

PRIVATE CIRCULATION.

No. 5.—May, 1901.

Whitefriars Journal.

Annual .

Ladies' .

Banquet.



MAY 3rd,
1901.

SPEECHES by . . .

Miss Marie Corelli,

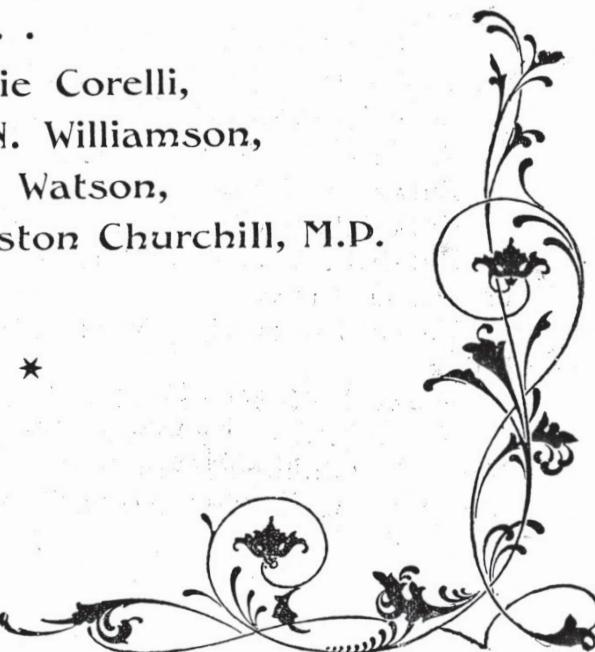
Mrs. C. N. Williamson,

Dr. John Watson,

Friar Winston Churchill, M.P.

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ANNUAL LADIES' BANQUET.

THE Annual Ladies' Banquet was held at the Hotel Cecil on Friday, May 4th, under the presidency of Friar Winston S. Churchill, M.P.

The Club Guests were :—Miss Marie Corelli, the Lord Mayor of London and the Lady Mayoress, Dr. John Watson (Ian Maclare), and Miss Vyver.

The Guests were received in the Grand Hall by the Chairman, assisted by Mrs. Geo. Cornwallis West. A handsome shower bouquet was presented to Miss Marie Corelli by Friar Perkins on behalf of the Club.

The following Friars and Guests sat down to dinner :—

FRIAR F. A. ATKINS—Mr. and Mrs. Horace B. Marshall, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Donald.

FRIAR J. HERBERT BAILY—Mrs. Baily.

FRIAR VAL. BLANCHARD—Mrs. Blanchard.

FRIAR POULTNEY BIGELOW—Mrs. Bigelow.

FRIAR W. BOUCHER—Mr. H. J. Palmer, Miss Baily, Miss Boucher.

FRIAR H. J. BROWN—Mr. and Mrs. Thos. J. Wise, Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Hewitt, Mrs. Brown.

FRIAR A. G. BROWNING—Surg.-Gen. and Mrs. Giraud, Mr. and Mrs. F. Perowne, Mrs. Browning, and Mr. Herve Browning.

FRIAR G. B. BURGIN—Mr. Douglas Sladen, Mrs. Burgin.

FRIAR J. BLOUNDELLE BURTON.

FRIAR SIR ERNEST CLARKE—Mr. and Mrs. Henri Riviere, Lady Clarke.

FRIAR WINSTON S. CHURCHILL, M.P.—Mrs. Cornwallis West, Miss Pamela Plowden, Mrs. Beerbohm Tree.

FRIAR EDWARD CLODD—Mrs. Grant Allen.

FRIAR C. H. COOK—Mr. and Mrs. H. S. Clutton.

FRIAR R. NEWTON CRANE—Miss Margaret Barter.

FRIAR PAUL CRESWICK—Mrs. Creswick.

FRIAR F. J. CROSS—Mr. H. W. Keay, Mr. C. Arthur Pearson, Mr. C. D. Cross.

FRIAR LOUIS H. FALCK—Mr. and Mrs. A. N. Pollak, Mrs. Falck.

FRIAR I. N. FORD—Mrs. Ford.

FRIAR J. FOSTER FRASER—Mrs. H. J. Palmer and Miss Palmer, Mrs. Fairbanks and Mrs. Fraser.

FRIAR A. J. FULLER—Mrs. W. G. Sleeman and Miss Sleeman, Mrs. Freull.

FRIAR DOUGLAS M. GANE—Mrs. Gane.

FRIAR Wm. Lawe GANE.

FRIAR F. CARRUTHERS GOULD—Mrs. Gould, Miss Gould and Miss Frances Gould.

