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Edited by FRIAR G. B. BURGIN.

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CLUB DINNER.

SOME EXPERIENCES AT THE FRONT AND ELSEWHERE.

The dinner arranged for the month of May took place on Friday, May 26th. Club Guest—The Right Hon. Will Crooks, M.P.; Prior—Friar Arthur Spurgeon, J.P.

Among the guests present were:

Sir Malcolm Morris, K.C.V.O., Captain Thomson, Mr. W. G. Rayner, Mr. William Blane (well-known poet and journalist of South Africa), Mr. Arthur Porritt, Mr. J. B. Matthews, K.C., Mr. J. H. Hoy, Mr. A. J. Mundella, Corporal Noel Irving, of the R.A.M.C. (before the war was an artist and author, now a hospital orderly), Dr. H. O. Butler, Mr. H. J. Edwards, I.S.O., Mr. Caradoc Rees, M.P., Mr. Eimer Showler, Mr. F. W. Hallett, and Mr. S. J. Shaylor.

The Prior, in welcoming the chief guest, said he had read a book called "From Workhouse to Westminster." There was a remarkable introduction in this book from the pen of Mr. G. K. Chesterton, who wrote: "The one man in the Labour Party in the House of Commons who really represents Labour is Mr. Will Crooks." Mr. Crooks represented Labour because he was of Labour; he knew what the working classes wanted, and thus he stood supreme in the particular line which he represented.

We were told somewhere that "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." If there was a man who by a hard and constant struggle and incessant work had made a position in the country and councils of the nation it was our guest of to-night. There was nothing to compare with the wonderful part he had played in the epoch-making struggle which began in August, 1914.

The Prior met Mr. Crooks one day in the House of Commons, and when they were discussing the war he made this remarkable statement: "In the name of my Saviour, I am going to see this

thing through." It was an original observation, which made a great impression on him. Mr. Crooks had lived up to it; up and down the country no man had done more to win the sympathy of the populace—if it required winning—than our guest had done.

Mr. Crooks was a man of humour of the true Dickens type. The man who saw humour in everything was going to do great things as life proceeds. We welcomed him there in many capacities, and he asked the brethren to drink "the health of our guest."

THE RIGHT HON. WILL CROOKS, M.P., who was very cordially received, said that the Prior had stated that he had been reading a book "From Workhouse to Westminster." He was once stopped in the House of Commons by a friend: "I see that 'From Workhouse to Westminster' costs six shillings." "I have just come up for fourpence halfpenny," Mr. Crooks retorted, referring to the fare he had paid from Poplar to Westminster.

"I have been associated with the workhouse all my life," the speaker continued. "One of my excuses for alleged extravagance in Poor Law control is that it is the duty of a man to provide for himself in old age. As I am likely to wind up in the workhouse, I thought I would make it as comfortable as I possibly could."

Referring to his efforts to secure the abolition of pauper garb, Mr. Crooks stated: "It was with joy I once met an old lady from the workhouse, in the East India Dock Road, attired in such a way that there was no indication where she came from. I said: "Hallo, Mother, how are you?" She said: "I ain't very well, and I don't like these clothes." "What is the matter with them?" I inquired. She said: "Why, nobody knows you come from the workhouse, and they don't give you nothing."

Alluding to his experiences during the water famine in the East End, Mr. Crooks stated that they were able to remedy the shortage by connecting up with the Kent waterworks. After this was done, a man came before the Guardians for relief. Asked why he required relief, the man said: "I'm out of work all through you." "All through me; I don't understand," was the reply. "I am a tinker. When there was a shortage people had to use their pots and pans, and now the water has come on again I'm out of work." There was no satisfying some people.

There was a gentleman present that evening who accompanied the speaker to a dinner given to five hundred youngsters, and one little girl said to a ragged companion: "Ain't it all right? Taters and pudden." "Yus," replied the other; "I'm sorry I mended my stays before I came."

Touching upon recruiting work, Mr. Crooks stated that his most extraordinary experience was at a meeting held in a district near to where the Prior resided. The chairman said: "I think we shall have a fine meeting. I have sent out circulars to all the young men in the district." When the meeting took place the hall was filled with grey-haired and bald-headed men, and there was no one else in the place. "I cannot make out where all the young men are to-night," said the chairman. Mr. Crooks replied: "I know where they are; they are out courting and have sent their fathers instead." He was placed in an ironical position when he addressed his first recruiting meeting at Burton-on-Trent. As a lifelong teetotaller, for him to go to Burton was bad enough, but to have to accept the hospitality of a brewery was worse. The morning after the meeting a man came to him and said: "You will be glad to hear that there have been over nine hundred men at the recruiting station." Mr. Crooks answered: "Which is the nearest way to the railway station? I don't want the wives and sweethearts after me."

"In the Midlands we had a recruiting meeting," Mr. Crooks continued, "and I think it was a major speaking—I am not well up in military knowledge as to the difference between a major and a captain. I always call them generals, and I find they have not the slightest objection. The major said: 'I was up all last night on duty, and, ladies and gentlemen, do I appeal in vain to you? If you saw your sisters' and brothers' legs flying in all directions would you not fight?' I thought it was time we drew our funeral money and got home."

Mr. Crooks was once invited to Yorkshire to spend a Sunday. He said: "I don't want to spend a Sunday in Yorkshire." He was taken to miners' clubs, where there were pots of beer; he visited three clubs in the morning, and in the afternoon went to a big meeting at a cinema. He was told: "You will have a rough time here; they are lining up for you." The men were against recruiting, and that was the reason he had been brought there. The chairman, a miner's agent, nervously tapped the table, saying: "I think they will be all right." Mr. Crooks

answered: "I propose to sample them before going on." He then said: "We will open by singing 'God save the King.'" The crowded meeting heartily joined in the singing, and after that there were no more difficulties.

The astonishing thing was that Mr. Crooks had never had a discordant note from the time he started the meetings until the present day. Sheffield was wonderful. Whilst he was waiting at the station at Sheffield, about fifty recruits came on to the platform; they were on their way to York. Quite a hundred women saw them off. When the train steamed away one old lady stood watching. He saw her with her apron to her eyes, and wanted to be sympathetic. "Are you upset, mother?" "No, there's nothing the matter with me." "Oh, I thought you were worried at seeing the boy off." "Worried! I ain't worried. He's the only one I've got, but I'm glad he's going to try to get one in at the blighters."

Mr. Crooks had had various experiences of people trying to catch his eye in trains and buses. "On one occasion I was travelling in a train when I was glared at by a man. I tried to avoid his gaze, but the man caught me. 'Have you read the paper this morning?' asked the stranger. 'No.' 'I thought you had.' 'Don't get angry about it.' 'See what the Labour men have been doing?' 'What have they been up to now?' 'I wouldn't trust a Labour man out of my sight!' the man exclaimed. 'What about the man driving the locomotive—you can't see him?'"

