

Prize Giving (17th August, 1962)

Speech/Report of Headmaster Dr. R. L. Hayman

My Lord Bishop, Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the staff and boys of the college, I offer you a warm welcome this afternoon.

You (Sir) are well known to every one in Gurutalawa, as a frequent and proper guest. We are fortunate to have you as our school manager, because you know school life from inside experience, having been a member of a Staff of Eton College, where you not only taught your own subject, but also ventured to teach mine-Physics.

So when you deal with Gurutalawa, whether it be as Chairman of our Board of Governors, or more directly as our manager, you have brought to bear on our problems, a wide experience in the field of education. I shall always remember gratefully the care and thoroughness with which you have dealt with our difficulties.

We are also delighted to have with us Father Golding of the Oxford Mission to Calcutta. In the past few years, we have had many pleasant contacts with the Mission and several of its priests have stayed here ; - amongst them was Father Peter Thorman, the Superior, who took charge of our chapel services for the best part of a month, while we were awaiting the return of Father Foster from his last leave.

It is good to have Anthony Keble here, who with his friend George Covington is doing a world tour. Anthony is, of course, an old boy of Gurutalawa and his father – the founder of the two Prep Schools – was one of my closets friends up to the time he left Ceylon.

Perhaps you will not mind if I tell a story about him. I shall never forget my first meeting with Mr. Keble, nearly 34 years ago. When he heard from Warden MaePherson that we would be sailing together for Ceylon, he wrote to me and suggested that we should meet at Victoria station, and take the boat train to Dover. Since neither of us would know what the other looked like, he thought it would be a good idea if we met on the seat under the station clock. The day of our departure arrived and I made my way to the boat train platform. Sure enough I found a clock there, and a seat just underneath it : but there was no Mr. Keble. So I sat down and waited. The time for the train's departure was getting near, and there was still no sign of him. An aunt of mine took charge; she kept me parked on the same seat under the clock, while she set out to look for other clocks, and other seats, elsewhere in the station. Her researches brought to light the fact that there were several of both, and almost at the further end of the station she found a solitary figure seated under a cock – placidly waiting. It was Mr. Keble, and in a very short time she brought us together. We continued to work together – even sharing a car – for several years, and it is sad that our ways have now parted. It is therefore all the more pleasant to have Anthony here today, and thereby to renew our contacts with his family.

I need hardly say how happy we are to have with us Mr. Paul Raj the Headmaster of the Bandarawela Prep School. Our two schools have worked together on the friendliest of terms, and I acknowledge with gratitude the wonderful help and support we have received from Bandarawela. Amongst the most valued members of the school, there is always a majority of prep school boys.

I do not want to submit you to the tyranny of the prize report. Many of you, would find my report long and tedious, and indeed you may well be in possession of full information about the progress of the school, much of which already appears, regularly and in detail, in the College Magazine. However there will be others who do wish to know about all our activities during the past twelve months. For their benefit my report has been printed, and I trust that you have been given copies of it. (I should like to mention that Mr. G. H. D. Chellappah, our honorary accountant, has supervised its printing and by this labour of love has saved us pages and pages of correspondence with the printers.)

Whilst then, I do not intend this year, to read my report at all, I hope that those of you who are interested, will take it away and read it at your leisure. I shall only touch on a few of its points, though I am afraid I shall enlarge on them at some length.

First, I wish to thank the teaching, the office, and the farm staff, and also the servants for their loyal co-operation throughout the year. The possession of a happy, united and hard working staff is more important than having good equipment and buildings. In this respect, we are certainly more fortunate than many Ceylon schools. For example, a visitor coming to Gurutalawa between 4.30 and 6 p.m. will find masters everywhere supervising the boys' activities and games on the afternoon of any working day.

I doubt if there is any master here who merits the crushing treatment meted out to a member of the Mount Lavinia Staff, by that famous character and Old Boy, Frank Goonewardene (I will call the master by a fictitious name, in telling the story).

