

RENDCOMB COLLEGE MAGAZINE

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SCHOOL NOTES

During the Summer Holidays and the first few weeks of the Michaelmas term the whole of the outside of the College was repainted, and the general effect is a good one. At the same time the racks in the drying room were taken out and rebuilt, and it is now possible for the games' clothes of the whole school to be dried overnight.

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The Headmaster has acquired a second hand, full-sized silent film projector from a cinema. The Big School has been wired for an arc lamp and a portable, fire-proof projection house has been obtained by the College.

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A. R. Curtis left in July to go to the Training College of St. Mark and St. John, Chelsea, where he will be taking a three year degree course.

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We were delighted to meet Mr. Claude Montefiore who came one day to see the College. Mr. Montefiore is seventy years of age, and is a nephew of Sir Francis Goldsmith, who built the house in about 1870. In spite of not having been in the house since his tenth birthday, Mr. Montefiore clearly remembered all the rooms on the ground floor and recalled how he used to have lessons from a governess in what is now the Common Room. He told us that this room was the only place in which smoking was permitted in those days, and that men visitors used to complain that the smoking room was of such meagre proportions!

Of the nineteen boys who sat for the School Certificate Examination in December. J. F. Roberts and W. Y. Willetts matriculated with honours; A. E. A. Brain, H. E. Miller, D. A. J. K. Richards, A. E. Shield, A. D. Thomas, O. G. Morel, G. M. Wilson and R. M. W. Campbell matriculated, and the following passed: C. E. Coles, J. R. V. Davies, H. C. I. Hanks, G. A. Lowe, V. W. Pullin, N. Slade, J. H. A. Muirhead and A. W. F. Abbott.

OLD BOYS NOTES

B. J. Meadows has been made an Official Referee for the North Gloucestershire Association Football League.

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C. J. Gough has been appointed to the staff of Loughborough College. Since leaving Rendcomb in August, 1924, until taking up this new post he had been with Messrs. Russell at Broadway. Cecil Gough is undoubtedly the finest craftsman who has ever passed through the College, and we offer him our heartiest congratulations and good wishes for a happy future in his new work.

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Tony Perkins attended the Old Boys' Dinner fresh from a chess triumph at Oxford. On the previous day he had played seven matches simultaneously against Wadham College Chess Club, and won them all. He numbered among his victims E. T. Norris.

HONOURS

N. A. Perkins has been awarded "The Junior Mathematical Exhibition" at Oxford.

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Dick Field has been awarded a Free Studentship to the Royal College of Art.

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P. H. Wyon has passed the second M. B Examination at Leeds University.

LECTURES.

On Friday, 13th October, Captain J. D. Daintree lectured to the School on "Life Saving." The first part of the lecture consisted of a clear and practical description of the Schaefer method for the resuscitation of the apparently dead. This included minor demonstrations on members of the audience. Capt. Daintree explained how this method is superior to others because of its simplicity, and drove home the fact that it is equally applicable to apparent drowning, asphyxiation from gas or electric shock. If at times we were tempted to remember that Capt. Daintree had given the lecture before, we equally were immensely impressed by the vigour, preciseness and, indeed, freshness of all he had to tell us, considering the very large number of times he has given the lecture in the course of instructing the Coastguard Service, and of later years, in schools. He left us convinced that any intelligent person, no matter how young, who will take the trouble to memorise a few simple facts, can be of real service in time of emergency.

The second part of the lecture was devoted to methods of rescuing drowning people from the water. Capt. Daintree demonstrated these with great clearness and obvious conviction, but some of us felt that they would not be of much use without constant practice and then only, as a rule, if the rescuer was the same size as, or larger than the victim. There must have been many in the audience who hoped that they would never be

faced with the position "to rescue or not to rescue" All the same it is a powerful argument for a Rendcomb Swimming Bath.

The last part of the lecture consisted of a fascinating demonstration of the rescuing of people from a wrecked ship by means of the breeches buoy. The lecturer had with him a scale model which took everyone's fancy, and which effectively cleared up any doubts about the apparatus which may have been in the minds of mere land-lubbers.

On Friday morning from 8:30 to 9:15 Capt. Daintree gave the Schaefer Method and Life-Saving Drill to the whole school in the Gymnasium. We felt, particularly in the case of the former, that this was very valuable.