FRIAR J. A. HAMMERTON—Rev. J. C. Grant, M.A.

FRIAR JOSEPH HOCKING—Mr. J. Rogers Pascoe, Mrs. and Miss Pascoe, Mr. and Mrs. T. H. Roberts, Mrs. Hocking.

FRIAR SILAS HOCKING—Miss Rigby Jones, Mrs. and Miss Hocking.

FRIAR ANTHONY HOPE HAWKINS—Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Spender.

FRIAR BERNARD E. HODGSON—Rev. J. H. and Mrs. Hodgson.

FRIAR R. HOVENDEN—Misses E. H. and A. Hovenden.

FRIAR T. HEATH JOYCE—Miss Ash and Mrs. Joyce.

FRIAR W. G. LACY—Dr. and Mrs. Allan, Dr. and Mrs. Neal, Mr. E. A. Smith, Mrs. and Miss Lacy.

FRIAR W. J. C. LANCASTER—Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Moss, Mrs. Lancaster.

FRIAR R. DUPPA LLOYD—Miss Mary Darton and Mrs. Lloyd.

FRIAR CHAS. LOWE—Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Spiegel, Mrs. Lowe.

FRIAR F. S. A. LOWNDES—Mrs. Belloc-Lowndes and Miss Munro-Ferguson.

FRIAR J. Y. W. MACALISTER—Dr. Geo. and Mrs. Ogilvie, Mrs. MacAlister.

FRIAR A. E. W. MASON—Mrs. H. B. Irving.

FRIAR ALFRED H. MILES.

FRIAR JOHN F. MOSS—Rev. Folliott Sandford, M.A., Mr. H. W. Pawson, Mr. Geo. Allen, Mrs. Moss.

FRIAR KENRIC B. MURRAY—Mr. W. Beckett Hill, Mrs. and Miss Murray.

FRIAR WALTER NEEF—Mrs. Neef.

FRIAR W. ROBERTSON NICOLL—Mr. Horace Morgan and Miss Nicoll.

FRIAR G. H. PERKINS—Mr. and Mrs. Methuen, Mr. C. E. Fagan, Rev. F. W. Haines.

FRIAR CHAS. E. PEARCE.

FRIAR GILBERT PARKER, M.P.

FRIAR GEO. RICKS—Mrs. Ricks.

FRIAR J. RUSSELL—Miss Russell.

FRIAR E. T. SACHS—Mr. and Mrs. Carr, Mrs. Sachs.

FRIAR W. M. SAUNDERS—Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Grant, Mrs. Saunders.

FRIAR W. SENIOR—Mr. and Mrs. Port, Mr. and Mrs. J. Power.

FRIAR W. N. SHANSFIELD—Mr. E. A. Morton.

FRIAR G. W. SHELDON—Mr. Harold Sheldon, Mr. John Livesey, Mrs. Sheldon.

FRIAR CLÉMENT SHORTER—Mrs. Shorter, Mrs. Tuohy.

FRIAR A. SPURGEON—Miss Thornborrow, Miss Cockshott, Misses Pattie and Hilda Cockshott, Mrs. Spurgeon.

FRIAR J. A. STEUART—Mr. G. T. and Mrs. Hutchinson, Mrs. Steuart.

FRIAR SIR W. P. TRELOAR—Miss Harrison, Mr. T. R. and Miss Treloar.

FRIAR AARON WATSON—Mr. and Mrs. Walter Runciman, Mr. Alfred H. Watson.

FRIAR RICHARD WHITEING—Miss Alice Corkran, Miss Roche Francis.

FRIAR C. N. WILLIAMSON—Mr. J. Sutherland Harvey, Miss Winifred Graham, and Mrs. Williamson.

FRIAR J. FARLOW WILSON—Mr. A. C. and Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Snudden and Mrs. Wilson.

FRIAR A. MORESBY WHITE—Sir Robert Mowbray, Bart., M.P., Mr. Harold Hodge.

“Sovran Woman.”