Mr. Crooks gave some interesting details of his visit to the fighting line, where the humour and humanity of the "Tommies" surpassed anything he ever knew. "In talking to the soldiers I said: 'You all know Piccadilly Circus?' 'Rather,' came the reply. 'You all know the fountain there—you know there is a figure on top—what is it?' There were shouts of 'Cupid—Angel—Venus.' I said: 'I'll give a packet of cigarettes to the man who guesses first. You give it up—so will I, for I don't know what it is.' I then told them of the lady who walked up to a flower girl in Piccadilly Circus, near the fountain, and asked for a shilling's worth of flowers. After the purchase, the lady said: 'Will you be here on Wednesday next, as I shall want a half-crown's worth for my daughter; she is coming out on that day.' 'She shall have the best in the market, mum. What has she been in for?'

"Whilst going into one camp, I was stopped by a military policeman with an M.P. badge on his arm. 'Your pass or permit, sir.' 'You are one M.P. stopping another,' I answered. 'Are you an M.P.? I should like to have your blooming pocket.' I said: 'My dear Tommy, that is where you make a mistake. Since I have been a Member with four hundred pounds a year the number of men of thirty who went to school with me is a revelation in scientific lying.'

"All through the camps the men were as chirpy and cheerful as robins; there are no pessimists there—they are all optimists. At one place, which I don't want to locate particularly, they had a kind of natural amphitheatre. About five thousand men were gathered round a boxing ring. One man said he would take me on at fourteen stone six. I said: 'You are too light for me—I want something heavier.'

"In the hospitals lay a lot of men all bloody and battered out of shape, saying: 'I'll be all right, guv'nor,' quite cheerfully. We talk of taxes and of dear bread, tea and coal—by the living God, we can never adequately repay these men for what they have done for us.

"I heard one story from Belgium of a Convent Mother who in a time of danger gathered the little crippled children together. 'Where are you going, Mother?' 'Go away, my darlings; God bless you.' There were two children who could not be moved, and she stayed behind with them. The others were led away to a place of safety by one of the Sisters. The woman was found two or three days afterwards kneeling, dead, at the altar; the two little children were dead beside her, and in her hand was clutched a paper on which was written: 'I have won my crown.'

"At a railway junction in Belgium eight hundred women were seized by the Germans, and with outstretched hands prayed to be told where they were going. 'We don't make war on women and children—be of good cheer,' said the Germans. The train steamed down to the German base, and *they have never been heard of since.*

"Some people want to know what we are fighting for. We are fighting for the honour and virtue of our wives and daughters. It has gone too far now to talk of pacification. We have got to fight this war to a finish. Our boys are brave; our people are enduring; our women are superb. God give us victory."

THE PRIOR thought that, after Mr. Crooks's eloquent address, it would be an anticlimax to have any discussion, and suggested that members and guests should adjourn to the Club room. This was the first time in the history of the Club that this procedure had been followed, and he was quite sure Mr. Crooks would appreciate the compliment being paid him. On behalf of the members, he sincerely thanked Mr. Crooks for his address.

Mr. Crooks briefly returned thanks. He was following an illustrious procession of men who had been entertained by the Club, and when he accepted the invitation he thought he should be out of place there. He had been very much at home; in fact, he was quite overcome. Reverting to his early struggles, he said: "When I was made a Privy Councillor my mind went back to the day I held at my mother's skirt as she appeared before the Board of Guardians. The chairman pointing to me —I was then nine years of age—said: 'That boy ought to be getting his own living.' My mother's lips quivered; tears fell down her cheeks. I looked up into her face and said: 'What is the matter, mother? Never mind what he says.' I wish she had lived to see me made a Privy Councillor."

CLUB DINNER.

OCTOBER 6TH, 1916.

THE DRAMA AND THE WAR.

Club Guest—GENERAL SIR HORACE LOCKWOOD SMITH-DORRIEN, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

Prior—FRIAR DR. C. W. KIMMINS.

AMONG the guests present were:

Sir Alfred Pearce Gould, Vice-Chancellor of the University of London; Dr. William Garnett, late Education Adviser to the L.C.C.; Mr. A. J. Mundella, Editor and Proprietor of the *School Child;* Mr. Arthur J. Price; Mr. Walter Palk; Mr. T. A. Rose; Lieutenant A. K. Wesley Dennis, 5th South Lancs; Mr. W. G. Taylor; Colonel Atkins, C.M.G., Staff of Commander-in-Chief of the Home Forces; Dr. Dawson Williams, Editor of the *British Medical Journal;* Mr. John Hinds, M.P. for West Carmarthenshire; Mr. William Archer; Mr. L. N. Parker, the

dramatist; Lieutenant Paget, of the R.N.V.R., home on leave from patrolling German submarines; Sergeant Noel Irving and Corporal George Pirie, two artists serving in the R.A.M.C.; Mr. W. J. Orams; Major T. A. Osborne, of the 47th Battalion Canadian Expeditionary Force; Mr. P. L. F. Perkins; Mr. Gordon Piper; Mr. L. A. Martin, Chairman of the London Chamber of Commerce; the Rev. James Marchant, Director and Secretary of the National Council of Public Morals; Mr. W. H. Wilson; Lieutenant Eric Rideal; Captain A. Teed, R.N., of the Admiralty; Mr. Hall; Mr. E. R. Showler; Mr. N. K. Whitlock; Mr. W. J. Ennever, of the Pelman School of Memory Training; Mr. D. W. Douthwaite, Under-Treasurer of Gray's Inn; Sir George Frampton, R.A.; Mr. C. E. Wade; Dr. Henry Bergen, of the Carnegie Institution, Washington; and Mr. J. M. Bullock, Editor of the *Graphic*.

General Smith-Dorrien explained why he had started his campaign for an improvement in the tone of public amusements, and gave reasons for including in it criticism of picture papers, picture post cards, posters, and other printed matter. His campaign was started on Imperial grounds, and for this reason he had preferred to work independently instead of accepting invitations to join forces with any medical movement or religious organisation. He looked to the future, and was anxious about the effect of certain plays, revues and the literature of lubricity, on the minds of those who would be responsible for the welfare of this great Empire, which was going to be still greater after the war. His first move was on behalf of the Army, but he had found it necessary to extend his view.

It was difficult to define how the low standard he complained of had crept into the theatre, and it was hard to know how to deal with it. That the danger was real was proved by the great mass of the correspondence he had received. He cited in particular a letter from a Canadian, who wrote that many of his countrymen were going home with an idea of England as a hotbed of iniquity, because, practically, all they had seen of it was the type of stage production that simply reflected the spirit of the camp hangers-on.

He fully recognised the honourable exceptions, but he felt persuaded that where there was ground for complaint the managers were themselves to blame for a class of entertainment that was, he urged, provocative of conduct responsible in turn

for a large amount of preventible disease in the Army. As to the connection between this grave danger and the stage productions he referred to, he cited the approval of no less an authority than Sir Thomas Barlow. In conclusion, he pleaded with the critics, whose influence on the British public was paramount, for their support.

