

Good Neighbourliness in the Town

NEED TO ELIMINATE SELFISHNESS

Life at its Best When Surrounded by Friends

When acknowledging his election to the Mayoralty, Coun. G. E. Boothman spoke particularly to the young people, young married couples, the middle aged and the elderly, dealing with the difficult problems facing each section of the population. He said he wished to be a friend to all people in return for the honour done to him, and wished to be of service to the people and the town. Appealing for patience from the young married couples looking for a house, because there were still 717 applications for Council houses, and it was only expected that 50 houses would be completed and let this year. "717 into 50 just won't go," said the Mayor. He paid tribute to the elderly, and said it was due to their efforts in the past that people to-day enjoyed the benefits of shorter working hours, health services, and happy, healthy and higher educated grandchildren.

As has been the custom in recent years there were a large number of children present at the ceremony, and Coun. Boothman particularly addressed them, and instructed them in the construction of the Council. He attempted a brief quiz on various points of local government, but possibly owing to shyness he was unable to draw the children into answering his questions.

The new Town Clerk of Todmorden, Mr. J. D. Moys, L.I.B., was present and was introduced by the Mayor.

RENDERED FAITHFUL SERVICE ity to keep the dignity of the office
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ness in our town.' I believe our townspeople are good neighbours, and on good terms of friendship with those who live next door or in the near vicinity. Very few people in our town have not at some time been connected with an organisation that knew how to arrange get-together efforts either in Sunday school socials, dramatic societies, choral societies, or supporting a sports club. Many people in Todmorden know of the joy and satisfaction they found in life when they took part in arranging functions that gave pleasure to others. I am very much afraid that the number of people who find pleasure in this service for others is getting smaller year by year, and in this way towns are losing their individuality. I have a great desire during my year to be of service to any organisation in our town that is doing good work among the young, middle-aged or elderly. One of the great needs of the present day is to eliminate selfishness — a renewal of the will to serve.

"I should esteem my year of office a successful one if I could stimulate and increase good citizenship. The obligations of a good citizen to my mind are few and simple—to be unselfish, to be friendly and to act the part of and be in truth the good neighbour. I plead, therefore, for good neighbourliness between individuals, between the ratepayer and the local authority, and between public authorities."

The Mayor then said he wished to speak particularly to the children present at that morning's ceremony, and went on to describe the constitution of the Council—its aldermen,

RENDERED FAITHFUL SERVICE

Moving the adoption of Coun. Boothman as Mayor, Ald. J. Gilmartin said he had known him since 1921 when he came to Cornholme, and he had served the people of Cornholme not only as a shop manager but in many other ways, in fact, one of his main objects in life was to serve the public. As a member of the Borough Council he had served with Coun. Boothman on various committees, but the committee that the Mayor-elect enjoyed working for most was the Welfare Committee, on which he served for about four years. He enjoyed that work because he was amongst the people and doing something to help them. Coun. Boothman had been a success in most of the jobs he had undertaken and not the least was his work for the British Legion. A founder-member of the Cornholme branch, he had served the branch faithfully ever since. When the Old Age Pensions Committee was formed, Coun. Boothman immediately offered his services. The thought which was constantly in his mind was: "Is there anything or anybody I can help?" He was a family man, therefore knew much about children and always had their interests at heart. Ald. Gilmartin said the Mayor-elect had served on the Council for six years and was sure to uphold the dignity of the office of Mayor.

Mrs. Boothman was referred to by Ald. Gilmartin as "Pioneer of the 'hut' in Centre Vale Park," and, like her husband, a founder-member of the British Legion. She also, had served the community well and was well fitted for the office of Mayoress. Ald. Gilmartin said he was sorry Coun. Boothman's mother could not be present, she would have been proud of the son who was so much like herself in carrying out charitable deeds.

WORKED FOR THE OLD PEOPLE

Ald. H. Taylor, seconding the proposition, said the office that was proposed for Coun. Boothman was one that could not be attained by wealth, position or birth—it had to be earned. Coun. Boothman had earned the honour of occupying that office by his work on the Council and in his religious activities. The calibre of the Mayor-elect was reflected in the latter alone; he had served for twenty years as superintendent and Sunday school teacher at Castle Grove Methodist and Vale Baptist Churches. Most of his adult life had been spent working for the community and hundreds of people had benefited from his work. Since leaving elementary school he had consistently endeavoured to improve himself by attending night school, and his struggles in those early days had led up to him being nominated as chief citizen. In the old age pensioners' movement Coun. Boothman was well known for his enthusiastic labours on behalf of the elderly people and he was respected by all. A man who held the position which Coun. Boothman had been invited to undertake must have a good home influence and Ald. Taylor was sure that the Mayor-elect qualified in that respect. In him the Council had a man who would endeavour to the utmost of his abil-

ity to keep the dignity of the office and possibly add to it.

