

WHITEFRIARS JOURNAL.

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LEIGHTON.**

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PRIVATE
CIRCULATION.

CLUB DIARY.

UNDER the Priorship of Friar Silas K. Hocking, the Club met on March 27th to entertain Mr. Pett Ridge and to discuss with him the topic of "London in Shadow and Sunshine." Mr. Pett Ridge opened the conversation by bringing into review the various phases of life in London through the mind and experiences of a supposititious Albert of Bethnal Green, tracking this fictitious personage through his years of infancy, youth, courtship, and manhood, and thus throwing a discerning observer's knowledge upon the conditions of life in the East End. Those who have worked among the poor in the slums knew that it was hopeless to attempt to change the nature of mature men and women. Mr. Pett Ridge believed in the concentration of kindly effort upon the young. The opener was followed by the Rev. Silvester Horne, Friar Burgin and Friar Grundy, and the Rev. J. Adams, who all endorsed his view regarding the duty of the State in ameliorating the lot of the children of the very poor.

"The Lighter Side of Recreation" was the topic set down for after-dinner conversation on April 3rd. Friar Mostyn Pigott acted as Prior, and displayed his ready wit and tact as he skilfully linked together the comments of the various speakers. The guest of the Club was Mr. Rudolph C. Lehmann, M.P., who opened the discussion with a playful speech, in which he gave many illustrative anecdotes of Oxford athletics and of his experiences as a coach of eights. He distrusted the orgies of athletics in the organisations called Olympic games. International meetings of athletes he thought undesirable. From them diplomatic complications were apt to arise. When the desire to make money once came into sport, he further argued, that sport as a recreation was doomed. But sport in an amateur spirit was always excellent. During the discussion much amusement was caused by an irrelevant speech by Mr. G. K. Chesterton. The speakers who contributed to the conversation were Mr. R. H. Forster (captain

of the Thames Rowing Club), Mr. Owen Seaman, Mr. J. E. Healy, Friar the Rev. F. A. Russell, Mr. H. H. Lawless, Mr. Desmond Coke, Mr. Fred Grundy, Mr. Fagan, and Mr. Ernest Young.

Sir William Butler, G.C.B., was the Club guest on April 10th, when Friar F. Frankfort Moore was Prior. In responding to the toast of his health, Sir William made an eloquent if brief "Plea for the Peasant." He treated the subject both historically and practically, laying particular stress upon the part which the British peasant had played in the wars and crises of the past, and indicating the value of the peasant as a potential or actual soldier, giving examples of how men of the soil, as well as men of the cities, may, with proper training, become important instruments in the work of national defence. In the discussion which followed, the peasantry of England, Ireland, and Scotland were brought into comparison by Friars Shan Bullock, G. B. Burgin, Moresby White, and other speakers.

LADIES' ANNUAL BANQUET.

THE Spring Session of the Club was brought to a successful close with the Ladies' Annual Banquet, held at the Trocadero Restaurant on May 1. In all respects it was one of the most brilliant of the series of dinners at which ladies have been present. Friar the Hon. Gilbert Coleridge was the Prior. The guests of the Club were: The Bishop of Ripon and Mrs. Boyd Carpenter, Lady Butler, Lady Grove and Sir Walter Grove, the Baroness Orczy, Miss Marjorie Bowen and Dr. Campbell, Miss Cicely Hamilton, Mrs. Percy Dearmer and the Rev. Percy Dearmer, Miss Henrietta Rae and Mr. Ernest Normand, Mrs. Lucette Ryley, Miss May Sinclair, and Mrs. Cornwallis-West; and the company included the following Friars and guests:

THE PRIOR and the Hon. Mrs. Gilbert Coleridge; FRIAR R. D. BLUMENFELD; FRIAR H. J. BROWN and Mrs. Brown; FRIAR G. B. BURGIN—Mrs. Burgin and Miss Bessington; FRIAR SIR ERNEST CLARKE and Lady Clarke; FRIAR F. J. CROSS; FRIAR C. D. CROSS; FRIAR WARWICK DEEPING and Mrs. Warwick Deeping; FRIAR ROBERT DONALD; FRIAR R. N. FAIRBANKS and Mrs. Fairbanks; FRIAR LOUIS H. FALCK—Mrs. Falck, Miss Violet Falck, Mr. Osborn Walford, Miss Lily Walford, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Polak; FRIAR J. FOSTER FRASER—Mrs. Foster Fraser, Mr. and Mrs.