FRIAR ARTHUR SPURGEON referred to our guest as one who, in the dark days of Mons, had done a great and memorable work not only for the British Empire, but for European freedom and civilisation. In regard to what the gallant General wanted us to do, one thing was certain—it was essential to maintain a high standard in public amusements. The price of this was ceaseless vigilance. In particular, supervision of provincial cinemas should be stricter.

As to the critics, Friar Spurgeon welcomed the good work of Mr. William Archer. As to the editors, he denied that the attitude of any of them was governed in such matters as the corruption of the public taste by the giving or withholding of theatrical advertisements. It was difficult to see any evidence of the suggested connection between the sickness in the Army and the character of current stage productions; but for the evils complained of, the best remedy was a healthy public opinion, and he thought the crusade started by our guest should be supported as a means of promoting that public opinion.

MR. WILLIAM ARCHER expressed a hearty admiration of the public spirit in which General Smith-Dorrien had carried on his crusade, though he could not accept all his conclusions. He did not think we could take the line that England had uniformly set an example to the world of all that was decent and moral. One need not accept the German estimate of our character. We had improved, certainly, since the Elizabethan age, but just at the present time the state of society was affected by the war and beset by very grave dangers. There was, he felt assured, no permanent declension in the standard of public morality; at the same time, the case of the young men in cities away from home influences needed special care.

As to the connection between what was called preventable disease and the stage, Mr. Archer found the same difficulty as Friar Spurgeon in arriving at a satisfactory conclusion. The charge was in the nature of a flank attack. Were the public or the managers responsible for the state of things complained

of? The problem was a difficult one. The manager, it was to be remembered, had to deal with the matter ready to his hand. Personally, he did not believe in the existence of any genius-playwright. Many of the modern stage productions were amusing and witty, but in essence most of them were absolutely rotten. General Smith-Dorrien seemed to overestimate the power of the critics. In fact, the critics had very little influence with the public. There was a time when this was not so, when there was one critic who had a very real influence, though he thought he did not always use that influence to the best advantage. He referred to the late Clement Scott. Clement Scott's criticisms had many points of excellence, but there were critics to-day, and he alluded in particular to his own most distinguished colleague, who possessed much more intellectual ability than Clement Scott. However, none of them had his influence.

As to the censor, or censors, and he was an old and inveterate enemy of the censorship, he was inclined to take up the cudgels for the censor. The censorship was powerless to do what it professed to do. Effective censorship rested with the public. The most depressing feature of the theatrical outlook was that its intellectual aspect was worse than its moral aspect. The very names of some of the existing stage productions were a scandal. He gave examples. The difficulty was that even the better part of the public would not take the trouble to discriminate. He did not desire serious problem drama just now. There were many excellent light entertainments, but the public went to the theatre in a cynical frame of mind. It was the old, old vice of the English nation not to take the theatre seriously. What was wanted was that the Government should show a real interest in the theatre as a great instrument of intellectual and moral education. We wanted a national theatre, and he was not at all sure that this was not one of the things the war was going to bring about. After the war there would be less money to spend on amusements, and instead of investing in expensive spectacular displays, managers might see that brains were cheaper, and the intellectual more remunerative than the sensual and sensuous appeal.

Friar Alfred Sutro asked if middle-age was not in danger of trying to dictate to boys, and if the so-called provocative plays were not more of an excitement to the lusty old fellows than to the lusty young ones. Much that was complained of,

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and that simply bored their elders, had no more effect on the young playgoers than water on a duck's back. Admittedly, the taste of the great body of the public was bad, but improvement must come from the public. Indecent suggestion was the thing that had to be stamped out. Altogether, from the point of view of the young as well as of the old, the whole problem had to be approached in a large spirit of toleration.

Mr. Louis N. Parker, who spoke with feeling of the great pride that he had in his profession of playwright, said he was greatly pained and grievously shocked to find the drama held up as a specific cause of disease in the Army, and he pleaded for a recognition of the line of demarcation between the legitimate drama and those performances that had been so severely condemned. The drama proper was perhaps the purest form of entertainment we had.

General Smith-Dorrien, replying, said he had tried all through to differentiate between high-class drama and the music-hall type of entertainment, which undoubtedly encouraged young soldiers to conduct themselves immorally. He thought there was sufficient evidence that among our critics were to be found men of brain and intellectual power. His faith would be sadly shaken if he were driven to believe that good plays were produced and that the public could not be induced to support them. What he had heard would be a helpful guide to him in the future. He should leave that gathering with many ideas of which he was ignorant when he came there. He had learned a great deal, and he was sensible both of the honour paid him in being invited to the Club, and of the patient and kindly way in which his few remarks had been received.

Prior Kimmins expressed the general feeling of the meeting when he said he hoped that General Smith-Dorrien's first visit to the Whitefriars Club would not be his last.

Except from Mr. William Archer, whose speech was a fine compliment to his hearers, one heard little about the Drama, and, save by the guest of the evening, little was said about the war during the debate on "The Drama and the War." The occasion, however, was one of the most memorable in the history of the Club. It drew a representative attendance of Friars, and there were many distinguished guests.

General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien's campaign, he explained,

was directed against stage productions that are usually referred to as *risqué;* but he aimed also against salacity and vulgarity in the cinema, the poster, the picture paper and the picture post card. There was a consensus of opinion that, while the campaign was justified, many modern stage productions had nothing to do with the drama proper. For the rest, "The drama's laws the drama's patrons give." Johnson's dictum serves to summarise the whole discussion.

Though the speeches were animated, there are few stories to chronicle. General Smith-Dorrien quoted from a well-known daily paper the following:

> "Mem. for General Smith-Dorrien: From the theatre advertisements of a certain provincial city: 'Nellie, the Beautiful Cloak Model,' 'The Unmarried Mother,' 'A Man with Three Wives,' and 'She Slipped.' Soldiers half price."

He also drew attention to a booklet purporting to contain a full description of the dresses worn by ladies in a certain revue—but with all the leaves blank! Very amusing was Friar Sutro's remark to a manager: "I see they are staging three plays of Shakespeare in Berlin. Why don't you put one on?" To which he received the reply: "Because you are the only man who would come to it, and you wouldn't pay for your seat." Then there was Mr. Archer's account of the two young officers, youths he could vouch for as innocent of any vicious tastes, but who when on leave insisted, the one in taking his mother to see "A Little Bit of Fluff," and the other ("which was worse") in taking his father to see "To-Night's the Night." Manifestly criticism, as Friar Sutro urged, needs to be tempered by a large spirit of toleration.

There was no reservation in the welcome accorded to the gallant General who opened the discussion. His sincerity was so manifest, his desire to be fair so patent. An officer and a gentleman spoke in his every accent. His few closing words, in which he who had done so much for the Empire expressed the modest hope that he might by his campaign be of some service to the future generation, touched all hearts.

