

No. 764.—Vol. XV.

SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 1893.

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THE SILVER WHISTLE.



A STORY OF SCHOOL AND HOME.

By REV. A. N. MALAN, M.A., F.G.S.,

Author of "Highfield House," "Uncle Tutor," "The Dis-Order of the Bath," etc.

CHAPTER XVII.—A CLOUD IN THE SUMMER SKY.

Dr. and Mrs. Camborne had returned from abroad. Notice to that effect had appeared in the fashionable intelligence department of the daily papers; so there could be no disputing the important announcement.

The honeymoon had waxed and waned in lustrous serenity. And now their fond hearts hoped and trusted for mutual comfort and support in meeting the earnest realities of life. Ah, well, but it is to be seen that such serenity ends of the wedding breakfast, and that the road is not so few and far between, nor tempests brew upon the horizon.

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"When will the rotten thing be done?"

A DAY AFTER RHINOCEROS.

BY MAJOR-GENERAL R. C. MONEY.

RHINOCEROS used to be plentiful in the Bhutan Dooras, the tract of country in Bengal which annexed after the Bhutan war. Lying at the foot of the Himalayas, covered with forest or grass jungle, watered by several large rivers and with many a swampy tract, this was the natural home of wild elephant, rhinoceros, and tiger.

There are two kinds of rhinoceros to be found here, one large, with a body the size of a small elephant, but with legs considerably shorter than that animal has, and with a smooth skin. This is the *Rhin. Indicus*. The other is smaller, and its skin is covered with square angular tubercles; it resembles the *Rhin. Javanicus* of Cuvier. This smaller animal is the least common of the two. Both are very stolid, plucky beasts, and greatly feared by elephants, there being but few shikari elephants that will stand staunch before a rhinoceros.

The skin of the larger sort hangs in deep folds behind and across the shoulder and before and across the thighs; these folds are not so fully developed in the smaller sort. Both kinds have one horn on the nose, varying in size with age, but seldom exceeding a foot in height.

It has been erroneously thought that the rhinoceros uses this horn as a defensive weapon. But this is not so; it is used in grubbing up roots, etc., and for defence it generally employs its large incisors, which are very big, long, and sharp-edged, one side being a regular sharp blade. With these it can inflict terrible wounds. The horn is a mass of agglutinated hairs, and is much valued for use as cups or sacred vessels in Bhuddist temples in Nipal and Thibet. The Garos and Meches, aboriginal tribes living in these parts, kill many rhinoceros for the sake of their horns, which fetch a high price. They also appreciate rhinoceros meat, and when one is killed its flesh is disposed of as much profit for the shikari who has shot it.

Big beasts as they are, shooting them off an elephant's back is not as easy as might be supposed, for you seldom get a steady shot. They are generally found in long jungle grass which conceals their whole bodies, and they commence to run as soon as they hear the elephants of a shooting party coming near to them. They can travel much faster than elephants, and the latter always get very excited in chasing them, and then shake about so violently that straight shooting off them is difficult. Rhinoceros and pig seem to try an elephant's nerves more than anything else, and one that is staunch against them is most highly prized among natives.

I was much amused on one occasion by a very barbaric chief's idea of a proper test of the staunchness of an elephant. It was the Pachete Rajah; he had purchased at a civil court auction a very fine beast with great reputation as a shikari or hunting elephant. When it reached his so-called palace he at once tested its powers by having it strongly accented, a pig tied to each of its legs, and a fire lighted underneath it. The beast, rather more than the best shikari could stand, and the elephant at once broke loose and rushed about till it had kicked itself free of the pigs. The rajah then sent the elephant to me, the sale having been in one of my subordinate courts, and desired to repurchase his purchase, as it was not what he believed it to be when he bought it, and did not come up to his idea of a staunch elephant!

Sometimes a rhinoceros will turn, but it is usually a stern chase, and a vital spot is not easily sighted. The skin, too, is so thick

that a mortal wound is not likely to be inflicted unless you can get a broadside view, and shoot between the folds of their armour-plates. It will thus be understood that many hunted rhinoceros get off, and you may have to track a badly wounded one for miles before you can come up with and kill it; on the other hand you may bring one down with a single shot. I remember seeing Sir W. Gordon Cumming, at one of the Durbanhagh shoots on the Nipal frontier, get a broadside view of one, and drop it dead with a single shot from a 450 express from a distance of at least 250 yards.

