

Mr Walton

Madam Chairman, ~~Sir Frederick Mander~~, Ladies & Gentlemen, School,

Without wishing in any way to steal the Chairman's thunder I would wish to extend a cordial welcome on behalf of the staff and school to our distinguished guests of this Speech Day. To you Madam Chairman, to the Governors, to Mr. and Mrs. Walton, to the parents, to old scholars home on leave from the Forces and most particularly to our guest and principal speaker, Sir Frederick Mander. Sir Frederick is a man after my own heart, an apostle of the gospel of Education. Some time ago I heard him give what to me is the most aptly summarised objective of Education in the following words:- "It is to get the best possible teachers in contact with the greatest possible number of children in the best possible schools for the longest possible time." It is because I believe that Sir Frederick has the cause of education as a burning fire shut up in his bones that I ask you to give him a specially warm greeting this afternoon.

With the noble words of the hymn uppermost in my mind I feel it is incumbent upon me before presenting my report to make a reference to the part played by the Old Boys in this war. The most sacred thing in this Hall is the Roll of Honour behind me on which is inscribed the names of 52 former members of the school who gave their lives in the first great World War - the war to end war. Now we are in the midst of World War No. 2 which we fervently hope will end in a peace which will end war and it may if we are prepared for justice. Year by year since 1918 we, as a school, on November 11th remember their lives cut short, remember their sacrifices, sufferings and render our thanks to the gallant dead. The school record shows that in the present war 32 Old Boys have made the supreme sacrifice and 3 are scheduled as "missing". For myself I cannot say with conviction in the words of Hilton - "Nothing is here for tears and nothing to wail, nothing but well and fair and what may quiet us in a death so noble" but we can hereby resolve with Lawrence and Binyon to say "They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old, age shall not weary them nor years condemn at the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them."

It is fitting whilst dealing with the Old Scholars' deeds to call to mind that a year ago there passed away the first Headmaster of this school - Mr. A. T. Warren. It is now more than 14 years since my predecessor retired but the passage of time has not lessened my admiration for the outstanding service that he rendered to the Southgate of his day. He achieved the highest award of his calling - the only award worthy of coveting by a schoolmaster - the respect and love of his colleagues and pupils. Praise is well, compliment is well, but affection is the final and most precious reward that any man can win whether by character or by achievement. No memorial graven in stone is needed for there lives an unwritten memorial enshrined in the hearts and woven into the very fabric of the lives of those who came under his beneficent influence. His work continueth broad and deep great beyond our knowing.

The last time I had the honour of presenting a report was in February 1940, some six months after the outbreak of war. I then said that we had an attendance of 870 in a school scheduled to accommodate half that number. We and our cousins at Minchenden were at that time "educational islands of refuge" for the victims left behind stranded on the shore after the 1939 evacuation floods had subsided. The numbers in the school even now are unmanageably large - some 580 - but that is the Headmaster's fault who persists in playing the self-appointed role of the educational Dr. Barnardo of the district, pursuing a policy of the ever open door. No educational orphan is ever turned away or passed on to another school if the Headmaster can possibly find room here. However, I do not think his philanthropy is unadulterated altruism, for on occasion he has thereby entertained angels unawares.

Our crying need is lebensraum and more lebensraum. To give you some idea of the density of our population, 13 out of the 19 forms are over the maximum allowed by the Board of Education for secondary schools and with 580 pupils housed in less than 4 acres of buildings and playing fields works out at a density of 92,600 to the square mile. You may well ask why does the Headmaster do these things. The answer is that he is a believer in education. The Education Act of 1902 gave 10% of our children the opportunity of secondary education. The White Paper of Mr. Butler if and when it becomes an Act of Parliament will give for the first time in this nation's history secondary school education for 100%. It will be the biggest step forward in State Education since 1870. Who knows what talent, nay what genius this country has wasted through allowing school education to stop at 14 - the point where knowledge begins to exercise its fascination (I hope the school supports me here). For the future we must see to it that full many a flower is not born to blush unseen and waste its sweetness on the desert air. Some one may ask can we afford it? T. H. Huxley, the grandfather of Aldous and Julian who knew a thing or two about Education long ago said I weigh my words when I say that if the nation could purchase a potential Watt, or Davy, or Faraday at the cost of £100,000 down he would be dirt cheap at the money. I hope the new secondary education will be a many-splendoured thing - the education of the whole individual - body, mind and spirit an improvement on the present pale faced academic education too sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.

