

# THE HARROVIAN

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## JEKYLL AND HYDE

*Lyon's & Rendalls House Play, Ryan Theatre, 24 January*

Last Wednesday and Thursday, we were treated to a Lyon's and Rendalls classic: Neil Bartlett's adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, directed by GLJ. Upon arrival, I was greeted by one of the more ominous sets I have come across in my time; nine chairs surrounded a wooden operating table, and another table was mounted by an array of coloured flasks and various other chemistry-related items. As the lights dimmed, the audience quietened down and the location was immediately established by a traditional song with lyrics resembling 'I love London' gently sung by the speakers on either side of me. A sense of foreboding swept its way over the audience as we collectively waited for the show to begin. Then, what I had originally thought to be some disruptive latecomers bulldozing the entrance doors down, was in fact a group of Victorian gentlemen, neatly dressed in tails, each with a cane and top hat, who made their way down the aisle and up onto the stage.

We were then introduced to a character exclusive to Bartlett's adaptation, Dr Stevenson (played with conviction by Ben Shailer, *Rendalls*) who was sporting the accessory that has acted as a symbol for medicine since time began, the stethoscope. He began to treat and simultaneously interrogate the victim of an assault in a dark alley. The cheekiness and sense of aggrievement of the young lad was captured with aplomb by Anton Fischer, *Rendalls*. We were then introduced to the quintessentially Victorian gentleman, Mr Utterson, whose rational and curious nature was established swiftly by the first of two Cleeves, Freddie, *Lyon's*. Commendation must go to the members of the ensemble whose occasional interjections and movements, accurately in unison, added to the atmosphere tenfold. With the help of Mr Enfield (Monty Morgan, *Rendalls*), Utterson made the connection with one of his clients, Dr Jekyll (Inigo Cleeve, *Lyon's*). Without the use of prosthetics or any effects to display the difference between Jekyll and Hyde, Inigo's employment of voice changes, from a typical Victorian gentleman's voice to the growly voice of Hyde, massively aided the audience in distinguishing between the two.

The lighting team displayed another masterclass in the unusual method of placing a moon-like light behind a curtain



and allowing the cast to display the murder of Sir Danvers Carew through silhouettes, avoiding the often-awkward stage murder that we see so often. The events of the night were eloquently described to us by Jekyll's servant, Poole (Teddy Barnett, *Rendalls*) who balanced the shock and confusion of the character with superb effect. Who better to play the ambitious Scotland Yard Police inspector than Oscar Sutherland, *Lyon's*, who embodied the character superbly. Mr Guest (Tom Leonard, *Lyon's*) who just happens to be an expert in handwriting, helps Utterson figure out that Hyde has the same handwriting as Jekyll, simply slanting the other way. GLJ then employed the always-effective split screen on stage as Jekyll reads out his letter to Utterson. As red smoke emerged from under the benches on the stage, all hell broke loose, and Poole insisted that something had happened to Dr Jekyll. As the other characters attempt to break into his room, Jekyll is seen writhing in pain, and particular acclaim must go to Inigo Cleeve, who avoided the overly dramatic stage death that we all dread while still capturing the suffering of Jekyll superbly. Blackout. Tension was at an all-time high.



Intriguingly, the next part of the play was a recounting of Jekyll's truth, told by Jekyll through a mountain of a monologue (credit again to Inigo for learning it all faultlessly); the flashbacks refer to the pages of confession, diaries and letters that Stevenson originally used to reveal Jekyll's truth. We learn all about Jekyll's instinctive drive to do bad things while upholding his reputation and propriety. Inigo's implementation of a vast array of physical theatre techniques made for a compelling display. The audience didn't know whether to feel sorry for him or to abominate him. Either way, Jekyll found himself galloping around the stage chanting "Bubble, bubble, bubble! Sip, sip, sip!" after the naïve Dr Lanyon (Arturo Saville Mascioni, *Rendalls*), who served as a foil for Dr Jekyll and gave him the ingredients he needed for his potion. Eventually, like all things, it caught up with Jekyll and he decided to end it all. With the deafening screams of Jekyll ringing around the auditorium, the ensemble slowly encroached in on him and the lights snapped off. Rapturous applause greeted the cast members on stage and rightfully so. A difficult play was handled with professionalism by a cast of superb and promising actors. Overall, it is undeniable that GLJ's direction combined with a wonderful cast and a superb tech team made for a very successful show.

## SINGING PRIZES

25 January, Speech Room

The Singing Prizes were well attended, despite the many other activities on offer that evening. An impressive number of boys took part, and each award was highly contested, with a strong standard of singing across all categories. Adjudicated by James Gilchrist, the results were split into three sections: the Lawrence Junior Singing Prize for Treble Voice; the Intermediate Singing Prize, with the Elizabeth Easter Trophy, and, the Oliver Sichel Prize for Singing, with the Li Cup.

Lawrence Junior Singing Prize for Treble Voice:

1st Frank Thompson – *To lo Sai*, Torelli

Frank Thompson, *Elmfield*, won the treble competition singing *To lo Sai* by Torelli – an emotionally driven piece, Thompson had a secure grasp of the story and context throughout, utilising contrasting tone and lilting tempi to communicate effectively with the audience. However, while it was felt that he could have been more grounded in the text itself, his performance overall was incredibly persuasive, and one backed by a strong vocal technique and sense of musical expression.

2nd Henry Murray – *Spring Sorrow*, Ireland

Sung with a distinct and well-established sense of melancholy, Henry Murray, *The Head Master's*, managed Ireland's long phrases with control and precision, allowing his soft tone to convey the story of the piece effectively. While he could have sung with even more expression and musical phrasing, his singing had a very mature grasp of the atmosphere of the piece, and, in turn, made for an enjoyable and moving performance.

Intermediate Singing Prize:

1st Alex Sheng – *Music for A While*, Purcell

Alex Sheng, *Elmfield*, won the Intermediate category, with *Music for A While* by Purcell. A challenging piece, Sheng managed the demands on range and breath incredibly persuasively, with his long lines of song creating an emotional and expressive performance with a captivating atmosphere. While his sense of performance and character could have been more grounded, Sheng's rich tone drew the audience into the music, and his expressive and musical choices provided an excellent demonstration of impressive musical communication with the audience, leading to an emotional and entertaining performance.

2nd Jake Turner – 'They Don't Make Glass Slippers' – *Soho Cinders*, Stiles

Jake Turner, *Druries*, chose a song incredibly suited to the unique brightness and shine of his voice. With a firm sense of character, Turner gave an emotionally moving performance, ensured by his technical accuracy and modern stylistic choices throughout the piece. He managed the delicate and higher sections of the piece particularly impressively, combining a modern and twangy chest-dominant mixed voice with lighter head-voice singing to dance around his upper range throughout the piece with incredible control; ultimately, leading to a full and entertaining performance, with a real highlight of story-telling and vocal style.

3rd Dara Odujinrin – *Nina*, Pergolesi

A beautiful song on the theme of unrequited love, Dara Odujinrin, *Newlands*, was placed third with a compelling performance of *Nina*, traditionally attributed to Pergolesi. Most notably, it was Odujinrin's use of contrasting colours and dynamics that gave a real sense of emotional weight to the song, combining with excellent accuracy and technical details throughout to deliver a persuasive performance. While it was felt that there could have been more understanding of the context and story, he had a mature grasp of the Italian, and

his expressiveness and vocal accuracy were more than enough to secure him third place.

Oliver Sichel Prize for Singing:

1st Ralph Lubbe – *Dalla Sua Pace*, Mozart

Ralph Lubbe, *The Grove*, chose to sing one of the most famous songs from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Sung with incredible accuracy and power, Lubbe won the Senior category, with the higher passages of the piece being a particular highlight of the evening, as they were managed with equally impressive control and strength. With a clear understanding and commitment to the text, Lubbe communicated an excellent sense of emotion and character through the Italian, with expressively sung lines throughout leading the audience through the piece. Overall, he sang with not only excellent vocal style and accuracy, but with a skill for communication – leading to an expressive and operatic performance of one of Mozart's challenging arias.

2nd Fergus McKie – *Erk König*, Schubert

Fergus McKie, *The Grove*, sang Schubert's '*Erk König*' – an incredibly brave choice requiring extensive vocal control, extending to the ability to sing four different characters within one song. With equally impressive breath control and range, McKie provided a full performance of the piece, with a concrete grasp of both the story and the text throughout. Sung in German, Fergus' ability to colour words according to character and story was a highlight of the evening and allowed him to take everyone in the audience on an emotional journey through one of Schubert's most powerful songs.