Malcolm Fraser; FRIAR CHARLES GARVICE—Mr. and Miss Eyre Hussey; FRIAR REGINALD GEARD—Mrs. Reginald Geard, Miss Nora Geard, Mr. Carl Leyel, Mr. and Mrs. Houghton Townley; FRIAR TOM GALLON and Miss Nellie Tom-Gallon; FRIAR ALFRED GIBSON—Mrs. Gibson, Mr. and Mrs. James Carmichael; FRIAR LIONEL GOWING and Mrs. Lionel Gowing; FRIAR THE REV. C. H. GRUNDY—Miss Ella G. Grundy, Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Heimann, and Mr. and Mrs. Norman Grundy; FRIAR PAUL HASLUCK—Mrs. Hasluck, Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Peacock, and Miss Ross; FRIAR H. A. HINKSON—Mrs. Blackwell, Mrs. William Clark, and “Katharine Tynan”; FRIAR DAVID HODGE—Mrs. Hodge and Mr. William Jeans; FRIAR SILAS K. HOCKING—Mrs. Hocking and Mrs. Rowland Conder; FRIAR G. THOMPSON-HUTCHINSON—Miss Doris Hutchinson, Mr. and Mrs. A. S. Watt; FRIAR WALTER JERROLD and Mrs. Jerrold; FRIAR T. HEATH JOYCE—Mrs. Heath Joyce, Mr. and Mrs. Carmichael Thomas; FRIAR ATHOL JOYCE and Mrs. Athol Joyce; FRIAR C. W. KIMMINS—Mrs. C. W. Kimmings, Miss Alice Cockerell Rennie, and the Rev. W. L. Hannam; FRIAR ALBERT KINROSS—Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Kinross and Mr. Ward Muir; FRIAR JOHN LANE—Miss M. P. Willcocks, Mr. Archibald Marshall, and Mrs. John Lane; FRIAR W. J. C. LANCASTER—Mrs. Lancaster, Mr. Percival Lancaster, and Miss Oxley; FRIAR THE REV. DR. ROBERTSON NICOLL—Mrs. Robertson Nicoll, Miss Robertson Nicoll, Mr. Maurice Nicoll, Miss Stoddart, Mrs. Ogden, Miss Coe, Miss L. Quiller-Couch, Miss Collins, Mrs. Kenneth Coombe, Mrs. Walsham, Mr. James Watt, and Mr. Pett Ridge; FRIAR G. H. PERKINS; FRIAR A. D. POWER—the Rev. H. Wesley Dennis, Mrs. H. Wesley Dennis, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Pitman; FRIAR ALGERNON S. ROSE—Mrs. Algernon Rose, and Mr. and Mrs. Stewart Macpherson; FRIAR E. T. SACHS and Mrs. Sachs; FRIAR WILLIAM SENIOR—Mrs. Senior, Mr. and Mrs. Power, and Mr. and Mrs. Port; FRIAR J. SHAYLOR—Mrs. J. Shaylor, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney J. Shaylor, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Shaylor, and Mr. and Mrs. F. Hanson; FRIAR CLEMENT SHORTER and Mrs. Shorter; FRIAR W. B. SLATER—Mrs. W. B. Slater and Miss Slater; FRIAR WALTER SMITH—Señor and Mrs. Triana, Madame Thayer, and Mrs. Walter Smith; FRIAR KEIGHLEY SNOWDEN—Mrs. Snowden and Miss Snowden; FRIAR ALFRED SPENCER—Mrs. Alfred Spencer, Miss V. Sefton Spencer, Mr. Morrison, and Mr. and Mrs. F. Rowland Munt; FRIAR ARTHUR SPURGEON and Mrs. Spurgeon; FRIAR RICHARD WHITEING—Miss Bertha Whiteing and Miss di Castelvecchio; FRIAR FARLOW WILSON—Mr. and Mrs. Vogler and Mrs. Snudden; THE HON. SECRETARY—Mrs. James Stuart, Mr.

