

## FOREWORD



The third birthday of the Wheatley Festival marks a new step in its development. It has now, by common consent, expanded beyond the control of the School and is governed by a committee representative of the cultural life of the area which it serves. Happily the School's interest remains paramount. It continues to provide the venue and to serve it in committee, and for this the Festival and its patrons owe a large debt to the Headmaster, Mr. F. C. E. Anson, and to his staff.

That we are thus developing will give, I am sure, pleasure to our friends and guarantors to whom we are most grateful, and encouragement to those who may be sceptical of the value of a Festival here.

It is becoming an unfortunate custom to lay down a Festival wherever there is a deep artistic tradition, or architectural magnificence, or scenic picturesqueness, or a mediaeval heritage, and to feel that only here can the arts succeed. Wheatley indeed finds its roots in Saxon England, but not for that is it note worthy today. It is a village of mid-twentieth century expansion, in the grip of developers and planners, and skirted by a new fast motorway. That the village should be so changed, many may regret, but regret is not enough. Civilised man has never lived on material expansion alone. His housing estate, his fast road, his automobile will not sustain him forever, and a combination of the last two may kill him. Spiritual refreshment he needs. He will always find it at his Church, and he will always find it in those expressions of God-given talents, which manifest themselves so richly in all the arts. That is why it is so important that the arts should live here. The village cannot be allowed to develop only in terms of the technological age. Its people should have music and drama and painting, as well as diesel fumes and telephone wires and street lighting.

The Festival opens with a choral concert given by the London Student Singers and the London Chamber Orchestra under their conductor Mr. Roy Emerson. The main work is Vivaldi's **Gloria**. We are glad to present this first choral concert.

This year we have chosen to build our dramatic programme around the quatercentenary of Shakespeare's birth. Mr. Gerard Gould who will be remembered for his excellent production of Shaw's **In good King Charles's Golden Days** last year, is presenting a series of scenes which reveal some of the many sides of the great playwright's studies of human character.