

Speech Day 1925



Speech Day Number 4 - November 11th 1925

Armistice Day was chosen for the ceremony and prize giving at the Hippodrome in 1925, and on such a special day, everyone joined in singing the songs "Heroes" by Farrier, and "Jerusalem" by Parry. Ald. Price was, as usual, leading the Board of Governors, and accompanied by special guests Sir Percy Jackson, Chairman of the West Riding Education Committee and Lady Mabel Smith, who had been unable to attend the Speech Day of the year before. The Headmaster and Staff were also on the stage.

Lady Mabel Florence Harriet Wentworth-Fitzwilliam (1870-1951) was the sister of the 7th Earl Fitzwilliam, and married Lt. Col William Mackenzie Smith. A radical socialist, Christian, and well known social worker, she was also a leading member of the Workers' Educational Association, formed in 1903, and she organised classes at Maltby, where she was chairman of the Board of Governors until 1951 at Maltby Grammar School. She was also a member of the West Riding Education Committee.

Sir Percy Jackson (1897-1984) Chairman of the West Riding Education Committee. He had a school named after him situated in Adwick le Street, near Doncaster which existed from 1939 to 1968.

The Headmaster's Report

In his annual report, the Headmaster spoke with confidence about the increasing numbers at the school, and of how they could actually show tangible evidence of the quality of the education given to the pupils now that the first set of results had been issued in the shape of school certificates. Satisfactory progress had been demonstrated, especially for a new school.

There were now 225 pupils at the school, as compared with 184 the previous year, and of these, 166 were fee-payers. The rest were student teachers and holders of scholarships and exhibitions. There were 115 boys and 110 girls, nine Forms, and a Sixth Form, added for those who wished to study for a Higher School Certificate, to be taken in 1927. A second IV Form had been added, and the current Form V would be taking their School Certificate Examinations in July.

Changes to be introduced in September 1926 would involve the introduction of Cooking for girls in Form III and possibly Form IV, and Needlework was to be extended throughout the school. The boys would study Physics as an alternative to these subjects. For boys or girls who did not see themselves staying on at school beyond Forms IV or V, alternative courses involving typing and shorthand, and book keeping would be offered to enable students to take up clerical work on leaving school. This was the germ of an idea which subsequently proved so valuable to many pupils, and was organised and supervised by Mr. Collette.

Industry and the Secondary School

Mr. Jenkinson said he was aware that schools must offer their pupils an education which would equip them for their lives when they left. They had to think of earning a living, which was important; however this was not the primary aspect of the curriculum. The requirements of the industry, trades and occupations which were open to the pupils did have to be borne in mind, but he emphasised that a Hemsworth Secondary School education would give the pupils habits of thought and a desire for knowledge which would enrich and equip them for anything. In mentioning the importance of any particular subject - Latin, Chemistry, Geography or Algebra - it was not the purpose of the study of these subjects to turn out

classical scholars, or chemists, explorers or mathematicians. It was to create men and women with a desire for knowledge and the ability and will to acquire it.

A difficulty faced by Secondary school headmasters was that for years, efforts had been made to get industrial firms to recognise the value of hiring a 16 year old who had completed the full four years of education at school, rather than 14 year olds. The employers said they could not afford to pay a 16 year old a wage which he might have reasonably expected for his age, and the schoolmasters on the other hand, maintained that that the quality of work to be expected of the Secondary school boy would be far superior. If employers would establish the age of 16 as compulsory for the starting of Apprenticeships, or insist on a school certificate as a guarantee of a satisfactory education, then schools might move even closer towards assisting industry with even closer links. He said,

"I put forward this consideration in order to remove the reproach which is sometimes levelled at secondary schools that they are not in touch with the industries around them."

It might also be commented that Mr. Jenkinson, in proposing a more technical set of subjects to be studied (typing, book-keeping etc), was insuring against the reduction of the school's population due to transfers of pupils to the Middle schools.

More space needed

The rest of the school had the usual annual examinations in July. Although the results were satisfactory and the reports on various subjects were favourable, work was hampered to some extent by congested conditions in the school. Even when the new science classrooms were completed there would still be a shortage of classroom accommodation if the school continued to grow as they hoped it would. However, by the time the new science classrooms (the 'top' corridor) and the gymnasium (assembly) hall were completed he anticipated that they would be in a position which would call for the completion of the school as it was intended finally to be. This was a passing reference to the expected 'Third Phase' of the building plans, which provided for a new dining room and kitchen at the school. This was becoming an urgent necessity. Dinners were now served daily to 140 children in two sittings and the kitchen accommodation was inadequate and the atmosphere was bad.

The Middle Schools (aka 'Modern' or 'Central')

Mr. Jenkinson spoke of the concerns about the opening of a new Middle school in the Hemsworth district. Would it affect the numbers of the Secondary school? He did not think it likely, as the two types of schools were quite different, catering for different types of young people. Secondary schools provided a classical education, and Middle schools an education of an industrial type. He commented that the curriculum of his own school would equip a young person for entrance to University, giving an excellent all-round education up to the age of 16 and beyond.