After the loyal toasts had been given from the chair, Dr. JOHN WATSON (Ian Maclaren) proposed “Sovran Woman.” He said: I think it is a great honour to allow a provincial to be present at this feast, and to see at a distance more or less remote those eminent persons whose writings enliven our existence in the wilds where we live. (Laughter.) The honour, moreover, is accompanied with great danger from the duty laid upon me of proposing so critical, so responsible a toast as “Sovran Woman.” It appears to me that Mr. Spurgeon, whose arrangements are so excellent—(hear, hear)—should rather have selected for the task one of the nimble wits of the capital than one labouring under the disability of dulness which belongs to those who have not the privilege of living in London. The toast is encompassed with difficulties on every side, for if one declares boldly that woman has no faults then the modern woman suspects one at once, because she has been reading those delightful books in which all the faults of women are pointed out with all the skill of the realistic writer; while if, on the other hand, one ventures to hint at any fault one exposes oneself, perhaps, to the charge of envy as a mere man. May I, therefore, take the risk of the former position, and as an old-fashioned man rejoice in woman’s sovereignty and repudiate woman’s equality as a lower word, declaring boldly that woman has no faults whatever, and that if some faults have been imagined in her they are in reality virtues in disguise. (Hear, hear.) For instance, there are some misguided people who have more or less directly accused women of being vain, and have sought to prove their case—mind you, I repudiate the men all along—by their love for dress. Sometimes, indeed, women do give themselves away in this matter, as when a charming person said to me—and I repudiate her too, at the same time—(laughter)—“the consciousness of being well dressed gives a woman such inward peace as religion has never been able to bestow.” (Laughter and applause.)

WOMAN'S OBJECT IN BEAUTIFYING HERSELF.

As a matter of fact every person who is able to enter into a woman's mind knows that she does not dress to please herself at all ; she dresses for her husband, or for the man whom she hopes will ultimately be her husband, and I would prove that if you would allow me to travel from so charming an assembly as this into a rather different scene, by reminding you first of all how pleasant a domestic servant—who might otherwise seem plain—looks when dressed in her uniform, and how, if one goes suddenly home at spring cleaning time the domestics of the house are found to have abandoned all that glory, and to be going about in a state of almost primeval nature. (Laughter.) That shows how different a woman's unselfishness in dressing is to a man's, because, while a woman will do anything to please her husband, he himself will wear a disgraceful suit of tweeds at certain seasons of the year, because he has worn them a long time and pay not the slightest attention to his wife's wishes. A woman feels it her duty to make the world more beautiful, and on that account alone she dresses, and for that alone she should be supported by the generosity of her men folk. (Laughter and applause.) It is also sometimes said that a woman gossips, and that again I think is a baseless slander. A woman takes an interest in the affairs of her neighbours, which is human, which is sympathetic, and which I will dare to say is Christian. (Laughter and applause.) As regards gossip she is not to be mentioned as opposed to man. A man will gossip in the Exchange, and he will gossip in the Club, until he is saturated with gossip, and has collected a budget fit for a society paper. (Laughter.) Then he will go home to afternoon tea and will listen to what is said—will dexterously guide the conversation until the last scrap of gossip is mentioned to him—and then when he is sure he has heard the last word, he will say, " Well, now, you women do gossip." (Laughter.)

WOMAN'S INSTINCT AND MAN'S REASON.

Sometimes also it is said that women cannot reason, and that has always filled me with immense indignation, for she has no need to reason. Reasoning is a lower form of mental exercise, compared with those methods to which the feminine mind is accustomed, and of which the feminine mind has an absolute monopoly. A man depends more or less on facts, a woman on inspiration. A man has more or less to work with judgment. A woman flings herself boldly on her instincts. On that account she is a far more charming speaker, as we shall know in a moment. A man has some sort of continuity in his speech, and however dull it may be, and however doubtful the connection, he does endeavour to go from point to point, keeping some relation between the different parts, but a woman charms us because she moves from one subject to another lightly and easily. A man goes

like a mole underground, making a steady passage, though often in darkness, through his speech ; a woman flits like a bird from branch to branch. Only recently I had the pleasure of listening to a lady devoted to philanthropy, and her speech was perfectly enrapturing, so that many an old man shed tears, and many a young man looked foolishly at the ceiling, which meant that they too wished to shed tears, but could not. (Laughter). In one remark she gave an insight into a lady's speech. She read a letter from a boy who had been taken from a miserable home and sent to Canada, and had succeeded there. It was very charming, and we all wept. She then said, "Speaking about Tommy"—that was the name of the boy—"is there any person present who has spectacles which are now too young ; I am collecting spectacles for a number of widows who are without them." (Laughter). I defy any man to move from one charity to another with so sudden, so charming, so irresistible an appeal. What a man would have done would have been to cough, to hesitate, to clear his throat, to say, "Now, my dear friends, another thing different from what I have alluded to"—and he would have lost all his accumulated capital of emotion as he passed from one frontier to another. People would have fidgeted and looked at the clock, while the woman, with her quick transit, carried all our interest, all our sympathy from Tommy in Canada to a society which supplies elderly ladies of small means with spectacles. (Laughter and applause).