One afternoon Frank Goonewardene and a party of friends were visiting a Colombo club, and ran into the master there. Frank stopped to introduce him to the rest of his party. "This is Mr. Perera, late of the staff of S. Thomas' College". The master replied indignantly "Late of the staff of S. Thomas' College? Mr. Goonewardene you are mistaken, I am *still* on the College staff". To which came the reply "Mr. Perera, that is untrue, every day at 3-15 p.m. you walk out of school and you are not seen by the boys or staff till 8.20 the next morning. Do you really count yourself to be a member of a staff which you hasten to turn your back on at the first opportunity?"

Well, here at Gurutalawa I think we can boast that every member of the staff contributes something to the life of the school, not only in the classrooms but outside as well.

The second thing which I would like to speak about is our need to extend our buildings, and improve our equipment. During the last twelve months our expenditure on maintenance and repairs has been heavy. I only hope that the work done will prove to be of lasting value, and that no further expenditure will be needed on the same items for some years.

I am very concerned that our dormitories are so seriously over-crowded. In normal times we should have tried *long ago*, to raise funds to increase our sleeping and living accommodation. But these times are not normal – far from it – and until the Government is in a position to make a clear declaration of its policy on educational matters, and especially, with regard to the future of private schools, we are uncertain of the course which we ought to take.

If a new “ set up ” is imposed on us, the size of our boarding house may decrease, and under such conditions the money which we might collect for the building of new dormitories, would have been collected, given and spent in vain.

If on the other hand, the school is allowed to continue on the present basis our numbers will rise though I do not think that they should ever be allowed to exceed a total of three hundred and sixty, and if that happens the building of new dormitories and the provision of further accommodation in both the kitchen and the dining hall will become inevitable.

While things are still so uncertain, it seems wiser to try to “ make do ” with our present dormitories, and to confine our building plans to such items as will be useful, whatever the future may bring to the school. I have two such buildings in mind: they are (1) a school hall and (2) a new science laboratory.

Though indeed our greatest need is for a school hall, we cannot start building until we have cleared the site chosen for it ; this involves the demolishing of the present science laboratory. Before we can do that, we have to provide an alternative one; and this, indeed, is urgently needed on other grounds. So the building of this laboratory has come first on our list of priorities, though in most respects a school hall is an even more pressing need.

We have been fortunate to secure the services of Mr. Visva Selvaratnam to design the laboratory. He is one of the best known of the younger generation of Ceylon architects, and a partner in one of the leading Colombo firms. He is also one of our old boys. He has designed for us a building which should meet our needs for years to come. I thank him for the time and trouble he has expended over the matter.

The work is to be done in two stages, at an estimated cost of Rs. 60,000/= for the first and Rs. 40,000/= for the second. The site chosen is the open and leveled ground just beyond the headmaster’s bungalow. It will be near the classrooms, and will not use space that is essential for other activities.

At present we have rather more than Rs. 40,000/= in the building fund, so we have to appeal to you to contribute towards the balance of the cost of construction. As in the past, we shall be happy to receive donations however small, for it has been by small donations that we have collected money for our previous projects. On the other hand, our Old Boys' Association has suggested that there may well be some wealthier parents and friends who would be able to give a sum of at least one hundred rupees each. If there were many who were generous enough to do this, then their contributions would mount up more rapidly towards the total required.

There may be others who would be willing to sign a banker's order to pay us regularly monthly instalments from their accounts. (Perhaps I should mention that the Board of Governors do control a building fund which has been accepted by the Government as a recognized charity).

Our Old Boys' Association is working hard on our behalf, and has already run one most successful benefit show in aid of our building fund; and is at present engaged on plans for another. Its members also devoted much time and effort to making our stall at the Thomian fair a success. Their loyalty and keenness have been an inspiration to all of us here. So I ask for your assistance; and whether you can help us in a small way, or in a big way, please do the best you can, for we have nobody else to whom we can appeal.

This will be my last prize-giving, so I hope that you will forgive me if I repeat what I have already said on previous occasions about our other needs. Even if there seems no immediate way of supplying them. I should like my successor to know, what I have always had in mind. Whether or not he adopts my ideas, will be a matter for him to decide, but I want to leave them on record.

