

And I sit here complacently, feeling no need for moral improvement. I am perfectly alright sitting here in the armchair close to the fire - that burns with brimstone.

M.N.B.

Answer at end.



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