THE LOVE OF TIDYING UP.

Sometimes, but I do not know whether it is a fault, a mere man will wish that women had not such an absurd love for tidying. About this time in the homes of those men who earn a scanty livelihood by writing, their papers are put in a thorough state of repair, and they spend a large portion of the summer in regaining their lost property. This love of tidying is common to the whole sex. It will be done by your wife as an act of wifely devotion, but it will also be done by the housemaid, who will take the notebook in which you have carefully written down some—well, you do not say so, but they were—brilliant ideas, the pemmican you are to pour water into afterwards and work up into proper measure, and she will search all round your study to find a convenient spot on the most remote shelf, among volumes retired from active service, and will thrust it in, in the very last place which would be expected. I find that that eminent theologian, Mark Twain—(laughter)—has been giving himself to the deciphering of certain interesting diaries which Adam kept in the garden. I have not read all, but I feel disappointed that one fact has not yet emerged, though I hope it may do so later ; it is that in reality Eve was put out of the garden for tidying. (Laughter.) To this day woman has been tidying, not only in our studies, but in human life, going here and going there, and putting all in a thorough

state of repair. We are not always, it is true, so grateful for it as we ought to be ; but that only proves her goodness, and our utter unworthiness. (Applause.) That is what I have to submit as an honest and sincere tribute of respect to Sovran Woman, and in order that everything I say may now be proved to you beyond all question in the most charming way, I have the honour to associate this toast with one who is sovereign as a writer in England, inasmuch as I suppose no one has such a body of clients and readers. Miss Marie Corelli, I can testify myself from people furiously angry with me because I have not managed to have absolutely the right adjective of admiration at the moment they seek for it, and from what I have heard when travelling everywhere in the country, has a hold upon readers in England such as no one else has obtained, and to her, in association with this toast, I pay my respectful tribute of admiration. (Applause.)

AN AUTHORESS IN THE LIONS' DEN.

Miss MARIE CORELLI, in responding, said : I feel myself placed to-night in a rather strange and unique position. It is the first time I have ever spoken at a public dinner. It is equally the first time I have to thank a London club of literary men for any kindness or consideration. (Applause.) It is altogether a new experience for me, and I need scarcely say it is as pleasant as it is new. When I started to come here this afternoon I thought of Daniel in the lions' den. Daniel knew he was going among lions ; so did I. He thought possibly some of them might bite ; so did I. (Laughter.) He was agreeably disappointed ; so was I. (Laughter.) I stand here surrounded by lions, and gentler animals I have never met. (Laughter.) They have been purring round me softly on either side—(laughter)—and I must say I found them very agreeable companions. One of them, Dr. Watson, better known to fame as Ian Maclaren, has just roared “an’t were any nightingale” in proposing the health of Sovran Woman. I am sure all here present, especially those of my sex, have been profoundly moved by his eloquence. Speaking for myself personally I may say that never until to-night have I heard sovran woman proposed by sovran man. I do not think it can be a very ordinary expression, because the inspired individual who does the Bookshop column in the *Daily Express* lately said he does not know what it means. In alluding to the approach of our present festivities he said, “Dr. Watson will propose the toast of ‘Sovran Woman,’ whatever that may mean. (Laughter.) For myself I consider it a very pretty phrase, but I should not like to take it too seriously. It seems to me rather like a ballroom compliment. (Laughter.) All women are acquainted with the dear old ballroom compliment, the worn and threadbare thing that our partner in the dance whispers to us at the close of the evening, how he never, never, never will forget—which, if we are wise, we shall know means that he forgets all about us the very next morning. “Sovran

woman" is said to-night; but will it hold good to-morrow? Will Dr. Watson, for example, when he is asked to pronounce an opinion on a woman's work look as amiable as he does now, and breathe forth a fervent "sovran woman" before proceeding to pass judgment? (Laughter and applause.)

IF WOMAN QUEEN, THEN MAN KING.

