

THE OLIPHANT

No. 71

WELHAM BOYS' NEWSLETTER

15, April, 1988

THINK ABOUT IT

"When some fellers decide to retire nobody knows the difference."

—Kim Hubbard

Editorial

The casual observer, on reading this periodical would be in for a bit of a shock, Where? Oh where is the genial, jovial, all-round, hairless Editor? Well, owing to the fact that the afore mentioned is going senile and badly needs a break, a bristly, myopic, hunch backed idiot has taken his place. You guessed it. None other than the friendly neighbourhood cartoonist.

Subsequent editorials may tend to be soporific, creating an excruciating feeling of pins and needles beginning somewhere around the region of the middle back extending to the left foot, causing one to feel like a scrap of fish a cat has dug out of the gutter and discarded as being unfit for feline consumption.

This is merely a warning, or rather a routine motion among us members of the Journalist's

communion. Disposal bags, spittoons and the like will be available at the Oliphant office.

In short—hang on! Try to bear with a clear mind. A whole load of the "usual nonsense,". Restraining any desire to plaster yours truly with rotten tomatoes, tea time "bondas" and the like.

Till then,

Exelsior!

Arnab Chaudhuri

APPOINTMENTS '88

School Captain—Sanjeev Sehgal

House Captains

School Prefects

PH Aresh Shirali

Arnab Chaudhuri

C Ambreesh Mohan

Piyush Modi

G Ashish Goswamy

Kaushal Motani

J Vishal Mohan

Deepak Jaiswal

K Manvendra Salkian

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Ref: "We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office."

Dear Ed.

The "Think About It", referring to the appointment of Machiavellian thieves to public office seems to have offended a great number of egotistical bosoms. Keep up the good work! Maybe us N-N-N-N Ninethies will have something to point fingers at without our rears being burned by the proverbial extra P.T.!

Yours etc.

**Altruists United Against
Despotism**

Yours truly being one of the "Despots". One can point fingers at the A.U.A.D.—extra P.T. without remittance for the next two weeks—Ed.

Dear Ed.

Thank you! Thanks a billion! The quote

just goes to show how full of doubts the existence of a "prefect" is. May be the hanging of lesser thieves will be more frequent.

Yours etc.

Machiavellian Top Dogs

Bravo! Hang 'em all! —Ed

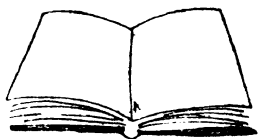
Dear Ed.

I thought a lot about the 'Think About it' and at the end of it, don't doubt its veracity. The appointment of the (Ar)² dyspos Quad eratacally demonstrates it.

Yours etc.

Knocked-out-loaded

Burn! Green eyes—Burn!! —Ed.



The Literary Affairs of Welham

The Ghostly Bus Driver

It was a dark, rainy New Year's Eve. A lone bus driver was driving back to his depot after dropping off a bus load of merry makers. He had the windshield wipers on but could not see the road clearly. Suddenly, out of nowhere, a truck came swerving crazily. It was too late to stop. He could only avoid a collision by swerving off the road. The driver was thrown clear of the bus by the impact and smashed his skull against a stout tree and died instantly. It was the night of the thirty first of December, Nineteen Sixty Four.

On the same night in Nineteen Sixty Five, an old man wished to return home at about midnight. He hailed the bus. When the driver, opened the double doors of the bus, the man took a single glance at the driver. The man was horrified. The driver's head was a shapeless mass. The driver also looked translucent. The poor man died of cardiac arrest.

The ghost driver was again sighted in Nineteen Sixty Eight by a young lady. She was so shocked by the ghost's appearance that she could not speak for a whole week.

As a result of these two incidents most people

stopped travelling by bus but a few people again sighted the ghosts, in Nineteen Seventy Two. One person even became mentally ill and has not recovered till this day.