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Good progress had been made in games and other out-of-school activities. More tennis courts were needed, and the hope was that a hard tennis court could be made. The cricket ground had been enormously improved and enlarged. Miss Morgan Jones was encouraging great progress in Music within the school, and later in the term a production of "Twelfth Night" would be staged. There had been a few changes of staff, with Mr. Dickinson's leaving, and the arrival of Mr. Collette, Mr. Shields, Miss Hanson and Miss Shortridge, making the current complement of staff as follows:-

[The Headmaster, Miss M.A. Griffiths \(senior mistress\), Miss Elsie Jackson, Miss E.D. Robinson, Miss M. Morgan Jones, Miss Eva Shortridge, Mr. Philip Crossland, Miss W. Hanson, Mr. James Arthur Storer, Mr. Leslie N. Collette, Mr. Robert F. Shields.](#)

The Headmaster thanked his staff most sincerely for their splendid loyalty and untiring energy, and also tendered thanks to the parents for their continued appreciation of the school and its work.

The Prize List

Lady Mabel Smith (a member of the West Riding Education Committee) presented the prizes, and mentioned the importance of the teaching of various subjects in training the young people to think clearly. To the boys and girls, she remarked: "Do not let worldly wise people rob you of your ideals."

The prize list was as follows:

Distinction in School Certificate: E. J. Barker, A. Campling, S. Thorpe.

School Certificates: Harry Crossley, Stanley Hawkesworth, R. N. Slatcher, Eunice Addis, Emma Bate, Lilian Dykes, Marion Finch, Mary Hodgson, Freda Swaine, Kathleen Thompson. English Subjects: E. J. Barker, Adelaide Branford, W. R. Wright, E. Taylor, J. Richards, Frank W. White, Phyllis Howe.

Languages: E. J. Barker, R. V. Williams, Katharine Hawkesworth, Helen Penn, Edith Guest, Edna Law.

Mathematics and Science: R. N. Slatcher, Philip Bull, Winnie Sadler, A. Thorpe, Vera Parton, Robert Wilson, Phyllis Howe.

Needlework: Vera Parton.

Woodwork: G. Hunt.

Singing: Ethel Gee, Frank W. White.

Art: Emma Bate, J. Lawrence Frazer.

Reading, Seniors: Miriam Wass, Frank A. Rothera,

Reading, Juniors: Maisie Thorpe, R. White.

General Knowledge: R. N. Slatcher, E. J. Barker, J. A. Leslie Jago.

Magazine Prizes: Miriam Wass, Millicent Wootton, Emma Bate.

General Progress: Doreen Raine, Ethel Smith, L. R. Smith.

Star Prizes: Mary Nettleton, Phyllis Howe, Vera Parton, E. Taylor, Frank W. White, Robert Wilson.

House Challenge Cup: Holgate 1,582 points, Price 1,127 1/2 points, Talbot 1,119 points

Mrs. Schorah proposed a vote of thanks to Lady Mabel Smith and Sir Percy Jackson, and made special mention of how her heart swelled with admiration of the former's power of addressing an audience. All were honoured and very grateful to both for their kindness, and she thought each had given splendid service. As a resident of Hemsworth she made reference to the old Holgate Grammar School which was, in spite of much comment, removed to Barnsley. She, as a girl, never had the opportunity even to go to that school as it was for boys only. She thought that the children today should be grateful for the chances they have which their elders had not.

In calling upon Mrs. Guest, of Ackworth, to second the vote of thanks, Ald. Price apologised for the absence of Mrs. Garstang, whose husband, professor Garstang, was one of the lecturers at Leeds University. Mrs. Garstang had given great help to the Governors' Committee. Her inability to be present was owing to the illness of her daughter. Mrs. Guest endorsed what Mrs. Schorah had said about Lady Mabel Smith and Sir Percy Jackson.

In the splendid musical programme, the following part-songs being given by the choir: "A Madrigal of Spring," "Snowflakes," "The Snow," "Lullaby," and Madrigal.

Miss Morgan Jones, who had done so well in training the choir for the Pontefract Festival, sang "The Jewel Song" from "Faust," "Down in the Forest," and "Love's Philosophy."

Miss Emma Bate gave two very suitable recitations for Armistice Day. They were "In Flanders Field," and "The Dead."

A speech in Latin was very ably given by E. J. Barker. This was "The Lamp of Learning," taken from Cicero's speech in defence of the poet Archias, delivered at Rome in the year 62 B.C.

Perhaps the most entertaining item on the programme was a short French sketch *L'Affaire de la Cruche*. The part of the irritable Monsieur Eysette was splendidly taken by Harrison Parsons, the other parts being acted by Lilian Dykes, R. N. Slatcher, and R. V. Williams.

Donations to the prize fund were acknowledged from the Rev. F. W. Holmes, County Alderman and Mrs. Price, Mrs. Dymond, Mrs. Heywood Jones, Mr. Lawton, Mr. Schorah, Mrs.

Dooley, Mr. J. Smith, Mr. Beaumont, Mrs. Guest, Mr. Potts, Dr. Wiltshire and Mr. W. H. Beetham.