These are dark and dreadful questions. (Laughter). I will not dwell upon them, for to-night our gallant and chivalrous hosts of the Whitefriars have of their own free-will paid us those honours which are our rightful due—"hear, hear," and laughter)—and have set us on those thrones which are truly ours to occupy for all time. For sovran woman is queen of the whole world round, and sovran man knows it. (Laughter and applause.) He sometimes pretends he does not know it—but he does! We hear a great deal now-a-days of strife and competition between the sexes, but surely there should be no strife between the two halves of a perfect whole. Man is king as woman is queen, and to do good work in the world the two must rule harmoniously together. One is not greater or less than the other. Each has the qualities necessary to make both happy, and men and women are never seen at better advantage than in their total unlikeness one to the other. An effeminate man is contemptible; a masculine woman is ridiculous. It is not by asserting herself as the equal of man that sovereign woman will best keep her sovereignty; it is rather by emphasising and insisting on the great difference between herself and him. Imitation is, we know, the sincerest form of flattery, but to flatter man so much as to try to make ourselves in any way like him is carrying the compliment somewhat too far. We women can be useful workers in the world without sacrificing our chief birthright-womanliness. It is not by copying man's dress, his sports, or his customs, that we shall keep and hold our best influence over him. His costume, if the gentlemen will permit me to say so, is really not worth imitating. ("Hear, hear.") His sports and his customs are of his nature, and not of ours. No woman ever gains anything by asserting that she is as good as a man. She ought to be so much better that any assertion of that kind is totally unnecessary. ("Hear, hear," and laughter.)

MODERN WOMAN'S NOBLE AMBITION.

It is generally understood and considered that man objects to the movement which is called the advancement of woman. If he does so object, his objection is perfectly reasonable and natural. For long centuries of tradition and history in all countries he has been accustomed to make his own laws for his own convenience, and those laws have kept woman in a subordinate position, as more or less of a drudge or a toy. He finds it difficult to understand now that with better education woman has better aims, and that instead of cringing at his feet she wishes to walk at his side, the free companion of his thoughts, the inspirer of all good things

to him, the defender of his honour, and his most faithful friend on this side heaven. (Applause). Surely this is what woman in the truest sense of womanhood means when she clamours for her rights. She wants the right to help in the work of the world, the right to have a voice in the affairs of life and society in which she is obliged to take so great a part, the right to suggest ways out of difficulty, to bring light out of darkness, and, above all, the right to inspire and encourage man to his noblest efforts by her steadfast and cheerful example. I take it that the sum and substance of woman's ambition when she talks of her advancement in life and work is to help *sovran man*—not to help herself so much as the whole work of the world. In arts and letters this must be, or should be, her chief concern. A Rosa Bonheur has filled a court in the Palace of Art; a George Eliot has filled a corner of the Temple of English Literature. Women can be either a Rosa Bonheur or a George Eliot, without challenging an Edwin Landseer or a Walter Scott. There need be no quarrel. Time is lost and temper wasted in discussing comparisons and equalities. The rewards of art are the same for both sexes. Failure means poverty and contempt; success means the spite and the envy of the unsuccessful. ("No, no," and laughter.) It has always been so, and always will be so till the end of time. ("No, no.") No worker in art or literature ever gathered the roses of a triumph without the thorns. We women may be justly proud of the fact that woman's work in every branch of art and industry has begun to be a recognised factor in the progress of civilisation, but I think we should be careful that while we gain we do not also lose. My friend, Dr. Watson, has gone very much on the old grounds of the mistakes of women—how she tidies up a man. May she long continue to do it—"hear, hear," and laughter)—for he is by nature a most untidy mortal. (Laughter). He also touched on her predilection for dress. Long may she continue to be better dressed than he is! (Laughter).

"NOT RIVALS BUT FRIENDS AND HELPERS."

He touched also on her love for gossip. I can only say that I never listened to such a babel of tongues as I happen to have heard in a men's club, nor have I known many more reputations picked to pieces than there. (Laughter.) Women are very good at that sort of work sometimes, but so are men. It is a case of six of one, and half-a-dozen of the other. (Laughter and applause.) As regards our love of dress we again have to turn to *sovran man*. He does not like to see us dressed as he is dressed. He generally complains, and makes a row about it, if one of his family should attempt to put on clothes like his. Therefore we have to dress to please him, and we do our best. We generally find we succeed, too. We should try by what we call our advancement not to repel *sovran man*, but rather to doubly attract and fascinate him. We do not want to be his rivals or opposers; we wish to be his friends and helpers. I am sure that is what all the best women want.

They do not want to be independent, unhappy creatures, roaming about the world without a single man to say a kind word to them. They want to be the friends, the companions of men, and help them in every good work. As I said, we should not attempt to repel man by our so-called advancement. We should show him that we have an increased charm, an increased kindness, a gentle helpfulness, for every man is our naturally born admirer and worshipper, and it rests entirely with ourselves to keep him so. I have no more to say except to thank Dr. Watson for the somewhat dubious manner in which he proposed sovereign woman, and also to thank our hosts of the Whitefriars for the cordiality with which they have responded to that hesitatingly handled toast. I thank Dr. Watson and the Whitefriars on my own behalf, and for all of my sex here present. However much we women may be haled from our thrones to-morrow in the conflict of this workaday world it is something to remember that we have been so courteously acknowledged the queens of to-night. (Much applause.)