The driver was again seen driving a bus, in Nineteen Seventy Six, by a group of young merry makers who took the incident to be some type of Halloween stunt, but when people enlightened them about the legend they resolved to never travel by bus again.

So, the legend lived on. People saw the driver and were totally horrified, some people had nightmares. Mothers used this legend as a pretext to scare their children into eating their vegetables. A rumour was heard that every New Year's Eve the ghost driver has another accident and lets out a bloodcurdling scream. It appears to me that by these incidents, bus companies will eventually go bankrupt, so I advise you : never invest in a bus company.

Ashish Deb Roy

(Ashish Deb Roy's essay won the first prize for the Mira Sundaram Essay Writing Competition, 1988)

Ghost Story

The night of 13th December, 1964 was indeed a tragedy. The deathly stillness of the place was broken only occasionally by a shrill cry of a bird or voices of jackals and hyenas. Sometimes from far off came the hollow hammering of a woodpecker. This jungle had experienced some of the greatest mysteries. The breeze was moving gently.

Then suddenly a pause ensued and the deathly stillness of the jungle was broken in a most extraordinary manner. It so happened that an accident, took place on the top of a high hill which fringed the western extremity of the place. The bus driver came down flying and fell on the jungle Machan. His skull was smashed. Poor fellow. He gave a squeal like a rabbit and that was all. he was dead. Half the enchantment of the place was due to the fact that it did not have the benefit of municipal lighting. Only very seldom there were

flares stuck on poles. Then suddenly from somewhere a green-shaft of light strayed in and reached his face and with a bang the dead man fell on the ground as if some tiger growled in vociferousness.

Another mystery was added to the experience of the jungle. How did a human come to the jungle, why and the reason behind it. Divine vengeance you can predict as any animal would do who saw the dead-body.

Every year on the 13th December night a most remarkable thing happens. The spirit appears of the dead man and replaces the bus driver. The spirit was Yakmah (me)

Ranjit Singh Bedi

(Ranjit Bedi's essay won the Second position for the Mira Sundaram Essay Competition 1988).

Imagine you are somebody else - a 'fisherman'

I am a fisherman living near an isle on the south coast of the Bahamas. We lived in a tumbled town but merely hand to mouth. My two children and myself were the only occupants of our hut.

I went out at dawn and came back to our tiny little hut at dusk. I toiled without rest, day and night. I was an experienced fisherman of more than a decade or so. I have had many experiences in my career as a fisherman, one of which is a very interesting one.

Book Review

"Farewell Party"—Miller Kundera

It is a story of fiction but not something repeated. Bhima is a well known musician who is a married man but seduces a young nurse during his stay in the civil hospital. On hearing that this nurse is pregnant, he tries to show false love to her in order to win her confidence so that she agree to undergo abortion. This he does because he loves his wife and does not want to disappoint her by revealing such a secret. Thus, he decides to suppress this incident.

Meanwhile, the nurse agrees but some of her friends and her fiancé, who loved her truly, stops her from this hazardous commitment, for they had suspected this musician to be avaricious and cunning.

At this stage she too falls in love with the musician and is caught between the two—her lover and fiancé.

Finally, her fiancé decides to bear all of it by telling her that she could tell the world that it was their child. In other words he suggests to her to

marry him immediately and avoid abortion.

In this part of the story the difference in the characters of the two—the musician and the fiancé are depicted which are almost contradictory to one another. The musician is shown to be immensely avaricious for he continues pestering her for abortion by showing false love.

It so happened that in one of the local restaurants, her tablets got exchanged with those of a revolutionary's potassium cyanide tablets. On knowing about it, the revolutionary chases her but soon he loses sight of her.

On the next day, her fiancé throws a party in order to announce their wedding. But, to his disappointment, she collapses in the middle of the party after having her tablets.

Her death results in great tension between the fiancé and the musician. Obviously the suspicion is on the musician but due to lack of proof, the consequences are uncertain.