The first is our need for an adequate school hall. This is wanted desperately. The room in which you are now seated has to serve all our needs. It is used as a dining hall, a "prep" hall, and to accommodate classes. It is here that we are compelled to hold our society meetings, our film shows, our plays, and our prize-givings. It is the only room big enough to seat the whole school, at assembly.

Before meals, classes must vacate the hall, in order to allow the tables to be laid. After meals the hall cannot be used for other purposes until everything has been cleared up. This delays our proceedings by as much as fifteen minutes a day. Again we cannot give our small boys an early dinner because the hall has to be used for prep and is not available. In consequence they have to go to bed much later than we would wish or think desirable.

Classes which cannot find room in the classroom block, have to be held here. (There are times when the school is working 19 sets simultaneously, and we have only

nine classrooms, two labs, and five other rooms in which to house them and so some have to come here). As a result between periods one always sees a procession of boys wending their way up to the classrooms, or returning from them on their way to the labs, woodwork shed, libraries, prefects' room or dining hall. Even if the boys do not dally, the change over can hardly take much less than five minutes each time. It is quite possible for a boy or master to spend as much as forty minutes in the course of a day, making his way from one class to another. I hope that the fresh air revives them; for in all other respects the time so spent is just wasted. Father Foster and I opposed the choice of the present site for the classrooms, when they were built in 1944, but we were overruled.

Another disastrous result of having to use our dining hall for purposes other than its proper one is the wear and tear it imposes on the furniture. When we have plays, cinema shows or a prize-giving the furniture has to be shifted, and however carefully it is done it does get knocked about. The joints of the legs of our tables and or our benches get worked loose, and constant repairs are required.

At the last old Boys' Association meeting, it was remarked with justice, that the state of our dining hall furniture was a disgrace to the school. Much defective furniture has been repaired after a fashion or replaced, but while the present arrangements continue, further damage is hardly avoidable.

Once we have a school hall designed for the purpose, it should be possible to avoid the rough handling to which the furniture is now subjected, and to keep it in better condition.

Another urgent need is the provision of a set of changing and drying rooms, and showers. At the games bell boys would then be able to go to the changing rooms and change into their sports clothes. After games they would have showers and change back. Things like wet football jerseys would be hung on hot pipes in the drying rooms, so that they would be dry before they were needed the next day. At present, in the months of November and December, a boys' football jersey may never really dry out between one visit to the dhoby and the next. In the low-country, such a provision may be a luxury, but to my mind it is a vital necessity in the hills.

A parallel necessity is the provision of adequate common rooms, where boys could spend time reading, writing or playing quiet games. Those who remember the common room in the early days of Gurutalawa, will realize how much the present generation of Thomians misses, now that we have none.

Once changing rooms, drying rooms, showers, and common rooms have been provided, it will be possible to keep the dormitories locked during the day. The present system by which the boys, practically live in their dormitories, during their spare time is deplorable. Unless the prefects and house-masters are very much "on the spot" it leads to almost slum-like conditions. We at S. Thomas' have always had a peculiarly blind eye to this deficiency, and to its consequences.

May I appeal to those who take up the task of running the college, after I leave, not to neglect these matters, and even if they are not able to adopt my suggestions, to work out some other plan instead ?

All of us were sad to learn of the death of Mr. Leslie de Saram, last Autumn, in England. He was a true friend of the school, and we at Gurutalawa owe everything to his and Mrs. de Saram's astonishing and imaginative generosity. We have been happy to receive two visits from Mrs. de Saram in the course of recent months, and to see her looking so fit.

As regards the progress of the school, I cannot pretend to be satisfied with the level attained in work. It may not compare unfavourably with that in other schools at the present time, but it is certainly far below the level we used to take for granted twenty years ago. No doubt the rapid change over to swabasha inevitably produced unintended and short-term side effects. If this drop in the standard of work was one of them, it will correct itself in time. However I feel that there must be other causes in operation also. I suspect that the present explosion in the size of the population of Ceylon, has drawn into the teaching profession many who are not sufficiently qualified to teach properly. Certainly a good proportion of the boys who come to us, seem to have received much less drilling in fundamentals than in the past. We are fortunate that the classes in Gurutalawa are comparatively small, and that it is possible to give the weaker boys more attention than they could get in many schools.

