

Speech Day 1928

Seventh Annual Speech Day, Wednesday November 14th 1928

The prizes were presented by Miss L. Leatham at this well-attended ceremony held at the Hippodrome, and the principal speaker was Dr. James Black Baillie O.B.E. Vice Chancellor of Leeds University. (Doubtless Dr. Baillie would have inspected the new Assembly Hall at the school before proceeding to the Hippodrome, as it was he who had originally been invited to perform its opening ceremony. Having been unable to attend this event, this was an opportunity for him to see the building.) As was usual, Ald. G. Price presided, and in his opening speech he stated that there were now 357 pupils at the school, which was a small increase on the previous year. He congratulated the Headmaster and Staff on a successful year, and especially the achievement of Adelaide Branford's County Major Scholarship, which was the third such award in the short history of the school. South Elmsall Pretoria Club had granted a scholarship for three years, which was a praiseworthy example of support. Efforts were being made to address the lack of accommodation at the school, with extensions receiving approval from the Board of Education, and work scheduled to begin without delay. The amount spent on the school since its establishment was around £60,000. The money was well spent, and it was pleasing to know that several former students were now attending universities.

The Headmaster's Report

First Link with the Universities

Mr. Jenkinson stated that during the previous few years the school had forged links with the universities, and now had about a dozen former pupils at universities and training colleges. Such education need not cost parents anything, as the Board of Education and the County Council gave grants, and the remaining cost could be covered by loans which students could repay in five years. (This would appear as a familiar method of support to any present-day student.) Mr. Jenkinson quoted the headmaster of a City of London School:

"I never met a man who wished he had not been to a university; I have never met a man who left school half-educated and did not regret it."

He urged parents to be ready to make sacrifices which would be amply rewarded later. The year's pleasing examination results in the Higher School Certificate were that seven of fifteen candidates were awarded full certificates, and three others passed in all principal subjects. In the School Certificate exams, 40 out of 53 passed, and 15 matriculated, 13 with distinctions. There were only four failures in Mathematics, five in French and seven in History, and in History 32 candidates of 53 reached matriculation - a high percentage. These results compared favourably with those of any school in the West Riding. Commonly, French was the stumbling block of boys and Mathematics of girls, and if a school had sound teaching in those subjects there was little to complain about. From the commercial form 22 candidates were entered for the Royal Society of Arts' examination, 21 passing in book-keeping, 28 in arithmetic, and eight of 13 in shorthand. Three former pupils at Leeds University were all scholarship holders: E. John Barker, County Major (History); Adelaide Branford, County Major (English); and Philip Bull, Holgate Scholarship (Mathematics).

Examinations

Mr. Jenkinson referred to Dr. Cyril Norwood's recent address to the British Association on examinations: "I am all in favour of Dr. Norwood's suggestion to abolish external examinations except for the purpose of University Scholarships and other such awards, and to rely more on a certificate from the Headmaster of the Secondary School. This ideal, which has been achieved to some extent in America, may be at present outside the range of practical accomplishment in this country, but of one thing I feel confident, and it is being more generally recognised every year: that if we must have examinations conducted by outside bodies, the examining bodies must conform more liberally to the requirements of the school. Schools must have freedom to expand in any direction that they feel to be necessary in the interests of their pupils, and must not be so tied as at present to tiresome restrictions."

The President of the Board of Education had recently pointed out that employers could help considerably by not insisting too rigidly on the possession of a School Certificate as the only test of ability and fitness, but by relying far more on the judgement of the headmaster or headmistress. Holders of a Certificate may not have the qualifications required in particular subjects, whereas those who have these qualifications may have nevertheless failed to gain a certificate owing to the regulations of the examining body.

The widening of the curriculum

Mr. Jenkinson described the attempts being made by the Governors and Director of Education to widen the curriculum by allowing three alternative courses in the third and fourth years, which could later be carried on to fifth and sixth years. Commercial courses were already under way, soon to be followed by an applied science course offering workshop practice experiences which would be valuable in a mining district such as Hemsworth. Hopes were high that the approved extensions to the school would be completed in the next twelve months.

Sports

Much gratitude was due to Miss Hanson, Miss Shortridge and the other mistresses for their efforts with the girls' sports. Mr. L. Collette had coached the boys for cricket and Mr. Scott, who was about to leave them, for rugby. Swimming had been taken up by a number of pupils, and Mr. Storer organised a swimming gala. They were grateful for financial assistance from the Education Authority concerning this.

The Arts

The Arts and Craft Exhibition of the previous summer had given particular pleasure to the Headmaster, and Parents' Day had been successful. Goldsmith's "She Stoops to Conquer" was shortly to be presented, and many successes in singing and dancing were achieved at the Pontefract Music Festival of 1928, much of which general progress was due to the fine efforts of his loyal

and capable staff, the support of the Governors, and in particular, the chairman Ald. Price. Thanks were given to the parents, together with an appeal for them to take an added interest in the work of their children, and to report to him any irregularities or errors.