As times a rhinoceros will turn and charge an elephant, but this is generally when very hard pressed, and forced either to go out of the jungle into open ground or to turn and face its pursuers. I have known one that was wounded turn and bowl over the howla elephant that was pursuing it, and then charge the sportsman and his chyprrasy who had been thrown out of the howla. The rifles had of course been thrown out of the howla also. This gentleman and his chyprrasy made for the protection of the nearest tree, and got it between them and the enraged rhinoceros, the elephant quickly retiring from the engagement. The chyprrasy, Gootroo, a most plucky native and keen shikari, noticing that his master had no gun in his hand, picked up one off the ground and offered it to him; his master, however, who was a novice at this sport, seemed to think Gootroo more likely to do execution than himself, and, their lives being in much danger, told him to fire at the rhino when he was close on them. Gootroo accordingly fired and hit the beast, but not thinking his one shot likely to be enough, wished to fire again, when he discovered that he had got hold of a rifle one barrel of which had previously been fired. So at immense personal risk, he ran out from the shelter of the tree's trunk, and almost from under the rhinoceros's feet picked up another rifle. Unfortunately, in his hurry he seized the rifle by the trigger and as he dragged it up a bit of the coarse jungle grass got in the way of the trigger, and Gootroo unwittingly pulling against it, off went the rifle, and the bullet passed through his thigh. Wounded as he was, and with the blood pouring from the wound, he rushed with the rifle to his master, the other barrel still being available.

It was most providential that while doing this the rhinoceros did not kill him, but it turned out that his one shot had been sufficient, and after a brief going into its heart, it stayed staggering about for a few seconds, it fell dead. This was a truly brave deed of Gootroo, and he certainly saved his master's life. He recovered from his wound after some months' illness. This man was for many years in my service, and a more plucky or keener sportsman I have never known among natives.

I may here mention, as a proof of the great strength of a rhinoceros, that the late General Dalson, commissioner of Chotanagore, told me that he saw one raise one of his elephants, a large elephant too, clean off the ground, hoisting it up on its head, which it placed under the elephant's belly, and then throwing it down; for a moment the elephant was balanced on the rhinoceros's head. The short thick legs of a rhinoceros cause it to stand lower than an elephant with its longer legs, and thus it can easily get its head and shoulders under that animal's body.

It was in March, some years back, that the Maharajah of Durbanhagh, Jhoteo Baboo,

one of his cousins, Metcalfe and I, were shooting tiger and rhinoceros in the Bhutan Dooras in the Jaipur district of Bengal. We were camped at Ghorahandah, and starting very early one morning, were in good time on the ground we intended to shoot over. This ground was in Rangbah Bagmah, one of the best bits of rhino country I have ever seen. The jungle here was full of large stretches of wild cardamum and of wild plantain, both favourite food of rhinoceros; there was also plenty of swampy land, and it was a sure find if rhinoceros were anywhere about.

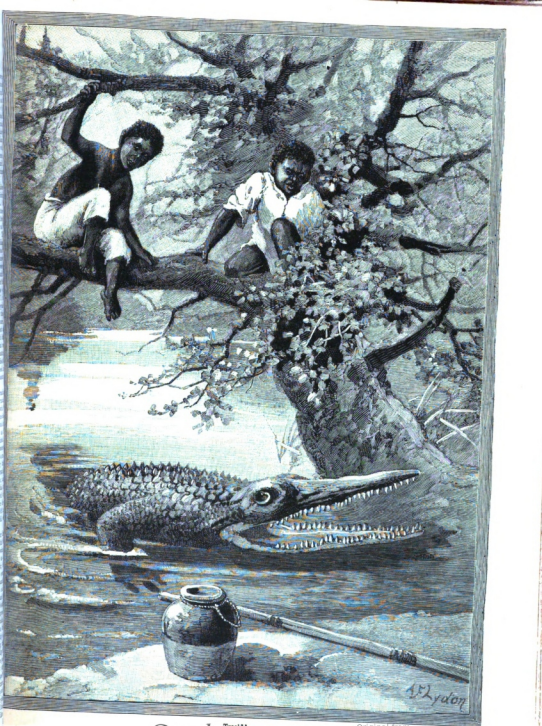
We formed line, four howdas and about fifty elephants, and commenced driving through a large patch of wild cardamum. It was a lovely spring morning, the forest trees, sissoo and others, clothed in their fresh green leaves, the bright sun pleasant, as it is at this time of year in these parts. The jungle scenery with its wealth of foliage, beautiful in itself, but rendered more so by constant glimpses of the not far off snowy Himalayas, Kinchinjunga and Mount Everest towering above all, the pleasure of such a morning, enhanced by the excitement of this sort of big game shooting, must be experienced to be really understood. I can only say that I know nothing more enjoyable. To the overworked Indian official such times are invaluable—certainly for a few hours, it may be for some days, no dik or post can find him, no official worries can touch him, he is out of reach, and his brain at rest. He can throw off all cares, revel in nature's beauties, and, after enjoying the grandest of all sport, return to his work refreshed and invigorated, with many a happy memory laid up for future days.

