

1935

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have taken for my text in this my seventh Annual Report two sentences from Ecclesiasticus - "Let thy speech be short, comprehending much in few words"

1935 marks the Silver Jubilee of our school for this building was opened in 1910. From its inception the school was co-educational. The girls were transferred from Avondale Hall School, of which Miss Barham was Headmistress, and the boys from the school in Broomfield Park House where Mr. Warren had been Headmaster since May Day 1907. The union of these two schools became Southgate County School with Mr. Warren as Headmaster and Miss Barham as Senior Mistress. It is a far cry back to 1910 but my predecessor - who by devoted labour and masterly leadership built up the reputation for sound scholarship which this school enjoys, not only in this district, but in the County is I am happy to say still amongst us as vigorous and as active as in days of yore, and I take this opportunity of once again paying my sincere tribute to the magnificent work of a great Headmaster. Miss Barham whose invaluable work for, and beneficent influence on, several generations of Southgate County School girls is, I am pleased to say, still with us. Further - at the present time there are no less than seven members of the original staff of 1910 who are on the present staff. As I do not wish to get into trouble over this - one has to be so very careful in certain matters - I would refer those who wish to know which members of my staff are entitled to say "We are seven" to the front page of the current School Magazine. This record must be unique. There are others on the staff who narrowly miss this distinction. I feel there must be a lesson to be learned here and to me the lesson seems obvious enough. Headmaster No. 1 must have had attractive and redeeming qualities which he passed on to Headmaster No. 2.

On this occasion you will quite naturally expect me to jubilate a little, but in spite of much temptation I will stick to my text and be content with a few statistics of some of our scholastic achievements during the past twenty-five years.

Since 1910 have been gained:-

Well over one thousand General School Certificates; 850 Matriculation Certificates (beginning with 9 in 1910, 65 in 1932, and this year 54); 154 Higher School Certificates, 133 Intermediate Certificates in Science, Arts, Commerce and Medicine; 29 scholarships to Universities (London, Oxford Cambridge, including six State Scholarships). One point of outstanding significance brought home to me by these figures is the value of Matriculation to so many of our students. Over 30 per cent of those who took Matriculation at school have gone forward to higher work; 20 per cent to Degree Courses and 10 per cent found the matriculation of great value in enabling them to claim exemption from various preliminary professional examinations.

Old Scholars Successes (admittedly incomplete)

D.Sc. and Ph.D.'s 10; M.A.'s, M.Sc.'s, and M.Eng. 8; B.Sc's 71; B.A's 35; Research and other Scholarships 28;

Coming to the present year's results, General School 104 candidates were entered, 98 passed, 54 gained Matriculation Certificates in addition. Four were awarded General School in Honours. Of outstanding merit were - D. T. Jennings with four Distinctions, and Grace Hatcher with five Distinctions. In Geography Grace was awarded by the University of London one of the two Arthur Thomas Simmons Prizes of Two Guineas for the best work submitted by a boy and girl at the Midsummer Examination for the General School Certificate. There were 10,309 candidates who took Geography. This is the first time that this school has won this Distinction.

This seems to be the appropriate place to mention another of Grace's triumphs, that of winning for the school a portable "Gebescope" for silent and talkie films, valued at £95 and in addition five National Savings Certificates for herself. The Essay competition was organized by the Gaumont British Company, the subject being "How a Gebescope could help my studies". I regret that Grace in her essay appeared to disparage the particular subject which her Headmaster tries to teach her, but as a distinguished panel of Examiners decided that her Essay was the best out of 16,000 I am willing to forgive her and to agree with the school that for the year 1935 she has earned the title of "public benefactor No. 1."