John Birrell, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Gorst, Dr. and Mrs. Rideal, and Mr. W. H. Kesteven.

“Sovereign Woman.”

The toast of “The King” having been duly honoured, and the Prior having read the Roll-call of Welcome,

THE BISHOP OF RIPON proposed the popular toast of “Sovereign Woman.” He said: It is always an anxious thing to speak to one’s fellow-creatures. It is peculiarly anxious when your theme is a difficult one, and, like this, somewhat enigmatic. I had to ask myself the meaning of the words your notice gave me. I had recourse to a dictionary. (Laughter.) This is not an age when dictionaries are always popular—(laughter)—at least, it is not an age when they are consulted; and I found that the word “Sovereign” was given the following meanings: “Pre-eminent in rule—(laughter)—possessing an authority which is original in itself, which deduces itself from no ancient origin, and knows no limitations.” (Laughter.) I confess that when I read that, the enigma deepened in my soul—(laughter)—for I was not sure whether I could put into true juxtaposition the two words which I was asked to speak about. Happily I found there was a second definition of the word “sovereign”—though I found that included the idea of predominance. It was that it was “efficacious.” (Laughter.) I thought that helpful. Some profit came of my study of the word. I began to see a little daylight. I began to see we were thinking of woman, not as the satirist would describe her, nor yet as the apologist for women’s rights would describe her, but as most of us would perhaps be prepared to describe her—as entitled to a sovereignty, entitled to a pre-eminence, and entitled to that efficacious helpfulness and power which I believe none, no matter what their political view, will deny to woman in her nature and her life. (Applause.) I remembered then, when the word “sovereign” was perplexing to my mind, that I must have recourse to ancient or past literature to enable me to understand the position, and then I remembered what at any rate one poet has said in description of her. He said that woman possessed—

“ Self-vaunting fancy, highly-crested pride,
Strong sovereign will—and some desire to chide.”

(Laughter.)

I discovered at any rate that there were men who were a little bit suspicious of the capacity of sovereignty which might

be exerted by womanhood, and as I pursued my thought and study a little farther I discovered the reason, for the same poet proceeded to inform us—

"They want the care of man, their want they know,
And dress to please with heart-alluring show;
The show prevailing, for the sway contend,
And make a servant where they meet a friend."

(Laughter.)

I understood then what it was that lay at the root of that man's attitude, for, evidently afraid of conceding any sovereignty, he knew that the witchery of women was such that they would get that sovereignty whether he admitted it or not. (Laughter and Hear, hear.) But I said, "Not thus could I write. I do not belong to the eighteenth century." I laid Mr. Parnell aside. I said, "I live in another age, an age in which people are trying to realise things as they are. We therefore do not look through the glasses which have been dimmed by many a prejudice. We are trying to face facts and to understand them." When I looked at it in that wise, I said, "No manner of doubt, if there is a sovereignty granted to man there must be a sovereignty granted to woman." And I can understand no reason why there should not be—for we have experience of it—a dual authority in this world. (Hear, hear.) I spoke to a workman on the subject, and he said, "If two men are working in a pit, one of them is bound to be boss." (Laughter.) I thought if you applied that to life there might be an application which touches the question of man and woman. (Laughter.) Believing very much in the ideal condition of things, and believing also, if you will have it so, that the duty of all men in life is to say, "Your ideals are not impossible"—for the moment you say to yourself that your ideals are impossible you are only advocating the policy of despair—I desire to say I can quite understand that Coleridge was right when he said that genius was androgynous. (Hear, hear.) And I imagine that everyone who has watched genius will be ready to endorse that dictum. No man or woman has attained to pre-eminent rank in any line of life who has not had the strong masculine elements of life mingled with the supreme gifts of womanhood. (Hear, hear.) If genius, then, is androgynous, I cannot see why there should not be a happy joint sovereignty, for the world cannot do if it is merely to listen to the voices of men, and it cannot do if it is only to listen to the voices of women—for if this world is anything it is surely a perpetual chorus in which all the voices have their due part. We want them all to