In games we suffer the handicap of having only a small proportion of older boys. The result has been our junior teams have fared better in their matches than the senior ones.

In the past, the staying power of our boys has often turned defeat into victory. I was sorry to see this year, that in certain matches, our teams were out-lasted by their opponents. This certainly throws doubt on the whole-heartedness of our teams' training.

A school is not merely concerned with the attainment of success in the scholastic and sporting fields. One of its most important tasks is to prepare boys to take their place in life, when they leave school. Not only must it do this by inculcating a spirit of toughness and determination, but also by teaching them (what I find myself calling-for want of a more exact term) the art of gracious living. The motto of New College, Oxord, is "Manners Maketh Man", and I suppose that William of Wyekhm who chose it, meant that man became what he was, by his whole way of life. It was not merely by a display of courtesy that a man was to be made—for in that case the Uriah Heeps of this world would rank high in the scale of manhood – but rather it was by his whole approach to life that a man would prove his mettle.

If William of Wyckham was right, we have a long way to go before we can boast that the way of life of our boys, is making them the sort of men we would wish. I refer

especially to one particular blind spot of the Ceylon boy. He feels little desire to care for his own belonging or those of the school in which he lives. Because of this, those of us who want to maintain the school compound, its buildings, furniture and equipment in good order have to fight an up-hill battle. Far too few boys held us in our endeavours, and on the contrary there are far too many, who by their neglect and carelessness, make matters worse. I am ashamed of the mess that only too frequently disfigures every corner of our grounds, and I am amazed that we in the school seem so completely unaware of it.

(I often think that this failing and a similar one in the matter of sanitation, must be among the factors which make lodging-house keepers in England reluctant to provide accommodation for Ceylonese students).

The maintenance of that degree of school discipline, which was regarded as normal in the past, has also become more arduous. There is a disturbing lack of public opinion in such matter, reinforced by the prevalent idea that there is no need to worry about bad conduct until one is caught. Schoolboys are confirmed optimists, and when they embark “on a career of crime” they never even consider the possibility of being brought to justice. I suppose that one part of good discipline is to face the facts of any situation in which we find ourselves, and to plan our actions accordingly, and in the full light of reality. Most boys, when they get themselves into difficulties, shut their eyes to the facts, or if they cannot escape from facing them, try to find some expedient to throw dust in the eyes of those who have to deal with them. So, for example, when the term tests loom threateningly near, and some boys realize how much they fall below standard in their work they do not take the realistic course, and devote their spare time to revision : but they either do nothing – hoping for the best – or else devise some method of cheating the examiners. Usually such methods involve one or more of their friends, and so the boy who cribs and the boy who helps him, both suffer, if caught.

Indeed it is only when they are caught that they realise, that even as a short term expedient, cribbing is a pretty poor thing to rely on : whilst on the long term view, it is disastrous.

It is not exactly the fact that cribbing is so often attempted, which worries me; but rather, I am perturbed by the attitude which lies behind it. The substitution of expediency for honesty as a guiding principle which one finds among the boys who crib, may, perhaps, have been learnt from the examples in public life given by their elders. Today, one can hardly pick up a daily paper without reading of such things.

And so we get the boy who is blasé, self-centred, indifferent to all attempts to help him, and cynically untouched by any motives which do not seem to pander to his own immediate needs. Such boys are found, perhaps more often than in the past, and where they occur, they constitute a real problem to the school authorities. Moreover they are only too often accepted at their own valuation by the other boys.

It is up to schools like ours to lead our boys to a better set of values and a truer way of life. Perhaps it is precisely in the fulfilment of this task, that the denominational schools have their special opportunity and vocation. May we keep it before our eyes in all that we attempt to do.

I must thank all those who have given so generously towards the cost of prizes. It is a very great help to us and it is most gratefully appreciated.