We had not been long in line and crashing through the jungle before a heavy rushing sound through the cardamums, with a whistling kind of grunt, and the immediate excitement of all the elephants near, told me that a rhinoceros was ahead; and as the elephants all down the line got excited, it was evident that more than one rhinoceros was in front of us. Now commenced a most exciting chase, the mahouts urging their elephants to their utmost speed in pursuit of the rhinoceroses running before them; and, jolted from side to side of one's howda, one heard only the wild trumpeting of the elephants and sharp crashing of the dried cardamum stalks and jungle grass. Of the enemy we were pursuing you could see nothing, the tall grass hid them.

It was a very coarse run, and our line was soon broken up, each howda, with the elephants that were nearest to it, following a different rhinoceros. I happened, as it turned out, to be after a very big beast; the ground was heavy, and the rhinoceros every now and then turning to avoid swamp and to keep on firmer ground, over which it could run quicker, enabled me to sight it and to get shots at it, now with a No. 12 Westley Richards rifle, now with a 500 Express. While it lasted the chase was most exciting, the uncertainty of its issue adding to the excitement. The chances were greatly in favour of the rhinoceros outstraining the elephants; there was the great difficulty of getting a fair shot, and there was the possibility of the pressed rhinoceros at any moment turning and attempting escape by charging back. At last, however, the rhinoceros succumbed and fell, and, coming up with it, I put a shot behind its shoulder-plate which killed it. No sooner was it dead than I was out of my howda to secure its horn.

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It was one of the larger species of rhinoceros, an unusually big beast, and its horn a particularly fine long one. My shikaris took the horn off the head, and then very rapidly and skilfully proceeded to cut off the plates of tough hide which cover the shoulders and flanks, of which you can make very pretty small round table tops, as, when properly dried, they are pale amber colour and take a high polish; you can also make good riding-whips and canes out of other parts of the skin. As this was an especially fine specimen I took some of its big toenails, of which it has three on each foot, and of which good shooting trophies can be made. While this was going on I could hear firing continually all around me, and knew that the others of our party had found rhinoceros.

During the operation of my rhino being skinned, a crowd of Meches, an aboriginal tribe living in these parts, had come up through the dense jungle, and the moment the carcass was done with they pounced on it, and with their long knives cut off all the flesh, which they at once carried away. I can only compare them to vultures tearing up a dead deer or the carcass of a skinned tiger. The Meches set to work with much the same rapid energy as the vultures, and the scene of a crowd of nearly naked men, of a yellow pale brown colour, smeared all over with the rhino's blood as they cut and hacked at its carcass, laughing and talking noisily the while, was wild and uncommon, but also very disgusting. A proys of skinning rhinoceros, you should, when after them, always be prepared with the necessary weapons, and I used to carry a small American hatchet and a Goorkha kookrie or knife in my howda. I was greatly amused once, when shooting on the Nipal frontier, to come across one of our party, a man who had done the Indian task, who had killed a rhinoceros, trying to get its skin off with a penknife! He was determined to have his trophy, and being prepared with no better weapon, and none of the mahouts with him having knives, he valiantly set to work, and when I arrived was hard at it, and had succeeded, after much labour, in making a tiny cut in the big beast's skin! It was getting late in the day, and he was so excited that, impossible as the task was, he was determined to have it done. I believe, all night, or until his little knife broke, had I not come to his assistance.

Having secured my trophies, I put the elephants with me into line and started to look up any friends. I had not gone far when one of the smaller species of rhinoceros, at all times the most gregarious, with a sudden rush charged the line and scattered the elephants. Ineffable confusion followed. All the elephants seemed to go mad with excitement as they, with a peculiar whistling, squealing grunt, charged one after the other. Four times it charged, but fortunately did no special damage to any of the elephants. Presently I got my chance, and a couple of shots bowled him over. When I came up at last with the rest of my party I found that Metcalf had killed a big rhinoceros and wounded another so badly that it was sure to die, and after which trappers had started. The maharajahs had killed, but seeing a baby rhinoceros of the big species, and being anxious to secure one, he had gone after it. I followed him, and found that he had pursued it into a small isolated patch of tree and grass jungle which he had surrounded with elephants. This baby was about three feet high, and its capture was great fun.