It may be worth recalling the fact that, while the first theatre in London was built in 1576, the structure was hardly set before John Northbrook's reproof of "Vaine Playes or

Interluds" was licensed for the press. Stephen Gosson's "The Schoole of Abuse, conteining a plesaunt inuective against Poets, Pipers, Plaiers, Iesters, and such like Caterpillers of the Commonwelth" came out in 1579. Philip Stubbes published his "Anatomy of Abuses," in which he castigated the "wickedness" of stage plays and interludes, in 1584. To-day the stage labours under a whole library of vituperative literature. Like the novel, which is in kindred case, it will go on amusing and occasionally elevating the public. Meanwhile, as Mr. Archer said, the public have to be educated above the level of mere nastiness and mere drivel. W. FRANCIS AITKEN.

DINNER.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD, 1916.

Club Guest—MAJOR-GENERAL SIR FRANCIS LLOYD, K.C.B.
Prior—FRIAR SIR E. VINCENT EVANS.

TOPIC: "DEFENCE AND DEFIANCE."

AMONG the guests present were:

Sir John Pritchard Jones, Bart., Treasurer of the National Museum of Wales; Colonel the Hon. A. V. Russell, M.V.O., Chief of Staff to Sir Francis Lloyd; Colonel Robert Jones, F.R.C.S., Director-General of Military Orthopedics; Dr. Dawson Williams, Editor of the *British Medical Journal;* Dr. Owen Pritchard, Red Cross Reserve, London District; Mr. John Hinds, M.P. for West Carmarthen; Mr. John T. Lewis, Oxford; Mr. Philip Williams, Member of the London Welsh Battalions Committee; Professor J. Morris Jones, M.A., of the University College of North Wales; Captain R. Harrison Archbald; Mr. C. Isler; Mr. R. C. Watson; Mr. Sharman Crawford; Lieutenant A. H. Wesley Dennis, 5th Lancs (home wounded); Major Sir Harry North; Captain Harold Page, M.C., of the Australian Imperial Forces; Sir Robert Blair, Education Officer of the London County Council; Mr. Alfred B. Garside; Professor J. H. Morgan, author of "Leaves from a Field Notebook," etc.; Captain H. S. Tunnard, Secretary to King's College Hospital; Colonel Max Greer; Lieutenant E. K. Rideal; Mr. H. Hobson; Captain Thomson, Transport Officer; and Mr. J. R. Fisher, the well-known publicist and journalist.

THE PRIOR briefly introduced the guest of the evening, and considered that it was a very great honour to be in the chair, all the more because Sir Francis Lloyd was a countryman of his own. He was in charge of the London district, and while he was there to look after us, we should all sleep far more comfortably in our beds. In feeling and eloquent terms, he gave the toast of the evening.

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR FRANCIS LLOYD, K.C.B., in responding to the toast, said that his subject was "Defence and Defiance." Two years ago Germany was absolutely defiant, and defied the whole world of nations outside the Central Powers. We, on the other hand, were defiant, but not prepared for defence, with the exception of one branch, the Navy. The Navy was absolutely prepared; it has swept the seas ever since, and rides at peace hoping that the enemy may come out to war.

With regard to the land forces, what state were we in at the beginning of the war? We were in no state at all. Thanks to Lord French and other great military men, our Army was gradually prepared to meet the foe. It stood, like the men of Thermopylæ, in the Gate. If we had then had a million men, the tremendous effort which we are now making would have been unnecessary. Now, we had to count our chickens and see what was to be done in the future. We must have preparation. Our great asset lay in the men who came forward and died for their country when necessity arose. Also, we must have trainers for our armies, officers and non-commissioned officers to train the privates and fill in the picture. There was need for a great reserve of officers to do the necessary training every year. We must have munitions ready, rifles ready, for this was a war of the great gun which pours forth a ton of iron at a time and rendered it absolutely necessary that we should keep up to date in gunnery and munitions.

The Territorial Forces had done magnificent service.

Our problem was rendered more difficult by the fact that we have our Colonies overseas to take care of, and it was a source of pride to the speaker when he reflected how magnificently those Colonies had rallied round us.

It was incredible but true that, until a short time ago, there was no line of defence round London; but, thanks to the magnificent services of the Volunteers, that danger had ceased to exist.

Our aircraft had improved enormously, and our gun-power driven enemy Zeppelins higher and higher, so that it was extremely difficult for them to bomb a great city.

The last problem which the speaker had to consider was that of a Channel tunnel, and he thought that, at present, it was not wanted. Were we wise to throw away the advantage which Nature had given us of being an island? A Channel tunnel at the moment would be of enormous advantage, but he would rather run the risk of sea-sickness than do anything that would invalidate the protection afforded us by Nature. He would like to keep the narrow seas inviolate, and be prepared absolutely for defence. We must also perfect our anti-aircraft defence.

FRIAR SIR ERNEST CLARKE paid an eloquent tribute to the late Lord Roberts and a visit of that great soldier to the Club. We must all help to defend the country.

FRIAR CANON WESLEY DENNIS was proud to be connected with a Church of England Training College. Every member of that college was a member of the Territorial Forces.

PROFESSOR MORGAN had been out to Germany, and had discovered that the methods of that country were absolutely vile.

MR. J. R. FISHER explained the best way to get recruits in Ireland. In the South African War he had heard some Irish soldiers cheering for Kruger, and, on expostulating with one of them, was told, "Why wouldn't we cheer him? If it weren't for him there'd be no war at all."

COLONEL RUSSELL, our former military attaché in Berlin, talked of the brutality with which German soldiers were treated by their officers, and of the incredible insolence of those officers. The brutal discipline of the German army had been the greatest source of its strength. The Germans, unlike us, made most elaborate preparations beforehand; in fact, the very day the former war with France was over they started preparing for the next war.

FRIAR GURNEY BENHAM was very glad to hear what the guest of the evening had said about the defence of the country.

DR. LAWSON WILLIAMS originally belonged to the Volunteer Force, but regretfully declared that he left it for the simple reason that he couldn't stand the sergeant any more. He emphatically agreed with our guest as to the extraordinary value

of the Territorial Forces, and also as to the very great value of the Army Medical Corps.

FRIAR SILAS HOCKING was thankful to our guest for instructing us on a very difficult question. He had quite changed his own views with regard to Germany, and had come to the conclusion that, in an interview with Von Tirpitz, that "bloodiest of pirates" had been pulling his leg.

COLONEL ROBERT JONES told of the bravery and cheerfulness of our wounded men. One little Bantam, mortally wounded, was asked how he felt, and cheerfully said "Tip top." Half an hour later he was dead. Colonel Jones also made a stirring appeal to the nation to provide for the future of our wounded men. Already we were becoming familiarised with wounds which a year ago filled us with horror and pity.

The Guest of the Evening briefly replied, and members and visitors repaired to the Club room, there to fortify themselves against the pitiless storm raging outside.

G. B. B.

DINNER.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17TH, 1916.

Club Guest—SIR EDWARD HENRY. *Prior*—FRIAR ROBERT DONALD.

TOPIC—"LONDON IN WAR-TIME."

