

1934

Mr. Chairman,

In order that this Prize Giving may finish at a reasonable hour brevity is to be the order of the evening, therefore, as first speaker it behoves me in presenting to you my sixth Annual Report to show that example which is always better than precept.

The school roll in September was 547 compared with last September's 513 so that numerically at least we are a greater school. 141 pupils were admitted this year, a maximum number in history of the school and one which I hope will not be exceeded unless we are afforded more adequate accommodation. Room for the extra form has been supplied by fitting out as a form room (and a very good roomy room it makes) the larger part of our Sports Pavilion (alias Hut), but this has meant that the games people have lost three quarters of what was already inadequate accommodation for changing and washing. Our temporary transformation from a three form entry to a four form entry school may appear a simple operation on paper but in practice it leads to many difficulties and endless complications. I have already reported to my Governors that although it has been possible by careful planning to accommodate the extra form this year, it will be quite impossible, even with the best will in the world, to repeat the experiment of admitting four new forms next September.

The normal capacity of this school is that of a three form entry and even so, as I reminded our Chairman, Alderman Pinching, last year we are ill equipped. This Hall is woefully inadequate; in the matter of the Sports Pavilion we have had taken away even that which we thought we had; we have a book store masquerading as a library and which also serves as a form room; a gymnasium (nominal) which is also a public thoroughfare. Misquoting Pope's well-known couplet "Hope springs eternal in the schoolmaster's breast, He never is but always to be blest". However, I would ask you to reserve your judgment until after the Chairman's remarks when I hope he will outline the scheme the Governors are putting forward to the Middlesex Education Committee for a new school hall

Coming now to our academic record for the School Year 1933-34. We presented 98 candidates for the General School Examination; of these 87 passed, 11 failed, 4 gained Honours and 42 matriculation certificates. All the honours were on the boys' side of the school. The most brilliant individual performance was that of D. Dyer who gained distinctions in five subjects - Geography, French, German, Mathematics and Mechanics.

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In the five post-general school courses we run at this school, pride of place this year goes to the Arts Course. Four candidates sat for the Higher School Examination, all passed both the Higher School and the Intermediate B.A. Joan Carlton gained three distinctions, French, English and History. She has been awarded by the Board of Education a State Scholarship (value £80 for 3 years). This result alone more than restores the prestige of the girls' side of the school and I may add for the information of the boys that the last State Scholar of this school was also a girl - Dorothea Motley in 1932 - and that time it was in the Science Group - Pure and Applied Mathematics. Joan Carlton's success is all the more noteworthy as at the time of the Examination she was barely 17 years of age, too young chronologically at least - to proceed to the University this October and consequently the Board has agreed to postpone the taking up of the Award for a whole year. The three other candidates who gained Intermediate Bachelor of Arts, were Lena Chivers, Kathleen Codringley, and S. Godman.

In the Science Group 2 candidates were presented for the Higher School Examination - both passed. G. Bennett gaining in addition the Intermediate B.Sc, with distinctions in Pure and Applied Mathematics. In the Commerce Group there were no candidates presented this year for Higher School Certificate.

In the Specialist group the outstanding result was that of Lena Chivers who came out 75th out of 1179 candidates in the Executive Examination of the Civil Service. R. G. Bunyan passed the General Grade Clerkship of the L.C.C.

In our own one year Commercial group arranged for those who have passed General Schools and desire a course of training to enable them to enter commerce and industry and who cannot stay the two full years needed to qualify for the Higher School Certificate - the results were again satisfactory. Certificates of merit were gained by eight pupils; five candidates gained Pitman's Shorthand Speed Certificates for 50 and 60 words a minute and one for 80 words. I commend this course to those who really cannot stay the two full years. The curriculum is broad-based and liberal, and designed to lay the foundation of further studies in commercial and business subjects.

I would again like to urge upon the parents the desirability - nay the necessity - if their children are to derive the maximum benefit from their school days of contriving even at some personal sacrifice that their children shall stay at least one year, and if possible two, after they have passed the General Schools Examination. If all one gets from one's school career is a General School Certificate the paltry prize is hardly worth the cost. Of necessity the first four years of secondary school life is in the main taken up with formal tuition with the formation of habits of industry and of learning how to go on learning, but once having passed the General School and obtained a minimum bread and butter qualification then is the time for the student to decide which fields of knowledge are for him the most attractive, and whilst there is yet time to rescue his individuality (ego) from all be they parent, parson or pedagogue who would rigidly mould him after their own image. I sincerely believe that the most crying need of our time is for individuality. Few nowadays dare to be eccentric; there is too much standardization, mass production in modern life may pass in machinery but it is deadly in education. It will be a sad time when youth no longer believes in its power to set the world right and for this they will need more character than intelligence - if the present generation were half as clever in matters of the spirit as it is in matters intellectual and mechanical what a much better world this would be and what a much better heritage we should leave our children. My enthusiasm for keeping your children at school to develop their individuality has led me to this digression but I am sure that if a pupil leaves this school immediately after obtaining the General School Certificate, he misses the best we have to give him.

I omit reference to successes of Old Pupils for these may be found on the back page of your programme. I will make one exception - the case of F. J. S. Gowan who at the early age of 24 has gained the Blue Ribbon of the Medical Profession - Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons.

I now briefly deal with athletic sports and the games of the school by saying that ~~the-various-sports-and-games--~~ cricket football, swimming, hockey, netball and tennis teams have had fairly successful seasons. Detailed results are given in the current issue of the School Magazine. I would like to mention the generous gift of a handsome challenge cup for the Inter-House Hockey Matches which has been made by Mr. Poulton-Jones, in doing so I confess to an ulterior motive and that is that other parents may be persuaded to present similar trophies for the boys' side of the school and thus stimulate inter-house cricket and football. On the Physical side of our Education the most noteworthy advance of the year has been in the Boys' Gymnastics as those who were

present at the excellent display given by the boys on December 6th will agree. I congratulate the Sports Master, Mr. Fawcett, on the fine result of his first year's work here.

