

Xmas 1932.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

An old writer apologising to his readers for a lengthy essay says "I seek to be short, howsoever my subject causeth me to be voluminous". Mr. Chairman mine is a like predicament - however as I see that one who signs himself "Observer" has in the school magazine proffered advice to those taking part in Prize Distributions, this advice runs "Pray ye be short good friends, the time is precious" it behoves me in presenting to you my fourth Annual Report to be as brief as my subject will allow me.

The School Year commenced with 510 pupils, 257 girls, 253 boys. We have an exceptionally large number - 70 - of post-matriculants who are continuing their education in the various Sixth Forms. In addition to the usual two-year Higher School Courses in Arts, Science and Commerce, we have a one year Commercial Sixth taking Spanish, French, English, Economics, Geography, Economic History, Accounting, Typewriting and Shorthand as the principal subjects of its curriculum. The school Authorities have under consideration the granting of a Certificate of Merit to those students who complete the year's course and who reach a minimum standard of efficiency. The object of this course is to equip adequately those of our pupils who when they leave us intend entering upon business or commercial careers. As this is a post-general schools or matriculation course, there is no ground for the fear that the minimum academic standard of this school will be lowered. Apropos this point one Old Boy writing to me recently said "I cannot say how very happy I was to read of the magnificent results of the school this year. I do hope that the success of the School Commercial Certificate does not mean that any credence is being given to the pernicious doctrine that one's education should be directed to obtaining the greatest possible monetary return in the shortest possible time after leaving school. I hereby pay my tribute to the firm educational foundation laid at Southgate. I have found that the broad general and scientific training I received of tremendous value although its

potential usefulness was not apparent when I was at school. After giving his latest examination successes, he finishes thus:- "As on previous occasions I should like to share my good fortune and enclose Postal Order for the Memorial Scholarship Fund". The writer of this letter, whose name I will not divulge at present, is one of the school's most successful sons and the foundation of that successful career was laid during my predecessor's regime. I have said before, and I now repeat my firm conviction that the high academic status of this school amongst the Secondary Schools of Middlesex is due mainly to the devoted and indefatigable labours of Mr. Warren during the 22 years that he was Headmaster of this school. When the history of Middlesex Secondary Schools is written, I predict that he will go down to posterity as "Warren of Southgate".

Briefly I will pass in review our academic record for this year. The official list of results for General School and Matriculation Examinations issued by the University of London shows 383 schools examined. Southgate County School with 65 Matriculation successes is second in England and Wales to a school with a roll of over 700 boys, which school has 66 successes. As this school has fifty per cent more scholars than we have, on a percentage basis we are easily first. For the whole of the School Year 1931-32, 67 candidates were successful in Matriculation. This constitutes a record for this school. In June 1932 113 candidates were presented for the General School Examination. 106 passed and there were 7 failures. Thirteen gained Honours, 9 boys and 4 girls; there were 104 Distinctions; the pupil with the largest number of Distinctions was A. V. Austen - 5 Distinctions plus a Special Credit - French, Mathematics, Mechanics, Physics, Chemistry and Oral French. 42 out of 65, that is 65%, gained Matriculation Certificates at the end of a four years course. For the Higher School Certificate 12 candidates

were presented, 11 passed. In Group (B) Arts Barbara Medhurst and Joan Philpot both gained Higher School Certificates, in addition Barbara Medhurst passed in Intermediate Arts. In Group D (Science) Joan Ennals, Dorothea Motley, R.P.Dell, O. J. Lawton, J. M. Naish, N. Spoor and T.H.Mobbs were successful in both Higher School and Intermediate Science. Distinctions in Applied Mathematics were obtained by Dorothea Motley and T. H. Mobbs and in Pure Mathematics by Dorothea Motley. In Group E (Commerce) Marjorie Jackson and A.E.Foster passed the Higher School, Marjorie Jackson also passing Part 2 of Intermediate Commerce.

H. J. Hobbs in passing 13th in the Examination for Air Force Cadets at Cranwell College, was a pioneer in this branch of His Majesty's Forces, so far as this school is concerned.

Recent Scholarships gained. (1) State Scholarship awarded by the Board of Education to Dorothea Motley; (2) Drapers Scholarship awarded by the University of London to Dorothea Motley; (3) Royal College of Science Entrance Scholarship won by J.M.Naish; (4) Exhibition to East London College gained by T. H. Mobbs.