Gurjeet Singh

Happenings

- ★ The following places were visited during mid-term :

1. Cycling to Hardwar
2. Trekking to Chakrata
3. „ „ Simla
4. „ „ Sabatu and Kasauli
5. „ „ Narendranagar from Rishikesh
6. Visits to Game Sanctuaries :
Corbett National Park
7. Dudhwa National Park
8. Sariska National Park
9. Skiing at Auli
10. River running at Kadijala (Markhar Camp)

- ★ The following house prefects were appointed from class X

Cauvery	
Jamuna	: Sidharta Goyal
	Saurav Sinha
Ganges	: Gagan Taleja
	Sumesh Suri
	Rajbir Grewal
Krishna	: Harinder S. Mann
	Rajkamal Phukan

- ★ The new academic session commenced on the 28th of March, 1988.

- ★ Miss Nirupama Goyal joined the middle school academic staff as a teacher of Mathematics. She is welcomed and we hope that she enjoys her stay at Welham.

- ★ The following boys won prizes for Mira Sundaram Essay writing Contest :

First Prize	: Ashish Deb Roy
Second Prize	: Ranjit Bedi
Third Prize	: Neeraj Kakati

- ★ Welham Girls and Welham Boys' Schools are getting together to perform the major production scheduled for May—"The Dark Tower."

ANSWERS TO THE PREVIOUS BRAIN TEASERS

1. None
2. Into the air, above.
3. The hat hung on his pistol !
4. The Mouse song is a high, wiry, warbling with trill, some what like a canary's. Only occasionally does part of the song fall within our auditory range.
5. There is only one chance in four of an all-boy (B) or an all girl (G) set. To work it out note how many different, equally possible combinations there are : BBB, BBG, BGG, GBB, GBG, GGB, GGG, of those 8 sequences, only two BBB and GGG are all alike. So the probability is $\frac{2}{8}$, or $\frac{1}{4}$.

One fine morning I was fishing as usual casting my net away into the ever wide ocean. After a long patient wait I pulled the net up towards the shore. I spread it out and started throwing the fish inside a big tub. After emptying the net, I folded it, covered the tub, put it on my head and started off towards home. Mid-way I heard somebody squeaking for help from my tub. I was astonished and stopped dead on my tracks ! I put the tub down. As I opened it, quite unexpectedly a small body of a girl popped out. I was even the more surprised when she started speaking to me in a very squeaky tone. It was a mermaid. She asked me to let her alone. When I asked her for the reason she refused to let me know. I was not convinced and threatened to take her home. She pleaded to leave her alone but I would not let her go in any way, without knowing the reason.

Shakespeare and Dickens Would Have Bit Their Fingers

Slangs are hackneyed on a Welhamite's lips. The usage of such words is assuming 'heights' and is being passed down from batch to batch, from seniors to juniors. The 'Juniors' who were bereft of such usage no longer wait to draw one from their seniors.

Every nook and corner of Welham echo these words. We are very familiar with 'lousy', 'cat', 'cool', 'phattu', 'saucy', 'damn', 'heights', 'hot', 'flop-a-diu', 'hadda vadda', 'aukat', 'panga', 'chavanni' etc. etc. etc. To an outsider it may sound the tongue of an alien land. It is spontaneous for someone. On pondering over it, he comprehends that in Welham 'hot' is synonymous with anger. What if you complimented a teacher that she looked real 'CAT' in her new sari ? In a Welhamite's vocabulary it does not refer to that lesser member of the feline family. Its expanded notion is 'cool American Teenager' and connotes beauty and perfection. Or for that matter being called 'T.D.H.' would be 'O.H.T.' for a new teacher (perhaps old teachers are aware of our terms). Not to keep the new arrival dazed it would be better to reveal that he is tall, dark and handsome. And of course there are those usual ones as 'damn', sprinkled on every exclamation. The teachers have a point to argue. How can something be 'damn good', 'damn nice' ? Among the most usual utterances—'Are you mad' ? Has rent the air, the air the most. Perhaps Welham doesn't lodge any 'corny guys'. The hot favourites on lips are 'hyper' and 'excited'-both meaning the same. And all the conversations sound tasteless if the common suffix 'yar' is not added.