Speech Of Chief Guest Rt. Rev. Archibald Rollo Graham Campbell Lord Bishop Of Colombo

I am very glad to be able to be present at your Prize-giving today and I am grateful to you, Dr. Hayman, for inviting me.

It is not always realized that the lot of a speaker on such an occasion is by no means an altogether enviable one, and he must needs tread somewhat warily. A well-known Dean, himself formerly a great Head Master, once at a school prize-giving ventured to say that there were too many stupid people about. The next day he received a postcard quoting what he himself described as “ this mild platitude ” and adding “ Yes, and you are undoubtedly one of them yourself ”. It needs some courage to stand up before a whole school and its staff, to say nothing of its Head master, together with a company of parents and others, and to deliver an address.

I begin by asking a question. How can you tell whether a school is a good school or not ? Well, of course you can go and look at it ; not on some special occasion when visitors are expected and things are rather different from usual, but on an ordinary working day. You can look at the school buildings; you can see how they are kept, whether they are in good condition, clean and tidy. You can ask about the teachers, how many of them there are, what are their qualifications, and how long they have been at the school. You can inspect the time-table and see what subjects are taught, and how much time is given to each. You can ask to see the results of the examinations, and you can find out how the school fares in sports and games. And you can watch the boys and girls as they go about their work and play ; see whether they are happy and intelligent, good mannered and industrious, proud of the school to which they belong.

But of course a good school does not depend for its work on its size, or on the greatness and splendour of its buildings; nor is it to be judged simply on the results achieved in the examinations, or by its success at games. I would not for a moment undervalue the importance of sound learning, of clear thinking and accurate scholarship; but we must look to our schools to produce not only good scholars but good citizens, men and women not only of learning but of character. So if you want to know what a school is like, you must see what sort of boys it has turned out; you must look at the old boys of the school as well as at the present ones.

What qualities, then, should we look for our schools to foster ?

First, for it is of outstanding importance, I would suggest integrity, absolute trustworthiness and reliability. Integrity come from a Latin word which means “ whole ” – sound through and through. On the wall in my dining – room in Colombo there hangs the picture of a former Bishop of Lincoln, named Edward King. Near the big chair in which as an old man the Bishop used often to sit there stood a box – a perfectly plain square wooden box. It had been the parting present of the carpenter in the village where King had begun his work fifty years before. When King had expressed his pleasure at

the gift, the carpenter was delighted. “ I knew you would like it ”, he said, “because it is the same on every side ”.

“The same on every side ”. That is what I mean by integrity – wholeness of character ; a character which is the same whichever way you look at it ; the character of one who is absolutely and utterly reliable ; one who can be trusted with anything ; who can be trusted to put his best into his work, whether there is anyone there to see or not. Did you ever hear of Sir John Moore, the British general who met his death at Corunna in the Spanish Peninsular War ? His life was as fine as his death. At a time when conditions in the Army were very bad, Moor did his best to improve the conditions of his soldiers and make them better men. In spite of every sort of opposition he persevered, until it became a common thing in the Army when a man was needed for a position of trust to hear it said. “ Give me a man who has served under Moor”. His men were so reliable, so certainly to be depended on ; like their leader, men to be trusted utterly. What a fine thing it would be if, when someone was wanted for a position of trust, men should say, “ Give me a boy from Gurutalawa .”

And then secondly, and not unconnected, a readiness to think for oneself. There is a little animal called the chameleon which, I understand changes, or appears to change, its colour according to its background. There are a good many people who are rather like the chameleon. They change their colour according to their background – according to the surrounding in which they find themselves. They are content to do what other people do, to say what other people say, and even to think what other people think, never forming a judgment of their own, taking their opinions at second-hand and so open to every kind of mass-suggestion. We must look to our schools to send out into the world men who have really learnt to use their minds, and who are incapable of being turned aside from what they believe to be right either by fear of public opinion or by hope of private gain; fearless and honest thinkers who, not despising the counsel of those wiser than themselves, are yet capable of forming a judgment of their own and are not afraid to do so. We must look to our schools to produce men who have the courage of their convictions ; who have the courage to do what is right, whatever the cost, like that other general of whom it was said, “ He steered only one course in life, and that one dead straight ”.