make up the music of life. (Applause.) When I take a survey of the literature of the past or the literature of the present, I think I recognise in the successful—the genuinely successful—literature, both of the past and the present, an abundant justification of the statement of Coleridge that there must be the manly and the womanly elements in the greater writings. Whether I take up the pages of an old writer or take up a book by some modern writer, I am struck by this: the chorus does combine the strong virility of the masculine with the exquisite sensibility and impressionableness—the sensibility of power—which I associate with the feminine faculty. (Applause.) Let me go back to my much-abused poet Parnell, and say he certainly was right when he said, in the old quotation you know so well:

"Those sacred Virgins, whom the bards revere,
Tun'd all her voice, and shed a sweetness there,
To make her sense with double charms abound,
Or make her lively nonsense please by sound."

(Laughter.)

It is the exquisiteness of the music which comes to our lives through womanhood which, blending with the strong, rough chorus of our manhood, makes the music of life, and no one of us can afford to dismiss from that chorus any one of these voices. If that is the true position, may I proceed for a moment, if you will bear with me, to be a trifle pessimistic? This is an age of rapid movement and unrest, and we are asked, sometimes in silver accents and sometimes in stentorian tones, to do justice and to do right by womanhood. We are all here—friends in this happy assembly—to recognise facts as they are, and there is one thing upon which I am a little apprehensive. Shall I tell it to you in confidence? It is this. I think this happy relationship of the blended voices of men and women ought to be sustained, in order that the music of the world may be good and wholesome and sound. I am prepared to say that women have passed out of that stage of tutelage which belonged to their lot some years ago—that stage of being tied, handicapped, and fettered which seemed to have been the delight of our ancestors, who mistook imbecility for grace, and want of capacity and want of knowledge for a kind of pretty modesty—(laughter)—and have passed into a stage in which we are trying to realise powers and capacities as they are intended to be, and the facts of life as they really and truly are. (Hear, hear.) I am the friend of the demand of womanhood for all the freedom which she can justly claim—and I have no *arrière pensée* in using that word “justly”—but I do wish to point out

the danger which it seems to me we (and by that I mean both the men and the women) of our day need to be on our guard against. May I for a moment take you back to the poet?

"Men born to labour, all with pains provide;
Women have time to sacrifice to pride."

So—he said—

"In a thousand wax-erected forts
A loitering race the painful bee supports;
From sun to sun, from bank to bank, he flies,
With honey loads his bag, with wax his thighs;
Fly where he will, at home the race remain,
Prune the silk dress, and murmuring eat the gain."

(Laughter.)

Now if the poet was trying to describe the dependence of woman on man, and picturing man as the toiling creature who went out as the busy bee gathering the honey in order that the loitering race, pruning its silk gown at home, might be able to eat when he provided, unfortunately for his simile he was entirely out at the elbow—(laughter)—for modern research has told us that the loitering race are the males. (Laughter and applause.) The drones are the happy husbands who do nothing. Modern life has entirely upset that hive. We have had a transformation scene, and what I see in my vision of progress is this—the man doing nothing and the woman doing everything; and that is, in principle, an impossible position. (Applause.) I think the parable of the hive is to be kept in mind. The real danger is lest the women should begin to do the work and run the risk of allowing the men to do nothing. May I whisper to you, brethren, this fact, and ask the ladies not to listen? Man is by nature very indolent. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) He has to work, but I can warmly assure you he does not want to work. (Laughter and applause.) My experience is that men do not, as a rule, love work, and my experience about women is that they do love it—(hear, hear)—and I am afraid that in the progress of women's rights there may be such a *bouleversement* as will leave the men the drones in the hive, to be, shall I call it, the ornaments of society. (Laughter and Hear, hear.) I do not think they will look the part—(renewed laughter)—but I am sure they will try to do their best. So I rather feel I am willing to concede to women a great deal—perhaps everything that we hear spoken of to-day. They may have the opportunity of following professions. They may be called to the Bar. They have already gone into medicine.