I do not have to be a thought reader to know what some of the Governors are thinking at this moment. Yes we know what is coming next - Mr. Dick is coming on to his King Charles' head - the School Extensions never materialized, but they are wrong. All I will say is that in 1939 we had faith, hope and charity; now in 1943 charity only is left. Yet this is not so desolate a conclusion as would appear for are we not told that charity is the greatest of these three.

On their own merits modest schools are dumb - with the single exception of Speech Day when by a prescriptive license Headmasters are expected to chanticleer somewhat. But none knows better than he that his school's efficiency is a curate's-egg efficiency, that is good in parts and it is these parts that he offers to the public. In any case my report cannot be comprehensive and perforce has to be selective.

In a review of the past year's work I am expected and rightly expected to give pride of place to Examination results. I am one of the diehards who see a real educational value in examinations and the proposal of the Norwood Report ultimately to abolish rather than reform the School Certificate Examination seems to me likely to do more harm than good. Rather would I rationalize and broaden the subject basis and humanize the examiners. No internal certificate granted by the school itself would carry the hall-mark of efficiency in the eyes of employers as that of an independent examining body. The great merit of the General School Examination is that it does away with a welter of Preliminary Examinations which in the past was demanded by for example, the medical, the dental, the pharmaceutical and other professional bodies who were willing to accept it in lieu of their own preliminary examinations but they would not be willing to accept an internally granted leaving certificate and we should be thrown back to the bad old days when our Sixth Forms were divided into several sets, each set working on different examination syllabuses for different examining bodies. Much better to keep the Aaron's Rod that swallowed up the other obnoxious creatures.

GENERAL SCHOOL EXAMINATION RESULTS. 98 pupils sat and 85 passed; 34 gained exemption from Matriculation. 77% of the 85 who passed took the examination after a four year course. I am often criticised in condensing a 5 year course into 4 years but there is method in the madness, more method I may say than madness for over and over again I have seen more educational development in the 5th year in one of our Sixth Forms than in the whole of the preceding 4 years. For several years now I have not encouraged those who have passed the General School Examination to repeat the examination in order to qualify in the indispensable subjects required by Matriculation unless there was a genuine need such as entering upon a degree course at the University. Further it is not generally known that a General School result may, in some cases, be a much better performance than a Matriculation. The success of this policy of not dawdling through the General School course and getting on to higher work as soon as possible is shown I think in the fact that this year's Higher School results are quantitatively the best in the school's history and include successes in Science, Arts and Commerce.

HIGHER SCHOOL EXAMINATION RESULTS. 18 candidates sat and there were 100% passes. Of the 18 who passed 11 obtained Exemption from one or other of the Intermediate Examinations; 9 qualified for Intermediate B.Sc., 1 for Intermediate B.A., and 1 for Intermediate Bachelor of Commerce.

EXHIBITION. In the Inter-Collegiate Examination of the University of London held in March this year, D. M. Hill won an open Exhibition - £40 per annum for 3 years tenable at the London School of Economics. Of the Examination results I would say this only; we are accustomed to expect much from those to whom much has been given but it comes as a pleasant surprise when more than much is forthcoming from those to whom little has been given. Before I leave this subject, I would like to point out the exceptional variety of opportunity there is in our Post-General School work. For those who are able to stay one year only they may choose any one of the following:- (1) Commerce leading to our own Commercial Certificate, the subjects including Shorthand, Typewriting Accounting and Banking, Economics; (2) One year course either in a Science Sixth or an Arts Sixth; (3) One year in the Biology Sixth; Domestic Science and Nursing Course As the Pre-Nursing course is new, it may be advisable to give one or two details of the course. It is for Girls who have passed the General School Certificate; the subjects include Biology and Chemistry as well as General Form subjects and in addition lectures in Physiology and Anatomy given by a Sister Tutor at the hospital. This course prepares for Part 1 of the State Preliminary Examination for Nurses and is recommended for the consideration of all girls who feel drawn to take up this useful profession. For those staying 2 years there are:- the Higher School courses in Science, Arts and Commerce; the Science course covers preparation for Agriculture, Biology, Veterinary, Surgery, Medicine, Dental, Research work in Physics and Chemistry. In recent years students have qualified for all the above-mentioned careers from the school.

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF SCHOOL LIFE. The war has presented the two Southgate Secondary Schools with opportunities of co-operation which the two Headmasters eagerly embraced for there is no petty rivalry between us; the two schools mutually provoke each other to good works. I call to mind two outstanding examples of co-operation - the A.T.C. and S.A.M.Y.O. By February the A.T.C. of the two Secondary Schools Squadron 973 will have completed three years excellent work and great credit is due to those members of the staffs of both schools who have served as Officers and Instructors in this essential National Service. I can heartily endorse all that my colleague, the Headmaster of Minchenden School has recently said in praise of Squadron 973.