We are grateful to Capt. Daintree for his lecture and for the great trouble he took to make it a success, and we shall look forward to his giving a similar talk and demonstration to the next generation of boys at the College.

Mr. James Burford's lecture on the "Constructivist Stage" on 15th October proved both pleasant and enlightening. Many of us were awed at first by the title, but the subject proved so attractive and was so clearly expounded that we still retain some knowledge of the constructivist theory, even if we cannot claim thoroughly to understand it.

The producer's art is to develop a mise-en-scene, which will enable his players to convey accurately the atmosphere demanded by each scene, and it is his object to do so by discarding elaborate stage scenery for more simple means, which will yet supply a setting sufficiently pronounced in itself to reflect and heighten the required atmosphere.

Perhaps the simplest and the best example of such a setting is one for "Beyond," in which the desired effect is fully obtained by a window and balcony in silhouette against a clear sky, for the

day scene, and by a blind and a very simple bedroom setting for the night scene. The setting for "The Detectives" presents another such example, in which the desired effect is produced by the simplest abstraction of the general representation of the scene required—in this instance a Continental railway carriage.

The mise-en-scene need not necessarily remain the same throughout the play, but will rather tend to become more naturalistic or more abstract according to the producer's conception of the atmosphere required by each scene, and of the best way in which to obtain it.

The Constructivist theory always requires a three dimensional setting, and places at the producer's disposal seven means which enable him to develop his mise-en-scene and to obtain the correct atmosphere for each stage in the development of the plot. Line proportion and mass are means which serve directly in the development of the setting. Their use may best be illustrated by example. Simple arches in Classic and Gothic style exemplify the use of line in reflecting the atmosphere of the period which it is desired to depict. A very wide stage front running between two short pillars conveys aptly the idea of "proportion," and is a suitable setting for the wide crinolines of "Versailles" in the Pompadour style. "Mass" is well exemplified by a very heavy setting which is designed to convey the impression of a man's smallness by direct contrast. A suitable example is perhaps a mise-en-scene in Egyptian style of architecture.

A three dimensional setting is a necessary attribute to the fourth means, "Level," which is essential if the producer is to reflect, through position at different stage levels, the psychological mood of the crowd in each scene, or to show in the same manner the actual success or failure in the plot of a leading character, who will appear in the scene at a level corresponding to his mood, or at different levels which reflect his destiny, be it known or unknown to the character in question. Thus Richard the Second might first appear in a Constructivist setting, at the top of a long flight of stairs down which he would slowly descend to the stage.

"Colour" and "Light" are means which help to obtain emotional effect. The mood of the leading character or the atmosphere of a whole scene may be reflected in the colour of the set. Green, for instance, may reflect a peaceful atmosphere, whereas black would produce a sombre effect, and red be indicative of mood. In a similar way the atmosphere of a scene may be reflected and intensified by means of "Light," diffused lighting conveying the impression of mood, and direct lighting that of action.

The final means at the producer's disposal is "Noise," which contributes very essentially to the general effect of a scene and which, by foreshadowing some future development in the plot, may directly anticipate the atmosphere and content of a later scene. Thus, in Schiller's "Wallenstein," the Duke's exit preceded by a groom who bears a torch, carries with it some feeling or air of finality. The door closes softly behind the Duke, whose footsteps may be heard receding slowly and dimly, before dying away at the end of a long passage.

We are much indebted to Mr. Burford for his very attractive talk.

On Saturday, November 18th, Dr. Arthur Browne discussed the History of Medicine. While it must be emphasised that medicine is preventative, curative, and educative, it is realised that medicine is not always a true experimental science. The methods of experimental investigation are difficult of application to human material, but the scientific elements in medicine are well worthy of a historical treatment.

The origins of scientific medicine were with the Greeks. Hippocrates, Aristotle, Galen, were outstanding names of an established system, which, flourishing for eight centuries, contributed the elements of anatomy, physiology, and nomenclature to medicine.

The Alexandrian School in Egypt followed in the Greek traditions, but there was a general decay in the spirit of enquiry in the Roman Empire. The centuries following the death of Galen were indeed, ones of decreasing decay of intellect. Arabic medicine, which spread Greek scientific knowledge in an Arabic version was the first awakening. In its

turn mediaeval scholasticism rendered these Arabic texts into forms available to the west.