The list of pupils who have gone from the school during the year to pursue higher studies is given on the back page of your programme together with the list so far complete as we have been able to make it of the successes gained by Old Pupils during 1931-32. I hope Old Pupils will allow me without in any way wishing to detract from their achievements to draw your attention to the successes of F.J.S.Gowar, B. L. Richards, S.H.Jarvis and K.E.Lauder. I think the time is rapidly approaching when on one of the evenings of our Prize Distribution we should invite distinguished alumni of this school to distribute our Prizes.

Now to that which makes a school, namely its corporate life.

Sports and Games. I may say without any fear of contradiction that we have never made a fetish of games and sports; they have been of secondary importance. Work has always had precedence and very few of our pupils past or present could have merited a rebuke similar to that given by Herbert Spencer to the young man who beat him at billiards - you remember the story - the philosopher who was very fond of an occasional game of billiards challenged a youthful billiard marker to 100 up. Spencer started off and broke down after making quite a small break; the youth took up the cue and ran out with an unfinished break of 100. Putting down his cue Spencer solemnly addressed the youth thus:- "A certain degree of facility in games of skill is a pleasant and desirable accomplishment but young man, such facility as you have displayed this evening is evidence of a mis-spent youth". In Cricket, Football, Tennis, Hockey, Netball, the school teams generally acquitted themselves adequately and occasionally with distinction. The first eleven cricketers did not lose a single match against rival schools but had to accept defeat at the hands of the Old Boys. The first eleven footballers also had a successful season; the outstanding event of the Tennis Season was the totanic struggle we had with our Minchenden friends for the Fairfield Rose Bowl. We congratulate the Minchendenians on their victory. In swimming the boys this year have made distinct advances and were unluckily to miss the Junior Shield at Wood Green, but for two or three years now the girls have carried off the laurels for swimming. The senior team won the North Middlesex Secondary Schools Shield at Wood Green and later, at the combined North and South Middlesex Swimming Gala at Westminster they were placed first in all Middlesex. The Victor Natationis Cup was awarded to Grace Baldwin. With regard to Athletics, W. Slate now holds four records - the Junior High Jump (Inter-School Stamford Bridge 1931) with 5'1"; the School Junior High Jump (Open) 1932 with 5'2"; the Junior Long Jump 1931 with 17'1"; and the High Jump (Open) 1932 with 5'5". Joint winners of the Victor Ludorum Cup 1932 were

H. J. Hobbs and K. Lovell; the A. T. Warren Challenge Cup for exemplary work in School Games (Cricket and Football) was awarded to S.F.Ingle. Winner of the Junior Cup, L. Paget; winner of the Old Boys Half Mile J.G.Stubbs. In the girls section Cups for the Championship of their respective group were won by Eileen Flowers, Thelma Tagg, Alice Hagger and Betty Fraser. Our best thanks are due to Miss Simmonds and to Mr. Wardhaugh for their efficient organization of the school athletic sports. Before leaving the physical side of our education, may I remind our Governors that we have three urgent material needs. (1) A properly equipped Pavilion; Hard Tennis Courts on our own Playing Fields; (weeks on end our grass courts are unplayable at the beginning of the season); (3) a Gymnasium.

The various school societies have continued to make progress. The Verse Speaking Choir were awarded the first prize and silver cup but the Dramatic Society's greatest triumph has been their admirable production of Bernard Shaw's "Arms and the Man" early this month. Our very best thanks are particularly due to the skilful coaching and indefatigable enthusiasm of Mrs. Polishuk. The profits from the play, which go to the Memorial Scholarship Fund were £19.6.9d.

The Orchestral Society. Under the leadership of Mr. Smith the orchestra continues to render the school very valuable service.

The Second Annual Inter-House Musical Competition for the S. B. Walter Gay Challenge Cup adjudicated by Mr. Eustace St.George Pett was a very enjoyable event. This year the combined Black and Green Houses hold the Cup with 398 points out of a possible 500. The Blues, Whites and Reds were next in order with 394, 379, and 370 points respectively.

The Operatic Society in March produced Gilbert & Sullivan's Gondoliers and made a net profit of £93. The present amount of the Memorial Scholarship Fund is approximately £474. Next March the Society hopes to present the comic opera Pirates of Penzance - March 28th, 29th, 31st and April 1st. In passing I should like to pay

a tribute to the splendid work put in for the operatic society by our Producer, Mr. Knowles.