“Mere Man.”

Mrs. C. N. WILLIAMSON in proposing “Mere Man,” said: The only other time I was ever asked to make a speech I had to say nice things about women. Now there is no difficulty in that. (Laughter.) Not that I like woman better than man—no woman would believe me if said I did. (Laughter.) But I could say all the nice things I really thought about women without blushing and being taken for a bold person. Besides, I began life by standing rather in awe of man—in the abstract. Of course one gets over that. But he seemed to have got such a start of us by being born a few days earlier, and putting us in his debt the very first thing by making us a present of a rib to go on with, and inviting us to his garden party. (Laughter.) That start did give him a tremendous advantage over us, and we can’t say he has not made the most of it. So you see, having for a long time (I won’t say how long) regarded man from this point of view, it comes as rather a shock to be asked to toast him as “Mere Man.” (Hear, hear.)

THE GREAT GAMES OF WAR, POLITICS, AND LETTERS.

I really must apologise for that word; it does sound too revengeful when one comes to think of it, especially as he is to be defended to-night by a representative man, who doesn’t even need a start to win in the great games of war, politics, and letters, and lots of other things only to begin which I should have to use up the whole alphabet, to end which would only be to spell success in a new way. Of course I don’t need to say that I refer to Mr. Winston Churchill, and it’s not to be wondered at that he has achieved so much in such a short time when one reflects that it took two very great countries to achieve him. (Laughter.)

A little while ago it was the fashion for us to run down man, and we almost wanted him to believe we meant it. But it’s different

now, at least temporarily. It's quite the thing again for us to be kind to man. We have even accorded him a privilege latterly which, so far as my knowledge of history goes, we have never given him before. We have encouraged him to set us a fashion in dress, and we have eagerly followed it. He put on khaki, and so did we, whether it was becoming to us or not. We stole his hat, we stole his jacket, we even tried to steal his heart, under the impression that it was khaki too. (Laughter and applause.)

"A MOST INTERESTING SUBJECT OF CONVERSATION!"

It is fortunate for me that it is the fashion again for us to make a pet of man, for, even at the dreadful risk of being out of date, I do not think I could reconcile it to my conscience to-night, when man has been lured here in the hope that as he was to be toasted he would be buttered as well, and then, knowing that he was too brave to cry, too polite to answer back or throw things, begin to lecture him on his faults. No, how much nobler to heap coals of fire on his head in the process of toasting! What if he has given us some cause for complaint in the past, when he was young and knew no better? How much wiser to forgive and forget, thus setting him a good example, which he is always expecting us to do! How much wiser to remember, after all, that it was on his invitation that we first set foot on earth—(laughter)—to remember how much he has done to make our stay exciting for us since we first became his guest, though perhaps his motive may have been partly selfish; how he has grubbed about finding out facts for us in astronomy, geology, history, science, and lots of other rather useful things, though no doubt we could have found them out just as well for ourselves if we had been obliged; how he has worked for us, fought for us, bled for us, brought us sweets, and made love to us; how he writes poetry about us, and publishes our novels, even when we say unkind things about him in them; how dull dinner parties and dances, and many other of life's entertainments would be without him. (Applause.) And while we are animated with this spirit of frankness let us confess that, whether it pleases us to call him irritating creature, mere man, or brave comrade and hero (they are all equally appropriate), let us confess that he has been, is, and will be the most interesting subject of discussion in the world—with the exception of the wars he has made and the dresses we are making. Mere Man! (Applause.)

FRIAR CHURCHILL IN A DIFFICULT POSITION.

The CHAIRMAN, in responding, said: I have on several occasions been asked to do things which have seemed extremely difficult, but I have never been asked to face any task half so formidable as that which my brother Friars have laid upon me in responding for "mere man." We have heard a great deal about women to-night, and man has hardly come into the question at all, so from the

charming speeches we have heard I can get nothing to assist me in embarking upon this important subject—for few subjects are so important in the world as “mere man.” Personally, I confess, if saying so is no insubordination to the rules of the monastery of the White Friars, I think the expression “mere man” is perhaps not altogether well chosen, for it seems to insinuate that the expression “sovran woman” has been used with a somewhat satirical motive. I said I find great difficulty in discussing the subject. I cannot talk politics, though, after all, man is concerned with politics. The art of governing his fellow men is one of his chief functions, but, of course, in the Hotel Cecil no association with politics at all can be admitted. (Laughter and applause.) I do not see what I can say about man as a writer, for though, undoubtedly, I had better not be drawn into making comparisons, we have a writer here to-night who does not come under the description of mere man, and whose reputation is known from one end of the country to the other. Another great function of man is as a soldier, but I do not see how I can say anything with regard to that now, because, after all, the fighting qualities of men have been rather to the front lately, and I think we have had quite enough of the alarms of war, and shall all turn with considerable satisfaction to the piping times of peace. (Applause.)