And then thirdly we must look to our schools to send out into the world men with a readiness to serve – to serve their generation, the community in which their lives are set. If you are learning anything here you are learning, I hope, that it is a finer thing to serve than to be served ; to spend yourselves for others rather than to have others spend themselves for you. The life lived for self is but a pale shadow of what life is meant to be. The fullness, the royalty of life is found in service. It is found by those who are ready to give the utmost that they have for the highest that they know.

And that brings me to my last words. As you will know, before another year has gone Dr. Hayman will have left us, and the Gurutalawa which he has loved and served and so largely helped to build will know him and Mrs. Hayman no more. “ To spend and to be spent in our work is our greatest and best privilege,” wrote Bishop Chapman, your

Founder, to his brother-in-law before he left England to come to Ceylon. If that be true, then Dr. Hayman has been greatly privileged, for of no one could it be more truly said that he had spent himself and what was his for the school to which he has given the best years of his life. He joined the staff of St. Thomas' College in 1928; and from that day to this he has not ceased his labour, his care and diligence, to serve the School which he has made so wholly his own. It is not for me to attempt to assess what this country owes to Dr. Hayman, or even what St. Thomas' owes to him; but at least we may claim that he has set a standard of devoted and self-sacrificing service that any schoolmaster might be proud to try to aim at. I have seen it said that his capacity for work is enormous. Certainly if he has asked much of others, he has asked nothing that he has not first asked of himself, and has set before others no ideal or standard that he has not himself tried to reach. For him the School has been first and foremost a family – a family in which every member mattered – mattered equally and was cared for in equal measure, and for each of whom he sought to find the appropriate outlet for his energies and interests. And in building up and caring for the life of the Thomian family here in Gurutalawa he has been wonderfully helped, as you all know, by Mrs. Hayman, not least in her devoted care for the sick – a care which has extended, I believe, beyond the School to the villagers round about.

No one, I suppose, knows the full extend of Dr. Hayman's gifts to St. Thomas'. In the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral in London there is a tablet in memory of Sir Christopher Wren, the great architect of the Cathedral, which bears the words, "*Simonumentum requiris, circumspice*" – which means, "if you would seek his memorial, look about you". So we might say of Dr. Hayman. But Dr. Hayman's best and most enduring memorial will be found, not in the swimming-baths that he has given or the fives courts and dormitories that he has built, but in the hearts and in the lives of the boys for whom he has spent himself with such lavish generosity; and his best reward will be their gratitude, their affection and their trust, and the knowledge that the traditions which he has sought to build here were being maintained and, if it might be, enhanced in the days to come.

Year by year on December 6th the members of my two colleges, which were also your Founder's two colleges, meet and drink a silent toast in grateful memory of the Founder – King. It was during the dark days of the war that King's kept the 500th anniversary of its founding, and in spite of war-time restrictions the Founder's Feast was held and the silent toast was drunk. "Why make a fuss about these old traditions?" a young man asked Lord Keynes, the economist and a Fellow of King's, after the dinner. Keynes answered with a smile, "Because we think it important to be in love with the past and with the future."

The greatness of a school, as of a country, depends very largely on how far it is in love both with the past and with the future; mindful always of what it has received, yet never resting either in the past or in the present, but looking forward always to serve the future in faith and hope. Never forget that the advantages you enjoy here today you enjoy because of the service and the sacrifice of those who went before you, the service and sacrifice of those who were ready to give the best of themselves and what was theirs

for the sake of those who should come after them. You have a great tradition here at St. Thomas', a tradition which you have inherited and of which you may be justly proud. Today that heritage is in your care. But as you are the heirs of a great tradition, so too you are the heirs of a great task; and you owe it alike to the Past and to the Future, to those who have gone before you and to those who shall come after, to hand on what you have received not less fair because it has for a time been entrusted to your keeping.