The rise of the Universities with their medico-legal schools lead to the re-birth of medical science. Leonardo Vesalius furthered anatomical knowledge, while a little later Fabricus, Sanetorius, and Harvey established modern physiology. This birth of medicine with a scientific basis leads on to the more modern work of Hunter, Penner and Lister.

Dr. Browne introduced much biographical matter with many interesting and amusing anecdotes. The whole was welded into an extremely interesting lecture, for which the whole school was extremely grateful.

FOOTBALL SEASON, 1933.

The most conspicuous feature of the football season of 1933 was the great improvement of our standard of play in the last two months of the term. It might be gathered from our succession of failures in the first month's matches (against Swindon College, Cheltenham GS., and Dean Close 2nd XI) that the school as a whole was slow to begin really intensive practice. This conclusion would be incorrect.

Our fortunes turned when the positions of outside left and centre-forward were filled satisfactorily. Neither Thornhill nor Abbott had sufficient experience to make our left wing effective, but when A. Wilson was tried there his combination with A. Brain (inside left) made it the strongest part of our attack.

Of the centre forwards tried during the term Hanks was by far the most successful. He quickly developed in skill, and although he was often half the weight of his opponents, he showed great tenacity in tackling them.

All the other players were in the 1st XI. of 1932, except Skelton, who played at outside right. Their play greatly improved during the season. Passes from the halves to the forwards were much more accurate, and the dangerous fault of clearing down the centre (from the backs) was almost unknown.

The 2nd XI. was much stronger and more successful than it has been for a

long time. The Junior XI. was quite capable, but on account of momentary carelessness many opportunities were thrown away.

After lengthy discussions in the General Meeting, it was decided not to play the Group Games, because of the unfit state of the ground. Although it was probably the hardest frost that we have ever had, it was a great pity to break the sequence. The following played in the 1st XI. after all experiments had been tried: Martin, goal; Sidgwick and Morel, backs; Muirhead, Uzzell (Capt.) and Boulding, halves, and A. Wilson, A. Brain, Hanks, Roberts and Skelton, forwards.

The results of the matches were:

First Eleven versus		
Date.		Result.
Sep. 30	Old Boys (H)	9—8(won)
Oct. 7	Swindon College (H)	0—6(lost)
Oct. 14	Dean Close (A)	1—7(lost)
Oct. 21	Cheltenham Grammar School (A)	0—9(lost)
Nov. 11	Malmesbury Grammar School (H)	4—1(won)
Nov. 14	Malmesbury Grammar School (A)	3—2(won)
Nov. 18	Dean Close (H)	2—2(draw)
Nov. 25	Hanley Castle (H)	5—1(won)
Dec. 2	Swindon College (A)	1—4(lost)
Dec. 9	Cheltenham Grammar School (H)	(cancelled)

Second Eleven versus

Oct. 21	Cheltenham Grammar School Juniors (H)	1—2(lost)
Oct. 28	Cheltenham Grammar School Juniors (A)	4—4(draw)
Nov. 11	Cheltenham Central School 2nd (H)	10—1(won)

Junior Eleven versus

Oct. 7	Marling Juniors (A)	2—4(lost)
Oct. 14	Farmor's School (H)	3—3 (draw)
Dec. 2	Marling Juniors (H)	1—3(lost)

CHRISTMAS ENTERTAINMENT

The Christmas entertainment took place on the afternoon of Saturday, 16th December, and this year consisted of two short plays, Laurence Houseman's whimsical fantasy "Moonshine," and John Galsworthy's "The Little Man."

"Moonshine" contains only four characters—thereby demanding great care in the choice of actors. The casting was completely justified. J. Gwinnell, in the difficult opening scene, at once created the true atmosphere of fantasy in his playing of Pierrot, and later succeeded in conveying admirably both the mischievous and wistful aspects of the character. He looked well, and his invocation to the moon was genuinely moving.

D. Morison made a cheery figure as Father Christmas, such as we should all love to see in our chimney corner on Christmas Eve. His voice was, perhaps, a little light for so generous a figure.