They may take what they please in the way of professional careers, and they may have the suffrage, and have their jewels and their gems ; but one thing I do not want, and that is that women should be put to the penal servitude of hard work. (Hear, hear.) I do not want—in the interests of man, who is naturally selfish—man to be relieved of the great and glorious responsibility of work and of providing a home for his womanhood, because I think it would be bad for him, and because I think it would be also, in the long run, injurious to the race. (Hear, hear.) I am not speaking of the work which many of you are happily engaged in. You will understand I am not holding a brief against women giving us their splendid help on the canvas and on the written and printed page. We have all rejoiced in their entrancing stories, their wonderful pictures, and their soul-inspiring poems. Indeed, may I say it, speaking for myself, that I have read—for I like a good novel, like most people—(hear, hear)—sometimes with simple amazement and admiration of the marvellous capacity, the extraordinary insight—quite, I think, outside the range of any possible region of acquired knowledge and experience—which seems to come almost by instinct to some women. They have sometimes put before one a scene which, in its delicate power of reading the innermost thoughts and the movements of the minds of men, has filled me with a transport of admiration and bewilderment. (Hear, hear.) I am not here—it would be invidious for me—to speak of individual works, but I am sure those present will allow me to speak in general and say, “ I can only thank you, ladies, who by the pen in poetry or in prose in a hundred ways have given one happiness and relieved the hours after the toil and battle of life.” (Applause.) Far be it from me to suggest anything which would deprive you of the right, or us of the privilege, of this fiction and these works. But what I do hold a brief against is the hard drudgery of womanhood in the large national sense. We have done a great deal in the reform of industrial conditions, but in my judgment we have not done nearly enough yet. To my mind it is one of the saddest things of our present national conditions that we have not realised the sanctity of woman’s life, that reverence for woman’s action and woman’s function. It has made us overlook those extraordinary cases in which women are kept toiling, under conditions which must put a direct tax upon their vitality and indirectly, I think, tend to the general degradation of the race. (Applause.) It is for that I say let us be on our guard lest in these movements we forget there is something too precious to be bartered away—our reverence for womanhood

and our determination that men shall bear the heat and burden of the day, for it is only thus that you will keep the high chivalry that I think God intended should be resident in the heart of man—lest we jeopardise that happy protected position which I think the very motherhood of our race deserves at our hands. (Applause.) In proposing the toast of "Sovereign Woman," I am sure you will allow me to say, whatever our views of woman may be, there is none of us will say she is to be regarded as a mere "Social Fetich." (Laughter.) You will not be surprised when I say it is my privilege to join with this toast the name of Lady Grove, and I am sure Lady Grove will agree with me that the purpose and aim of all those who are interested in literature or art, and, above all, who are interested in national welfare, is to solve what is called the women's question by a wise and wholesome consideration which will make us understand that woman is to be woman and man to be man to the end of the chapter. (Hear, hear.) Lady Grove is my authority here that the one vulgarity we have to be on our guard against—and that Lady Grove will attack, I am sure—is unreality—(hear, hear)—and to be unreal is a danger which I think sometimes waits upon all of us when we deal with this question of men and women. (Hear, hear.) Let us be real. Let us face the facts as they are, and let us be determined that as, in the order of nature in which we find ourselves, men and women have in the past been able to do so much for the development of the race and the happiness of the world, they may, joining hands, more strongly, more freely in the future than in the past, resolve that the future shall bring a greater blessing to the peoples that are to come than even they have brought in the past. (Applause.)

LADY GROVE, in reply, said: At the last Club dinner that I was invited to attend, and at which I was told I was to speak—I always regarded it more or less as a matter of coercion—I was particularly asked to speak on a subject that I was particularly asked not to speak about to-night. (Laughter.) I quite agree that, after the speech we have just listened to, it would be most unbecoming on my part to venture to say that women had any grievances at all. We have all heard what magnificent spheres have been opened to them and what useful work they are able to do in the spheres they occupy at present, and I am free to say this—if all the men and women in the world were of the same opinion as the Bishop of Ripon there would be no such thing as a woman's movement—everything would be for the best; there would be no question of righting grievances at all. (Hear, hear.)

