

Head Master's Report. 1944

GROWING ENROLMENT

SUBMITTING the school's 26th. annual report, the head master (Mr. J. L. Griffiths) stated:

"Last year I reported that with a record enrolment our accommodation was severely taxed, but this year our enrolment rose to 633, a further increase of more than 80 pupils. This has led to such congestion that it has been very difficult to carry on the work of the school in a reasonably satisfactory manner. Owing to shortage of rooms, classes are much too large for really effective teaching, and our matriculation class has had no class room at all.

A further increase is expected in 1945, and we have obtained permissive occupancy of the two military wards near the Scout Hall. These are to be altered and furnished, and will provide fairly adequate accommodation for Form I. It is hoped then to reserve the room where the library is housed exclusively for library purposes, and possibly to obtain some relief in the matter of large classes.

ADDITIONS TO SCHOOL PLANNED

Plans are being prepared for substantial additions to the school, and we hope to have included in these, provision for an assembly hall large enough to seat all the pupils at the same time, making provision for additional seating accommodation for use on special occasions. Plans and estimates for such a hall are in course of preparation, and it is hoped that finality will soon be reached.

As I indicated in my last report, the provision of such a hall will be only partly financed by the Government, and the community will be called upon to provide a substantial portion of the cost. The school has already commenced to raise money for this purpose, and this year the Advisory Council decided to devote the School Improvement Fund to this object. During the year £182 has been subscribed to this fund.

CHILDREN HELPING THEMSELVES

At the same time, there have been various school efforts to raise money for the same purpose, notably the school play and concert, which were most successful, both as regards the amount of money raised, and as outstanding entertainments. Money has also been raised by means of

Money has also been raised by means of stalls, etc. Miss Fallow's Ballet Club contributed the proceeds of one of their performances to the Hall Fund, and this augmented the total by £63/15/6. The school is deeply indebted to Miss Fallow for this very valuable help. The total amount raised during the year, including the Improvement Fund, amounts to £635, an outstanding effort, and the sincere thanks of all interested in the school are due to those who did so much to achieve this very fine result.

When the amount of our commitment is definitely known, a wider appeal will be made to the community, and I am certain that the worthiness of the object will ensure an enthusiastic response.

Considerable changes have been made this year by the University with respect to the Intermediate, Leaving Certificate and Matriculation examinations. It was hoped that these would result in more elasticity and freedom in school courses. The curriculum, however, remains overloaded; as the demand made by the University faculties for prerequisites at the Leaving Certificate stage as requirements for entry to various University courses makes it difficult for any substantial change to be made in the curriculum of even the lower forms. Pupils in the lower school do not, and in general, should not be expected to know their later scholastic requirements, and their abilities at this stage are not at all clearly determined. I feel that little can be done to change this state of affairs until pupils intending to do Leaving Certificate bypass the Intermediate Certificate examination, and spend two years following the Proficiency Certificate stage in undertaking a course of study including probably seven (7) subjects to the Leaving Certificate standard.

This year a course was provided for pupils who definitely have no prospect of proceeding to Matriculation, and who have difficulty in coping with languages other than English. In lieu of such languages an approved craft is provided, and also only a limited course of mathematics, and a number of pupils taking this course have shown very satisfactory progress.

There is a tendency to take advantage of the abnormally high wages now offering for even untrained and comparatively uneducated boys and girls, and too many pupils leave school without completing the course for which they entered, not realising that education means much more than preparation for obtaining positions.

than preparation for obtaining positions. In 1943, 39 pupils gained the Intermediate Certificate, while 4 others passed in four or more subjects at the Higher Standard. Twenty-one pupils gained the Leaving Certificate, 18 of these qualifying for Matriculation. The small Honor Class gained 1st honours.

In spite of the very great difficulty experienced in obtaining books, a substantial amount has again been spent on the library. The Government subsidised purchases on a £1 for £1 basis up to £25, and this was of considerable assistance, though because of the shortage of available books we were unable to take full advantage of the subsidy.

In addition to the money raised for the Hall Fund, the school forwarded £100 to the Education Department's War Relief Fund.

Nine hundred and seventy-nine dozen eggs were sent to various hospitals, this total beating our previous record by 50 per cent.

The House sports were again well patronised by parents and friends, and once more the afternoon tea arrangements were most unselfishly and capably undertaken by the members of the Ladies' Welfare Club.

OLD PUPILS SERVING THEIR COUNTRY

The number of old pupils in the various branches of our Forces is now more than 260. Of these 6 are prisoners of war, 4 are missing, and 12 have lost their lives. To their relatives we extend our sincere sympathy.

TEACHERS LEAVING

Miss Egerton and Mr. Jones, whose work over a period of years is so well and favorably known, are leaving us to obtain well merited promotion. Miss Egerton is going to Ararat High School, and Mr. Jones to Dimboola High School. Our best wishes go with them. Mr. Smith, who has been in charge of our examination mathematics, is being transferred to Northcote High School.

1944 has been a very difficult year, and I cannot speak too highly of the manner in which members of the staff have carried out their duties, and of their active cooperation in all efforts to advance the interests of the school. I also wish to thank members of the Advisory Council for their interest and help." (Applause).

The ANA Cup, awarded to the Champion House in Athletics was presented to

the captains of Orchid House, and Shirley Lewis and Bob Wills, editors of "The Gate," were presented with bound copies of the magazine.

Messrs. J. W. McAfee and F. S. Ward proposed a vote of thanks to Professor Trikojus for coming out and presenting the certificates.

In his reply, Professor Trikojus said that there was no doubt we needed more education—a broader education as well as the specialised education provided at the university. A blending of the methods of mature experience and youthful impetuosity was needed. There must be cooperation between these two sections.

Mature experience must be prepared to realise there are new methods. Now and in the post-war period there will need to be an increasing realisation of one's social obligations. He would like to see an extension of handcraft in education and they must foster a community spirit—a good example of which was the establishment of community forests by certain towns. Australia wanted more statesmanship and less politics.

His closing wish was that in the New Year they would have victory and also see the dawn of a new era, in which man, with tolerance and good example, would be re-awakened to a keener sense of his social responsibilities so that the world might progress in the true sense of that word.