3rd Keith Au-Yeung – 'Something's Coming' – *West Side Story* Bernstein

An incredibly rhythmically complex and challenging piece, Keith Au-Yeung, *Bradlys*, managed to pull off Bernstein's 'Something's Coming' with panache and impressive technical accuracy. Well driven, Au-Yeung never seemed panicked by the song, but instead fully in control of rhythm and tempo throughout. With a sweet tone, Au-Yeung managed the broader (and higher) sections of the song impressively, contrasting well with the faster and more text-driven opening; utilising a sense of genuine excitement throughout the piece, Au-Yeung could have placed more emphasis on character and acting for a fuller musical theatre performance.

Overall, the night was thoroughly enjoyable, containing a range of styles and genres performed, with an impressively high standard of performance throughout. Particular thanks should go to Mr Takenouchi for accompanying every performer, Professor Gilchrist for his adjudications, and to DNW for his organisation of the event.

## ORCHESTRAL CONCERT

Speech Room, 22 January

On 22 January, Harrow Sinfonia and the school Symphony Orchestra, alongside several singers and actors, presented a night of Shakespeare-related entertainment to commemorate the publication of Shakespeare's First Folio in 1623.

First, Harrow Sinfonia performed parts from Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*, interluding famous scenes from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, such as the mechanicals' play (which was very amusing). Four singers, Ralph Lubbe, *The Grove*, Ray Moon, *West Acre*, Fergus McKie, *The Grove*, and Henry MacDonald, *The Park*, also performed as a part of the sequence, and personally, the writer thought the singing to be excellent.

Next, the Symphony Orchestra performed Walton's Suite from *Henry V*, an arrangement of the composer's work for the 1944 film. Though less visually appealing than the film, the

experience was an aural treat for the audience. The stylised Tudor opening was composed and elegant. *The Death of Falstaff* was a heart-wrenching string movement in the style of an emotional Passacaglia. The third movement, which depicts the battle filled with noises of swords, horses, and armour, is stormy and frightening. The fourth movement, *Touch her soft lips and part*, was another beautiful and emotional movement expressed very well by the string players. The final *Agincourt Song* was exciting and loud (the writer has run out of words at this point and must make do with this unflattering appraisal). In between the movement were also readings from the play itself, echoes of 'once more unto the breach' and other quotes my memory fails to recall. The excellent readings were presented by Jasper Brockwell, *Druries*, Hugo Evans, *The Park*, Arhan Maker, *Druries*, Charlie McDowell, *The Knoll*, and Aaron Patel, *The Knoll*. Many thanks should be given to DNW and DNB for conducting the concerts and to APC for directing the readers and actors for the wonderful performance.

## SENIOR GEOGRAPHY SOCIETY

Xander Jones, *West Acre*, and Mungo Lawson, *Elmfield*,  
'Why Glaciers Are Fundamental to France', 24 January

Beginning with a swift overview of glaciers, the lecture centred on Glacier Blanc and Val Thorens' Glacier, pivotal to France's ski industry and economy. The core message emphasised sustainable practices – limiting tourism and limiting food waste in an effort to protect such an important component of Europe and the wider world. The glaciers extend beyond borders, supplying 90% of Europe's agriculture water, impacting 2 billion lives. Moreover, they play a vital role in climate regulation, their retreat a clear sign of the effects of global warming. This lecture revealed the local and more global significance of glaciers in France, urging us to be more mindful and aware in our duty to protect these crucial frozen rivers.

## SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY

'Beyond Zero Resistance: Superconductors', Feo Mishin, *Elmfield* and Joshua Oliver-Willwong, *Bradlys*,  
23 January

In a captivating lecture by Feo Mishin, *Elmfield*, and Joshua Oliver-Willwong, *Bradlys*, Physics Schools 7 became a lens into the realm of superconductivity, with the speakers kindly donating their knowledge and expertise, and giving us insight into the application, research, and inner workings of superconductors.

Mishin and Oliver-Willwong illustrated complex concepts like bosons and electron-cation collisions in a brief but helpful and understandable way, on par with many of the teachers at the School. After dashing through what causes resistance in a normal, boring conductor, they covered the quantum effects of making stuff very cold. Without heat to cause vibrations and disrupt the electrons, they can form Cooper pairs. To turn a long explanation is a short one, these pairs of electrons become synchronised and entangled, and become ghosts of a sort, and will no longer collide with other electrons or cations. This causes the legendary zero resistance, as nothing can reduce the kinetic energy flowing through the electrons. Not only do superconductors have zero resistance, but they also interact with magnetic fields. Superconductors are under the influence of the Meissner Effect. This means that they expel magnetic fields. This is the basis of maglev trains and allows them to hover.

Superconductors are prized for their transformative properties and have many applications, some particularly notable ones

being MRI scanning, lossless power grids and energy storage, motors, particle accelerators, quantum computing, and fusion energy. However, a major problem posed by superconductors is they need to be cold, very cold, including the 'high temperature' ones, which is why scientists globally are on the hunt for a particular holy grail, a room-temperature superconductor. (You may have seen many fake news articles.) However, this dream is currently still fiction, but we can hope the ever-expanding frontiers of scientific knowledge will uncover this revolutionary secret. As we eagerly wait for more chapters in Humanity's journey to unfold, we can only hope that room-temperature superconductivity becomes a tangible reality.

## NIGERIAN WRITERS AND WESTERN LITERATURE

*Exploring the Influence of Chinua Achebe and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Kitan Akindele, Newlands*,  
25 January

Akindele's talk provided us with some fascinating information about themes such as cultural conflicts in West Africa, tribalism and post-colonialism. He began speaking about Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, a renowned Nigerian writer, and her books on topics such as identity, race and feminism, which had a profound impact on Western literature. Akindele delved deeper into some of her most notable books including *Half of a Yellow Sun*, which highlights the turbulent period in Nigeria's history as the country navigated through its own civil war. Akindele helped the audience gain a deeper understanding of the novel as he spoke about the Biafran War, a conflict between the Igbo people and the rest of Nigeria, before explaining how reading *Half of a Yellow Sun* helped him gain a wider perspective of the topic. Growing up, he was only told one side of the story by his grandparents. Having been lucky enough to study Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* at GCSE, Akindele then explored the stereotypes portrayed in the novel and discussed the abuse that underlay the real-life relationships between many fathers and daughters in Nigerian households. Finally, Akindele focused on Chinua Achebe, whose nickname is 'Father of African literature'. Achebe's books are often rooted in the impact of European colonialism, and this is no different in *Things Fall Apart*, which Akindele summarised and analysed, focusing on its influence in African literature. Akindele spoke about the novel's themes: the consequences of colonialism and the impacts of change on individuals and communities. He ended the talk by discussing how he sees the effects of colonialism in modern-day Nigeria and whether the traditions displayed in *Things Fall Apart* are still witnessed.

## PIGOU SOCIETY

*'Energy Scarcity in Nigeria?', and 'How to solve Nigeria's Energy Crisis'*, Mubarak Tinubu, *The Knoll*, and Zachary Uduehi, *Lyon's*,  
25 January

Mubarak Tinubu, *The Knoll*, and Zachary Uduehi, *Lyon's*, gave an illuminating talk on the topics 'Energy Scarcity in Nigeria: What Policies Can be Employed to Tackle This?' and 'What Needs to be Done to Solve Nigeria's Energy Crisis'.

Tinubu and Uduehi first explained that Nigeria's rapid increase in population relative to its increase in energy provision led to the country's energy crisis, where 86 million people do not have access to energy.

Several challenges hinder the country's efforts to solve



the energy crisis. Insufficient energy infrastructure, such as transmission lines and power plants, limits industrial productivity. A population boom is further straining limited resources. Nigeria has only one wind farm, contributing to a mere 0.1% of Nigeria's energy, and four hydroelectric plants. Additionally, corruption continues to plague Nigeria. Opportunistic government officials siphon-off funds for investment. Organised crime runs rampant: gangs steal 200,000 barrels of oil and gas per day. The infrastructure that exists operates below total capacity due to poor planning and corruption.

Nigeria plans to tackle the crisis by building nuclear power plants. Talks with international nuclear agencies suggest that with \$10 billion of investment, Nigeria could produce 4000MW of electricity per year. The government also plans to increase the solar power contribution to Nigeria's energy pool to 20% by 2030. Tinubu and Uduchi commented that new developments must synergise with Nigeria's current oil and gas infrastructure.



Government reform, crackdown on corruption, and public-private partnerships could act as deterrents against energy crime. Fiscal policies to reduce trade restrictions would also allow other countries to invest and bring expertise to Nigeria, advancing the infrastructure and diversifying energy sources. They could then combat the competitiveness brought by foreign firms with subsidies to local firms to produce better technology.