But unfortunately they are not all of one opinion. Even the members of the same august assembly to which he belongs are not of the same opinion as the Bishop. A noble lord, speaking on the subject of electoral disabilities, said it was bad enough to be classed among criminals and lunatics—he did not mention paupers, for he was one of the “splendid paupers” we were asked to sympathise with some time ago—but what he could not stand was being classed with women and children. (Laughter.) Why is it that women, when they are bracketed with anybody, are always associated with the immature and the incompetent? The most humorous classification I think I have met with came the other day, when I received a circular from a firm of well-known tobacconists, in which they described the excellence of their goods. (Laughter.) They said they guaranteed to their clients, actual and prospective, that their cigars and cigarettes were all “hand-made.” The circular went on to say “they are all made by competent men, and neither by machines nor women.” (Laughter.) I hope you will notice the order in which they come. (Laughter.) And I presume, in the views of the person who drew up that circular, that even if women had made them they would not have been “hand-made.” (Laughter.) We need not go to the tobacconists’ or to the circulars of publicans, or any other, for our estimate of women; we can hear what Shakespeare says. All Shakespeare’s heroes, it has been said before, are heroines—(laughter and Hear, hear)—and if it is true that Portia was Shakespeare’s ideal of a woman, we are told to believe that Katherine, even in the last act, was his ideal of what a wife should be. (Hear, hear.) Shakespeare is, from my point of view, an extremely intelligent person, so that when we have innocuous persons like Lamb holding up to our attention as children that Katherine, when she had been tamed, was the sort of wife we have a right to expect, we must remember that there was another woman in the play who had never undergone the process of taming. I have more sympathy with Katherine in her most violent moments than in the abject condition which followed that taming, when at once she went at her husband’s summons, whereas the other said, “If he wants me he can come to me; it is not for me to run to him every time. I am not at his beck and call.” (Laughter.) That is the normal attitude of the ordinary wife. It is possible to say that Katherine had not the proper sense of dignity and self-control which should be possessed by every well-regulated woman. But at least Bianca had never undergone the process. I maintain that Shakespeare’s ideal of what a normal wife should

be was the attitude adopted by Bianca. When Katherine comes in, in the last act, and, in accordance with her husband's desire, tears off her best tressau bonnet, Bianca says:

"Fie, what foolish duty call you this?"

(Laughter.) And although we have at the end of the play a wonderful speech, supposed to indicate the right relations between man and woman, we have also this view of Katherine's sense of her need for obedience to her husband. She says that man, the husband,

"Commits his body
To painful labour, both by sea and land,
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,
Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe."

If it were true that every woman in the world could "lie warm at home, secure and safe," through the agency of man, then I am perfectly prepared to admit that what she says—

"Love, fair looks, and true obedience"

is indeed

"Too little payment for so great a debt."

(Hear, hear.) But it is not true. (Hear, hear.) We know there are homes where women do not lie in warmth, secure and safe. We know, even more, that in many homes where they do lie warm, secure and safe, their warmth and security is not due to the labour and toil of their husbands. (Hear, hear.) It is due to the fact that they have inherited a certain amount of wealth from their ancestors—perhaps the only thing they have inherited from them—(laughter)—and by this means alone it is that they are able to give their wives this sense of warmth and security, without which they would not be able to exist. I disclaim any desire to run down the men. (Laughter.) I think them very amiable—(laughter)—but I do want a true sense of proportion in considering what women owe to men and men to women. (Applause.) Don't let us talk always of the debt that women owe to men without its being acknowledged what men also owe to women. Women give as much as men, and they rise or sink together. (Hear, hear.) Now I would ask you to let me say one thing. I have not once mentioned that phrase "Votes for women," and lest I should be tempted to do so now, I will immediately sit down. (Applause.)

"The Prior."