THE GREAT ART OF POLITENESS.

So I do not see what I can discuss about mere man unless it is his politeness, which seems to me his great feature. (Laughter.) You see he arrived here first, and, as Mrs. Williamson stated, woman came here by his invitation. I must point out that, from the confused recollections I retain of Adam’s diary, if woman at any rate came into the world at Adam’s invitation, he was asleep when it was given. (Laughter.) However, when she came, man, with his customary courtesy, immediately yielded the first place to her, although she was the second to arrive, and she has held it since—the first place in every heart, the last word in every quarrel. (Laughter.) As Miss Marie Corelli has said, sovran woman is queen all round the world, and sovran man, or mere man, as it is put on the toast list, knows it, or, if he does not, is made to know it—(laughter)—and I think it is very right and proper he should know it. And without in the least denying that fact, I feel, in responding to the toast as a mere man, that I must congratulate the proposer of it upon the many kind things which she has found it possible to say about that insignificant section of the human race which was under consideration, and also personally for the extremely kind way she honoured me by alluding to myself. (Applause.)

The LORD MAYOR proposed “The Chairman,” wishing him a happy and prosperous career both as a traveller—for a man who took to travelling seldom or never stopped till time overtook his steps—and also, and especially, as a politician. He thought the

chairman was very happily described in the quotation under the toast—"You will find this Friar a notable fellow." (Applause.)

The toast was drunk with musical honours.

THE MINGLING OF THE MONASTERY WITH THE CONVENT.

THE CHAIRMAN, in responding, said he devoutly hoped he should travel no more, for the more he had travelled the more he had realised that, for those born in England, that country was the only one to live in. And if there was any one part of England he preferred above all others it was London. And if there was any one occasion above all the others when he would be in London it was on the occasion of the Whitefriars Club ladies' night. (Laughter and applause.) They had their weekly dinners, of course, but without the annual festival at which the ladies were invited it would not be a very human or a very natural affair. It was only on those occasions that they offered a real representation of the great world outside, for what was life but a judicious—occasionally an injudicious—mingling of the monastery and the convent. (Laughter and applause.) He felt very proud to have been selected to preside on that occasion as the Friar on duty in that particular cloister—(laughter)—and he trusted that the Friars, although they met and consulted together austerity and deliberately once a week, would not during the remaining days forget the influence of sovereign woman, to whom rather feebly, but still devotedly, they had tried to show their reverence, and their respect, and their affection. (Applause.)

An excellent musical programme was carried through, Mr. Sidney Hill acting as accompanist. Among those taking part were Miss Elsie Mackenzie, Mr. Robert Radford, Mr. Harrison Hill, and Mr. Walter Churcher.

At the close of the after-dinner proceedings a conversazione was held in the Grand Hall, the evening being brought to a conclusion by the singing of "Auld Lang Syne."

CLUB NOTES.

Everybody seems to have thoroughly enjoyed the Annual Ladies' Banquet. The arrangements went like clockwork, thanks to the good sense of the speakers and the excellent chairmanship of Friar Winston Churchill, M.P. The time-table gave 10.5 as the hour for concluding the after-dinner proceedings, and it is worth noting that the actual time at which the programme was finished was 9.58. This is probably a record for a gathering of this kind, and what is of equal interest the programme of music and speeches was carried through exactly as printed.

Miss Marie Corelli, who was the chief guest of the Club, expressed herself greatly delighted with the banquet. On behalf of the Club a handsome shower bouquet was presented to her by the Hon. Treasurer, Friar Perkins.

This was the first occasion on which Miss Corelli has spoken at a public dinner, and this fact emphasises the triumph she undoubtedly achieved. A full report of the speech as revised by herself appears in this issue.

Mrs. Williamson also made a decided "hit" in proposing "Mere Man." Her voice is not so strong as Miss Corelli's, and some of her best points failed to reach those seated at any great distance from the centre of the room. Under these circumstances the verbatim report of her speech will be read with special interest.

Dr. Watson in proposing "Sovran Woman" fulfilled a promise of twelve months' standing. It was a matter of deep regret to the Committee that, owing to the illness of one of their sons, Mrs. Watson was unable to accompany her husband.