Careers

Mr. Jenkinson said he would welcome any help or advice concerning the careers of the scholars. He had a notice board in school on which he posted information relating to this, and people were invited to come and speak on the subject. He would like more parents to attend these talks, and discuss the matter generally with himself and the staff. He felt that the teaching profession was overcrowded, and other avenues must be found for young people. On the other hand, the real aim of education was the formation of the character, and he ended his report by quoting the late Lord Oxford's address to Aberdeen University:

"Keep always with you, whatever your course may be, the company of great thoughts, the inspiration of great ideals, the example of great achievements and the consolation of great failures. So equipped, you can face without perturbation the buffets of circumstance, the caprice of fortune and all the inscrutable vicissitudes of life."

Dr. Baillie's Speech

The influence of the Secondary School

Dr. Baillie congratulated the Headmaster on his report, saying it was one of the best he had heard. He admired Hemsworth Secondary School which had achieved so much in such a relatively short time, and which had demonstrated the value of raising the level of intelligence in the community. Such schools had not been created just to prepare for University. He welcomed the fact that the Headmaster mentioned guiding his pupils in their career choices. Schools should assist their students to prepare for, and choose the work they would do after leaving.

One of the most valuable elements in the success of a school was the cultivation of a fine tradition. A school with a tradition was like a person with brain and character. One of the best and most important elements in a sound tradition in a school was the cultivation of a sense of fair play. Another quality was the cultivation of self-reliance. In these days, when public opinion moulded political and social life, it was more important than ever that boys and girls should be taught to think for themselves. Then there was nothing like hard work for forming character.

The speakers were thanked, on the motion of Mr. J. Potts, seconded by Mrs. E.L. Dooley.

The Presentation

[The owners of the High Hall before it became a school were members of the Leatham family, and it seems likely that the guest of honour, Miss L. Leatham of Wentbridge, who presented the prizes, was invited with this in mind.]

Higher School Full Certificates

Adelaide Branford, Philip Bull, Lilian Dykes, Kathleen Jagger, James Keenan, Kathleen Thompson, Thorpe S.

Higher School Part Certificates

Violet Dodds, Olive Tooth, Miriam Wass, Stanley Hawkesworth, Mart A., Frank A. Rothera, Williams R.V.

School Certificates

Leslie Bancroft, Barker J.R., J. Lawrence Frazer, Harold Goner, Brian Harrison, George A. Hunt, J.A. Leslie Jago, Richards J., Leslie R. Smith, Edwin Taylor, Arthur Thorpe, Cyril Warner, White W., Fred Williamson, Arthur L. Wilson, Albert V. Heywood, Hopkins A.J., Howitt N., George C. Mellars, James H. Smith. Betty Austin, Annie Brailsford, Nellie Chilton, Ethel Gee, Edith Guest, Jennie Hodgson, Edna Law, Doris Miles, Hilda Newton, Vera Parton, Helen Penn, Winifred Penn, Clarice Allen, May Bull, Margaret Cunningham, Hilda Finch, Nancy Parsonage, Molly Price, Ethel Smith, Maud Wood.

County Major Scholarship

Adelaide Branford.

Distinction in School Scholarship

Fred Williamson, J. Lawrence Frazer, George A. Hunt, John Mellor, Leslie R. Smith, J.A. Leslie Jago, Albert V. Heywood
Betty Austin, Nellie Chilton

Form Prizes

5A - Vera Parton	5B - Howitt F.N.		
4A - Florence Parsonage	4B - Kathleen Webster	4C - Harold Goulding	
3A - Sidney Fox	3B - Hilda Paley	3 Remove - Flora Hudson	
2A - Laura Austin	2B - Mary Sutton	2C - Sybil Howson	2D - Leslie Guy

Needlework Prizes (Special Prizes given by Mrs. Guest)

Edith Guest, Ethel Midgeley

Reading Prizes

Seniors, Mary Highfield,
Juniors, Ethel Midgeley.

General Information

E. John Barker, Maurice Gibbon

General Progress

Grace Mills (17 places), A. Walsh (15 places)

Star Prizes

Mary Sutton (70), Florence M. Parsonage (68), Phyllis Howe (67), J. Webster (57), Sybil Howson (55), Arthur Thorpe (52)

House Challenge Cup

Guest 601 points Holgate 524.5 points Talbot 414 points Price 73 points

A musical programme was given by the scholars with Miss Wright as conductor and Miss Hodgson accompanist. Part songs were given by the school choir, violin solos by George Mellars, songs by Miss Phyllis Wright, solos by Misses Miriam Wass and Mollie Price, and items by the school orchestra.