

PROLOGUE

Lords, Ladies, Gentlemen, bright June once more
bids us throw wide the hospitable door,
and plants you helpless on the bench austere
strange sights to see and stranger tongues to hear.
So first, with your permission, you shall be
apostrophised in sundry lines by me.

While I peruse of time the backward span
and the slow process of the seasons scan,
one thought pervading dominates the mind,
how changed this June from that which lies behind! ¹
Then all our little town with bunting gay
proclaimed an universal holiday;
and influent crowds her narrow streets among
jostled and pushed amain in eager throng.
For Town and School and all with comely mirth
combined to celebrate our *Sherborne's* birth,
and trace the story of her circling years,
where yonder *Roger's* keep its height uprears.
No recitation dull of verse or prose,
or English Greek or Latin, then uprose;
no black clad actors trod the red draped stage
with halting echo of a byegone age.
Heaven's azure dome our roof, th' expansive scene,
whereon we played our parts, Dame Nature's green;
and, that the drama might its frame beseem,
twelve centuries supplied the ample theme.
Illustrious *Parker!* when thy nimble mind
yon stately Pageant at the first designed,
and love of *Sherborne* nerved thy Master will
t' employ for her thy manysided skill;

¹ *The Sherborne Pageant, written and invented by Mr. Louis N. Parker, for nearly twenty years Director of the Music in Sherborne School, was produced in the Ruins of Sherborne Castle on June 12th and following days, 1905.*

how little didst thou reckon that thou wouldst be
 some day o'erwhelmed almost with pageantry.
 See! rival towns dispute our *Sherborne's* bays,
 outdo her efforts, and outshine her praise:
 a *Warwick* here, an Anglian *Bury* there,
 a here—a there—in fine, an everywhere!
 Ere half a week is sped, by Avon's tide
 Knights, Kings, Queens, Bishops, Barons stately ride;
 and while one thousand players served our turn
 two thousand there t' outdo poor *Sherborne* burn.
 So when next year *St. Edmond's* sons engage
 three thousand folks shall crowd th' astonished stage!
 Anon, year after year, town after town,
 shall crown its forbears with a grander crown;
 each Pageant on a more majestic scale,
 and e'er before the last the former pale.
 Yet we who first revolving set the ball
 have two great points of vantage over all:
 their shows may be more splendid in array;
 still they but follow where we led the way:
 and whoso sets his heart on Pageantry
 must straight apply to our own L.N.P.

Enough of this! I bid you contemplate
 affairs more germane to our little state.
 And first a kindly welcome we'd extend
 to a prized Governor and honoured friend;
 statesman and courtier, scion of a line
 whose names in English story brightly shine,
 with *Zutphen's* hero linked, and him who won
 undying saintly fame at *Bemerton*:
 and while we greet Lord *Pembroke* heartily
 this little tie with him we gladly see:
 from 1550 date our chartered powers
 his style derives from one more year than ours.²
 Two heads with honour crowned with wisdom stored
 are lately taken from our Council board.³

² *The Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, G.C.V.O., is 14th Earl in direct descent, the Earldom having been granted in 1551.*

³ *Two very old Governors have lately retired; Mr. Thomas Ffooks, of Totnell, whose grandfather was elected Governor in 1762, his father in 1805 and himself in 1845; and Mr. J. Hoddinott of Sherborne, who had held office for fifty years. Both are O.SS.*

Each long had done us service, each had known
 dear Alma Mater as a grateful son;
 and to well earned repose as each departs
 he bears the tribute of our grateful hearts.
 Nor could we bear that honoured name should go,
 linked with our own so many decades through.
 Grandsire and sire and son in turn have lent
 their weighty counsels to our government:
 now lest the name of *Ffooks* should vanish quite
 succeeds the nephew to the uncle's right. ⁴
 And where (search Dorset through with wary eye)
 more fitting governor could man descry
 than him, who Dorset born and Dorset bred
 of Dorset Londoners is ranked the head;
 that skilful wielder of the healing knife
 to whom our Liege himself ('tis rumoured) owes his life? ⁵

Turn next your gaze where India's sultry sky
 glares furious o'er the plain's immensity:
 two young men nurtured in our loved abode
 are thither called to share the white man's load: ⁶
 and whereso'er they go, they still shall find
 their wanderings guided by a *Sherborne* mind. ⁷
 Another honour, long to us unknown,
 upon yon oaken board is duly shown:
 the oldest House of all on *Camus'* banks
 adds a *Shirburnian* Fellow to her ranks. ⁸

⁴ *Mr. Thomas Ffooks is succeeded by his nephew, Mr. E. Archdall Ffooks, of Sherborne, an O.S., Under Sheriff and Clerk of the Peace and County Council for the County of Dorset. His Father was also a member of the Governing Body.*

⁵ *The other vacancy is filled by the appointment of Sir Frederick Treves, Bart., G.C.V.O., C.B., LL.D., Sergeant-Surgeon to H.M. the King, who is (amongst many other things) President of the Society of Dorset men in London.*

⁶ *Mr. Sidney Turner and Mr. J. F. Brewster have lately passed into the I.C.S.*

⁷ *Sir F. R. Upcott is Chairman of the Board of Indian Railways.*

⁸ *Mr. H. W. V. Temperley has been elected a Fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge.*

Nor lack distinctions won (for counterpoise)
 at *Christ Church* (and elsewhere) by present boys.⁹
 Some with their brains have made our hearts rejoice,
 another wins us glory with his voice.¹⁰
 And while our mental efforts something yield
 honour is gathered in another field—
 a watery field I mean; for (strange event)
 old *Camus* takes from *Yeo* a President.¹¹
 Last whoso'er shall view this year's 'R.A.'
 shall see us honoured in a novel way.
 A *Sherborne* limner, who with keen delight¹²
 was present and beheld last summer's sight,
 arming his brush with patriotic paint
 has laboured to immortalise our Saint.
 So now for years to come shall we possess
 the portrait of our Head, in fancy dress.
 Whereof if you would, sirs, assured be,
 only return next year—and you shall see!

⁹ *F. V. Merriman, Classical Scholar of Christchurch, Oxford;*
C. H. Cole, Classical Scholar of Sidney, Cambridge;
G. C. Lunt, Exhibitioner, Exeter, Oxford.

¹⁰ *O. Parry-Jones has been elected an Academical Clerk of Magdalen College, Oxford.*

¹¹ *The President of the C.U.B.C. this year, Mr. H. M. Goldsmith, of Jesus, is an O.S.*

¹² *Mr. H. A. Olivier, O.S., has painted a portrait of the Head Master as St. Ealdhelm, which is exhibited in this year's Academy, and will be given to the School.*