# METROPOLITAN

## GROUNDHOG DAY

Dir: Harold Ramis, Runtime: 1hr 41min

Happy Groundhog Day. This week's review is exactly that. *Groundhog Day* (1993) follows a cynical TV weatherman (Bill Murray) who finds himself reliving the same day over and over again after he and his news team travel to Punxsutawney PA to report on the world-famous holiday, Groundhog Day. His predicament drives him to distraction and depression, until he realises his troubles might be just what he's always needed.

A phrase described as 'post-New-Year's depression' is not a hard one to understand. Part of the reason why I find this film so engaging is because it offers another holiday to look forward to through the middle of winter, set in a cosy small town. The movie's light-hearted, comedic, yet solid plot can be attributed to its director Harold Ramis. Ramis is most famous for his roles in film comedies *Ghostbusters* (1984), *Stripes* (1981) and *Caddyshack* (1980), all of which he acted in himself. I happen to believe his work as a writer and director actually eclipses the films in which he stars, and films like *Animal House* (1978), and *Groundhog Day*, are much funnier. Ramis began as a substitute teacher working in Chicago's inner-city schools, as well as a freelance writer for the Chicago Daily News. Ramis avoided the Vietnam War draft by injecting himself with methamphetamines to fail his military physical. His luck (and health) improved and he began performing with Chicago's Second City acting troupe while landing a position

as a joke editor for *Playboy* magazine. At the time, Second City acting troupe was a gateway for ambitious comedians to show off their talents, and after Second City became Second City TV (or SCTV), the genius and acting skills of the comedians were able to be shown off on a much larger stage, skyrocketing the likes of Rick Moranis (*Honey I Shrunk the Kids*, 1989) John Candy (*Uncle Buck*, 1998) and Eugene Levy (*Schitt's Creek*, 2015) into stardom. The fact that Ramis worked as a writer and cast member for SCTV (a superior precursor to SNL) meant he was always being exposed to new ideas and introduced to comedic talent. Although SCTV mainly worked out of Canada, it would often host celebrity guest stars; enter Bill Murray. Ramis and Murray would work on *Ghostbusters* and *Caddyshack* together, but after disputes on how to film *Groundhog Day*, their successful friendship ended catastrophically, leading to a mutual 'shunning' between the two of them, breaking only in 2014 when Ramis was confined to a hospital bed, where weeks later he died of the autoimmune disease that plagued him. To me, Bill Murray on screen is often a hard pill to swallow due to the tangible feeling one gets that he'd rather be anywhere else but filming this movie. I actually found *Groundhog Day* to be one of Murray's best roles (second to *Rushmore* 1998) and now knowing it was filmed with Murray beaten into submission and forced to smile a little, puts a spin on the whole film.

*Groundhog Day* is often called 'timeless', which I believe is due to its whole-cloth creation, actually earning a BAFTA award for Best Independent Screenplay. It asks the resonating question: "What would you do if you were stuck in one place, and every day was exactly the same, and nothing that you did mattered?". A lot of 'gimmicky movies', as mentioned in my review of *About Time* (2013), can easily fall foul of ignoring the plot for the sake of pursuing a stupid gimmick. This was not that, nor was it a boring rendition of something we'd previously seen. Its originality was a key to its success and inspired other films such as *Edge of Tomorrow*, *Happy Death Day*, and *50 First Dates*. The 'time loop' plot point, to many, seems like an obvious reference to purgatory. Ramis later said technically Phil was stuck reliving the same day for ten years, however, in the original screenplay, scenarist Danny Rubin wrote that Phil Connors was stuck in Punxsutawney for closer to 10,000 years. Although both Rubin and Ramis are Jewish, Ramis converted to Buddhism, a faith where it takes 10,000 years to transition from your physical self into the world of the spiritual. This is a true tenet of the faith, and it's known as 'The Latter Day of the Law'. In addition to religion, after the film's release, doctors and students were calling and writing letters to Harold Ramis, thanking him for making a movie about psychoanalysis and breaking detrimental patterns in the mind, the concept they believed to be reflected in the film. In an interview with Harold Ramis and Danny Rubin, both men admitted that the script for the movie had actually been floating around for years as a tool for Rubin to get producing and writing jobs elsewhere. It was originally a very dark script, focusing much more on the psychological aspects of the film, but Harold Ramis felt the script too dark for mass appeal, so he laced jokes and comedic scenes throughout the plot.

Phil Connors (Bill Murray) is able to live with absolute freedom while in the time loop, his actions having little to no consequence on his life, and the only thing seemingly affected is his mind. Of course, the obvious metaphor here being that despite having absolute control over what he can get away with over the many months in the time loop, able to rob a bank, eat cholesterol-laden breakfasts, and eventually attempting suicide by crashing his car into a moving train, Phil is trapped behind bars in the truest sense of the word, and, eventually, the only way to break free from these shackles, is for the jaded Phil Connors to transform his mind. The talented Andie MacDowell does her job well as a supporting actress, leaving room enough for Murray to really shine, MacDowell being the sweet yet firm rock off which Murray can leap into the everyman and out of

the time loop. This film has remained in the public psyche for a very long time and continues to do so today, with a viral news story of someone who used the COVID-19 lockdown to watch *Groundhog Day* every day for a whole year, wasting much of his time and learning nothing new.

The film ssembles the finest cast of comedians to create a beloved holiday movie full of comedy and charm. As mentioned earlier, the small-town setting is the perfect place for a movie like *Groundhog Day*; it's comforting and cosy, yet, despite being relived every day for (give or take) many years, a process no doubt boring for Phil Connors, the script never loses its bounce and pace. Part of the reason the whole film felt so punchy is because Murray's lines felt like genuine off-the-cuff wit and, in many cases, that was exactly the case, in Rubin's words, "some colouring here and there". In conclusion, Happy Groundhog Day to all and I really do recommend this film for anyone looking for that perfect 'feelgood' film with a plot. Once again, if you have any films you'd like to see reviewed, please don't hesitate to email me 21mcdowellm@harrowschool.org.uk

P.S. I couldn't find anywhere relevant to place this, so I thought I'd add it at the end:

In an interview talking about his college days spent writing satirical plays, Harold Ramis said: "In my heart, I felt I was a combination of Groucho and Harpo Marx, of Groucho using his wit as a weapon against the upper classes, and of Harpo's antic charm and the fact that he was oddly sexy—he grabs women, pulls their skirts off, and gets away with it."

## BOZ PART TWO

### *A brief introduction*

That breakfast, Mr Trumpet (an unimportant character in this play, I must note, dear reader) had decided to plump his fairly unimpressive buttocks opposite Mr Boz, who was enjoying his cheeriotic communion.

Mr Trumpet, the Harrow school organist-cum-librarian, was a fairly pathetic man. His face, which appeared as a vision of old gum from a crack in the chapel pew, held a wonky grimace.

"What's up, Boz!" he snivelled. Despite his good, English surname, good, English public-schooling and good, English passport, Mr Trumpet had a concerning tendency to use outdated phrases from across the pond in good, English conversations. These included "Gee-Wizz" (a colloquialism originating from American gold-mining towns, I am told), "Gosh-Darn" and "No probs, Dude" (or, on very rare occasion, "Dudette"). It was as though he had been very cruelly tricked during his childhood into believing that the "Children's Oxford English Dictionary" was actually called "Annual Scouts Book of Cracking Jokes, 1896".

He spent at least a quarter of his waking hours in the chapel, fanatically practicing English madrigals and Spanish chants by the Infernal organ. Perhaps this consistent closet-inhabiting is why he constantly held his fairly unimpressive limbs pinned to his chest, like an action figure or Barbie that had been manipulated by a toddler and discarded behind a sofa. If he would have a perfume named after him (a very rare possibility), it would be called "Um, actually..."

Boz looked up from his Cheerios and glared at the runt through the top of his head.

When a man is being engaged in conversation by a person whom he finds fat-headed whilst trying to enjoy his grub, he will, until the moron departs, suddenly take on the form of a connoisseur; he will push each morsel about his plate as though it were gold in a panner's basket, place each potato on his tongue as delicately as a curator and masticate slower than is sensible. In order to convey utter conviction in the joys of food (and holy abstinence from the boredom of conversation) Mr Boz attempted this manoeuvre.

"Hey Man." crookedly crooned Mr Trumpet in what can only be described as a trans-Atlantic accent, achieving a tone of both anger and arousal. "How have you been, Boz". He said. "I..."