MRS. PERCY DEARMER, in proposing the health of "The Prior," said: This is a toast I have looked forward to with much trepidation, principally, I think, because of a letter from your Secretary, who said that the usual toast, "Mere Man," to-night was to be omitted. He said I was to propose the health of the Prior. I was not to speak of Mere Man, but I was merely to speak of the Prior. (Laughter.) This I find very difficult if I am not to speak of the Prior as Mere Man. (Laughter.) I have sat at dinner to-night with the Bishop—(laughter and Hear, hear)—and I am also connected in many ways with the inferior clergy. (Laughter.) But a Prior! It fills me with anxiety! I cannot tell with what degree of reverence I ought to approach the subject. (Laughter.) A wise man has said about the mistakes of life that one must never explain and never apologise, but at the same time we must never do it again. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) I feel in this that I have been like the White Queen in "Alice in Wonderland," in that I am explaining, I am apologising, before I have made my speech. (Laughter.) But I hope that if doing it again means a dinner at the Whitefriars Club, that I shall be allowed some day to do it again. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) I believe that your rule is that three things must be excluded from the speeches—politics, religion, and the suffragette question. (Laughter.) This makes my task peculiarly difficult, because I feel that all the serious things of life are excluded, and as I belong to the serious sex I feel I am tied down to a frivolity which really does not belong to me. (Laughter and applause.) Politics, I suppose, in a sense, are the affairs of this world, and religion the affairs of the next, and the suffragette question might be said to be the affairs of a world to come. (Laughter.) But I am to leave all these out. I am to speak of the Prior—but not as Mere Man. I would like to speak of the Prior just with reference to the Whitefriars Club, and to this I feel I owe a debt of gratitude. It is always very delightful when one wishes to say "Thank you," to be able to say "Thank you" to as many people as possible and in public. (Hear, hear.) I come before you to-night as a beginner in letters. Two years ago, when the Whitefriars Club first asked me to dine here, I was more of a beginner than I am now. To be a beginner in anything, whether fiction or golf, is a very trying thing, and one is always very grateful for any help or sympathy that can be given one. I was very much of a beginner indeed, and when the Whitefriars Club asked me to be a guest I felt—well, it gave me

a sort of lift; I felt that perhaps what I was saying was worth saying, or perhaps I might some day say something worth saying. That is a good frame of mind for anybody to be in, and the Whitefriars Club did that for me, and I am grateful for the opportunity of expressing my gratitude. It seems rather absurd for me, a stranger, a guest, to come and talk to you about your Prior, because you must know his many virtues much better than I do. But he bears an illustrious name, and a name of which England may indeed be proud. (Applause.)

THE PRIOR, in reply, said: I feel I am thanking you in my corporate capacity, as representing the Whitefriars Club for the nonce, and I beg first to thank Mrs. Dearmer for the very kindly and flattering terms in which she has proposed the toast. I would also like to take the opportunity of thanking the Bishop of Ripon for his luminous tribute to the work of women, and for his word of warning to our own sex, which I hope we have all laid to heart. I should also like to thank Lady Grove for her splendid speech—not untinged, I remember, with salutary irony. (Laughter.) A student desiring to pass a divinity examination went into the classroom and was confronted with a paper whereon one of the questions he was asked was, to give a life of St. Paul. His somewhat imperfect knowledge did not include the New Testament—(laughter)—and he scratched his head and bit his pen, and at last a bright idea struck him, and he hastily wrote, “Paul who was also called Saul—and here perhaps it may not be irrelevant if I give a list of the Kings of Israel and Judah.” (Laughter.) My position is somewhat worse, because the list of the Kings and Queens of literature and art has already been recited in the Roll-call. (Laughter and Hear, hear.) I find we present the somewhat unusual and anomalous spectacle of a company of monks entertaining a bevy of ladies. Time was when the very thought of woman to the monkish mind was anathema maranatha. (Laughter.) She was the embodiment of sin. She was the accursed thing. She was the fair semblance of beauty under which the devil hid all his wiles. We seem to see the struggle of St. Antony underlying the whole conception of woman in the middle ages. Consequently the strongest rules for her exclusion from monastic precincts had to be made. Rules, however salutary, are apt to become somewhat inconvenient, and there are difficulties in the way of keeping rules. An instance of that occurred in a book, “Ekkehard,” written by Victor von Scheffel. When a monastery came to be fiefed to an overlady instead of an overlord, the question was, how was the lady to take possession of her property? No