AMONG the guests present were:

Mr. Geo. R. Sims; Sir Gordon Hewart, K.C.; Mr. Yeend King, Vice-President of the Royal Institute; Mr. R. F. Cholmeley; Mr. John Paynter; Mr. Ernest Wild, K.C.; the Right Hon. Sir D. Brynmor-Jones, K.C.; Mr. F. T. Hopkinson, C.E., Constructor of the Hull Docks; Mr. Lawrence W. Browne; Mr. H. C. Biron; Mr. F. H. Norman; Mr. R. W. James; Mr. W. H. Brooks; Dr. A. W. Henly; the Rev. H. F. Northcote; Captain Guy Neely; Mr. Gentry, Chief Inspector, Special Constabulary, T Division; Mr. Marley, Inspector do.; Mr. G. A. E. Marshall; Mr. E. W. Walker; Lieutenant L. C. Rideal, R.N.; Lieutenant E. R. Rideal; Mr. A. Edward Tulk, Advocate, of Vancouver; Mr. Bishop; and Mr. H. Mattingly.

THE PRIOR said that Sir Edward Henry had been head of the Police in India and Johannesburg before becoming Com-

missioner of the Metropolitan Police. He was a most humane head of the Police Force. The recent reform with respect to the cocaine habit was due to him. Since the war he had organised the Special Constabulary, and he had also enlisted the services of women. A woman patrol was recently looking after Hyde Park at night. She saw an amorous couple on a seat. She watched for some time until their attitude became more amorous. At last the woman patrol approached the couple, and suggested: "Excuse me, but don't you think it is time you young people were in bed." Sir Edward Henry was not amongst those who were unprepared for the war; all his plans were carefully prepared three or four years before it.

Sir Edward Henry, who was enthusiastically received, said that the Police were an executive body; they had to carry out the laws and regulations in the making of which they had no voice. It happened at times that the provisions of some of these enactments ran counter to the feeling and sentiments of a considerable section of the community, and the Police, having to enforce them, came in for a certain amount of obloquy. If they could satisfy the public that they carried out these distasteful duties with a reasonable amount of good sense and with discrimination, he was sure that those who felt aggrieved would not wish to withdraw from the Police that esteem and good will which it was so essential they should possess.

Proceeding to deal with the question of "London in War-time," Sir Edward said that when war was declared we had to face a situation which gave cause for some anxiety. We had in our midst an alien population of some 150,000; of this total there were between 23,000 and 25,000 German adult males and 7,000 Austrians. When war was declared he was able to issue to the twenty Divisions a very complete list of points of special importance which required guarding by men night and day. He made an appeal to the citizens of London asking them to enrol themselves as Special Constables. Within a few days 20,000 "specials" guarded the vulnerable points.

As regards the aliens, they were first registered and then interned. This reminded him of a story about a well-known judge, now retired. He was having his lunch at the Reform Club, and drinking hock. Someone came up to him, and said: "Lord So-and-so, do you know that you are drinking German

wine?" The ex-judge replied: "Well, I ordered it, and am now only interning it."

Sir Edward dealt with the steps taken to protect London by the enforcement of the lighting regulations. He had a map showing the position of every Zeppelin bomb dropped. Anyone seeing this would be convinced that the Zeppelin commanders had not the remotest idea of the places they were aiming at. On one occasion twenty-four bombs were dropped on some market gardens. Considering the preparation made by the raiders, the amount of damage which they did was not at all serious.

Replying to criticisms which have been made with regard to the retention of young single men in the Force, Sir Edward said that when the war broke out the strength of the Police was 22,000. Deducting the men who had been called to the Colours and had joined the Navy, those who were required to protect the dockyards, and those who had enlisted of their own accord, the total was reduced by 7,000. He formerly had 4,500 men at the section houses; this total was now reduced to 1,700. He showed the impossibility of reducing this number further, consistent with public safety.

Having explained the difficulty of introducing female taxi-cab drivers, Sir Edward proceeded to eulogise the work of the women patrols. There were two classes. The National Union of Women Workers provided a patrol. This was still in an experimental stage. Their best work was really done in persuading and influencing flighty girls, and by starting clubs and counter-attractions to the streets. In conclusion, Sir Edward offered some practical suggestions with regard to dealing with the social evil.

Mr. H. C. Biron stated that, ever since he had been a magistrate, it had been held that a good magistrate, like good children, should be seen and not heard—unlike their jokes, which were heard and not seen. The public always expected a comic magistrate, and were disappointed if they did not get him. The controlling authority, when they had to bear the irreparable loss of Mr. Plowden, had great difficulty in filling his place.

Mr. Biron complimented Sir Edward on his "arresting" speech. He was glad Sir Edward struck a blow at the unnecessary and ungenerous attacks and the ill-considered reports that young Police ought not to be in the Force. He did not

know which journal was responsible. He took it that this criticism came from the criminal section, whose favourite retort to the Police was: "Yah, why aren't you fighting the Germans?" During the war there had been a diminution in crime—a great many criminals were fighting the Germans. There was a wide-spread idea, probably due to the railway novels, that crime was a dashing affair. This was very wide of the mark: nobody turned to crime who could get an honest living.

Mr. Max Pemberton claimed to be qualified to speak on that occasion, as he was the only man who had been discharged from the Police Force. There was a policeman stationed at the Tower of London who was approached by an old lady with the inquiry: "Which is the Bloody Tower?" The constable replied: "There it is, Mam—all of it."

There was every evidence that the lighting arrangements in London had proved effective. A soldier recently complained to his colonel that he had walked about an hour with a Gordon Highlander at night in London before he discovered that he was a man. During the first weeks of the war many curious things happened on which he would like to question the guest of the evening. He should have liked to hear what became of the governess with all the bombs in her trunk. We all remembered that lady; she was an old and faithful servant of the family. When her trunks were searched, they were full of bombs. Then there was the hotel manager who had been shot on many occasions. There was also the big store of rifles which were reported to have been found in a house in Connaught Place. In order to find out which was the house, the *Daily Mail* representative rang every bell in every house in the street, and was rudely received at all of them.

Mr. E. E. Wild, K.C., from his experience as an inspector of the Special Constabulary, spoke of the useful service which this section had rendered during the war.

Mr. G. R. Sims described Sir Edward Henry as "the Premier Policeman of the British Empire." We had had an interesting discourse under the shadow of the "old Alsatia." One of the most interesting features of London in war-time was the changed aspect of the criminal classes. It had been his lot to mix a good deal with them—he was not alluding to the present company. The other night he was strolling in Regent's Park, giving his dogs their "final," when a police-

man who knew him very well when he was studying crime in East London said: "You know the Jim Murphy gang, guv'nor?" "Yes." "Will you believe it, they've all joined up?" "Have they?" "Yes; they're all in the Army Service Corps."