This wasn't a caesura, as it may appear, that denotes deep heartfelt confliction. Nay, reader. His mid-sentence halting was due to the sudden summoning of a uniformed pupil who had appeared to his left. He stood perfectly still, at attention.

Sensing a shift in atmospheric pressure, Mr Boz slowly looked up to the drivelling Organist. Seeing that his mouth was mercifully shut and that his scrambled face wasn't facing him, but indeed towards the shell-looking creature who had appeared, Mr Boz stopped eating.

"What d'you want" asked Mr Trumpet, turning to his side.

The little mouse looked up to the leaking roof.

"Are you Boz?" he earnestly enquired. Mr Trumpet went red and flashed a glare at Mr Boz. "I'm Boz" stumbled the applicable with a sly smile, "Mr Boz, that is", with a gesture to wave off the needless anger originating from the crimson-faced Mr Trumpet. "And who may you be?"

"Not important" the odd creature blundered. "I have read something of yours, an essay in the Academic Journal; 'twas very good" he added. "I have a vested interest in discussing it with you".

Mr Boz had noticed how the boy was speaking in such an odd fashion, saying his words as though they were spilling from his very lungs like a punctured tire. Perhaps he was foreign. German, he bet. Or maybe plain stupid (such mistakes have, in the past, been made by the admissions board). Still, he found the second conclusion unlikely. The boy had blond hair and a terribly fragile-looking nose; maybe Swedish? Or American? No, unlikely.

Mr Boz, who held the look of a man in mental indigestion, asked, "which one was that? You see, I have written..."

"On the Likelihood of Evolution Without a God" blurted the urchin.

"Oh..." said Boz. "That's mine, yes."

The Boy twitched, perhaps in frustration. "It was very funny" said the confusing shell, without the courtly smile expected of such a statement (his face remained dead-pan). "You stated on line 10 of the eighteenth paragraph that 'the validity of evolution definitively excludes the possibility of the existences of Adam and Eve'".

With a gracious nod, like that a teacher gives when he is correct, Boz smiled and said, "that I have said that; that is probably true".

"Profoundly interesting!" said the boy, once more gazing upon the mildew-brown ceiling, staring with a vivacious intent. He turned his eyes to those of Mr Boz's, his pupils like dark tunnels and his world-knowing smile-grimace hanging from his face like a wound. "But you are most profoundly wrong," the lofty apparition spoke.

"The Devil!" blurted the tomatoey Mr Trumpet, who vibrated as he threw his weight to face the boy, hurling his machinating gaze at the blond head which, Boz now noticed, seemed to create a sort of light. "Go on" said Boz.

The boy smiled. "They are real, be in no doubt. I am not. I believe I have met them".

The troughs of his uncanny face seemed to enflame at that moment, and his plastic mask almost melted like a hand-fan. Boz did not know why, but he began to sweat. His head rocked like a ship on the cape of good hope: his ears rushed with the bang of blood; his feet seemed to lift from the very floor. Was he floating? His eyes welled up with the tears of a pubescent rage, which Boz had thought that he had left behind in the civil war in his own country, and he thought that he might faint. And indeed, although I hate to spoil a good story, I must inform you that he did. But not before, dear reader, getting a final glinting glance at that maleficent little blond devil. He smiled like the moon. Mr Boz collapsed, plunging nose-first into his Cheerios.

## THE GOD OF THE EASTERN SUN

*Arthur Yang, West Acre*

The second poem of the Nine Songs, as recorded, is 'The God of the Clouds'; however, Chinese scholar and poet Wen Yiduo takes this to be a misplacement, and 'The God of the Eastern Sun' ought to be placed before 'The God of the Clouds' because it is in this order the two are always collectively addressed in books from the time, as deities who control sun and rain (two important weather features in an agricultural society). Thus I have placed 'The God of the Eastern Sun' second in the series, from its original seventh position.

The God of the Eastern Sun  
From the east, oh! I shall rise,  
Caress my steeds, oh! by the great Sun-Tree.  
Approaching dawn, oh! on clear night skies,  
With loose reins, oh! the day set free.

I drive thunder, oh! on the dragon boat,  
Banners of cloud, oh! in winds they grow.  
I sigh, oh! to ascend and float,  
My heart hesitates, oh! and lingers low.

Dance and song, oh! what great delight,  
The beholders, oh! forget to leave.  
Bells tremble, oh! and strings made tight,  
Drumbeats and chimes, oh! interweave.

The pipes are sounded, oh! the reeds are blown  
I remember the priestess, oh! so fair and bright.  
She dances, oh! like verdant birds by flown,  
Great songs she sings, oh! with her gentle steps light.

Pulsing with melody, oh! and dancing with glee,  
The gods arrive, oh! and shadow the sun.  
Blue nimbus coats, oh! and white dresses misty,  
I raise the long arrow, oh! to shoot Lupus' crown.

I take my bow, oh! to descend on Earth,  
I wield the stars, oh! to ladle cassia wine,  
I soar east, oh! and fasten my girth,  
In gloomy dark, oh! again I shall shine.

## OPINION

### WHY THE WEST SHOULD NOT DEAL WITH THE HOUTHIS

I must admit the motivation for this article did not come from a moral urge to inform Harrovians about a niche area of conflict in the Middle East. On Tuesday night, I participated in the Junior Inter-House Debate between Elmfield and The Park. I won't go into too much detail about the events of that evening as all that and more can be found in my debating partner Mr Kular's article, no doubt lurking somewhere between these manilla pages [It isn't, don't go looking – Eds]. It would be terribly tedious for the readers of this article to read it in its entirety and be unfamiliar with the 'Houthi problem' so I think it's necessary to elaborate. The Houthis are a militant religious group that arose in 1990 in Yemen and stood against corruption, a problem they believed to be plaguing Yemen, accusing the United States of instating a puppet president (the exact names and dates of these events and key players are unnecessary for an overview such as this, if

that's what you want, read a depth study.) Furthermore, during the Iraq war, the previously passive Shi'a Islam Houthis were moulded into a militant group with extreme anti-West views. In 2015, the Houthis seized the capital of Yemen (Sana'a) prompting the Yemeni government to ask the Saudi Arabian military to roll in and remove the Houthis. The Saudi plan to go into Yemen and remove the Houthis was thought to be a one of expediency and efficiency; instead, Yemen has had to endure nine years of Houthi warfare, bombings and thousands of casualties. As of October 2023, that was all there was to be said about the Houthis. In November 2023, just a month after the Hamas attacks against the Israelis began, the radical, religious, outcast, Shi'a Houthis began causing disturbances, hijacking and destroying cargo on both commercial and government ships passing through the Gate of Tears (the opening at the mouth of the Red Sea and 'the bottle neck of world trade' – M McDowell). This is a terrible thing for the economy as 12% of global trade is reliant on the Gate of Tears. Everyone who came to the debate found it to be incredibly informative, and simply being there seemed to eliminate any confusion as to why these issues exist in the region at all.

The motion was 'This house does not back the Western military action against the Houthis'. My personal views on the matter are confused and flawed so I'll simply outline why Western military involvement against the Houthis could be a bad idea and some alternative options. 1: finding a diplomatic solution. This is a feasible option because all parties involved are eager to end the dispute and a diplomatic approach as opposed to a Western militant one would be much less costly both monetarily and in terms of human lives. 2. fear of escalation. If the Western powers were to further their military action against the Houthis a Cold War-esque scenario might develop with Iran against the West. If diplomatic action should fail, ONLY then should there be war, and ONLY a war led by a UN task force and NOT the West. The Houthis are proud to be in direct conflict with the US and the West, turning what is a worldwide economics issue into an age-old conflict of ideologies as well as a dance with nuclear war.

The Houthis have made it clear that they will end their disruption at the Gate of Tears if Israel allows aid to reach the Palestinian civilians in Gaza and the West Bank. This is a real, diplomatic solution costing zero lives, and one that would end up strengthening the world economy in a matter of days. Such diplomacy would be mediated by the UN, or an equally unbiased neutral country such as Switzerland. The Middle East has been subject to Western whims for hundreds of years, resulting in conflicts that end in confusion, corruption and thousands dead. It would be more logical to simply 'cut to the chase' and come to a diplomatic solution free of casualties, and something that would expediate the rebounding of the economy and lowering of oil prices post-Houthi disruption.