We have accepted words like 'phattu' and 'aukat' which were once upon a time confined to only street-side loafers. Among these 'desi' ones, 'Panga' is most frequently used. 'Don't act cheap and don't take pangas with seniors' is the common warning given by prefects, a warning for pulling a senior's leg. So the tussle goes on with us persisting and teachers objecting. But what to do ? Had

After a long argument she said that if I would leave her in the ocean, I would be very fortunate. Very unwillingly I retreated to the shore and the moment I left her in the water, in her place was a handful of gold coins. It was adequate for our living as we did not live ostentatiously, but very simply.

I returned very happily to my house where I showed it to my children. They were overwhelmed. I myself experienced overwhelming joy. I slept that night thinking of my last day of toiling labour.

Neeraj Kakati

(Neeraj Kakati's essay won the third prize for the Mira Sundaram Essay Competition, 1988)

we logic, we would not be called youngsters.

No one ever halts to ponder over the origin of such slang. One fine day you wake up and find them on your lips. Of course the ones like 'cat', 'cool', 'damn' are of American origin. Either one traces them from the Hollywood films or picks them up from the ones scattered in Archie comics. No one can say about the 'desi' ones as, 'chavanni', which seems to be indigenously coined. No doubts Shakespeare and Dickens would bite their fingers in amazement.

But one should not bother, what if our lips are fond of them ? Its all a part of the growing up phase. So nothing to get hassled about and 'cool' it man.

Shashank Sharan

The views expressed by the above do not necessarily reflect the views of the board. A couple of change in breaks to the above for taking "pangas", will probably "set him straight"—Ed.

Instantaneous Death

Could't it be other wise done.

Of what past sins I vision see

The child was born with

Instantaneous death,

O'God forgive his soul.

I beseech.

With heavy heart and good assemblage

I carried the body past the lanes

Crossed the rivulet and reached the spot

Where the poor wretched was to be laid

Slowly and gently I laid him low

Wrapped in spotless coffin white

And prayed to God in inner heart

Forgive him and me the sinful outright

Lament we not the loss sustained

But what we care no doubt

Is what the people round us say

And what they talk about *this episode*

L. C. Bhatia

Brain Teasers

- Q. 1. What fruit has its seed on the outside ?
- Q. 2. What popular dance has in its title the name of a city ?
- Q. 3. Mr. and Mrs. Smith have seven daughters and each daughter has a brother. How many members are there in Smith's family ?
- Q. 4. How does one know which is the left bank and which is the right bank of the river ?
- Q. 5. Would it be cheaper for you to take one friend along with you for a movie twice, or 2 friends at the same time, along with you ?

Discovery

'Tiger, Tiger Burning Bright. . .'

A Report on a Mid-term trip to Jim Corbett National Park.

For many of us the trip to Jim Corbett Park was almost an experience of "Jungle Book" come alive. Mowgli hobnobbed with Bhalloo and Akela, while we bumped into Chanchal and Timur and other tigers who seemed to assume character and individuality as we learnt more about their antics and habits from the Mahout who escorted our party.

Thirty highly excitable and garrulous children would hardly seem the right company to be in in a jungle where one is constantly reminded to "Be Quiet", or not to "Blow Horns" or switch on the lights of our vehicles, by large garish notices painted on rocks...or else, no animals. Nonetheless the tigers didn't seem to think it extraordinary, neither did they blink their large tawny eyes in surprise when they saw us gazing at them in total disbelief.