S.A.M.Y.O. came into being in April 1942. This organization was formed quite apart from the two Old Scholars Associations and is mainly for the benefit of school leavers between

the ages of 16 and 19. During the summer the Club's activities ran mainly for sport but in the winter Friday of each week sees a good attendance in the School Hall when music, debates, dramatics, table tennis and dancing all have their enthusiastic supporters.

HARVEST CAMPS. This year as last 2 camps were run, one for girls and one for boys. 50 girls and 6 Mistresses spent four strenuous weeks harvesting the plum crop at Bluntisham, near St. Ives, Huntingdon. The camp was originally planned for 5 weeks but owing to the early and rapid ripening of the plums and the exceptional vigour of the girls, the camp closed down at the end of the 4th week for lack of work to be done. 29 boys and 4 Masters again went to Wing in Buckinghamshire. The work consisted almost entirely of corn harvesting. The camp was again organized by Mr. Knowles. Glowing letters of appreciation from the farmers have been received both in the cases of the boys and the girls camps.

WAR SAVINGS. Special Efforts. War Weapons Week £1,460, 14. 6 Warships Week - £2,597. 0. 0d. (the highest in the district), Wings for Victory - £3,020. 0. 8d. The Grand Total was -£7,078. 4. 2d. This total owes much to the enthusiasm of our two organizers - Mr. Pratt and Mrs. Holt but the week by week contributions are not nearly what they should be. We have an active membership boys and girls - about 180 - that is only 1 in 3 of the scholars in the school. I appeal to the parents present to see that every family represented in the school has at least 1 member of our National Savings Group. BOOK SALVAGE CAMPAIGN. Close upon 12,000 books were collected by the pupils of this school.

PRISONERS OF WAR. Our 10 Prisoners of War have not been neglected. Books, tobacco and cigarettes have been despatched at intervals. This work has been in the efficient hands of my secretary, Mrs. Long.

R.A.F.COMFORTS FUND. We are affiliated to the Central R.A.F. ComForts Depot and 3,648 ounces of wool have been purchased. £31. 1. 6d. has been contributed towards the cost of the wool and, up to the present, 327 garments, pullovers, socks, scarves, gloves, ~~hats~~ hats have been knitted and despatched to Headquarters. This fund is in the capable hands of my Senior Mistress, Miss Jeans.

MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND. This fund has languished somewhat owing to the War interfering with the annual production of a Gilbert & Sullivan Opera by the school operatic society, but in July last I received a letter from the Executors of the late Mr. A. T. Warren saying that it was his wish that after his death a gift should be made to his old school and enclosing a cheque for £100. This amount I have placed, for the time being, in the Memorial Scholarship Fund. The fund now stands at £1,063 Grants are made annually from this fund to leavers proceeding to Higher Education. In the present year £45 has been awarded to three pupils who left in July and who are now at the University. Whilst on the subject of Awards, I should like to acknowledge my gratitude to the Trustees of the Priscilla Ingram Trust for the very generous way in which they have helped our students to realize their ambitions in life - the grants are made despite the fact that the Headmaster of Southgate County School is one of the Trustees. I would also remind parents of the generous help given in the form of grants by the Middlesex Education Committee in case of need. For the possibility of such financial assistance being forthcoming may be the deciding factor when parents are deliberating whether to allow their children to remain at school to pursue one of our Higher courses.

SCHOOL SOCIETIES. Orchestral Society. It looked at one time as if this would be a war-time casualty but its leader, Mr. Smith called to mind what Wordsworth had said - "Men must grieve when even the shadow of that which was once great passes away" and took courage and gave substance to the shadow. But the substance

needs sustenance and I plead with parents to allow their musically minded offspring to learn to play one of the many instruments we are willing to loan pupils for the duration of their school career. Believe me Dr. Malcolm Sargeant is in this matter a better guide than Dr. Joad, for music makers derive far more pleasure and benefit from their innocent pastime than mere music listeners and is not music the only pleasure given to man to which no pain or penalty is attached - this was said before the invention of the saxophone or that atrocious misuse of the human voice called crooning.

DRAMATIC SOCIETY The Dramatic Society is busy rehearsing for next term's production of Oliver Goldsmith's Play "She Stoops to Conquer". Provisional dates are March 3rd and 4th 1944 and if those taking part come up to the standard reached by them in their last full length play - "The Midsummer Night's Dream" they will earn our unstinted praise.