Secondly, if the current conflict escalates further, it could lead to a Cold War-like scenario since both Iran and the West are capable of nuclear armageddon. This would increase worldwide tensions, something that in and of itself has tangible consequences. This escalation would not be so for the UN. The UN has member countries from all over the world, making it a global, hence neutral, initiative. As previously stated, the Western powers have had years of conflict, exploitation and coup d'états in the Middle East. Such events have left the powers in the region more than apprehensive about Western involvement. It's very plausible that the current Western military action against the Houthis, if continued, would only lead to escalation. Abdul-Malik al-Houthi (front-runner for the Houthi group) said yesterday:

"Your strikes will only increase the strength and determination of the Yemeni people to confront you, because you (the West) are the aggressors against our country."

The Biden administration (Biden himself, in his own vapid way) said that they would continue drone and bombing strikes



despite showing zero positive results. This is ridiculous. These strikes clearly are not achieving anything, but killing unlucky civilians and wasting American taxpayers' money. The Houthi fighters are like a travelling circus, hard to find, hard to fight, but not impossible. The issue is, the Houthis are being supplied with weapons by the nuclear power (or heavily suspected nuclear power) Iran. To get to the root of the problem would mean dealing with Iranian supply lines, something the West would be unable to do as it would mean Cold War-like tensions. It is not because the American/Western plan of attack is ineffective, but, as demonstrated by the statement of Abdul Malik Al-Houthi, the strikes are only increasing the animosity of the Yemeni people against the West, as well as their thirst for combat. None such animosity would be met with a UN taskforce in the region as the UN has members from all over the world, making it a global initiative. If the worst comes to worst (God forbid) Iran would be unable to nuke all the member countries of the UN. Additionally, Sudan, Eritrea and Jordan all have their only ports on the Red Sea, meaning their trade-heavy economies rely on commerce to be free-flowing through the Gate of Tears and the Red Sea. Furthermore (that's right; furthermore), 20% of Egypt's government budget relies on fees of merchant and commercial ships passing through the Suez Canal. Saudi Arabia would be effectively unable to export oil to the East due to an impassable Strait of Hormuz and Gate of Tears. These countries (Saudi Arabia, Eritrea, Sudan, Jordan and Egypt) cannot be seen openly allying with America in a fight against the Houthis (due to their ties with Israel), but involving the UN, a global force, would mean that these countries could still contribute to a solution without seeming to support Israel. I feel I need to stress the point that absolutely everyone involved in this conflict wants it to end. The Chinese depend on the oil they receive from Saudi Arabia, which is now nearly twice as expensive (or getting there) as the Saudis are now unable to pass through the Gate of Tears or the Strait of Hormuz and must instead go through the Mediterranean and then around the Cape of Good Hope to reach their Chinese buyers. The impact China feels is just one example about how complex this issue is, and, believe me, almost everyone is affected.

If the West were to increase their military action against the Houthis, the disruption in the Red Sea and, moreover, the suffering of the global economy, would continue, and the Iranians and the West would be tiptoeing around mutually assured destruction. I can only hope this article has been enough to give you the edge in any dinner-table conversations. A complex matter indeed.

## STARMER'S HARROW

*Or, How I Stopped Worrying and Love the VAT*

I'm in a perfect position to judge this question: after all, I am a begrudging member of the elite group that we may call the "Harrovians". I say 'begrudging' because I would sooner be a "Broadmoorian", "Thatcherian" or "recently deceasedian" before I would want to be remembered perpetually as a Harrovian. Most Harrovians are miserable and dull creatures, ranking in the same position on the food chain as the Vegan Tiger. At every moment of my life, one of the miserable duds pops his head up with something unnecessary or base. The last conversation I had with one had something to do with whether plants could catch diabetes, and the one before (although I struggle to remember it) was about whether the British Government should stage a heist on the Town of Bordeaux in hopes that they may turn over all their vintage stuff to HMRC.

Indeed, even if amusing, being surrounded by constant eccentricity convinces one that the whole world (and, indeed, every single person of it) consists purely of Toffy Morons, as opposed to

the truth, which is that there is a slight infection of *Harroviensis* (the name which I have ascribed to the most formidable disease present in members of this School) in North London. However, those who read this and know me will be amused. For I am a most unabashed moron myself. Although I may be a hypocrite, I would suggest to my opponents that my kind of *Harroviensis* is a weaker strain. The disease manifests itself in many more unpleasant ways.

Now our website claims (in a move that is either mischievous or ironically ignorant) that this mound of fire and brimstone (see *Home to the Hill*, the secret sixth verse) will sculpt out of any Year 8 a "mature", "well-meaning" and "world-conscious" individual. And yet, one needs only to look around one see a sort of tyranny that is only otherwise seen in madhouses, prisons, and Parliament.

Arrogance: that's the main symptom of *Harroviensis*. Admittedly, this especially aggressive disease has been used to great benefit in the esteemed careers of Harrovians. Churchill, Nehru and Sheridan certainly needed this nifty little trick to achieve the things that they did.

Nay: the admittedly gangrenous infection of the paltry ranks of Harrow Men is considerably more sinister. I call it 'unfounded confidence'. It's a uniquely modern problem because these brats genuinely believe that they are more intelligent and more interesting than anyone else. It's the abandonment of natural human faculties, of the very appreciation of a world community, and blind submission to the idea of personal worth and genuine importance. I believe that such unhelpful qualities originate mainly from the tendency this School has of mollicoddling and pampering. The results of such a disease are often disastrous, causing such later-life disfigurements as disregard for the fellow man, emotional immaturity, and a tediousness boorishness.

This is all part of a theory I'm working on, which I have elected to call the Überjunge Complex. I am publishing a lengthier discussion of this modern affliction in a publication whose name has slipped my mind...

Complexes aside, my view is that Harrow School does not deserve to exist any more than say, Harrow College. I think that private schools are mostly brilliant institutions that can be used for good. I would use the examples of private schools and what they can do for the disadvantaged and, in our case, the down-right stupid. They are also, I believe, needed for the continued participation in the Civil Service – without them, of course, the Houses of Parliament would be running empty.

Therefore, my final proposition is thus: VAT should be instated exclusively for Harrow School.

## CORRESPONDENCE

*Letters to the Editors*

DEAR SIR,

Referring to article 'Cancel Culture Exists', I note the author states that J K Rowling expressed transphobic views. I have personally not seen anything written by J K Rowling that backs this statement up. Perhaps I have missed something. Nevertheless, this opinion is one the author is entitled to voice, albeit written as if fact.

My view is that she has been labelled transphobic by those who are intentionally or non-intentionally blind to the difference between being transphobic and holding gender-critical views.

There is also an opinion in the article that this benefited Rowling's 'brand'. It concerns me that people cannot voice gender-critical views without the belief that there are ulterior motives, such as publicity and sales. The response to such views is often vitriol, accusations of being a 'TERF', being hounded and threatened in person and on social media, cancelled from

public events and a rock-solid stance that ‘if you aren’t with us, you are against us’.

Many people are scared to voice their opinions in public about gender and trans-related issues. Those who have a public voice are influential and, sadly, the press and politicians take the slamming down of gender-critical views as public opinion and run with it under the name of transphobia. So I applaud J K Rowling and other public figures for sticking their heads above the parapet and voicing their opinions. We need people like this to represent the views of what I believe are the majority.

It should also be remembered that many women (and men) who are not celebrities have had their careers and mental health crushed for voicing or acting in a manner deemed anti-trans by groups, such as students, companies, councils and trans-activists. Prof. Kathleen Stock, Natalie Bird, Roisin Murphy, Sonya Douglas, Claudia Clare, Kelly Frost, Lexi Ellingsworth, Rachel Meade and Prof. Jo Phoenix are a few examples of many women who have faced unimaginable abuse and negative consequences on their lives.

I am not practised or confident at debating, I am not the most eloquent of people or a master at clever retorts, I’m not good at recalling facts to mind under pressure, and I’m not on X or Instagram. But I try to keep abreast of current views and facts and am self-assured in what I know and believe. I am just grateful there are women (and men) who have the courage and ability to voice their gender-critical views – views that so widely represent people like me.

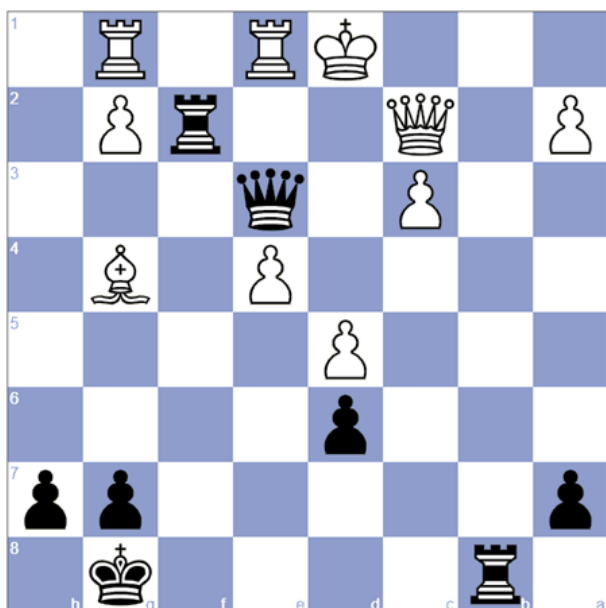
Sincerely yours,  
HELEN DUNCAN, ELMFIELD MATRON

## CHESS

This week’s chess puzzle comes from a game between then-IM Juan Mario Gomez Esteban (now GM) and IM Khvicha Supatashvili which took place in Hungary in 1992.