R. O. J. Cooper contributed a good character study of the old woman—always a difficult part for a boy—and E. R. Gillham made a very human policeman, happily blending the none too intelligent constable with the kindly father. He was exceptionally good in the scene where the humorous philosophy of the latter accepts the fantastical happenings of the night, which completely bewilder the arm of the law.

The production skilfully captured the true spirit of this delicate fantasy. The staging was good, the grouping triumphing over the difficulties of confined space and limited action. There is, for a small stage, a transformation scene that might well have baulked less enterprising stage hands, but this was carried out with exceptional speed and smoothness. The lighting helped greatly in creating the right atmosphere, the all-important ray of moonlight being always "on the spot."

"The Little Man" provided an admirable contrast, transporting us to the worldly bustle of a Continental railway station. Here again the right note was struck at the rising of the curtain and the opening scene truly foreshadowed the brisk speed and sophisticated humour of the play. The simple dignity and kindness of the Little Man, as played

by R. Ingleton, quickly engaged our sympathy and held it throughout his misadventures at the hands of an unkind fate and voluble officialdom. With him we heaved an enormous sigh of relief at the happy conclusion of all his troubles.

It is not easy to maintain for any length of time, of all accents, an American one, and C. Sidgwick deserves much credit for his consistent and clever impersonation. He captured the essential "showmanship" of the character of the American and was chiefly responsible for the admirable speed and verve of the whole performance—altogether one of the best pieces of character study he has given us, and a fitting climax to all the valuable work he has done for Rendcomb acting.

As the German, R. Skelton expounded Nietzsche with Teutonic blustering and much conviction, and was particularly happy in his capacity of interpreter.

The traditional reserve of the Englishman and his Wife was safe with M. Richardson and R. Bettison—though they might both, with advantage, have been more audible.

A. Wilson gave us a good interpretation of a bombastic official who is completely out of his depth in dealing with an unofficial situation.

R. Brain made a stalwart policeman, D. Richardson looked well as a porter, and R. Thornhill did good work as the much-harassed waiter. N. Dalton played the part of the Mother, and managed his skirts and his baby with commendable skill. Last, but not least, there was the Baby, who, if incapable of dramatic talent, provided the audience with a good deal of amusement.

In this play, also, the production was excellent, and the performance a spirited one. Once more the ingenuity of the workshop was called into action to provide a difficult piece of staging, and the resulting railway carriage, complete as it was with luggage rack and corridor, was a most effective achievement. The costumes, as we have now learnt to expect, were excellent, and well worthy of the hours of hard work that went to their making.

A large gathering of parents and friends was warmly appreciative of the afternoon's entertainment.

COLLEGE PARTY.

This was held on Tuesday, December 20th, and it was decided to make certain departures from the programme of 1932. The fancy dress parade was held early in the evening, and was followed by a performance of "The Poacher," by Form Va. We then went into supper in the dining-room, during the course of which toasts were drunk, including that of "The Old Boys." After supper we repaired as usual to the Big School, which had been delightfully decorated by the Entertainments Committee. Here dancing went on, punctuated by the distribution of Mrs. Wills' kind gift of chocolates. And so to bed, after a most enjoyable evening, for which the Entertainments Committee. Miss Simmons and her staff are greatly to be congratulated.

WEDNESDAY, 21st DECEMBER.

During the early evening the College was cleared of all decorations, and these were made into a great bonfire pile at the park end of the balustrade. After tea the silent film "The White Hell of Pitz Palu" was shown in the Big School. The plot was poor, but we were glad to have the opportunity of seeing one of the last good films to be made before the advent of talking pictures. Much of the photography is first-class and gives, not only a real insight into Swiss mountain scenery, but a demonstration of the superiority that the silent camera has over the sound apparatus.

After the film, the lighting of the bonfire and songs round it ended an enjoyable evening and a good Christmas term.

THE RIVALS.

It gave us all great pleasure to see the English Classical Players again, and they were even better in "The Rivals" than they were in "The Importance of Being Earnest" a year ago.

From the very first they gripped and held our attention. The opening dialogue if it had been indifferently acted, might well have been dull, but there was just

the right vivacity to interest us in the characters and plot, while Sheridan was cunningly making his exposition. Till the final curtain, we were away in 18th century Bath, and we enjoyed every minute of our time there. The English Classical Players helped us to enjoy the richness of Sheridan's drama. This was all the more remarkable in that the cast in the play is considerably larger than the number of players in the company.

