

SIX BLESSINGS

An old revivalist hymn urges us to 'count our blessings.' This can well be the task for our final chapter, for the reader will by now be satiated with facts and may wish to get the School into some sort of perspective before laying this booklet aside. To my mind there are six such blessings, well clear of all others, which have done most to make M.G.S. the splendid School it is and always has been.

First, its setting amidst fair and unspoilt countryside, with an outlook as delightful as that of any school in England. Its pupils have come from the small towns of Malton and Norton, from the surrounding villages and from outlying farms and hamlets. Most of them have had their full share of the integrity and sincerity of the countryside and as pupils they have been trusting, co-operative and friendly.

Second, its size, which has always been small enough to preserve something of the family atmosphere of the early days. The Headmaster and his Staff have come to know their pupils well, not just as names, faces and I.Q's., but so as to be able to give them the help and direction appropriate to their special needs. Many of the pupils have benefited in another way, for a higher proportion of them have held posts of responsibility, or played in School teams, than would have been the case in a larger establishment.

Third, the fact that the School has been co-educational since its refoundation in 1911, and so has given its pupils the many benefits that come in later life as a result of the free and natural association of boys and girls during their adolescence. Co-education is now respectable and its merits are acknowledged by a growing range of informed opinion. Old Maltonians can well be proud that their school was among the pioneers of mixed secondary schools.

Fourth, the kindness and wisdom of its three Headmasters, none of whom have been the efficient pieces of administrative machinery that many of their fellows too easily become, but have all retained a warm-hearted personal interest in the children and teachers in their charge. M.G.S. can be grateful, too, for the length of time that each one has held his office, bringing the School a stability to be envied by those schools that have witnessed a long procession of ambitious and reforming Headmasters.

Fifth, that there have been so many devoted servants of the School, willing to give not only their hearts but much of their lives to M.G.S. This is in no sense an honours list, but who can think of M.G.S. without recalling some or all of 'A.B.', Miss Douthett, 'Mecca', Bruce Rolls, George and Gertrude Barker—and there are others, some still giving service, not very far behind them. It is names such as these that give a school its tradition and its sense of lasting values. May we mention here also the enlightened direction given to School affairs by its Governors, and in particular the active and sustained interest of the Worsley family.

Sixth, the energy and skill of those many teachers who, though not feeling that M.G.S. should be their whole life's work, have nevertheless, during their years on the Staff, given without stint of their time and abilities. We think here, among others, of Marion Edwards, Thomas Curzon, Ethel Turner, Lucy Taylor, Bill Richardson, Beatrice Goldberg, and of many others, several of them still in office.

The School, then, has much of which it can be proud. But this must not lead to complacency. Those of us who love M.G.S. must not be blinded to her shortcomings; they exist today as they did in the past. Much work remains ahead, but those who face it can feel themselves part of a fine tradition, which has sent out into the world some two thousand men and women, the great majority of whom have led happy and useful lives, and many of whom, as this booklet has shown, have done well enough by any worldly standards to reflect great credit on their School, and on all who have laboured there over the last fifty-four years.