A few years ago Mr. Sims was closely associated with the Rev. Claude Elliott, who did more to tame the Hoxton hooligan than any man he knew. He started social and rifle clubs for the lads of the village—it was a village then—and did some remarkable work of reclamation. When a new member joined the club, he was given a quarter of an hour at punching the ball before being introduced to the other members. This took away all his superfluous energy, and at the time he was introduced to his fellow-members he was not aggressive. A great deal of a certain class of crime was due to misdirected energy, and the vitality of youth and manhood finding a wrong outlet. In the present war, in which a vigorous manhood was fighting, they had misdirected energy directed to a right channel, for the vitality of youth had found a noble and patriotic outlet.

Sir Gordon Hewart, K.C., M.P., remarked that Lord Palmerston at a Ministerial whitebait dinner, after looking at a dish of whitebait, and glancing at the less interesting countenances of his colleagues, said: "Gentlemen, let us follow the example of these little fishes—let us drink a great deal and say nothing." Silence was golden, but after the fine speech we had heard from Sir Edward Henry the exception proved the rule. The happiest days of his life were spent twenty years ago at the Whitefriars Club, listening to Mr. Max Pemberton (before he began to depict crime as a dashing affair), Mr. L. F. Austin, and others. At present he could only say that his former colleagues in Fleet Street still observed a reasonable habit of lucrative indiscretion. He thanked Sir Edward for his discourse. With its unobtrusive knowledge, restrained power and charming polish it was an illuminating and memorable speech.

Friar Arthur Spurgeon added his appreciation of Sir Edward's admirable address. There was a quiet, dry humour running through the speech—it might be termed laconic humour. A good example of this was given by the Hon. John Hay, who was an honorary member of that Club, and Ambassador from the United States. A friend of his had taken a lady into

dinner. After she had sat down at the table, she observed that she was a widow. The American turned to her and inquired: "Grass or sod?" The frank way in which Sir Edward had addressed them was one of the greatest compliments which could be paid to the Whitefriars Club.

SIR DAVID BRYNMOR JONES, who had presided over the Police Commission appointed to inquire into the Cass case, paid a high tribute to the Metropolitan Force, and FRIAR LINDLEY JONES offered some comments on the lack of uniformity in the lighting arrangements of the suburbs. THE PRIOR conveyed to Sir Edward Henry the members' appreciation of his excellent address; and SIR EDWARD HENRY briefly replied to some of the criticisms raised.

THE CHRISTMAS DINNER.

THE Christmas Dinner was held at the Trocadero on December 8th. Friar Foster Fraser was the Prior of the night, and Mrs. Foster Fraser kindly acted as hostess. Club Guests—The Countess of Carrick and Mrs. Haden Guest.

Friars and their guests:

THE PRIOR—Mrs. Foster Fraser, Mrs. Evans, Miss Katharine Fraser, Miss Margaret Fraser. FRIAR G. B. BURGIN—Mrs. Burgin. FRIAR SIR VINCENT EVANS—Dr. Pritchard, Mr. and Mrs. Huws Davies, Miss E. Furner, Mr. Philip Williams. FRIAR CHAS. W. F. GOSS—Mr. Horace Goss, Miss Muriel Goss, Mrs. Pendrill, Lieutenant S. Graham. FRIAR ROBERT LEIGHTON—Mrs. Leighton. FRIAR MORGAN DE GROOT—Mrs. Morgan de Groot. FRIAR H. T. MCAULIFFE—Miss McAuliffe, Miss Ruby O. McAuliffe, Captain Guy Neely, Mr. and Mrs. Assheton-Bennett. FRIAR NORTHCROFT—Miss Northcroft, Miss Rands. FRIAR G. M. PIPER—Mrs. Piper, Mr. Gordon Piper, Mr. and Mrs. C. Bingemann. FRIAR G. H. PERKINS—Mr. and Mrs. Sydney F. Boam, Mr. Alfred B. Garside, Mr. C. E. Fagan. FRIAR F. A. RUSSELL—Mrs. Russell, Mr. Robert Cooper, J.P., Mr. F. W. Brown, Mr. Charles Porter. FRIAR JOSEPH SHAYLOR—Mr. and Mrs. W. Hattersley, Mr. Frank Elliott, Mr. Shaylor, Miss Shaylor. FRIAR HAROLD SHAYLOR—Mrs. Shaylor, Mr. and Mrs. Crawfurd Price. FRIAR W. B. SLATER—Mrs. W. B. Slater, Miss Slater, Mrs. Collin Wearne. FRIAR ARTHUR SPURGEON—

Mrs. Spurgeon, Sir Malcolm and Lady Morris, Miss Bestwick, Miss Edith Bestwick. THE HON. SECRETARY—Mrs. Nash, Miss Pullen.

THE PRIOR gave "The King."

In submitting "The Vestiaire Marie-José," the Prior had the privilege of recommending to their notice one of the most valuable societies which was doing good work at the present time—namely, the Belgian Health Society. It was helping to keep alive 10,000 little children who were living in that part of Flanders which, fortunately, the Germans had not been able to secure. The Belgian Health Service was doing a magnificent work in trying to succour these unfortunate children.

Every week in the villages behind the fighting line there were infant consultations. There the mothers brought their children to the doctors and good women who gave their services; the children were examined, and something was done for their benefit. We could well appreciate how difficult it was to get sufficient milk for the children. Something was being done to make up the deficiency by providing condensed milk and milk powder.

Referring to the work which was being done in England in support of the Society, the Prior mentioned that this branch had been in existence only two or three months. We were delighted, he proceeded, to have as our guest Mrs. Haden Guest, who was really the originator, as far as England was concerned, of the British section of the Committee. The Society was named after the little Belgian princess. We were also honoured with the presence of the Countess of Carrick, who represented the Duchess of Norfolk, President of the English Society. The Countess was good enough to spare a little time from her many duties and come there that evening to give them an account of the good work of the Society.

In conclusion, the Prior, on behalf of the members of the Whitefriars Club, handed to the Countess of Carrick a cheque for the work in which the Society is engaged.

THE COUNTESS OF CARRICK expressed her pleasure at being honoured that night to represent at that dinner the English Committee of the Vestiaire Marie-José. She was deeply grateful for the magnificent contribution which the Club had made to the funds of the Belgian Health Society. There was but little to tell them after the Chairman's speech. We were out to do

one special thing—it was easily put in a few words. The Belgian Health Society found that the mothers and the babies in the districts in Flanders close to the firing line were in a most terrible state of distress. The enemy had driven these people before them—mothers, babies and children. They were homeless and destitute in a strange part of the country. It was necessary to do something at once. The mothers were very often in a terrible state of distress, mentally and physically; their men were fighting, some killed and others prisoners.

Amongst the families were new-born babies and children who could not feed themselves. The pressing need was to get supplies of milk and clothes. Very often the women had only the clothes they stood upright in; they had nothing with which to clothe the children. A Committee was formed in Belgium, and one has also been appointed in England, to see what can be done. They were now helping to keep a great deal more than ten thousand children, and the number was increasing rapidly. Infant consultations were held weekly, taking the place of what was called "Babies' Clubs," where the mothers brought the babies to be examined, and whatever was necessary in the way of milk and clothing was provided for them.

