

1963-1964 Span Magazine – Principal's Message . . .

Since coming to Whitebridge High School you have grown in physical and mental stature. Work and study in your subject have improved your capacity towards the making of a future livelihood and the useful employment of your leisure hours. The opportunity to advance in both these directions has been assured by those who designed your courses but there is much more to be gained from experiences at High School than can be incorporated in a syllabus of study or measured by percentage marks.

We hope that at school you will gain not only knowledge but wisdom and that you will develop habits that will lead to a way of life which is satisfying to yourself and beneficial to others. Examples of men's lives and thoughts in history and literature can increase your understanding. Precepts expounded by parents, preachers and teachers will guide those who listen but probably the greatest influences come from examples and environment.

Let us decide to assist in creating the right sort of environment. This will depend largely on our attitude to our fellows, our ability to exercise tolerance if not friendliness to those with whom we may disagree, and the sincerity of our own application to whatever task we have in hand, preferably a sincerity born of desire to succeed personally rather than to surpass others. Fortunately excellence in these directions is not restricted to the intellectually brilliant ones but is available to all with the right spirit.

1965 Span Magazine – Principal's Message . . .

I was evidently not regarding your editor's request for a message for "Span" as an urgent matter when I recently sought some recreation in my old university mathematics text book. In it on the fly-leaf I found that I had written the quotation:

"One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed though right were worsted wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, sleep to wake."

After such a lapse of time I cannot remember what led me to seek courage in these words: whether the contents of the text were proving baffling, the examinations louring on the horizon or my finances in their usual depleted state. I know I was not given to quoting poetry so Browning's lines must have greatly impressed me when I encountered them.

I think that in those distant days I would have absorbed the implications of the poet's words and have understood that I could not in idleness rest on the assurance of fairer fortunes, but that some effort and enterprise were required on my part. I would have realised that Browning's main theme was that of attitude. Educationists to-day are concerned with attitudes to study, to other people and to life in general.

Those high school students from careful, comfortable homes, with pleasant comradeships, attractive school surroundings, friendly contact with teachers, would rarely see clouds on their horizon. But those rare moments of disappointment or depression by students, teachers or parents in study or relationships need not become moments of despair if we face up to the situation and "march breast forward and if baffled fight better".

This school as a corporate body has in its brief existence encountered but few problems – few chiefly because of the "attitudes" of the folk concerned. Most of our students apply themselves conscientiously to study and have a fair appreciation of the rights of the person and property of other people. The staff has been capable and interested in the progress, sport and activities of the children. The parents have given willing co-operation in the provision of fees, uniforms and materials. Many mothers and a few fathers have been most generous with their own time and toil.

Of our original students now completing Form III, those who will continue to Form VI have reached the half-way mark of high school life. They have set a pattern of behaviour and attitude for those who follow and if they maintain their standards the future of the school seems assured.

"No, at noonday in the bustle of man's worktime
Greet the unseen with cheer!

Browning's concluding stanza seems appropriate for what should be my last message in "Span". I wish for the school what almost became its motto: "Vires acquirat eundo" – "may it gather strength in the going".