The mahout's mates had dismounted, and with several Meches, ropes in hand, tried to seize the baby; but the moment they got up to and tried to surround it, it would make a

charge, knock several of them over, and disperse all. Over and over again this was done; an hour or so passed, and the baby was still uncaught. At last some one got a noose over its neck, and for the moment it was a captive; but twenty men could not hold it, it was too powerful for them, and breaking loose, though with the rope still round it, it again charged and put to flight its would-be capturers. It was not that these men were devoid of pluck or strength, simply that the baby was too strong for them, and the rough ground and stiff grass gave them but poor foothold, and they were constantly falling or being knocked over. There was no vice in the baby's charges, it was heavy and clumsy in its movements, and seemed to knock people over with no intention of damaging them. After a long time it was overpowered and dragged to the nearest Mech village for the night, and on to our camp the next day. In camp Meches made a small bamboo stockade just big enough for him to stand up in, but hardly enough to turn round in, so little room that it was impossible for it to charge the sides of the stockade. After being in it some twelve hours, it became very quiet, and allowed milk to be poured down its throat. This was done constantly, and in little more than a day and a half it came out of its stockade to all intents and purposes a tame animal. The sudden way in which all its natural wildness vanished and it took peacefully to domesticated life was very astonishing. I kept it with me after this for a few weeks before sending it on to Durbhangah, a long journey, and during this time it followed me about like a dog, going out walking with me, and always keeping well to heel. I noticed that it was an intensely nervous beast—a falling and rattling near it, the slightest bark of a parish, or any other noise, would make it rush forward at my legs, and more than once it threw me down. Its big ears were constantly raised and seemed on the go for sounds, and its rushes at me looked as if it came for protection, though, if so, it found me a poor support! This nervousness was peculiar to it as long as it lived. I have noticed it in other rhinoceros in captivity, and from my observations in the jungles I think it is common to all its species, and that the so-called rhino charge is merely the blundering rush of a heavily startled animal, who, when rushing, uses all its strength to clear obstacles out of its path.

This baby reached Durbhangah safely, was made a great pet of by the maharajah, and lived for some months, dying, I believe, through injudicious feeding (sour milk or some such thing) on the part of its keepers. I may here mention that the Assamese used to tame rhinoceros, and occasionally employ them as beasts of burden. I have seen a dikhoy or washerman who used a rhinoceros to carry the clothes he had to wash to and from his house to the river where he washed them.

To return to the shooting party, by the time the baby was caught it was getting late, so we had luncheon, which we always carried with us, and after a little more shooting we started for camp, having many miles to cover before we reached it. We had killed seven rhinoceros and caught one baby of that species, so the whole of the Mech population in those parts were provided with many days' feast on their favourite food. Metcalf had also shot a particularly fine old black bear, measuring from heel of hind foot to tip of snout over eight feet, and we had also got some sambar, the largest of Indian deer, and some grand antlers among them, a very good day's bag. Those shooting luncheons are not to be forgotten. If we halted for them in open country we had a

small tent, which was rapidly pitched by some of the servants, or if trees were available we sat under the shade of one. In a few moments a good luncheon would be spread before us, all that you could wish for to eat or drink, and ice was never forgotten. As a rule, by the time you got your luncheon you had enjoyed good sport and were satisfied with yourself and the world at large. You had a good healthy appetite, pleasant companionship, and the anticipation of the big game you were to come across as soon as you remounted your howda elephant. Nothing could be more pleasant!

As the jungle we had to pass through on our way to camp was such that you might at any moment come across big game, we stuck to our howdas and did not get on to the Howda elephants. The sun set as we jogged along, and night came quickly on us. The howda elephants kept close together, the beating elephants following in a crowd a little distance behind. On most of them were seated Meches, getting a lift to their homes which we would pass, and all the Meches were carrying with them huge pieces of rhino-flesh.

