

No Budget Evening Times 1939 Feb. 19.40

Madam Chairman, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We live in a time of rationing and you will be pleased to know that my 11th Annual Report will be severely cut down. In fact the speakers of this afternoon have all agreed to apply self-denying ordinance and to be content on this occasion with an iron ration of speech. I think there are three things you would like to know about the school. First what of the past? secondly what of the present? and thirdly what of the future?

WHAT OF THE PAST - say up to the beginning of last term when the catastrophe of catastrophes fell upon us - the War. Here are the Examination results of the last school year, which you will see are well up to previous standards both in the General School and Higher.

GENERAL SCHOOL EXAMINATION 100 candidates sat, 90 passed and 54 gained exemption from Matriculation.

HIGHER SCHOOL EXAMINATION 6 Science candidates entered 5 passed and three in addition gained the Intermediate B.Sc. certificate. Four Arts candidates entered, two passed and one in addition gained the Intermediate Bachelor of Arts Certificate. This year we did not pull off a State Scholarship but one of the senior prefects - D. G. Arnott won an equally valuable major Science Scholarship - the Wantage Scholarship tenable at Reading University for 3 years and of the value of £80 per annum. We heartily congratulate Arnott on his success and the members of the Science Staff for the indispensable help they gave to him.

WHAT OF THE CORPORATE LIFE OF THE SCHOOL? I have time only to mention the Operatic Society's production of "Iolanthe" the nett profit from which was £58. 2. 0d. This amount has been paid into the Memorial Scholarship Fund which now stands at £899. I am sure that the Producer, Mr. Knowles, is just as sorry as I am that owing to the war we are not producing our usual Gilbert & Sullivan opera this year.

WHAT OF OUR EXTENSIONS? Well we have definitely said goodbye to them for the duration and may be till the Greek Kalends. I expect you will be disappointed but I am saying nothing further on this subject. We have fought a good fight - the fates have been against us. Instead of the hoped for addition we have had subtraction, for our all too small Playing Field has been encroached upon for the necessary trench accommodation.

WHAT OF OUR OLD SCHOLARS? Their academic successes are recorded on the last page of your programme and the record is one of which we are very proud. You will also see from the School Magazine the names of 100 Old Boys now serving with H.M. Forces. The list is admittedly far from complete and in fact has largely been compiled by the help of the Old Boys themselves who have given me news when visiting the school. Almost daily I am torn between a feeling of pride and sorrow - pride as a schoolmaster of these Old Boys and sorrow as a responsible individual that in this Year of Grace 1940 it is still necessary for the nations to resort to the dreadful arbitrament of war. We have in this Hall a perpetual reminder in our Roll of Honour of the sacrificial price paid by 52 former members of this School in the war they hoped would end war and yet I firmly believe the message they would pass on to us from the shadows in no uncertain voice would be "you the task inherit the unfinished task to which we gave our lives!"

WHAT OF THE OLD SCHOLARS ASSOCIATION? This has been very sorely hit by the loss of many of its executive officers now away on active service. Those left behind are bravely keeping the old school flag flying and are anxiously waiting to know their fate at the hands of the Borough Council in respect of the rental of the Brackendale Ground. I am particularly grateful to Patrick O'Connor for his excellent work since he took over the combined office of secretary and treasurer.

WHAT OF THE PRESENT? - say since the beginning of the war. Education like truth is one of the first casualties in war and according to some of our papers Education in this country is in ruins. This is, of course, a language of exaggeration and in Southgate Education is very far from being in ruins; it certainly suffered a temporary eclipse or blackout but that lifted rapidly and had the mills of Middlesex not ground so exceedingly slow, far slower in fact than the mills mentioned by the poet Longfellow, we might have returned to normality in this area much sooner. First may I say we consider ourselves so far very fortunate not to have been evacuated. We have had our troubles and had to live in day tight compartments but we have had much to be thankful for. After the holiday I expected a family of some 480; instead my family suddenly increased to 870 - the highest in the county. This was largely owing to Southgate being in the midst of evacuable areas and we, therefore, had the great privilege of being the asylum (sanctuary or refuge) for several of the unevacuated portions of secondary schools in surrounding districts. I know the word asylum is a dangerous word to use and might be abused by an enemy propagandist. If, for example, Lord Haw Haw of Hamburg got hold of a press report of my speech we might hear over the wireless one evening "Germany calling - "disastrous result of the war on the youth of certain suburbs in Northern London Southgate County School turned into an asylum for 870 feeble minded boys and girls." Our school day up to Friday last began at 8.45 and ended at 4, working 11 sessions a week including Saturday morning. Not one of the 870 pupils came fewer than 6 sessions a week and the majority attended full time. By dint of almost superhuman labour a time-table was constructed to provide instruction for 600 at each of the 11 sessions, 600 being the limit of the A.R.P. accommodation. I wish here and now not only to pay tribute to my own staff but to the seconded staffs for their invaluable help, and not even Hitler himself could prevent me from naming two in particular Mr. Auger the senior master and Mrs. Long my secretary, whose labours I can only liken to the two people the one on the right hand and the

other on the left who helped up the heavy arms of the weary leader of Israel in Old Testament days. At half-term we said goodbye (or it may have been au revoir) to our guests from Glendale, Latymer, Tottenham County and Tottenham schools, who went back to their own schools, leaving us with an almost empty school - a mere 520 -our own plus Hornsey County and Hornsey High and transferred pupils.

WHAT OF THE FUTURE? Well the future will be no better than the past unless we alter our ways. I refer, of course, to the future of Education. The Dean of St. Pauls over the air a few weeks ago gave us a magnificently true phrase. It was "Man is a splendid failure". Both the adjective splendid and the noun failure are equally true but it is not the splendour of the achievement in such things as material science and the conquest of nature that we are conscious of to-day but the dismal failure of moral and spiritual leadership which has plunged us for the second time in the present century into War. The only agency that can change the word failure into the word success so that the phrase would read "Man is a splendid success" is Education - not the lop-sided fractional education known to us to-day but a broader, deeper and fuller education of the WHOLE MAN and not merely for one third of man, and that the least important third - his intellect. This educational gospel will not come out of a department at Whitehall presided over by a second rate politician en route to a higher Cabinet Post. It will be a task taxing to the utmost the abilities of the best "allrounders" we can find in the British Isles and I am not certain that but that their best war service would be done if such a group of men were confined to a concentration camp for the duration and ordered to hammer out a philosophy of Education suitable to our national genius. One thing would soon become crystal clear to them. They would know what to avoid like poison - the German method of Education. I know that it is easy for us to see where the Germans have gone wrong; easy to see the terrible weapon of destruction that the Nazi leaders have forged in their 6,000,000 fanatically devoted but utterly mal-educated Hitler Youths - who are the spearhead of the German Army. I think Hitler's greatest crime is that he has perverted the idealism and enthusiasm of a whole generation of German Youth to base and inglorious purposes.

I am afraid my iron ration of speech has been exceeded, in fact you may say I have helped myself to a supplementary ration.

February 1940.