Jim Corbett Park held surprises and wonders in every corner. Even the deer which we have seen so often caged in large iron bars, seemed different in their natural surroundings. Their lissom legs were quick to bound away when they saw this large noisy monster—our bus—approach them followed by squeals of delight, which must have sounded ominous to their pretty ears. Garial—our rest house amidst the woods, was surrounded by deer at night. We could hear them daintily trip about the lantana bushes, alert and wary of any threat from the curious human beings in the habitat of their own making. Wary too, of the tiger who prowled about the rest house at night, leaving his pug marks for us to see the next morning; tantalizing pug marks that kept us in suspense about whether he would choose to visit us in the rest house the next night.

Not long after we had visited Dhikala, on the first day of our jaunt, we decided to drive down Sambhar Road, also popularly called "Thandi Sadak", a shaded road where animals grazed peacefully in the afternoon, protected from the direct heat of the sun. It was while we were roaring down the track in our bus that we spotted a large burnished orange tiger limping across the road. Before many back seaters had seen him, he disappeared into the lantana bushes, or perhaps beyond

into the tall elephant grass. It was impossible to locate him, but we knew he was there, looking at us in sheer glee at having foxed us.

The same evening a few of us climbed onto the roof of the bus, satiated with the thought that we had seen a tiger and there was no way we would see another one; but who would have thought Lady Luck to be so benevolent. She was positively beaming at us. The bus screeched to a dramatic halt, while we rolled about the roof in horror, to see this magnificent creature stalk proudly across the road, take refuge in a bush by the road and settle down to survey us. We clicked photographs in wild enthusiasm before she rose again in disdain and wandered away. (She obviously wasn't all that impressed by what she saw of us!) We learnt later that she had been named Chanchal and she was called so because she enjoyed games with tourists, tantalizing them—peeking at them through bushes and when they had their cameras poised—just so—she would walk away.

No jungle trip in India is really complete without the company of a mahout. Amer's parents, who must think similarly, had arranged for one to be with us. No ordinary mahout—mind you—a celebrity. Subedar Ali is one of the few men who have survived a tiger attack. He was badly mauled by a man eating tigress and lost all the flesh on his skull as a consequence. He wears a scarf on his head in the manner of the Arabs, has dark piercing eyes, a gap-toothed wide smile, the charm of the devil and a knack for story telling. We first saw him astride his elephant, Gomti, taking a hoard of tourists around the forests, and it wasn't long before he had everyone around him, agog with excitement listening to his adventures at Jim Corbett.

The next day's surprise brought a herd of elephants. A magnificent tusker outlined against the horizon and a herd of elephants with their young ones nestled against them for protection. They were dangerously close to the bus, but then we had an armed guard who was poised and ready to shoot into the air, if they decided to get vengeful.

The last evening's treat was an elephant ride;

a disappointingly short ride, as hardly a few yards away from the rest house at Khinhaul were a couple of tigers. Timur, one of the dangerous tigers in the park and his mate. Both of them were resting under a bush, absolutely still, with their heads raised in anticipation of trouble. They seemed like models made to perfection, until the tigress moved her tail and put the fear of God into us and the elephant. We retreated hastily, bumping along on the elephant as she stamped her way through the bushes, oblivious of the trees and plants she flattened to the ground. That was most surprising experience of all. Tourists came by the dozens on elephants to look at the tigers, but they were unperturbed and sat there motionless, gazing steadily back in all their splendour—Lords of the Jungle.

Being in the midst of the natural environment evokes a myraid of feelings that are hard to express. It is only then that you experience the thrill of realizing the wonder of the creativity of nature. The trees and wild flowers on our school campus also grow in Corbett Park, but there they assume a freshness that compels you to acknowledge their presence and revel in their beauty. The silence and greenery in the forest is peaceful and brings the happiness that no concrete structure can ever evoke. One leaves unsatiated, to return to structured time and loathsome civilization, with an ache that longs to answer the call of the wild.

Maya Yadav

The above proves why the staff representative prowls about like the sabre toothed felines of yore.

—Ed.