Black to play and mate in 2 moves.

Submit your answers to JPBH by email to enter the termly competition.



Last week’s answer: 1. Ng3+ Ke3 2. Rf3#

Interested in chess? Come along to Chess Club, 4:30 – 6pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays in MS 5. All abilities welcome!

## NOSTRADAMUS

Harrovian Editors re-interpret the “Great Prophet” to predict outcomes in 2024



Dr Crowe  
Astrologer

*L'oeuvre ancienne se paracheuera,  
Du toict cherra sur le grand mal ruyne:  
Innocent faict mort on accusera,  
Nocent cache, taillis à la bruyne.*

*The ancient work will be finished,  
Evil ruin will fall upon the great one from the roof:  
Dead they will accuse an innocent one of the deed,  
The guilty one hidden in the copse in the drizzle.*

How many years must the SCH endure  
Before we can give it a roof?  
How many tonnes of diesel do we need  
To power the generators each day?

If you happen to be insouciantly wandering past the half-finished science building, or the not-quite-ready SCH restoration, or the maybe-soon-to-be-demolished mosquito-infused pools on Obadaiah Slope for the quadrillionth time, worry not. The answers to Harrow’s construction calamity are not blowing in the wind, but written in the stars. 2024 could bring great success and joy to the Hill, as we have already seen success in the newly completed car park and destruction of natural space. Let’s hope that the “ancient work” of the SCH may finally be finished (although some “evil ruin” could still fall through the roof). So why has it taken so long? Perhaps we should cast our eyes towards the culpable criminal mastermind “hidden in The Copse”...

*La grand copie qui sera deschassee,  
Dans vn moment fera besoing au Roy.  
La foy promise de loing sera faussee,  
Nud se verra en piteux desarroy.  
The great army will be chased out,*



*In one moment it will be needed by the King:  
The faith promised from afar will be broken,  
He will be seen naked in pitiful disorder.*

What other ‘great army’ assaults these Hills other than the day on which we invite our (living) Giants of Old with open arms to the battlefield: ‘once more unto the base, my friends, follow up!’? This seems to be an imminent sign of victory for us on Founder’s Day. However, we are left to guess at why our OHs will be ‘needed’: the School goes into financial default (due to VAT), or another 450 construction project (or, equally, more funding needed for an ongoing one)? Will we then see some suggestions of a feud with the OHs and a reluctance in support? Might Mr Shailer’s articles annoy them, or is it Mr Arnison’s increasingly profane language? The last line seems to suggest a sex scandal of an important associate of the School (or any other scenario where nudity is generally accepted)...

*Siege en cité de nuit assalée,  
Peu échappée, non loin de mer conflict:  
Femme de joie, retours fils défaillie,  
Poison et lettres chachees dans le plic.*

*The city is besieged and assaulted by night;  
Few have escaped; a battle not far from the sea.  
A woman faints with joy at the return of her son,  
Poison in the folds of the hidden letters.*

Is this the Harrow battle plan for the eventual war against the Other Place? Is the poison the sewage rising from the Thames? Has the returning son just been sent back home due to the incident? Is the sea the overflowing Thames? We will not know, but let us be friendly to Eton, for now...

*La grande perte, las! que feront les lettres,  
Auant le ciel de Latona parfait:  
Feu grand deluge plus par ignares sceptres,  
Que de long siecle ne se verra refaict.*

*Alas! what a great loss there will be to learning  
before the cycle of the Moon is completed.  
Fire, great floods, by more ignorant rulers;  
how long the centuries until it is seen to be restored.*

It appears that the SMT are destined to raze the School this year. Such ignorance should not be tolerated. Will the Vaughan Library burn? Will the Thames swallow London? WMAL, heed this warning or perhaps Harrow-on-the-Hill will become Harrow-on-the-Isle.

*Le mouuement de sens, coeur pieds & mains,  
Seront d'accord. Naples, Lyon, Sicile.  
Glauiues, feux, eaux, puis aux nobles Romains,  
Plongez, tuez, morts par cerueau debile*

*The motion of senses, heart, feet and hands  
will be in agreement between Naples, Lyon and Sicily.  
Swords fire, floods, then the noble Romans drowned,  
killed or dead because of a weak brain.*

It appears that our noble friends the Etonians could have heeded the warnings of Nostradamus, though perhaps with their “weak brain[s]” this prophecy may have passed them by... Regardless, with their city flooded, the “noble Romans” are left to grovel at the feet of Harrow in all its international glory – stretching unceasingly from New York to Shanghai. Perhaps soon the time will come for us to unite and end Eton in ‘Swords fire’ once and for all...?

*De soeur le frere par simulte faintise*

*Viendra mesler rosee en myneral:  
Sur la placenté donne à veille tardiee,  
Meurt le goustant sera simple & rural.*

*The sister's brother through the quarrel and deceit  
Will come to mix dew in the mineral:  
On the cake given to the slow old woman,  
She dies tasting it she will be simple and rustic.*

Who’s the sister? What’s the cake? I know not the divine prophecy within these words, yet my clairvoyance shouts, “Beware the Shepherd Churchill food this year!”.

Nostradamus was obviously pessimistic about the 2020s. He believed that a world war would begin in the years 2020, 2021, 2022, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2029, and that in 2030 a meteoroid would hit Earth, causing violence and ceaseless killing. He also makes mentions of plagues, famines and inquisitions. Indeed, it seems that he never had anything good to say at all. No “I predict that this year man shall discover his capacity to excrete gold” or “this year, man shall abolish misery, as it shall become unnecessary”. Instead, he feels entitled to moan about fictional genocide, metaphorical volcanoes and inflamed pustules. So forgive me, therefore, if I don’t take his gloomy predictions for this year very seriously.

Additionally, every January, the Daily Mail Online (WMAL enemy no 1) posts a spurious and brain-cavity inducing article about “What Nostradamus will get right about this year”, and every December another apologetic article entitled “What Nostradamus got wrong about this year”. So, truth be told, I don’t trust the sensationalist old fart’s accuracy.

Therefore, I have decided to pick my prediction from the year 2022, as it seems more than probable that a flat-headed git such as Nostradamus could feasibly have made a mistake by a year or two. My editorial peers have gone for fear-mongering and dreary-death predictions. Therefore, I have picked one that should create a mood of positivity for the future, instead of unbridled disappointment. It reads as follows:

*“Blue-head shall white-head  
harm in such degree  
As France’s good to both shall e’er amount.”*

I have decided to interpret this as follows: over the next year, the glorious army of His Majesty of Great Britain, Northern Ireland and (by the end of 2026) the Twelve Colonies shall stage a full-scale invasion of France, creating loads of death etc. and the eventual destruction of Paris with big guns and nukified Minis. In the end, France shall be entirely destroyed, and converted into one big ocean (in order to make cruise times between Southport and Malaga quicker and more aesthetically pleasing). However, we shall preserve Bordeaux and surrounding vineyards as an island for wine exports exclusively to the UK (renaming it “New Slough” would also be a nice added bonus).

Finally: some good news! Here’s hoping that this year we will finally get our revenge for 1066. Death to Macron, slightly longer live the Empire and god save King Rishi!

*L'ordre fatal sempiternel par chaisne,  
Viendra tourner par orpte consequent:  
Du port Phocen sera rompue la chaisne,  
La cité prinse, l'ennemy quant & quant.*

*The fatal everlasting order through the chain  
Will come to turn through consistent order;  
The chain of Marseilles will be broken:  
The city taken, the enemy at the same time.*

2024 will be an all-conquering year for Harrow School. The Harrow XV will win the ‘treble’, victory against the enemy

will take place at NW8 for the third year on the bounce and, most importantly, the School will achieve record GCSE and A-level results as in-lesson concentration is said to be at an all-time high. The return on investment that will arise out of paying for boys to focus in the form room will trump\* Mr Starmer's 'pragmatic' VAT. The rest of the country, living in fear of the year that the mighty Harrow is about to have, will be left 'Biden' their time.