We were all aware how important infant life was, particularly in Belgium, which was so depopulated. We must save the children, and this seemed to be the most practical way of doing it. This was done in the rough roadway, in the doctor's house, and sometimes in the village prison. It was extraordinary to see the result of this treatment. Some infants, merely skin and bones, hardly alive at all, with regular feeding began to revive, and a totally different child was seen.

There was also a remarkable change in the mothers when all anxiety as to their infants was removed. Mrs. Haden Guest, who had come back from the Front, had stated that there was a shortage of milk; milk powders and substitutes were being used. She felt what she had stated was an appeal for more; it was not. Her object was to explain that what the Club had so generously given would be devoted to a really good purpose. The Society was not well known; no money was spent on advertising. On behalf of both Committees, she thanked the Club from the bottom of her heart for their kindness that night.

Friar the Rev. F. A. Russell, in submitting "The Spirit

of Christmas," described the toast as one with a long history and a deep truth. It reminded us of the greatest fact in history, with which was connected the song, "Peace on earth —good will towards men." It was the peace of the love of our Blessed Lord, in whom omniscience crowns itself in love and saved itself from the commonplace. Whatever might be our attitude as to individual forms of Christianity, we were dominated by the toast and what it suggested.

We read of the two thousand years' influence of our common Christianity, direct and indirect, reaching us through a record, like music, in the ears of men and women who had imagination, whatever else they might lack. It was the result of two thousand years of direct preaching; it was the result of that sacred atmosphere which lived in Christian homes. Whatever men and women were pleased to classify themselves, intellectually and spiritually, they simply belonged to the grand old English race in responding to the toast of "The Spirit of Christmas." The "Death on the Cross" was an illustration of what we had to go through; we have to go through struggle and tragedy before arriving at the fulfilment and realisation of our ideals.

Before we entered upon the war, England was prosperous; she was happy and self-contented; she felt herself immeasurably strong. Smug success might do more to kill the spirit of Christmas than a tragic war. The tragedy came upon us; we did not seek it. In the words of Wordsworth:

> We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
> That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold
> Which Milton held.

Thinking of the peace and brotherhood of man, thinking little of ourselves as a great nation, we saw freedom and the sacredness of humanity threatened. These things would be made memorable by a great literature, greater than Shakespeare himself. He need not recite how hundreds of thousands from mills, offices, fields and ancient houses flocked to the Colours. Some said it was awful; they were the worshippers of the obvious. When he saw men flocking from the universities and public schools to fight for glory, freedom, and the common rights of man, he felt proud that he was born in England. The sacrifices of our great army made us proud of its achievements. We had seen such an hour of elevation and ennobling of the

souls of English men and women as perhaps we should never see again.

This was our grand test; we had risen to it. In this hour England had been born; this England had realised herself and shown her glory. Over the graves of those who had fallen in France beautiful flowers were growing; the desert of human sadness was rejoicing and blossoming as the rose. These flowers were symbolical of what would come to pass in England; there would be a new passion for freedom, a new knowledge of self-sacrifice, a grander manhood and a tenderer womanhood. Out of desolation would come a new England which we could not describe, which Shakespeare himself could not describe.

FRIAR SIR VINCENT EVANS, in proposing the toast of "The Prior," remarked that Mr. Foster Fraser in a comparatively short life had done some wondrous things. He had measured Manchuria with his cycle, plumbed the Antipodes with his line, and ruled the hemispheres with his pencil.

THE PRIOR acknowledged his indebtedness to Sir Vincent Evans for the Lloyd Georgian phrases he had used. Sir Vincent had a great weight on his shoulders at the present time; if we really tried to find out who was the maker of the new Cabinet we need not go far outside these doors. Friendship was really the guiding-star of our Club. There was no other Club in London where there was such divergence of opinion; where men like Vincent Evans and Foster Fraser could meet and argue about Lloyd George. He hoped we should all meet together next year under more joyous circumstances as regards national affairs.

ANOTHER ROSE LUNCH.

FOLLOWING what promises to become a very charming precedent, on September 25th Friar Clement K. Shorter gave a Rose Lunch, at the Rendezvous Restaurant, in Dean Street, to Friars Aitken, Foster Fraser, Shansfield, Spurgeon, De Groot, Burgin, Shaylor, and Senior. As the room was crowded with members of the Army, Navy, and Bohemia, there was very little privacy about the proceedings. The lunch itself was something to be remembered, perfectly cooked, and all the more enjoyable owing to

friarly abstinence from the good things of this world in war-time.

MENU.

Hors d'Œuvre Varies.
Sole Meunière.
Cotelette Nicoise.
Poulet Rôti.
Cœur de Laitue.
Pêche Melba.

Friar Shorter was a delightful host and made all his guests very happy. G. B. B.

ANNUAL REPORT AND BALANCE SHEET, 1916

THE Annual Meeting, held under the Priorship of Friar Helm, involved no grave discussions of policy. The report and balance sheet, which constituted its features, were as under:

The Committee have again the pleasure of reporting that the Club has maintained its membership and its vitality. The number of dinner engagements has been few compared with those arranged in the easier times of peace, but they have had a particular interest, and members have rallied to attend them, often at considerable personal inconvenience, and have been very glad in the sequel to have done so because of the nature of the events. Several Friars are away from London on Military or Naval Service; others have urgent duties at home preventing their presence in the circle; but the muster of those who remain has more than justified the carrying on of the Club dinners.

In addition to the Christmas dinner, which was associated with the Red Cross Fund, five dinners have been held. The Guests were the Right Hon. Will Crooks, M.P., "The Man Who Dined with the Kaiser," General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, Major-General Sir Francis Lloyd, and Sir Edward Henry. The topics were "Some Experiences at the Front and Elsewhere," "How I Dined with the Kaiser," "The Drama and the War," "Defence and Defiance," and "London in War Time."

Four new members have been elected during the year, namely, Mr. H. A. Aitken, Mr. J. R. Fisher, Mr. E. H. Goddard, and Mr. Harry Shepard. Mr. Aitken is an artist who recalls a friendship with the late Friar Grundy. Mr. Goddard is identified with the *Sketch* and *Illustrated London News;* Mr. J. R. Fisher, barrister

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS, 1915–1916.

RECEIPTS.

	£	s.	d.
To Balance at Bank, 30th Nov., 1915	126	1	6
,, Members' Subscriptions	126	10	5
,, Entrance Fees	6	6	0
,, Christmas Dinner	36	6	0
,, Interest on £300 London County Council 3 % Stock	7	1	10
	£302	5	9

EXPENDITURE.

	£	s.	d.
By Rent (less Rebate, £15)	65	0	0
,, Christmas Dinner, Trocadero Account ...	40	9	0
,, Artistes	16	13	0
,, Waiters' Christmas Boxes...	5	11	0
,, Club Guests...	1	17	6
,, Circulars, Cards, Programmes, &c.	24	15	0
,, Club Journals	32	8	0
,, List of Members	5	15	0
,, Postages, Typing and Sundries	10	4	2
,, Newspapers	1	1	6
,, Subscriptions Overpaid refunded	3	3	0
,, Wreath (Friar J. F. Wilson)	1	0	0
,, Donation to Mark Twain Bed, Dollis Hill Hospital	1	1	0
,, Balance at Bank, 30th November, 1916... ...	93	7	7
	£302	5	9

Compared with vouchers and audited,

ALGERNON ROSE.