In the Higher School Examination, five candidates passed in the Science Group, all gaining the Intermediate Bachelor of Science Certificate; two passed in Arts, one gaining Intermediate Bachelor of Arts Certificate; three passed in the Commerce Group, one gaining Intermediate Bachelor of Commerce. Our greatest individual academic achievements this year were those of G. W. Bennett and D. S. M. Davis; Bennett who gained two Distinctions (Pure and Applied Mathematics) in his Higher School Examination was awarded by the Board of Education a State Scholarship, now our 6th. This Scholarship carries a grant of £80 per annum for three years and is tenable at King's College, London. Early in the year Bennett won a Scholarship offered by the University of Hull of the value of Sixty Pounds per annum for three years but relinquished this in favour of his State Scholarship. D. S. M. Davis was awarded the Drapers' Science Scholarship equal in value to Bennett's and tenable at Queen Mary College, London.

Before passing on to the corporate activities of the school, I should like to impress upon parents the extreme desirability of letting their children stay at school as long as possible after their 16th birthday. I regret that there are some even who wish to take them away before the agreed minimum for schools of this type, which is the end of the term in which they reach their 16th birthday. A useful course for those who cannot stay for one of our three 2-year post-General School Courses in Arts, Science and Commerce, is our own Commercial Course, in which in addition to the usual subjects include Shorthand, Typewriting, Banking and Accounting. The whole course is designed for those pupils about to enter upon commercial or business careers.

Coming now to the corporate life of the school. On both the boys and girls sides of the school the Games are in a healthy condition. At last after many delays we are to have hot water facilities for washing in the boys and girls cloakrooms. Think of it! 25 years without a supply of hot water on these premises. However the past is dead; let us give thanks now for essentials (not mercies) about to be received. This improvement is the result of repeated requests made by the Parents and Staff Association, and our Governors to the Middlesex Education Committee. Another amenity we owe to our Governors is the Hard Tennis Courts we are to have next year in the extensive grounds of our cousins at Minchenden. I think that we now have as many trophies (sports) in the way of Cups as we can deal with. During the past year there were presented to the school the "Dyer" Inter-House Cricket trophy; the "Greenwood" Cricket Cup; and the "Ingle" Inter-House Football Cup. A former Governor of the School - the late Mr. S. B. Walter Gay - left a legacy of £10. to provide a Sports Trophy desiring at the same time that his name be associated with it as a friend and admirer of this school.

The Operatic Society continues its financially useful career. I can say no more than this in a Headmaster's Report but the writer of an article in the School Magazine is much more fulsome for he says "the Operatic Society continues its triumphant way and has added new laurels to its already glorious crown by the production of Ruddygore" which added to the Memorial Scholarship Fund £73. 5. 0. This fund now stands at £660; £600 of this is invested in War Stock, and over £100 has been awarded in recent years, from this fund, to scholars leaving to pursue courses in furtherance of their education. Next year we present Gilbert & Sullivan's Opera "H.M.S. Pinafore" and hope to make a bumper contribution of £100 to the Fund. Once again I wish to express my deep appreciation of the fine co-operative work put in by the members of this society, by the Staff, and most particularly by the producer, Mr. Knowles.

The Dramatic Society has again, thanks to the enthusiasm of their producer, Mrs. Pole, had a very successful year. The Enfield Musical Festival is their happy hunting ground and this year they entered 7 Drama Groups, 5 Choirs, and 8 soloists, and returned with the following spoils:- 2 Silver Cups, one won by the senior girls choir, the other by the senior dramatic group; (the Second Form Boys Choir missed a silver cup by one point); 1 silver medal for solo work, 2 bronze medals for solo work. Next year the Dramatic Society wishes to have the opportunity of taking the place of the Operatic Society in its annual effort to raise funds for the Memorial Scholarship Fund. We wish it success.

The Orchestral Society under the skilled leadership of Mr. Smith, should be complimented upon its contribution to the musical activities of the school. I again appeal to parents to encourage their musically-minded children to take up some musical instrument and to become makers of music rather than hearers only. I have store away in the Study, waiting for learners, an oboe, a flute, cello, and the promise of a double bass. Until very recently we had a corne presented by one of the members of the orchestra (F. Raffaelli) who will be leaving shortly, but this instrument was snapped up almost immediately. The Fifth Inter-House Musical Competition was this year adjudicated by Mr. F. C. Field-Hyde of the Royal Academy. The winning House was Red with 134½ points, the runner-up being Whites with 125½ points.