\*Trump here refers to the verb rather than Donald.

*"My son – mark me well, knowledge of such things cannot be implanted in your deficient mind"*

No doubt, Nostradamus predicts horror for the Fifth Form's upcoming GCSE results.



"Sir, is the plural spoonfuls, 'spün-, fülz or is it spoonsful 'spünz-, fül, which is to say, what is the plural of that amount which is as much as two spoons will hold?", asked a Shell in a random English div last week. But boys should be aware of the harm they can cause by asking these apparently harmless questions.

Because, during one morning break, a fight broke out in the English Department when Dr Bentick asked for a "few spoonfuls of sugar for his tea", and Mr Sugarman-Warner finally lost his temper, and quickly corrected him by saying, in fact, "it was not spoonfuls, it was spoonsful, and only an uneducated boor would say spoonfuls." Eye witnesses say it was Dr Bentick who threw the first punch. Mr Fannon heard the noise and came out of his form room to calm things down. "I'm quite sure the word is spoonfuls" he said, "analogous to bowlfuls and platefuls", but he was cut short when Sugarman-Warner drop-kicked him. Dr Keshavarz screamed from the top of the stairs, "No, it's definitely spoonsful, a compound of two words in which the first is a substantive noun, and the second an attributive adjective!" and launched into a flying body slam.

So *The Harrovian* asked the boys to decide – what is the correct plural of the word?

The result is that around three-quarters (580 boys) think that it's pronounced spoonfuls, while around a quarter of the boys believe it to be spoonsful. We think that's a particularly clear majority!

## SPORT

### CROSS-COUNTRY

*Harrow Borough Championships, 18 January*

Harrow hosted the Harrow Borough Championships, which is the first step on the road to qualification for the Middlesex team. There were some excellent individual results, with 14 boys qualifying for the Middlesex Championships.

In the Junior boys' event, Barkley Barnicoat, *Moretons*, and Luke Attfield, *Druries*, finished 2nd and 3rd respectively.

Harrow swept the field in the Intermediate boys' event, with Harrovians taking the first four places; most notably with Otis Farrer-Brown, *Newlands*, coming in first in a time of 18:14 across the 5.5km course.

Michael Cattini, *Moretons*, completed our strong showing by winning the Senior boys' race in comfortable fashion.

### FOOTBALL

*The School v Haileybury, 25 January*

1st XI Away v Haileybury, Draw 3-3, Southern Independents

After expending so much energy in their terrific previous outing against Tonbridge, it was evident that the Harrow team were looking lethargic in the build-up to this crucial league encounter with Haileybury. Week 3 of the Spring term is always a period when the boys can start to tire, but it was particularly noticeable as the boys trained on the Tuesday. With several players carrying niggly injuries and star player Charles Edu, *Lyon's*, only emerging from the Medical Centre the morning of the game, it all contributed to a very stressed DH pre-kick off. In the end, this fixture against Haileybury proved to be box-office stuff, combining aspects of the feared 1st XI malaise with a dramatic last-minute comeback that proved that this year's vintage are nothing if not dogged fighters till the end.

From the opening whistle, it was evident that the pre-match concerns would be a reality as the 1st XI struggled to find their rhythm and they were immediately put under pressure from Haileybury's high press and quality in the final third. Haileybury dominated possession, pinning Harrow deep in their own half and restricting their opportunities to break forward or play any possession football. Talal Nsouli, *The Knoll*, has been extremely impressive this term and he had to be at his best to prevent Harrow going further behind with several last-ditch interventions. As the first half progressed, Haileybury's persistence paid off as they broke the deadlock, seizing a 1-0 lead heading into half-time.

Harrow managed to equalise early in the second half when the ever-impressive Teddy Tarbotton, *West Acre*, whipped in a corner that was flapped at by the Haileybury goalkeeper, allowing Kitan Akindele, *Newlands*, to react quickest and tap power home from close range. Harrow looked better in their build-up play at the start of the second half, but the game took a dramatic turn when a controversial penalty was awarded to Haileybury. After a clearance was dealt with indecisively by the Harrow centre-backs, it was clever play from the Haileybury number 10 to dance through a couple of tackles before being brought down. The controversy was over where the foul was committed and even the Haileybury player admitted he wasn't in the box for the apparent foul – no matter, the penalty had been awarded. Caspar Baker, *Moretons*, did superbly to guess the right way and save the initial penalty, but the follow-up was tucked home to put Harrow 2-1 behind.

With Harrow spirits shot to pieces, Haileybury continued to assert their dominance and struck an absolute hammer blow with another goal that had more than an air of suspicion about it, looking marginally offside. For the next 20 minutes, Harrow played like a defeated team who were feeling sorry for themselves, out of ideas in attack and looking exposed in defence. The 1st XI were grateful to Henry Snow, *Rendalls*, and Baker who both exhibited outstanding skill and determination to making crucial saves that kept Harrow's hopes alive.

With hopes seemingly dashed and goal threats Akindele and Peter Ballingal, *Moretons*, on the bench with injuries and cramp, DH returned from a medical incident and a mountain of medical paperwork that had robbed the team of Mubarak Tinubu, *The Knoll*, to oversee a Harrow team bereft of ideas. With only five minutes left on the clock and some 'comments' coming in from the Haileybury parents

behind the Harrow dugout, enough was enough. The injured Akindele was thrown back on for one last throw of the dice, the formation was switched to 4-2-4 and Tarbotton was tasked with inspiring a late comeback. Tarbotton obliged as he was brought down on the edge of the area, before picking himself up and powering a rocket of a free-kick into the Haileybury goal, which put Harrow on their way. With the very next attack, Harrow pushed forwards with directness. Arthur Porter, *Druries*, laid the ball off and Akindele fired home with a terrific strike that got the scores level again. With the Haileybury parents who had chastised DH at 3-1 down now having disappeared, Harrow had one final chance to claim a victory that had seemed impossible at one stage. Porter again created space in the box and fed the onrushing Akindele, but his strike was snuffed out by Haileybury's impressive number 5 and the final whistle blew to leave the game at 3-3. It would have made for an incredible Match of the Day episode.

At full-time, the Harrow team looked utterly bereft of energy and were a picture of disappointment. The final minutes had pointed the way to Harrow the team should have played in the other 75 minutes and, in the end, it felt like a missed opportunity to have only come away with a draw. Given how bleak things had looked at 3-1 down though, the boys should be proud of the way they came back into the contest and that they still theoretically have a chance to win the league by staying unbeaten. It does mean that there can't be any further slip-ups though, and the boys will need to learn from the errors in this epic contest, especially for the crucial league contest against Dulwich.

#### *The School v Radley, 25 January*

2nd XI Home v Radley College 1st, Lost 1-4

The 2nd XI played up against Radley's 1st XI on the Sunley, and took advantage of the playing surface with some good attacking moves. Unfortunately, Harrow did not make the most of their opportunities, while Radley did, running out into a 4-1 win. Tochi Orji, *The Park*, scored a consolation goal in the second half, while Jack Young, *Newlands*, kept pushing the team forward until the final whistle.

3rd XI Home v Radley College 2nd, Won 5-4

A thriller on Park Lake, the 3rd XI came out slowly against a well-drilled Radley 2nd XI. At 2-0 down it took great determination to turn the game around, using our wingers to make incisive breaks. Leon Mills, *Newlands*, was too much to handle for the opposition, and goals began to flow from Harrow, finishing the half with a long range stunner from Chris Mutombo-Ramazani, *Bradlys*. Leading at the half 3-2 the game was Harrow's, as we came out and scored another two goals. Radley fought back and the final ten minutes was a defensive saga holding on for a 5-4 victory.

4th XI, Home v Radley College 3rd, Won 4-2

A fantastic, composed and direct full team performance, meant the 4th XI continued to build pressure, score well-executed goals, and hold off a determined Radley 3rd team to secure a well deserved victory.