It was almost quite dark when we in the howdas passed a Mech village on the side of a small river, running between very steep deep banks. Slowly, cautiously, and with some little difficulty, our howda elephants slithered down the almost perpendicular bank, crossed the river, and climbed up the equally steep opposite bank. Just as we got to the top of this bank, the beating elephants arrived at the Mech hamlet, but, near as they were to us, the darkness and intervening trees prevented us seeing them. Suddenly a tremendous noise sprang up from where they were. Some eighty or ninety mahouts were there, began to shout and call in the most excited and confused manner, and what was the hubbub that broke on the stillness of the night. Pandemonium seemed to be let loose. We pulled up to find out what was wrong, but, amid the babel of sound, it was at first difficult to distinguish what was called out. At last we heard that Sultan, one of the largest of the elephants, a magnificent beast, had gone mad, had killed his mahout, and was attacking the other elephants, and that a general stampede was taking place, the other elephants flying in all directions. There came shouts that Sultan was crossing the river to attack the howda elephants, and excited mahouts from the opposite bank called loudly to our mahouts by name to get the howda elephants out of the way and to hurry them to camp, which was not far off. Our elephants were now in a very excited state, they seemed to understand what was up, and it needed little persuasion to make them fly along the homeward road as fast as they could in all directions.

A mast, or temporarily mad elephant, is no joke, and if Sultan, a most powerful, grand elephant, was really mad, and coming after us in the dark, our position was one of much danger; and eagerly, rifles in hand, we strained our eyes in the darkness to see if he was following. Shouts assured us that he was, but we could not see him. We had an exciting run to camp; the pace the elephants were shuffling along at, jolting so much, was such that it was difficult to stand in them. However, so far as we were concerned the excitement was all about nothing, and if Sultan did follow us, he soon gave it up, and we got safely to camp. Later on in the night we heard what all the row really was, and it was a sad ending to a good day's sport.

Sultan, at all times a difficult animal to manage, used to get very angry when attacked by rhinoceros, and he was coming back to camp, but he had excited after the day's work. It

mahouts were all tired and anxious to get home, and the fact of their hurrying their elephants along close together on the home-ward route, made him very troublesome, and his mahout had much difficulty in controlling him. Seeing this, the mahout should have got him out of the crowd and brought him slowly home, alone; but mahouts are a reckless lot, and impatient to be in camp, and this man took no precautions. He had allowed a Meech, who happened to live in the small village on the river bank, to ride on Sultan's guddy, and the Meech had with him an immense bit of rhinoceros flesh. On reaching the village this Meech called to his brother, who came out of one of the huts and rashly stood right in front of Sultan, and the big bit of rhino-flesh was thrown over Sultan's head to him. I think it is highly probable that Sultan's mahout at the moment was not in his place on his elephant's

neck, but had jumped off, as mahouts will when coming to a village after a long day's work, to get a drink, otherwise it is hardly likely he would have allowed a big bit of raw meat to be thrown over his excited elephant's head, right at its feet. Of course, he swore he had never left his elephant, and did not notice the meat being thrown. Any way, thrown the mass of raw flesh was, and landed with a thud before him. This was more than Sultan could stand. As the meat fell the other Meech stooped down to pick it up, and in a second Sultan was on him, knelt on him, and killed him instantaneously. Sultan had had too much excitement that day, and went mad. Having killed the Meech, he attacked the other elephants, many of whose mahouts had left their seats, and then began the shouting and confusion we had heard. Luckily Sultan did no more mischief, and his mahout was able to bring him into

camp. Starting the next morning, without shouting we passed through this little village, and there by the side of a tree, on a charpoy or common native bed, lay the body of the poor young Meech, with his widow and other female relations weeping and wailing loudly, after their custom, by his side. It was a sad sight; but the dead man and his brother were chiefly to blame for the accident, for Meeches are accustomed to elephants, and, knowing their habits, he should not have stood in the way he did, right in front of an elephant who was excited and hot after a day's shooting. It is needless to say that the widow was well provided for and the mahout punished.

This account gives a fair description of a day's rhinoceros shooting. It falls to the lot of few to come in for such sport, but if any of my readers have, they will, I am sure, agree with me that it is most exciting.

HELPS BY THE WAY.

II.—PARIS SCHOOLS.

By J. S. MAINGK.



The dress of the boys at l'Ecole Monge.

December 4, Saint Barbara's Day, on which day the school named after this saint was opened in 1486.

The great feature of French schooling is the earliest system of cross-questioning the boys of every class, on every subject studied. There are as many as forty to fifty "interrogateurs" or ostenticians at each of these head schools.

