

1934

Thirteenth Annual Speech Day, Wednesday November 14th 1934

The thirteenth annual Speech Day was held at Hemsworth Hippodrome before a large attendance. County Coun. A. Flavell, chairman of the Governors, presided, supported by Mrs. G. Price, Mrs. S. H. Guest, Messrs. G. Cooper, J. Potts and S. Fieldhouse (governors), Capt. L. Hallam (an ex-governor), Mr. A.G. Jenkinson (Headmaster), and Miss M. A. Griffiths (Senior Mistress). The prizes and certificates were distributed by Mrs. Hone, wife of Canon Hone, Rector of Barnsley, and an address was given by Mr. A.L. Rowse, M.A., Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford, a former pupil of Mr. Jenkinson when he was at his previous school at St. Austell in Cornwall. An apology for absence was received from Mrs. Dooley, a Governor, owing to illness.

Thirteen Years' Progress

The Chairman paid a tribute to the late Mr. Gabriel Price, chairman of the Governors from the establishment of the school until his death earlier in March, and went on to congratulate the headmaster on his appointment as a magistrate. Outlining the history of the school, Coun. Flavell said the total cost of the amendments to the original building to date was approximately £46,000. The school was opened in September 1921, with 101 pupils, of whom 76 were fee-payers, and now had 452, of whom 97 were fee-payers and 355 held scholarships. In the whole of the secondary schools in the West Riding there were 11,143 scholarship holders and 5,131 fee-paying pupils. Many Hemsworth students, he added, had passed through college and university, and were rendering valuable service to the nation. Others were preparing to follow, and the country would be cleaner, sweeter and wiser because of the existence of that school. He urged the pupils to be resourceful and, when the psychological moment arrived, to be ready.

Numbers Rising

The Headmaster, in his annual report, said that the numbers in school were rising. During the previous year 69 pupils left the school of which seven went to University or Training College, five were teaching for a year before going to college, six were nursing, four in the R.A.F., two in the R.N., eleven shop assistants, four clerks, eight artisans or mechanics, two farming, two in domestic service, five had left the district, and thirteen were at home or unemployed. He would have liked to have been able to say that none of those who left were unemployed, and he urged parents to decide what they wanted their children to do at least a year before they left, so that the staff might have a chance of helping them

Between Scylla & Charybdis, (or a rock and a hard place)

"I suppose that to devise a suitable curriculum," continued Mr. Jenkinson, "is one of the greatest difficulties that headmasters of secondary schools have to face at the present time. On the one hand we are told that a scrappy education is worse than useless, that a thorough knowledge of a few subjects is of far more value than a superficial knowledge of many; on the other hand the champions of particular subjects are all clamouring for the inclusion of their own as an indispensable part of education, and the mere mention of early specialisation is apt to raise a panic. How is the headmaster to steer a wise course between Scylla and Charybdis? In these days, knowledge is becoming more and more specialised, and character, which is the ultimate aim of education, must be based on knowledge. An earlier specialisation and a reduction in the number of subjects is the safe way out of our difficulty. I think we have done something in the right direction by our system of alternative courses in the fourth and fifth years, but the curriculum is still overloaded. Then there are examinations to be faced, and the requirements of examining bodies make it necessary to retain subjects which might otherwise be eliminated. I am not sure that the final solution of this complex problem is not to be found in a system of selective and non-selective schools, by which the selective school would take the more academic or would-be University pupils, and the non-selective would be

able to adopt a more simplified and at the same time more broadened and more satisfying curriculum with possibly a School Certificate at the end of it for those who leave school at 16. I know the objections to such a scheme, but to my mind they would be far outweighed by its advantages if it led to a simplification of the curriculum."

The Headmaster then paid tribute to the late Mr. Gabriel Price, the founder and benefactor of the School who had been chairman of the Governors since the opening of the school.

Mrs. Hone distributed the prizes, and was presented with a bouquet by Doris Hainsworth, the head girl of the school.