The chief excursions of the year have been those organized by Miss Slee last Easter when a party of senior girls visited Wells for the purpose of conducting a botanical survey of the district; and the Northern Capitals Cruise arranged by Mr. Knowles. I may mention here that Herr Salewsky is very anxious that we should arrange another interchange with the Oberrealschule, Berlin-Steglitz, for next summer.

The Year 1931-32 has seen the re-organization of the Old Boys Society which in recent years had been languishing mainly, I fear, owing to the apathy of its members. That is now a thing of the past. The Society has now, thanks mainly to the enthusiasm and energy of its Treasurer, Mr. J. Jeffrey, its Secretary, Mr. C. Dean, and its Chairman, Mr. Allen, taken on a new lease of life. An ambitious programme of work has been mapped out including the purchase of a fully equipped Sports Ground to accommodate all the activities of both the Old Boys and Old Girls Clubs. 60 new members have joined this year and in addition several members who had allowed their subscription to fall into serious arrears have rejoined and there is an active membership of 250 including 5 Life Members. The Old Boys Cricket Club - formerly a separate body - has joined forces with the parent society. The Football Club has been re-formed and is running two elevens in the secondary schools O.B. League. At the present time the first eleven stands at the head of its division. The annual re-union of both societies took place on June 18th and the Old Boys Cricket Match and the Tennis Tournament, followed by a Flannel Dance, were all a great success both socially and financially. Attendance on Club nights this winter looks like setting up a new record. An Old Scholars Dramatic Society has been formed and will present a mystery thriller entitled "The Nine Forty-Five" in the School Hall on January 20th and 21st next. A full account of the activities of both societies will be found in the current school magazine.

Finally it remains for me to thank the Governors for the deep interest they take at all times in the welfare of the school. One recent instance of this was the visit of our friend, Mr. London, to unveil the tablet which commemorates the bequest of the late Mr. Richard Bell to the two secondary schools of Southgate. I am also particularly indebted to our Chairman - his encyclopaedic knowledge, wise counsel, and timely advice - have always been at my disposal. To every one of my colleagues of the Staff in particular to the Senior Mistress, Miss Barham, and the Senior Master, Mr. Auger and to my Secretary, Mrs. Long, my sincerest thanks for their splendid support and unswerving loyalty.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, there is always a temptation at these annual stock-takings to stress the tangible and easily assessable things of education, such as certificates gained, but the question of questions we schoolmasters ask of ourselves is "What type of pupils are we tending to produce as the result of our labours? What values have they? What standards? Not how many pupils can we squeeze through any particular examination in order to pander to the craze for record making and breaking. There is still too much Pedantocracy, mere book learning, about secondary education. We are cribbed, cabined and confined by our educational pastors and masters. Our examination methods are too procrustean; the victims - known as candidates - are laid in turn upon beds labelled French, Mathematics, Science, etc. and stretched - Yes! forcibly stretched at times to the requisite length; occasionally, very occasionally the victims are too long, in that case lopping off the superfluous length is necessary in order that they shall fit precisely. Now I think we have followed these educational precedents as long as they can be of use to us and now we must make precedents for those who are to succeed us. Here in this school we are moulding the destinies of 500 pupils, all individuals and all unique. First, last and always, we have to foster

character, secondly to train the mind and thirdly lastly and leastly to stock it with facts, meantime guarding against the mechanization and machine made standardization of the individual. Professor Spearman states that every normal child is a genius at something as well as an idiot at something. It is our obvious task to discover the "two somethings" in each of our pupils. I am afraid at times that we pedagogues believe we are cleverer at spotting the less desirable of the two qualities, but pleasantries aside Mr. Chairman, we do wish our pupils to guard their individuality, to keep it sacrosanct and inviolable against the assaults of all Procrustians - whether parent, parson or pedagogue - otherwise when their epitaphs come to be written they may be similar to that of the man on whose tombstone was engraved "Here lies - so-and-so - born to be a man, died a grocer". Or if grocer gives offence, I hasten to substitute, schoolmaster, because he allowed the demands of the material world to starve out his spiritual life.

In conclusion Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, our ideal for this school is "that somewhere within its walls, shall all that forwards perfect human life be started, tried, taught, advanced, visibly exhibited"; the profound difference between that ideal and our meagre achievement is the measure of our dissatisfaction.