

SECONDARY EDUCATION IN THORNBURY NOW TAKING A DEFINITE PATTERN

HOPES of a definite plan for grammar and secondary education in Thornbury and district by the end of this summer acceptable to the governors of both schools and the Local Education Authority were mentioned by Canon R. G. Rawstone who presided at Thornbury Grammar School Speech Day on Wednesday.

Canon Rawstone went on to pay tribute to the Headmaster, Mr. D. P. Rendall. He recalled that when Mr. Rendall was appointed here the tremendous problems which faced the School today had not yet arisen. But Mr. Rendall had faced them with great patience and determination, with a readiness to accept and work with the changing ideas which determined educational policy in these days.

Mr. D. P. Rendall, Headmaster, in his review of the school year, said 'I am not a traditionalist and firmly believe that true progress must grow out of experience. Thornbury Grammar School has certainly not stood still in the fast moving river of change.'

As more Schools become comprehensive, so more Sixth Forms come into being. The increase in the number of Sixth Forms raises real problems in terms of hard educational economics. Honours Graduates in Mathematics and Science are already in short supply, nationally. The proliferation of Sixth Forms will only accentuate this problem. If a Six Form is to be thoroughly efficient in terms of variety of courses and subjects offered, in terms of accommodation and facilities and, most important of all, in terms of staffing, then neighbouring Schools must be prepared to come together and pool their resources at this level. I firmly believe this.

Then there is a pressing need for reform of Sixth Form curricula and examinations, notably with a view to reducing specialisation, a need now widely accepted.

The prizes were distributed by Professor John E. Harris, Vice-Chancellor of Bristol University, who in his address praised Thornbury Grammar School for the high level of its general education. He said that the school magazine was the best he had read in years. It was outstanding not only in the artistic level of its illustrations but in the scope and breadth of its articles.

Education was tremendously important because it represented to any youngster the opening of the doors of opportunity in later life. It was astonishing how useful some of the supposedly useless subjects turned out in later life.