Prize List

In addition to the certificates, the following prizes were distributed:

County Technological Scholarship... .. Kenneth R. Goodall

County Major and State Scholarship Millicent Webb

Parker-Rhodes Scholarship Robert H. Thorpe

For Distinction in School Certificate... .. C. Binks, Hetty Blanchard, Gerard Challender, George Elvidge, Doris Hainsworth, Gordon Hopkinson, H.L. Hopkinson, A. Keeling, Joseph Keogh, W. Metcalfe, Arnold Skelding, V. K. Thorpe, E. Walsh, Eric S. Whittle, L. Wilson.

Form Prizes - George Elvidge, Margaret Poole, W. Metcalfe, Vera Parkinson, P. Kenyon, Mary Ineson, G. Sutton, D. Corbett, Kathleen Mills, Olive White, Joyce Garrod, Barbara Crossland, Beryl Townend.

General Information - H. Bradley.

Star Prize - Beryl Townend.

Special Prizes for Head girl and Head Boy of the school, Sybil Howson and J. N. Thorpe.

Special prizes for Latin - Hetty Blanchard and J. N. Wilson.

Needlework prize - Vera Parkinson.

General progress - E. Arthur Jessop (21 places), Alice Allton (19), William Higgins (19), John Westbroome (19).

House Challenge Cup - (1) Talbot (1,092 1/2 points), (2) Holgate (878), (3) Guest (722 1/2), (4) Price (593).

Inter-House Sports Cup - (1) Talbot (68 points), (2) Price (65), (3) Holgate (60), (4) Guest (24).

House Arts Cup - (1) Talbot (1001/2) (2) Holgate (611/2), (3) Guest (33), (4) Price (21).

Prize Winning

After congratulating the school on its "magnificent record of progress," Mr. A.L. Rowse, the special guest, gave an address. He began by saying that those who were best at examinations were not necessarily the best citizens, nor were they the worst. Winning prizes was rather a technical affair. The important thing was to turn out good, fully developed men and women, for if the country was to come out of its difficulties it needed every scrap of ability coming through the schools. It could not afford to waste any, and he hoped the West Riding County Council, which was one of the most liberal minded education authorities in the country, would make every effort to see that boys and girls of outstanding quality were drafted on from the secondary schools to the universities to be further trained. It stood to reason that

the wider the net was cast the larger should be the haul. If they made it their business to bring out of the elementary schools all the boys and girls who would most profit by further education on those lines there should be still untapped sources of ability with which to serve the community. The aim of education should be to bring out the particular capacities, to discover the bent of individuals. Pupils should not be sent out as mere specialists having no general attitude to life. Still less should they go out so innocent of the world as to fall victims to the bad influences of contemporary society. They had a duty to see that each generation had a better chance than the last. We were going through great difficulties, and would gain or lose according to how we made the future. It was in our wills to make it.

In a word to parents - "poor, harassed, and often worried parents," as he described them - Mr. Rowse said the best advice he could give was to watch their children and find out what was their natural bent. It was no good trying to drive them into something not fitted for them. If the children had a talent no pains should be spared to develop it. He concluded by wishing the school all prosperity.

Dr A.L. Rowse, FBA, Emeritus Fellow of All Souls was made a Companion of Honour in 1997 for services to history and literature. The historian spent the greater part of his academic life at All Souls, Oxford, of which he became a Fellow at the age of 22. His subjects in more than 90 books of history, poems, biography, and criticism have been diverse, but he remained primarily, a historian of the Elizabethan age



Dr A.L. Rowse 1903-1997

A comprehensive vote of thanks was proposed by Mrs. Guest, seconded by Capt. L. Hallam, who congratulated the school on its wonderful progress. In reply, Mr. Rowse asked for the customary day's holiday, which was granted.

A programme of music and plays was given by the scholars, with Miss P.E.M. Wright as conductor and Miss I. Agnew as accompanist. Miss Wright also sang two songs.