किसी विनोदी मित्र का परिचय ।

गगन.... हाँ यही मेरे प्रिय मित्र का नाम है । रंग साँवला, कद पाँच फुट, घुंघराले बाल, सफेद चमकीले दाँत तथा शेर जैसी मुँछे । दूर से इन्हें कोई देखे तो फौरन भाँप जाए कि ये कमजोर आदमी है । वजन इनका होगा करीब-डेढ़ सौ किलो । बहुत दुबले-पतले हैं ये बेचारे ।

जितना खुला इनका नाम है उतने ही खुले कपड़े ये पहनते हैं । लंगोटी के सिवा इनके बदन पर कोई कपड़ा न होगा । बदन पर तेल लगाना ये कभी नहीं भूलते । खुद को बड़ा तीसमारखाँ समझते हैं । हनुमान के भक्त हैं, इसलिए मैं इन्हें खुद को तगड़ा समझने के लिए दोष नहीं देता । एक बार तो ये अखाड़े में दारा सिंह से कुश्ती करने को उतर गए । अगले दिन ये अपनी बची हुई सही-सलामत हड्डियों को गिन रहे थे ।

स्वभाव से गगन बड़े विनोदी है । उनके बोलने का ढंग ही इतना दिलचस्प है कि वह दो मिनट में शत्रु को मित्र बना लेंगे । अपनी मासूम एवं प्यार भरी आवाज़ को वह बहुत अच्छे ढंग से इस्तेमाल करते हैं । रोते को हँसाना, हँसते हुए को रुलाना ये भाईसाहब खूब जानते हैं ।

दूर से इन्हें कोई देखे तो सोचे हाथी का बच्चा चला आ रहा है । 'पहाड़-नुमा-इन्सान' यही कहके गगन को हम चिढ़ाते हैं । मासूम तो बेचारा है ही, कई बार रूखाँसा हो जाता है । इसकी फुटबाल जैसी तोंद को हम बहुत छेड़ते हैं । कई बार अपने पेट पर मटका रखकर हम गगन को छेड़ते हैं । परन्तु, गगन हमें टाल देता है ।

खाने से तो गगन नफ़रत करता है । केवल तीन सेर चावल, दो डोंगे दाल के तथा एक किलो सब्जी दिन में तीन बार खाता है । ज्यादा नहीं, पाँच लीटर दूध तथा दो किलो बादाम खाना, इनका रोज़ा का काम है । कई बार जब मैं इनसे इतना कम खाने का राज़ पूछता हूँ तो कहते हैं, "क्या करूँ ? दुबला पतला जो

हूँ ।" इनके ये मासूम शब्द मेरे होंठों पर एक हँसी की लकीर खींच देते हैं ।

इन्हे किसी चीज़ से नफ़रत है तो वो है, लड़कियों से । लड़की देखकर इनके पसीने छूट जाते हैं, लंगोटी ढीली हो जाती है तथा होश उड़ जाते हैं । इनकी इसी 'बीमारी' का हम पूरा फ़ायदा उठाते हुए इन्हें कभी रेशमा तो कभी रीटा आदि कहके चिढ़ाते हैं ।

इनका शायद ही कोई दुश्मन हो । इनसे कोई नफ़रत करता है तो वो है, रामू हलवाई । उसका भी एक कारण है । एक बार बेचारे ने गगन को गुलाब जामुन खाने के लिए बुलाया । गगन ने खाना तो शुरू कर दिया परन्तु बन्द करने का नाम ही न लेते थे । अस्सी गुलाब जामुन खाने के बाद ही गगन का छोटा सा पेट भरा । तब से रामू हलवाई कभी भी गगन के गले नहीं पड़ा ।

अब तक तो आप जान ही गए होंगे कि मेरा मित्र गगन कितना कमजोर, कितना हँसमुख इन्सान है । जो भी हो गगन जैसा मित्र सौ में से एक मिलता है और मुझे अपने दुबले-पतले मित्र पर नाज़ है ।

हरिन्दर मान

IX B

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