The expressions "faire un cours" for teaching, and "mettre un cours" for learning, date from the fourteenth century, when the masters merely read the lessons and the pupils listened. Had it not been for the catechism which followed, little would have resulted from such a mild form of instruction.

Both Sainte-Barbe and l'Ecole Monge, like the Lycées and the municipal schools, prepare for the B.A. degree and for entrance into the military schools (Saint-Cyr and the Polytechnique), the Central Government School of Arts and Manufactures, the Naval Cadet School, the Mining School, the School of Forestry, the Agricultural Institution, and l'Ecole Normale, for educating Government teachers; that is to say, for the final step in life before entering a career.

Of the Lycées, the first in rank is the Lycée Louis le Grand, which was once the great Jesuit school, first known as le Collège Clermont, later as l'Ecole Louis le Grand.

After receiving many different names during the Revolution and the Empire, it is now called as above. Of course it has been rebuilt and enlarged, and now there is a preparatory school attached to it, in the Rue

Auguste Comte, the Lycée being on the old site in the Rue Saint-Jacques.

There are four divisions of a Lycée: the upper, for boys from 14-20, of the classes for rhetoric, philosophy, and mathematics; the second, of boys from 14-16, of the third and second classes; the third division, of boys from 12-14, and of the fourth class; and the last division, of boys from 6-12, of the Petit Lycée, of the eighth, seventh, sixth, and fifth classes.

Gymnastic exercises are obligatory for all.

The chief municipal schools, splendid edifices, in which vast sums have been expended by the city of Paris, are the Collège Chaptal, and the schools known by the names Turgot, Colbert, Lavoisier, Jean-Baptiste Say, Arago, etc. There are boarders; but they are principally schools for day-boarders, a great many of whom are free scholars who have obtained the privilege of a free schooling by passing an examination in diction, geometry, arithmetic, history, geography, composition, and drawing.

Boys are prepared in these schools for the military and higher civil-service schools, but especially for the School of Arts and Manufactures, and for commercial life.

The course of study for the B.A. degree is six years, the seventh year completes the studies for the military and other high schools before mentioned.

A special feature of these schools is the series of visits made annually in July, under duly appointed specialities, to the great manufacturing, mining, and industrial establishments of Paris and the faubourgs.

But the great school of France have always been at Paris, and even there are not numerous. There are two schools in Paris which must interest English boys, one, a very ancient school, Sainte-Barbe, on the Fauchon Square, adjoining the celebrated library of Sainte-Genevieve, under the rector (Chanoine); the other, l'Ecole Monge, founded in 1816. Both these schools belong to shareholders, Sainte-Barbe belonging to old students and holders, l'Ecole Monge belonging to former pupils of l'Ecole Polytechnique.

Both schools are in buildings of modern construction, replete with every requirement; in both schools there are several hundreds of day scholars besides the boarders.

Lessons are from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., except on Thursdays, which is a half-holiday. This is the same at all the schools of Paris. Sundays are spent at home or with friends of the parents, by all boys who have not fallen into disgrace. The great punishment of all the schools is the withholding of the right of "serie" on Sundays and holidays.

The rules at the schools in Paris are very strict as to reading-books. None are permitted but those passed by the master on a boy's admission. Any attempt at smuggling forbidden books into a school leads to dismissal. At Sainte-Barbe, and at l'Ecole Monge, athletics, swimming, fencing, and many exercises, fill up the Thursday afternoons and free hours for recreation.

Both schools give great facilities for riding-lessons. Over a hundred boys go to the riding-school near l'Ecole Monge every day. The dress of this school have a moving club, and a football and lawn tennis club.

Cricket has not yet been "en vogue" in France. A number of illustrious men, politicians, and generals, have been educated at Sainte-Barbe; a few of those, whose names are familiar to boys, may be mentioned: Tourg, Olivier, Soussier, Eiffel, and Bertrand the mathematician.

Sainte-Barbe has a preparatory school called Petite Sainte-Barbe, at Fontenay-aux-Roses, a pretty name for a pretty spot a little east of Paris.

The great holiday of the boys of Sainte-Barbe is

December 4, Saint Barbara's Day, on which day the school named after this saint was opened in 1486.

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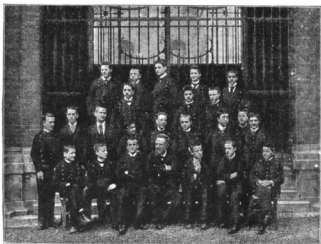
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Group of Sainte-Barbe school, Paris.