S.D.I.A. These initials stand for the "Society for the Discussion of International Affairs. The members of this very ambitious society are in search of facts out of which they can build up an informed opinion of their own in preference to accepting meekly those of their elders. Though ambitious I have not heard of any member emulating a school boy whose grandfather said to him "I hear you are doing very well at school Tommy, what is your best subject? - Reading, writing or arithmetic? A look of disdain crossed Tommy's face as he replied "Don't be preposterous Grandpa, I produced the best plan for post-war reconstruction. The society principally relies upon three sources for its instruction, (1) Films; (2) debates and discussions; (3) talks on current domestic and international matters by authoritative speakers mainly from the Ministry of Information. The society has helped the Aid to Russia and the Aid to China funds and its Chairman and presiding Genius is Mrs. Pole.

THE FILM CLUB. This is a new venture and has a definite leaning towards scientific and educational films though I believe there has been an occasional concession to the weaker brethren in the shape of a Hickey Mouse film.

I note one war time casualty - the Chess Club. Perhaps the times are too strenuous as the old writer, Robert Burton, quaintly said - Chess play is a good and witty exercise for the mind but if it proceeds from over much study it may do more harm than good; it is a game too troublesome for some men's brains, too full of anxiety, all but as bad as study; besides it is a testy choleric game and very offensive to him that loseth the mate.

STAFF Four members of the staff are serving in E.M. Forces; the German master, Mr. Rolfe; the Art Master, Mr. Toplis; the Physical Training and Games master, Mr. Fawcett, and the Music master, Mr. Baggarley. In three cases deputies are carrying on in the meantime - Dr. Albert for Mr. Rolfe; Miss Seward, an old, but not so very old, Southgate County girl for Mr. Toplis; and Mr. Wain for Mr. Baggarley. In the case of Mr. Fawcett, we are making a gallant effort to fill an unfillable gap but even so it takes 3 people, one of whom is Mrs. Fawcett herself.

CHANGES. Miss Slec the Head of the Biological Department left us in July to become Senior Mistress at Crewe Secondary School after being with us for 12 years. Whilst it is true that no one is indispensable, it is also true that some of us are irreplaceable. Miss Slec was one of the irreplaceables. She was what I have called a "second miler". We were very sorry for ourselves but rejoiced in a well merited promotion to an even greater sphere of usefulness. Miss Slec's departure necessitated a change in the Biology Department - Mrs. Richards becoming Head of the Department and Miss H. Rowe B.Sc., was appointed Junior

Biology Mistress. Miss Rowe has the great advantage of having been in statu pupillari in three good secondary schools - Palmers Green High, Minchenden and Southgate County. We trust her stay with us will be long and happy. Mrs. Holt of the French Department left us at the end of October to take up similar work at a secondary school at Eastleigh, near Southampton. That she bore us no illwill was shown by a cheque which I received recently from her towards the Memorial Scholarship Fund. Miss D. Cavey, B.A. London has been appointed to fill Mrs. Holt's place and here again a long and happy stay is my wish for Miss Cavey.

My best thanks to the members of the staff for their unswerving loyalty to the school. Particularly do I thank the Senior Master, Mr. Auger and the Senior Mistress, Miss Jeans and that ever present help in time of trouble, my secretary, Mrs. Long. Also it is fit and proper that I should thank a small band of helpers for valuable assistance given con amore in solving the traffic blocks in that overworked department - the Headmaster's Study. I refer to Miss Dowsett and to two Old Girls, now both happily married, Mrs. Forsaith (Joyce Blaver) and Mrs. Stunden (Joyce Brown).

It only remains for me once again to tender my best thanks to you Madam Chairman, to the Governors of the School, to Mr. Walton, the secretary of the Middlesex Education Committee and to the Acting Divisional Organizing secretary, Mr. Hutchison, for the support and encouragement that have at all times been forthcoming and if so be it is possible for you to give a high priority immediately after the war to our school extensions, I am afraid then I shall have to think of a different epitaph for my tombstone. The present selection is an adaptation of a line from Gray's Elegy - "Chill penury froze the genial current of his soul."

As I began with the Old Boys I will end with a reference to the school records which show the part being played by Southgate County School Old Boys. 4 D.F.C's; 1 D.F.M.; 1 George Medal; 1 M.B.E; 2 Air Commanders; 1 Lieut: Commander; 1 Major; several Squadron Leaders and Captains. It is the heartfelt desire of all that before the next Speech Day comes round we shall have back in our midst all our Old Boys and Girls and that there will then be established in this world a civilization in which Youth will be able to serve rather with their lives than with their deaths.

December 1943.