The simplicity of the scenery was most noteworthy—just a single screen with three arches. With the greatest of ease we could imagine we were in a street or a room.

Our sincere thanks to all. Examinees were particularly glad, a few weeks later, to have made the acquaintance of Mrs. Malaprop.

ACTING.

Acting last term maintained its high standard. There was a welcome revival of serious, well rehearsed plays—as opposed to the often equally enjoyable but perhaps less valuable impromptu performances which have been a particularly prominent feature in the acting of past terms. These too, however, were not lacking, and it would have indeed been a pity had they been, but they played a more subordinate part than usual.

There were a number of form plays, which were produced by Mr. Fogden, and Form Va have established a reputation as a form which contains much acting talent. Form III. are steadily improving, and are now much surer, much less self-conscious than before. It was pleasant to find that the majority of Form I. were so audible. They must now learn to act, rather than to recite their parts, but this improvement will undoubtedly come with increased experience.

On Saturday, Nov. 28th, some members of the school gave a performance of Patrick Hamilton's thriller "Rope," which was produced by C. Sidgwick. This was perhaps the most ambitious of Sidgwick's productions of three-act plays. It was certainly the most successful. "Rope" is

not an easy play to produce. It is not assisted by impressive mechanical effects, as was "The Ghost Train," or by an abundance of light relief, as in "Number 17," but it is a play whose success depends essentially upon good acting. The details of the production were excellent. The stage setting was simple but impressive, and the costumes and makeup admirable; but they were not relied on too much, they were simply a background for the acting. The play had been well rehearsed, and the actors knew their parts thoroughly. It seemed to a member of the audience that the prompter was rather over-hasty in supplying a cue, but, at any rate, he was not much in evidence.

The two chief parts were taken by Martin and Sidgwick, both of whom maintained a consistently high standard. Of the minor parts Willetts was excellent as the hysterical, neurotic Charles Granville, while Tuft, as Leila Arden, not only looked but spoke, and—what is even more rare in a boy—moved like a woman. Sidgwick is to be congratulated on a really excellent production, and the whole cast upon their admirable team work.

On Monday, Dec. 18th, a performance of Shaw's "The Man of Destiny," was given by some members of the staff. This performance was the more enjoyed because it was entirely unexpected, and the actors are to be congratulated upon the secrecy with which they so successfully surrounded their preparations, as well as upon the excellence of the actual performance.

Mr. Newport gave a fine interpretation of Napoleon, and at times he was extraordinarily impressive. There were moments, however, when we felt that his facial expression was, perhaps, too strong. Mr. Woodroffe seemed to fit naturally into the part of the Lieutenant, and Mr. Lee-Browne's inn-keeper was a fine character study.

Mrs. Lee-Browne was outstanding as the Lady. Every speech and action of her's was natural and impressive. Less than any other member of the cast did she seem to be acting; her moods of indignation, of supplication, of mockery, and of cajolery, all carried intense conviction.

The prologue, kindly read by Mr. James, though necessary to a complete appreciation of the play, proved too long for the audience, and perhaps succeeded in dulling rather than in whetting its appetite.

Special praise is due to the producer, if he existed, and to Mrs. Lee-Browne and Miss McCabe, who made the costumes. Our thanks are given to the whole cast for a very enjoyable evening, and, while we would not be so unkind to cite this example as a precedent, we hope it may be by no means the last performance by present members of the staff. It would be a pity if further use were not made of so much talent.

Form Va. who took their School Certificate Examination last term, were naturally unable to take much part in out of school activities. However, on Tuesday, December 19, some members of the Form gave a performance of J. O. Francis's one-act play, "The Poacher," which was produced by the Headmaster. Considering the difficulties under which the actors and producer were compelled to work, the production reached a high standard. N. Slade, as Thomas Shon, well portrayed a man torn between his desire to remain loyal to his newly acquired respectability, and his more natural yearnings after his old life, to which he was urged with ultimate success by Dicky Bach Dwl, who was convincingly played by V. Pullin. Hanks, as Marged Shon, made the most of a more subordinate role, while Willetts was excellent as the hypocritical Daffyd Hughes. The timing was rather slow, and consequently the action sometimes lagged, but this was, no doubt, due to the necessary under rehearsal, of which, incidentally, the play showed very little trace.