woman was allowed by the monastic order to cross the threshold. Mark you that the word "threshold" was the important word in the rule. These monks laid their heads together, and then, like my divinity student, a bright idea struck them. This is the way they got over the difficulty. A young and handsome monk was chartered to meet the lady at the gate of the monastery, and he went out to welcome her, and he took her in his arms, and he lifted her up, and he carried her across the threshold in order that her dainty feet might not even brush the doorstep. (Laughter.) It has not been necessary to do that to-night—(continued laughter)—but if it had been, I am quite sure I am speaking the truth when I say there would have been no lack of volunteers in this company for so dear and so gracious a task. (Laughter and applause.) I think I am now in a position in which I may perhaps express our own corporate vanity, not my own. I think I will, if you will permit me, dive for a very few minutes—for the evening is getting on—into the history of the past. The Carmelites, whom we now represent, were founded, as you know, somewhere in the thirteenth century, and they took to themselves a plot of ground lying somewhere between Fleet Street and the Thames. It was called the Whitefriars, and latterly it came under the name of Alsatia. That became naturally a sanctuary. Sanctuaries, like reputations, sometimes come to be smirched by time, and this sanctuary became, according to the words of the historian, the resort of libertines and rascals of every description. Cast your eyes around, and you will see them. (Laughter.) These libertines and rascals came together in 1867, and they said to themselves, "Let us form a club." It may not be irrelevant if I give you one or two names of the early members of this Club: Tom Hood, Joseph Knight, Barry Sullivan, William Black, and Manville Fenn, and, last but not least, the Friar whom I see opposite me, whom we all hold in great affection—Friar Senior. (Applause.) Since those early days the Club has increased in size and, may I say, importance. But we have not departed, nor do I hope we shall ever depart, from our pristine simplicity, and the chief feature of our Club consists in our weekly dinners, at which we discuss all subjects, human and divine, from the influence of mountains upon microbes—(laughter)—or whether drink produces good drama, to the influence of poetry upon prisons—(laughter)—and I can say with truth and sincerity that those discussions, although we differ sharply, are carried on with no acrimony. (Hear, hear.) There is a harmony which pervades our proceedings almost unparalleled in the history of clubs. But there is one feature which distin-

guishes our Club, and which I know of no other club possessing, and that is the spirit of kindly good-fellowship which binds us together in more than a nominal brotherhood. (Hear, hear.) We feel that, whatever each of us may be doing in this great roaring city of London, we may, by this friendly intercourse, learn something, notwithstanding, from one another, and we hope and we think that we strengthen that bond of fellowship which binds us together more surely day by day, as the history of the Club goes on; and I say this with all sincerity—this bond which exists between us is something indefinable, it is unique, and it cannot be bought by gold. (Applause.)

The speeches were interspersed with songs and other entertainment, and the proceedings concluded with a conversazione and the singing of "Auld Lang Syne."

CLUB NOTES.

FRIARS will receive in the course of a few days particulars of the arrangements for the Annual Pilgrimage, which will take place on Saturday, July 11th. The Committee having gone through the voting papers, found that Salisbury (with Stonehenge) was the most popular of the three alternative places suggested for the excursion. The Dean has very graciously invited the Friars and their ladies to wander round his gardens. There will be a special saloon train to and from Salisbury, luncheon on the train, and dinner at the White Hart Hotel; coaches to Stonehenge. Friars are asked to reserve the date.

Friar T. Athol Joyce has presented to the Club casts of a couple of seals of the Fleet Street White Friars. They are copied from examples in the Manuscript Department of the British Museum. The following are the descriptions:—

White Friars or Carmelites, Fleet Street.

3571. [13th cent.] Two canopied niches; in the l. a saint holding in the r. h. a sword; in the l. h. a church; in the r. a Virgin with crown, the Child on her r. arm.

Inscription.

S' · CONTENTVS · FRM · CARMELI · LOND'.

Priors Seal.

3572. [14th cent.] Pointed oval; a saint seated in a canopied niche, in the r. h. a sword; overhead in a smaller niche the Virgin, seated, with crown, the Child on the l. knee.

Inscription.

S' · PÒRIS · LÒDON' · ORD.....CE · MAR' · DE · CARMEL'.

W. N. S.