5th XI Home v Radley College Boys Under-18D, Won 3-2

6th XI Home R Radley College Boys Under-18E, Lost 1-4

Junior Colts A Away v Haileybury, Won 2-1, Southern Independents

This was a pleasing performance, not only for the win but also because of the quality of play evident throughout the game. After a second half at Tonbridge characterised by heart and determination but a lack of composure, the JCAs imposed themselves against Haileybury, and started to produce some of the slick, passing football of which they are capable. Pleasingly, despite a slightly slow start in which the opposition were in the

ascendancy, Harrow solved problems as a team, making good passing angles and eschewing the impulse to punt it long in order to relieve pressure. This bore fruit, with some excellent interchanges between the imperious Paul Olusegun, *Druries*, in midfield and Mikail Magomedov, *Rendalls*, and Joel Oturuoh, *Lyon's*, down the left side. Harrow's opener came from a sharp build-up on the right wing, with Eli de Venecia's, *The Head Master's*, shot squirming past the goalkeeper. The JCAs lost a bit of shape and composure at that point and, following a phase of pressure, were able to work the ball into the box. Sam Gibbard-Jones', *The Head Master's*, last-ditch tackle was a goal saver but adjudged to be a foul. No matter, Rishya Rawal, *Rendalls*, added to an excellent display with the ball at his feet by saving the ensuing penalty. Buoyed by this, Harrow renewed their attacking momentum and were themselves awarded a penalty shortly after Damon Chiu, *Newlands*, was fouled after going through one-on-one with the keeper and slotted the spot kick nervelessly. The message at the break was, once again, composure and, unlike last Saturday, the JCAs put this into effect. Passing patterns are emerging and the team should continue to grow if they believe in their principles of play. There were excellent performances throughout: Auberon Dragten, *Rendalls*, was brilliantly dynamic – some of his one-touch lay offs were unbelievably good – and Sebastian Aucott, *Lyon's*, put in an assured performance, coming into the team at right back. With fewer than ten minutes to play, the central midfield got caught ahead of the ball, allowing Haileybury a 40-yard strike at goal. A deflection caused the ball to loop up and over Rawal, setting up a last few nervy minutes, particularly as the home team had a formidable long throw weapon. Ultimately, a merited victory was secured though, and the JCAs will hope to build on the many positives from this game in their next encounter.

Junior Colts B Away v Haileybury, Won 3-1, Southern Independents

A slow start steadily transformed into a dominant display with Haileybury struggling for a single attempt on goal in the second half.

Junior Colts D Away v Haileybury Boys Under-15C, Won 6-2

Junior Colts E Away v Haileybury Boys Under-15D, Won 10-0

Yearlings A Home v Haileybury, Won 4-2

Despite dominating the early stages of the game, Harrow found themselves 1-0 down after 15 minutes, thanks to a free-kick that flew in from 25 yards out. Harrow showed impressive resilience to keep playing their football and were soon level, after a brilliant move down the right-hand side, where Shiden Goitom, *West Acre*, latched onto a crossed from Joshua Nwaokolo, *Newlands*, as it dropped about 12 yards from goal. Haileybury were determined to play almost exclusively long-ball passes, but centre backs Cheng Ku, *Bradlys*, and Jesse Aidoo, *Bradlys*, headed practically everything away. Ronan Smith, *Elmfield*, was defensively solid, using the ball extremely well in what was his first game for the As.

In the second half, Luke Attfield, *Druries*, found the bottom corner from the edge of the box, leaving the keeper motionless. Harrow looked to be in complete control before conceding a breakaway goal that came out of nowhere. Thanks to Joshua Nwaokolo, *Newlands*, however, Harrow replied instantly and were soon 4-2 up and the game was safe. This was a fantastic team performance and a thoroughly deserved win. Matthew Hughes, *The Head Master's*, made some good stops throughout the game and was brave in the final minutes to keep Haileybury from scoring again.

Yearlings B Home v Haileybury, Won 5-2

The Yearling Bs ran out very convincing 5-2 winners against a valiant but overmatched Haileybury side with a hat-trick from William Lee, *The Head Master's*, and goals from Harry Tait, *The Head Master's*, and Aaryan Basu, *Druries*.



## FIVES

*School v Eton College, 18 January*

Only a few days ago, the second-greatest fixture of the fives season was at risk of being cancelled. (The most magnificent match is Harrow v Eton at Harrow, of course.) With the capricious Thames deciding to throw a tantrum and spew up some sewage into Slough, Eton College was inundated with rather whiffy water. While we were returning home to the Hill, the unfortunate Etonians were forced to spend an extra week away from school. We therefore send our condolences to them, as they must have finally realised the benefit of being situated on top of a hill. However, thanks to the grace of Providence and Eton's excellent efficiency, the cloaca catastrophe was swiftly resolved. The game was on!

Like us, Eton is also refurbishing their fives future with refurbishment works for half their courts. Due to the reduced court capacity, only eight Harrow pairs were in action on the day.

After a comfortable coach ride, the Harrow team battled the bitter cold and marched to the courts. Fortunately, a few people still remembered the code to the Eton changing rooms, and we were invited to enter by the beaming Etonians who awaited us. Unfortunately, the central-heating system was less welcoming and it was colder inside than out; the funky patches of floodwater on the carpet were not exactly reassuring either.

But what is the cold and the wet compared to the miry marshes of Harrow football? Picking up their courage and resolve, the Harrow team quelled the cold with their burning desire for victory. And it was so... Though Eton put up a good fight, Harrow secured a commanding 6-2 victory overall – one of the best results in recent memory! However, we must thank Eton for arranging this wonderful fixture despite the many difficulties. Better luck next time!

1st VI away v Eton College, Lost 2-1

Although our Second and Third Pairs did not achieve the wins they wanted, it was a very encouraging display from Harrow's top pair of Gus Stanhope and Valentine Ballingal, both *Moretons*. Once settled in, they took an early 2-0 lead with some magnificent set pieces. Though they made things tricky for themselves in the third set, they won the fourth comfortably to put down a good marker for matches ahead.

Colts 1st VI away v Eton College, Won 2-0

A dominant performance from the Colts, winning both matches after enthralling first sets.

At First Pair, Judah Amankrah, *The Knoll*, and Dominic Hopkins, *Elmfield*, were simply too good in the crucial points and produced a masterful performance to win comfortably in the end.

Playing as Second Pair, William Martin-Jenkins, *The Park*, and Tony Shi, *The Grove*, also won a sensational first set with some vehement volleying from Martin-Jenkins and ferocious cutting from Shi. They continued their fantastic form to win a convincing victory.

Junior Colts 1st VI away v Eton College, Won

It was a fabulous win for Alf Beresford Peirse, *Elmfield*, and Nico Older, *The Park*, who played with intent and desire. Off to a quick start, they made it very difficult for their opponents with their diurnally improving set pieces.

Yearlings 1st VI away v Eton College, Won 2-0

Both pairs triumphed today at Eton.

At First Pair, Henry Murray, *The Head Master's*, and Woody Venville, *Lyons*, recovered from a slow start and held on to win a tense first set 14-13. The battles continued with the boys winning 3-1 eventually. All the sets were extremely close and the boys deserve credit for keeping their heads when all about them were losing theirs.

As Second Pair, George Jacot da Boinod, *Rendalls*, and Caspar Bourne Arton, *Elmfield*, produced a determined display with strong cutting and consistent returns to win 2-0.

All four boys are improving and enjoying their results.

Colts 1st VI Home v Westminster School, Won 1-0

Olly Filo and Harrison Gray, both *The Park*, were too strong today for the opposition and easily ran out as 3-0 winners.

Junior Colts 1st VI Home v Westminster School, Won 2-0

Neel Gupta and Alf Beresford Peirse, both *Elmfield*, battled well in the first set to win 12-10 and then dominated the second one to win 12-4. They both returned cut well in particular towards the end.

Louis Nicholson and Caspar Spencer Churchill, both *The Park*, combined well to also win 2-0 with some impressive cutting and aggressive rally play.

Yearlings 1st VI Home v Westminster School, Lost 2-1

The First Pair of Henry Murray, *The Head Master's*, and Caspar Bourne Arton, *Elmfield*, won 3-0 to confirm their obvious improvement. They both developed their set pieces which kept the pressure on their opponents.

The other two pairs had some good battles but lost narrowly whilst improving throughout.

## RACKETS

*The School v Eton, 25 January*

1st Pair v Eton College, Lost

A 1-3 loss for Charlie Hope, *Rendalls*, and Gus Stanhope, *Moretons*, who played well in patches but just missed out on taking the match to the final game.

2nd Pair v Eton College, Lost

An excellent match full of twists and turns, which the Harrow pair of Mostyn Fulford, *The Knoll*, and Charlie Nelson, *Bradlys*, eventually lost 1-3.

Colts 1st Pair v Eton College, Won

A fine effort from Jack Nelson, *Bradlys*, and Diego Castellano Burguera, *Rendalls*, who won 3-1 with some determined, aggressive rackets. Both boys showed tenacity and skill.

Junior Colts 1st Pair v Eton College, Won

A confident performance from Arjan Lai, *West Acre*, and Arthur Brown, *Druries*, who had a convincing 3-0 win. Lai underlined his development and Brown produced some great form in the extended rallies.

**Ways to contact *The Harrovian***

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