

think of anything connected with it that was either relevant or true. Incidentally, there arrived from nowhere in particular a blot and several smudges. I gazed for two whole hours at this spectacle, and then merciful ushers collected my piece of foolscap.

"It was from these slender indications of scholarship that Dr. Welldon drew the conclusion that I was worthy to pass into Harrow. It is very much to his credit. It showed that he was a man capable of looking beneath the surface of things; a man not dependant upon paper manifestations. I have always had the greatest regard for him.

"I was in due course placed in the lowest division of the bottom form. I continued in this unpretentious situation for nearly a year.

"However, by being so long in the lowest form, I gained an immense advantage over the cleverer boys. They all went on to learn Latin and Greek and splendid things like that. But I was taught English.

"As I remained in the third Form three times as long as anyone else, I had three times as much of it. I learned it thoroughly. Thus I got into by bones the essential structure of the ordinary British sentence—which is a noble thing. And when in after years my school fellows who had won prizes and distinction for writing such beautiful Latin poetry and pithy Greek epigrams had to come down again to common English to earn their living or make their way, I did not feel myself at any disadvantage.

"It was thought incongruous that, while I apparently stagnated in the lowest form, I should gain a prize open to the whole school for reciting to the Headmaster 1,200 lines of Macaulay's 'Lays of Ancient Rome' without making a single mistake. I also succeeded in passing the preliminary examination for the Army while many boys far above me failed in it.

"I also had a piece of good luck. We knew that among other questions we should be asked to draw from memory a map of some country or other. The night before, by way of final preparation, I put the names of all the maps in the atlas into a hat and drew out New Zealand. I applied my good memory to the geography of that Dominion. Sure enough, the first question in the paper was 'Draw a map of New Zealand.'

"Henceforward, all my education was directed in the Army class to passing into Sandhurst. Officially, I never got out of the Lower School. It took me three tries to pass into Sandhurst. There were five subjects, of which mathematics, Latin and English were obligatory, and I chose in addition French and Chemistry. In this hand I held only a pair of Kings—English and Chemistry. Nothing less than three would open the jackpot. I had to find another useful card. Latin I could not learn; French was interesting but rather tricky. So, there remained only Mathematics. I turned to them—I turned on them—in desperation.

"Of course, what I call Mathematics is only what the Civil Service Commissioners expected you to know to pass a very rudimentary examination. Nevertheless, when I plunged in I was soon out of my depth. I was soon in a strange corridor of things called Sines, Cosines and Tangents. Apparently they were very important, especially when multiplied by each other or by themselves! They had also this merit—you could learn many of their evolutions off by heart. There was a question in my third and last examination about these Cosines and Tangents in a highly square-coated condition which must have been decisive upon the whole of my after life. But luckily I had seen into its ugly face only a few days before and recognised it at first sight. I have never met any of these creatures since.

"With my third and successful examination they passed away like the phantasmagoria of a fevered dream. I am assured that they are most helpful in engineering, astronomy and things like that.

"I am glad there are quite a number of people born with a gift and a liking for all this; like great chess players, for

example, who play 16 games at once blindfold, and die soon of epilepsy.

"The practical point is that, if I had not been asked this particular question about Cosines and Tangents, I might have gone into the Church and preached orthodox sermons in a spirit of audacious contradiction to the age. I might have gone into the City and made a fortune. I might even have gravitated to the Bar, and persons might have been hanged through my defence, who now nurse their guilty secrets with complacency.

"In introspect, my school years form the only barren and unhappy period of my life. Actually, no doubt, they were buoyed up by the laughter and high spirits of youth. But I would far rather have been apprenticed as a bricklayer's mate or run errands as a messenger boy. It would have been real; it would have been natural; it would have taught me more; and I should have done it much better.

"I am all for the Public Schools, but I do not want to go there again."

Of this one-time troublesome boy all the world has come to recognise that on his pathway through life he has taken his place among the Immortals, and that time cannot touch or tarnish his imperishable record.

A. R. BUNCH

## More Deaths from Accidental Poisoning, Burns and Falls.

THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S Quarterly Return\* for the December Quarter, 1954, was published on April 14th, 1955. The Return, which also includes some provisional statistics for 1954, relates to England and Wales.

### Infant Mortality Rates in Great Britain and Northern Ireland and in other Countries.

The death rate of children under one year of age in England and Wales as a whole in the third quarter of 1954 was 21 per 1,000 related live births, the rate for Wales being 28. The rates for Scotland and Northern Ireland were 24 and 28, respectively. These rates compare with: Sweden 16, Netherlands 19, New Zealand 20, Denmark 22, United States of America 25, and Italy 54.

### Death Rates in London and Cities Abroad.

In the December quarter the death rate per 1,000 population in Greater London was 10.3. This compares with 11.0 in Cologne, 10.8 in Munich, 9.9 in New York, 9.7 in Copenhagen, 9.2 in Stockholm, 9.0 in Oslo, and 7.9 in Rome.

### Expectation of Life.

On the basis of the death rates for the year 1953, the expectation of life of a boy at birth is 67.30 years, and of a girl 72.44. This compares with 67.06 and 72.35, respectively, on the basis of the 1952 death rates, and with 48.53 and 52.38 on the basis of the death rates for 1901-1910.

### Poliomyelitis.

The provisional figure of deaths from poliomyelitis in the December quarter was 26, compared with 80, 26, 16, and 46 in the four preceding quarters, December, 1953, and March, June, and September, 1954. The number of cases notified during the quarter was 577, compared with 1,053 during the corresponding quarter of 1953.

### Causes of Death.

More persons died from accidental poisoning, burns and falls during the first nine months of 1954 than during the corresponding period of 1953. The figures for the first three quarters of 1954 show that there were 753 deaths from accidental poisoning, compared with 658 in the same period of 1953, 621 deaths from accidental burns (522 in 1953) and

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