There were 2 excursions this year. 1. The Fourth annual visit at Whitsuntide of a party of senior girls under the leadership of Miss Slee to Wells for Field Botany. 2. The visit of a party of 33 senior boys to Grenoble and district in the South of France organized by Mr. Knowles who was accompanied by Mr. Paull and Mr. Fawcett. These international tours are of great educational value for as Bacon said several centuries ago, "travel, in the younger sort, is a part of education", and that only by contact and first hand knowledge can prejudices be slain and insularity eliminated. I would also strongly recommend to parents the fortnight's French holiday course to be held at Eastbourne next Easter for girls who are preparing for the General School Examination in June. The cost is £5. for the fortnight.

Old Scholars Association. In my last Report I used these words - "By next midsummer we confidently hope that the Association's new Headquarters in Broad Walk would be ready for occupancy. Our hopes have been disappointed, and unless the Town Council moves rapidly, the ground will scarcely be ready for us by midsummer 1936. Why this delay? I state facts, being too old a campaigner to dream of apportioning blame. Notwithstanding this set-back, the Old Scholars Association continues to flourish. Its Vice-President, Mr. J.R. Allen, and the Hon. Secretary, Clifford Dean, are as enthusiastic and indefatigable as ever, though wiser and somewhat sadder men. On behalf of the Old Scholars Association, I make an earnest appeal to Aldermen and Councillors present to use their best endeavours to expedite matters in connection with the ground in Broad Walk.

Owing to the Association having to vacate its present headquarters in the New Year, it will be without a ground and without headquarters unless the new ground in Broad Walk is ready. It would be a happy coincidence if the Jubilee Celebrations of the Old Scholars Association next year could be made to synchronize with the official opening of the new Pavilion.

Parents and Staff Association. I have to thank the officers of the Association for a gift of £10 to enable me to form the nucleus of a library of records to be used in conjunction with the radiogram they presented to the school last year. Good use has been made of the radiogram in the top part of the school and it is also used by a junior French set.

At the end of the Summer Term Mr. Thompson, our Art Master, and Mr. Bishop, Music Master, were transferred to Minchenden School. We were very sorry to part with them; our loss has been our neighbours gain. Mr. Thompson was one of the original staff appointed in 1910 and the record of his work here was a valuable one. Mr. Bishop was appointed in 1919 and his work was no whit less enthusiastic than that of his colleague. We welcomed in September Mr. J. Toplis who came to us from Sandown County School; he has a difficult role to fill for he is responsible for both Music and Art.

My best thanks I offer to our Chairman, Mr. County Council Robert Grant, and to the Governors of this school for their sympathetic support. Thanks to their united efforts the present school building in which we are cabined, cribbed, and confined, will before 1938 at latest be enlarged by the addition of - a large new Hall, Gymnasium with Changing Rooms, and Library. If all goes well! How dire is our need of these amenities you all know.

My warmest thanks to the members of my Staff for their ~~unswerving~~ loyalty to the School, and to myself, as Headmaster. I can say without fear of contradiction that we are a happy school and a happy staff - we have mutual confidence the one in the other. Particularly do I thank the Senior Mistress, Miss Barham, the Senior Master, Mr. Auger, and my Secretary, Mrs. Long. Also I would not omit to mention and to thank Margaret Bickmore, an old scholar, who has con amore given her services for the past year to help in the most over-worked department of the school - the Headmaster's Study.

Finally Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen it is in no spirit of self-satisfied complacency that I have presented to you this Report Schools may be divided into three classes - 1. retrogressive, 2. static, 3. progressive. Our record of the last 25 years shows quite definitely that we are not in class 1, but it does not entitle us to rest content otherwise we shall be in danger of finding ourselves in the second category. Rather do we prefer to make greater endeavours to achieve a still larger measure of success and so beyond a peradventure to be classed in the highest group of all the progressive.

December 1935.