E. D. B.

OLD BOYS' DINNER.

On Saturday, 11th November, 1933, the Old Rendcombian Society held an informal dinner at the Rendezvous, Dean Street, London. There were present: Mr. F. W. T. James, a member of the Governing Body; the President, Mr. Simpson; the Headmaster, Mr. Lee-Browne; Mr. Osborne, one of the early members of the staff; and D. Dakin (Chairman), C. Wells (Hon. Sec.), R. H.

Newport, B. V. Harris, C. Clarke, M. Gleeson-White, Frank Jones, F. Knefel, D. Haes, N. A. Perkins, C. Taylor, G. Morgan, J. Allen, J. Lambert, R. Hutton, R. Curtis, A. P. Browning, D. Field, R. F. Butler, and C. Hartland—a welcome increase in numbers. It was with deep regret that we noticed the absence of Mr. Schiller, who was, we understand, engaged in teaching Russian peasants “What Form Va. say is true”; Mr. Richings, who went to see the chrysanthemums at “Ye Olde Shipe Inne” by mistake; Mr. Lucas, who was busy in transporting Neo-Freudian embers to Newcastle, and Mr. Hook, who might have attended had not the Committee refused to hold the dinner in “The Green Tea Rooms,” Piccadilly.

In proposing the Headmaster and the College, Mr. Simpson congratulated Mr. Lee-Browne upon an excellent year’s work, and expressed his great satisfaction upon the fact that the numbers of the College had increased. Mr. Lee-Browne then outlined the activities of the past year at Rendcomb, and, as Mr. White was absent, thought it unnecessary to tell us again that the School was going to the dogs. It was with great pleasure that we learnt from the Headmaster that the Old Rectory has, after long negotiations, been bought for the College, and will in future be known as Rendcomb House. We were pleased, moreover, to learn that a battery of Aga Cookers had been installed in the kitchen, and we understand that the discomfort of the change-over was somewhat nullified by the tact and charm of Messrs. Aga’s representative. But one man’s fish is another man’s “poisson”—as Alphonse said when he gave Mr Clarke his turbot.

Mr. James, as guest, next proposed the Club, and thanked the Society for their kindness in affording him the opportunity of meeting Old Rendcombians. Mr. Dakin, whose political opinions had earlier been questioned by the President, cheered up considerably when Mr. James said he was glad to be among Gloucestershire men. The Chairman then welcomed Mr. James, and expressed his approval of our guest’s love of Gloucestershire men. The Chairman, in conclusion, thanked Mr. and Mrs.

Simpson for their hospitality to Old Boys at Chelsea and Mr. and Mrs. Lee-Browne for the great welcome which they extended to Old Rendcombians when they visited the College.

The President proposed the health of Old Rendcombians overseas, after which we were taken over to Hollywood, Mr. Lee-Browne kindly showing a “Cine-mag” of school activities—an entertainment and a record that must be “nearly unique” in Old Boys’ circles.

After a very pleasant evening the party dispersed gradually, Mr. C. Wells and Mr. Curtis with the President, Mr. Jones with the empties, and Mr. Taylor with his railway timetables.

We are asked by the management to publish the following list of articles lost and left:

1. —A green hat (not “the”) initialled B. V. H.
2. —Half-a-pint — at the President’s Table.
3. —A mountain of dead matches (on the left of the Headmaster’s place).
4. —Memory. Answers to the name of “Bob.”
5. —A refined accent and a quarter of a pound of cheese.

NOVEMBER AT RENDCOMB.

The dead, rustling leaves still fall steadily as I cross the Park to the sunlit temple. Away below me the shallow lake shimmers in the slanting rays of the setting sun. Down on the road the cars hum monotonously, but, except for that, and for the dull rustling of the falling leaves, there is no other sound in the valley.

Over the folds of the hills I can plainly see the beech trees on Norbury Camp, while below, Colesbourne Manor is just visible over the trees.

The sun lights up these objects, and then its dull red disc begins to disappear. Soon it is gone beyond the horizon, and the shadows in the valley deepen. I slowly retrace my steps through the advancing twilight.

P. FIELD (Form III.)