The Ladies' Dinner brought the session of 1900-1901 to a very successful close.

The first summer engagement of the Club was on May 18th, when a visit was paid to Selborne, conducted by Friar Dr. Bowdler Sharpe. Two saloons were attached to the train leaving Waterloo at 10.5, and Alton was reached shortly before twelve. Brakes were waiting to convey the Friars and their guests to Selborne, where they were received by the vicar, the Rev. Arthur Kaye, M.A.

After a visit to the church, lunch was provided in a marquee, erected in a meadow near the Queen's Arms Hotel. Friar W. Senior, the Prior for the day, presided, and the Club guests included the Vicar, Mr. W. Paxton Parkin, the present owner of White's house, Mr. Henry Maxwell, a prominent resident and an enthusiastic Selburnian, and Mr. Henry Warner, by whose permission Dr. Bowdler Sharpe has been excavating in search of the old Priory, a mile or more away from the village. The health of "The Visitors," proposed in eloquent terms by Friar Senior, was responded to by the Vicar and Mr. Parkin.

After luncheon a visit was paid to the Wakes and the party having been photographed by Friar Russell, a climb to the Hanger by the Zig-zag was undertaken.

Tea was provided at the Queen's Arms Hotel, and the "neat-handed Phyllises" who waited at table having been photographed by six Friars, the party walked through the vicarage garden to the Priory where, like Charles Lamb on revisiting Blakesmoor, they felt "astonished at the indistinction of everything." They had in their mind's eye long cloisters, arches, chapel and all the other attendant features of a well-preserved ruin, but all that Dr. Bowdler Sharpe's energy has been able to accomplish as yet is to unearth the remnants of an old foundation wall. He, however, hopes to speedily extend his discoveries, as his excavations are henceforward to be conducted under the auspices of Magdalene College, Oxford, to which the land of the old Selborne Priory now belongs.

On returning to London, supper was provided at Villa Villa Restaurant and a number of toasts were given. Friar Senior, in proposing a cordial vote of thanks to Friar Bowdler Sharpe, had some very facetious things to say concerning the Selborne Priory which were greatly appreciated. Dr. Sharpe, in reply, said he was in no way disconcerted with the Chairman's observations and expressed the opinion that there would be a great deal more to show the Friars on the occasion of their next visit to the Priory. Wherewithal there was more fun and more satire.

The Committee desire to thank Dr. Sharpe for his great kindness in printing the little book giving full particulars of the itinerary of the Pilgrimage. This thoughtfulness was greatly appreciated by both Friars and guests.

The next great event in the Whitefriars calendar will be the pilgrimage to Wessex on Saturday, June 29th. Friar Clement Shorter will be the Prior for the day. Ladies are cordially invited to take part in this excursion.

Full particulars of the arrangements were given in the circular sent to the members a few days ago. All that need be said here is that applications for tickets should be sent to Friar Spurgeon, Whitefriars House, Carmelite Street, as soon as possible. As the Committee have chartered a "special," there will be no difficulty as to train accommodation, but to facilitate arrangements for securing the requisite number of conveyances for the seventeen miles' drive from Wool to Dorchester the Committee would like to know at least a fortnight before the date of the pilgrimage how many intend to go. No tickets can be issued after Saturday, June 22nd.

A special programme for the day will be printed and sent to each Friar and guest on Wednesday, June 26th. This programme will contain a complete time-table. It will also indicate the saloon in which members of the Pilgrimage will travel, and the number of the carriage which will be assigned to them for the drive through the Wessex country. A copyright photograph of Friar Hardy, never before published, will be reproduced in this programme, and, instead of asking our host to sign fifty copies of the souvenir, we have requested him, and he has consented, to append his autograph to fifty copies of this portrait. These will all be numbered, and will be allotted to Friars in the order in which they apply for tickets.

The Committee, realising that it will be a great advantage if the souvenirs are in the hands of those who intend to take part in the Pilgrimage at the earliest possible moment, think it better not to wait for any copies to be signed, and the autographed programmes will take the place of the proposed autographed souvenirs.

The fund opened by the Committee to assist the widow and daughter of our late comrade, Irving Montagu, closed to-day (May 31st). A complete list of subscriptions will be forwarded to each subscriber in due course.

Friars are reminded that, although the weekly dinners are suspended during the summer months, there is a foregathering of members in the Club Room on Friday evenings. Friar J. Farlow Wilson makes what arrangements he considers necessary for the success of these informal meetings.

The Club luncheon (1s. 6d.) will be served daily in the club-room during the summer months—Saturday and Sunday excepted.