

COMMEMORATION, JUNE 23RD, 1934.

PROLOGUE, recited by J. MAIR, Head of the School.

I am the Prologue, and my task uncertain,
Unless it is to ring you up the Curtain;
Smile on your Charms; exclaim in tones precise
How Young you look and Uniformly Nice—
And so remind you that 'tis You, not us,
Who build the School with Touch Miraculous!
For You approach house matrons on the quiet
With Dim, Delirious Dreams of modern diet;
'Tis You who talk of health, and take good care
That Tom's Complexion still is "Mainly Fair"—
And is there e'er a Parent who disdains
To tax Housemasters on their house's Drains?
Mothers send parcels, woollen, weird and wide
To shield their youngest son's alarmed inside,
While Fathers fritter incomes on rash trips
To watch their sons miss catches in the slips;
And Tragic Couples wander round the Courts,
Beating round bushes of too just Reports,
And, with Imaginations strained, suppose
'Poor Work' means 'Unsuccess'—and not 'Repose'!
All this delights us; yet one Task you Shirk;
You guard our Health, but never do our Work!
Now once again we hail and give you Greeting,
Remind you of Past Days and Summers Gone,
Yet link the Past and Future at this meeting
And show the Road that still shall lead us on.
Here see the School, where we shall now Rehearse
Our life for you, welcomes its Corporate Guest.
It is one timeless whole, one Universe,
Your Goal to-day—but still remains our Quest.

- (a) Hail also, Reverend Sir, Serene, Seraphic,
Safe here at last from Oxford's direful Traffic;
Within this peaceful place you can Forget
Male pupils—(worse)—the Undergraduate—
For one brief moment that great city's gone
Where Youth is gay 'And Quiet Goes the Don.'
And You, Sir Chairman, hail. All know your ways,
(b) Foxes and Fun and odd half-holidays
Dropped from Olympus. So, in our Presumption,
We coyly make the Impolite Assumption
That there'll be more ahead. And give our thanks
That Kindness' River still o'erflows its Banks.
Your Brothers, too, we greet, those Spirits who
Move ever in Veiled State, beyond our view;
Propelled by Motors to Dim Conclave, then
As silently propelled away again.
(c) Hail also, grave Divine, who yet can save
With gravity the sinner from the Grave,
We bid you welcome, though all could dispense
With our dull tongue who heard your Eloquence.
Perchance Yon Central Figure you Deduce
Is our Headmaster. Let me Introduce
Parents and Friends to Academic State—
His words, though winged, possess a Certain Weight;
While many a Feat of his has found—no less—
(d) The Adulation of the local press.
All these we greet; assure them that the School
Moves to a bright Allegro 'neath their rule—
Though on our Playing Fields the slowest game
That e'er a Nation played goes on the same,
And if to win our matches we deplore
Yet see, with what Artistic Sense we draw—
Here, too, ere stumps are drawn and efforts cease,
Are won indeed the Victories of Peace.
On Field Days, too, we terrify the Cattle
Of sleepy farmers with our Mimic Battle;
Crouch in the grass, then Rise, and everywhere
We make our brave assault upon Thin Air.
And in the Classroom, too, will humour reign—
For those not ABLE meet too soon with CANE!
This is our Life, of Thought and Action blent,
The Serious and the Gay. Here Beauty grows
Freely, yet Loved of Peace. Here we have spent
Long hours to build the Vision we disclose—
To shame, in this Bright Month, the Flaunting Rose
With deeper colour in our Lives—yet, Stay!
The Proof is in Ourselves, and talk must close—
So Prologue goes and, going, cries 'THE PLAY!'

- (a) The Rev. Dr. Lys, O.S., Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University.
(b) The Blackmore Vale Hunt meets annually in the School Courts.
(c) The Rev. Canon Quick.
(d) The Headmaster represents the Town on the Cricket Field.