Coming next to the corporate life of the school. The Operatic Society has now to its credit five Gilbert & Sullivan operas and the Memorial Scholarship Fund has benefited to the extent of £413. 10. Od. as a result of their efforts. Our last production, the Yeomen of the Guard realized a net profit of £78. The present amount of the Memorial Scholarship Fund is £600. 11. 6d. £500 of which is invested in War Stock. April next year we hope to produce "Ruddigore". These annual productions are made possible by the enthusiasm and skill of our Producer, Mr. Knowles together with the excellent team work of practically the whole of the Staff. Every year just before the performance we say to ourselves "is this really worth while" "why not have a rest next year"? But when the production is over all doubts vanish and we begin at once to discuss our next opera.

The Dramatic Society under the enthusiastic guidance of Mrs. Pole has had a very successful year. At the Enfield Festival our senior girls carried off the Cup for Verse Speaking and the Second Form boys were awarded the "George Spicer" Cup.

The Inter-House Musical Competition (the fourth of the series) was adjudicated by Dr. Walker Robson and resulted in the White House retaining the "Walter Gay" Challenge Cup for a further year. This House obtained the high percentage of 92.

The Orchestral Society under the leadership of Mr. Smith has on many occasions during the year rendered valuable service. Assembly on Friday mornings is an additional joy to me as the presence of the Orchestra brightens up the singing - which by the way is quite hearty on ordinary school days but distinctly creditable on Fridays. If as I hope in our new Hall we have an organ installed then indeed I shall feel like singing my Nuncdimittis.

There is one school activity which I would like to bring to the notice of parents, this activity might be called the silent service by reason of its modest, retiring and yet withal effective nature, namely the School National Savings Association. During the last 8 years more than £360 has been saved by the pupils and over 400 certificates have been purchased. I would particularly commend this Association to the newcomers. Application should be made to the Secretary, Miss Jeans.

The chief excursions of the year have been three.

- (1) Party of girls who visited Harrogate at Easter in search of further knowledge of the French language. This party was organized by Miss House, Head of the French Department.
- (2) The third annual visit at Whitsuntide of senior girls under the leadership of Miss Slee to Wells for Field Botany. I have heard this called "a buttercup hunting party" but I suspect there is a tinge of professional jealousy in this somewhat disparaging description.
- (3) The visit of a party of boys under the leadership of Mr. Knowles and Mr. Fawcett to Denmark. I heartily commend these tours to the parents of boys as being of a highly educational value.

The Old Scholars' Association. In my last annual Report I foreshadowed the amalgamation of the Old Boys and Old Girls Associations. This is now an accomplished fact and the combined Association has now definitely crossed the Rubicon. By next mid-summer we confidently hope that the Association's new headquarters in Brackendale will be ready for occupancy. The old scholars are contracting to rent the ground from the Southgate Town Council for a period of 21 years, the Agreement has not yet received the final sanction of the full Council but it is hoped that early in the New Year the contract will be completed. In addition to a handsome pavilion, equipped with shower baths and ample changing facilities for both sexes, there will be 5 tennis courts, 2 of which are to be Hard, cricket, football and hockey pitches. The major share for

the credit of this forward policy is due to the Vice-President and the Secretary of the Old Boys' Association, Mr. J. R. Allen and Mr. Clifford Dean and here I would like to acknowledge my indebtedness to both of them. Both have been incorrigible optimists and indefatigable workers for the welfare of the Old Scholars Association. I would urge all Old Scholars who are not at present members of one of the sports sections to join up without delay. I mention in passing that the next production of the Old Scholars' Dramatic Society is "The Sport of Kings" and this is fixed for February next.

Parents & Staff Association. Once again we thank this Association for its generous support. Its latest gift is a substantial contribution towards the cost of a radio-gramophone installation. This will enable us to develop still further the aesthetic and recreational side of our education, particularly in the matter of affording opportunity for musical appreciation.

Finally I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to you Mr. Chairman, and to all the Governors for the keen interest you and they take in the school's welfare. For example quite recently Mr. County Councillor Grant secured for the school from the Library of the late Sir Thomas Lipton 150 volumes - these books are an additional reason why our request for an adequate library should be granted.

We welcome to our staff our new Master, Mr. Windross M.A. Cantab. who comes to us from Blackpool Grammar School. I have every confidence that his stay with us will be mutually beneficial.

No Report of mine would be complete without the expression of my grateful thanks to the Staff for their devoted and loyal co-operation in the task of maintaining the efficiency of this school. Of the Staff I can say unhesitatingly that its ideal is that everything done in this school should be done for the greater glory of the institution and not for the glorification of the individual. I would particularly thank the Senior Mistress, Miss Farham, the Senior Master, Mr. Auger, and the Headmaster's indispensable Secretary, Mrs. Long.

problem

The subject of Education has been tossed and tumbled by thousands of thinkers since the time of Plato and yet is unsolved. In fact it has to be solved anew by each generation. It is a web of Penelope, never ending, ever beginning. We have here no educational nostrum only the charlatan has that; no generalization can be made about things educational save that a generalization cannot be made. But this one particular statement is true for all time - that in matters educational the indispensable essential, far transcending palatial school buildings, expensive equipment, elaborate syllabuses, etc. is - the character, the attitude of mind, and the moral capacity of the teacher, for education is a process by means of which spirit influences spirit, heart moulds heart. The best thing a teacher has to give his pupils is inspiration and that is caught and not taught.