Mrs. Boothman as Mayoress would be a strong support to her husband though her manner was quiet and unassuming. She had a natural charm devoid of any affectation which would weld her to the people she met and make it a pleasure for them to have met her.

After the new Mayor had been unanimously elected he took his position in the Mayoral chair and was handed the keys of office by the retiring Mayor (Coun. A. King) who offered his congratulations and best wishes for a happy term of office. Aldermen Gilmartin and Taylor also tendered their good wishes and congratulations.

OPPORTUNITY FOR SERVICE

The Mayor said he wished to express his thanks to the members of the Council for their unanimous election of him to that office. He was very conscious of the honour done him in electing him the 36th Mayor of the borough and he would endeavour to maintain the high and exacting standards of his predecessors since the town's incorporation in 1896. He would also tender sincere thanks to all those people who had so kindly extended good wishes to him and to the Mayoress. It was not fully realised how many sacrifices were made by womenfolk, especially the wives of councillors and all men who took upon themselves public work. They inevitably lost many hours of companionship and on occasions hours of sleep. It was common knowledge to the men concerned that they received from their womenfolk ideas, inspiration, and guidance, and it was with both appreciation and pleasure that he paid this tribute to the wives, mothers and sisters for the great part they played in civic and public life. Most of their work was done behind the scenes and their praises often went unhonoured and unsung.

Regarding himself he could not stand before them and claim to be a talented speaker, a profound thinker, a clever business man, or a wealthy magnate. He could, however, say with truth and sincerity that he would like to be a friend to all people and he would, in return for the honour they had done him, be glad to have the opportunity to be of service to others and to his town.

"During my life," continued the Mayor, "I have endeavoured to practice kindness and courtesy, and for many years I have taken my part in the instruction of young people in the way they should live. My other great interest has been the welfare of elderly people—a cause which is near to my heart and which I hope to develop during my Mayoralty. It is the Mayor's prerogative on this day to speak on any subject he wishes. As I see the position, whilst we have every reason to take a pride in our past achievements and inheritance, we cannot live in the past nor yet in the future. Our task is to live in the present amid the daily round and common task.

JOY AND SATISFACTION IN SERVING OTHERS

"But the theme of my remarks this morning is 'Good neighbourli-

ness' particularly to the children present at that morning's ceremony, and went on to describe the constitution of the Council—its aldermen, councillors and officials. The work and ordered progress of any local authority was grounded on a blending of the technical skill and ability of the official with the initiative, local knowledge, aspirations and desires of the elected representatives of the people. He wanted the children to be interested in their town.

"Some of you older boys and girls will shortly be leaving school. You may not think so but it is true that you have been better cared for than any previous generation of boys and girls in Britain. All these are very good things but they are not a guarantee that you will grow up to be a good citizen—you yourself are the only guarantee of that.

"717 INTO 50 WON'T GO"

"Now a word to the young married couples who are still waiting for a separate house of their own. I know you have shown great patience and I must ask those of you who have not yet been accommodated to continue to do so. At present we have 717 applications for Council houses. Fifty houses are expected to be completed and let this year. 717 into 50 just won't go. Not all the 717 applicants, of course, are young married couples and the Housing Committee strive to treat all classes of applicants fairly under their points scheme. That scheme may not be perfect, but it is true to say that the letters under the scheme have been more satisfactory and produced less complaint than was the case previously. Housing progress has not been as marked as the Council would have liked. Restrictions on capital investment, rival claims on labour and materials and the financing of costly schemes are limiting factors which have to be contended with in committee room and office and cannot be waved away with a glib phrase or the sweep of a wand. We hope this year to start the erection of houses at Harley Wood and go some way to preparing the Stansfield Mill site for future development. The acquisition of this site and its tidying up will command general approval in the town.

"To the middle-aged of our town, you have done a grand job during your life, having weathered two terrible storms that were enough to break any one's spirit. In spite of this you are known for your industriousness, respected by your employers, because you are willing to do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay.

DESERVE THE VERY BEST

"My final words are addressed to the elderly. You have played the game in your life, by your striving and working, and efforts and planning, are the people able to enjoy the benefits of to-day, shorter working weeks, health services, better homes, happy, healthy and higher educated grandchildren, it is to you that we should offer our thanks. In the evening of your life you deserve the very best, and when is life at its best? It is best at all ages when you are surrounded by friends. I want to make

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