

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

I am commissioned, on behalf of the Masters and my Schoolfellows, to congratulate you upon our migration to-day from yonder ancient but over-narrow chamber, in which we had barely elbow room to welcome your annual presence amongst us. to a new chamber more worthy of our School's increasing reputation, and better suited to its rising numbers. Perhaps there can be no clearer proof of what we owe to your care and judgment than the capacious dimensions of this beautiful building, consecrated to the service of the Muses, which you would seem to have erected less in reliance upon the past prosperity of the School than in the belief that its future will be equally prosperous.

You meet to-day to inaugurate a new period in the history of our little state. Hitherto it has been our custom upon Prize Day to listen to your kind words of approval and encouragement without attempting any speeches ourselves. But, to-day, I have to solicit your attention, on my own account and that of my companions, to the most successful of the prize exercises, Greek, Latin, and English, written during the past year, which, with your kind permission, we propose to recite. And perhaps it may not be distasteful if, by way of variation, we endeavour to raise a smile, at any rate upon the faces of the fairer portion of our audience, by enacting an amusing scene or so from the plays of Aristophanes, Shakespeare, and Molière. I am well aware, however, that at present we can claim no right to the building in which we are assembled, and that, before we attempt any such innovation as I propose, you, my Lords and Gentlemen, must give us the right to play our several parts upon this stage.

Let me ask, then, if it is your will and pleasure that these walls and benches should henceforward be devoted to the use of the School.