W. B. SLATER.

November 23rd, 1916.

EDWARD CLODD,

Hon. Treasurer.

and journalist, is known to all the Friars; and Mr. Shepard has been a frequent visitor in the circle.

The Committee record with deep regret the death of Friar John Walker, who, during his membership of three years, was rarely absent from the Club dinners.

Very cordial thanks are again due to Friar Burgin for his Editorship of the WHITEFRIARS JOURNAL. The Hon. Secretary can bear testimony to many tributes received from absent members who write expressing their appreciation of the chronicles which keep them in touch with "Blighty." The JOURNAL does much to sustain the strength of the Club in the peculiar conditions of the war.

The balance sheet shows a loss of £32 13s. 11d. on the year's working; but this is more than accounted for by the fact that the subscriptions have been halved for the period of the war, and there is reason to expect that the adverse difference in the coming year will be slight.

THE FRIARS' CLUB.

Subject for Discussion—

"WHAT DO I READ IN WAR-TIME? AND WHY?"

By Friars Sir W. Robertson Nicoll, Coulson Kernahan, Gilbert Coleridge, Clive Holland, W. Archbald, and G. Moulton Piper.

Friar Gilbert Coleridge prefers the Ancients.

WHAT do I read, O sapient Editor?
What *should* I read in stirring times like these?
I've read "J'Accuse," Bernhardi, Treitschke too
(I wonder if my spelling is correct).
I've fed myself with patriotic speech:
Lloyd George and Asquith and Sir Edward Grey.
The man I *will* not read is Bottomley:
I'm just as good a patriot as he.
I only skim the telegrams in haste
At breakfast, munching toast and margarine,
And never do I buy an evening rag,
Because I value more my peace of mind.
I used to read the drill-book carefully,
And flag codes, till the doctor intervened.
Just now I am a one-eyed gardener;
The flowers I cultivate at ease are books.
A play of Shakespeare, Borrow's wanderings,

And Balzac's works purveyed by Friar Dent,
Both Cotton's quaint translations of Montaigne,
And "Dreamthorp" seen by Alexander Smith.
A glance occasional at Wordsworth too.
I never read a novel nowadays,
For neither James nor Friar Garvice please.
O brother Friars! should you lack belief
That we shall gain a speedy victory,
Or should you harbour just a creeping doubt
About munitions, or the Government,
Betake you to the Ancients, and you'll gain
A confident and sure tranquillity.

Friar Coulson Kernahan is denunciatory.

WHAT do I read in war-time? Lies chiefly—about the war. And why? Because the politicians—they're all alike, or nearly all—tell 'em; the newspapers (naturally) report 'em; and I read the newspapers in the hope (no luck at present, but it will come in time) that some of the party politicians have been hanged.

Friar Sir W. Robertson Nicoll gives the facts.

I READ in war-time pretty much what I did in peace-time. Of the war books I read only the most important. If anything, I read more novels than before, and I find that Dumas helps me most. I wish I could say more, but these are the facts.

Friar Clive Holland explains.

WHEN I am sick and tired (not infrequently) of the "fiction" in the shape of war news supplied by the "dailies" and evening papers, and the stupidity of the censorship, which would probably blue pencil the quotation of "My kingdom for a horse," I turn to the poetry of the country-side, in which the shock of battles and the wasteful carnage of human beings happily finds no echo. It provides both a distraction and a tonic, and an admirable screen which serves, if not to blot out, then at least to obscure the sordid manœuvres of party politicians, who, with their tongues in their cheeks the while, tell us that there are nowadays no party politics.

He rediscovers old friends.

I am rediscovering, too, in the little spare time that one gets, even when one's profession may be said to have "gone to the dogs" (of war), some old favourites among authors long dead, or of that mid-Victorian period which seems in the stressful period of to-day

æons distant. And—shall I confess it?—I am tasting afresh Stevenson and "sea-dog" writers, and voyaging with them across seas I have traversed, though, alas! no such adventures as they so vividly imagined happened to me in the voyaging. Why do I do it? I know I have pleaded guilty to what I once heard called "a damnable waste of God's time" (he was a Presbyterian minister for whom the Sabbath held no joy, and fiction was of the devil), and my reason is that, for the thinking man, life would be less than tolerable just now but for the poetry and romance upon one's book shelves.

Friar W. Archbald is comprehensive.

At the beginning of the war I devoted all my leisure to the reading of the daily papers—three or four editions per day; and I am afraid I was not contented unless each edition had an account of a battle, more or less bloody. Then I devoured all the books, blue books and other coloured ones, giving our own and our Allies' versions of the cause and outbreak of the war. Then came the other books; personal recollections (unfavourable all of them) of the Royal Family and the statesmen, past and present, of our enemies. These I greatly enjoyed, especially the latest one written by a recent guest of the Whitefriars.

And finds comfort in novels.

On the rebound, I found comfort in the peaceful pastoral novels distributed weekly by Mudie's motor-car. Now, however, I have a letter telling me that the Government has commandeered the services of their drivers, and that their country customers must in future either come to London or exchange their books by parcel post, paying charges each way.

He reads his fellow Friars.

Fortunately I have a considerable library of the works of my fellow Friars, past and present, many of which I shall enjoy re-reading. When these are exhausted, I must be contented with my daily paper, in which no doubt I shall find as much fiction as is good for me.

Friar G. Moulton Piper is proud of our race.

What do I read? Everything I can about the war, my one regret being that my leisure for reading is so scanty. Think of it—the biggest thing that has ever happened, and I am *here*—to see it worked out. Yes, I must own to that; but I want to see

how *they* are doing it. And the records to hand—was there ever anything like them? Is chivalry dead? Read any V.C. or D.C.M. list and see. Are we lacking in patriotism? There is for answer "The First Hundred Thousand," a prose idyll if ever there was one. Are we degenerate? If anyone thinks so, let him read "The First Seven Divisions," the epic of the old British Army, a story of sublime pluck and pertinacity, and it transcends every military record ever written, for it brings them all in, officers, N.C.O.'s, and men. There is nothing to choose between them. This war, while levelling all, has shown what some of us knew, though others hardly dared to dream of, that when the occasion came the British race would show that there is no first nor last. From the Shetlands to the Falklands, west of the Marne and east of the Suez, heroes everywhere.

And the new literature.

Yet it is not alone the military deeds that fascinate me. Here is a new literature of high order growing under our hands. The exclusion of the war correspondent from the actual firing line, and the new conditions of this grim struggle, have abolished the old style of prosy detail of movements, of marches and counter-marches. Out there under the stars, young eyes are seeing visions beyond old men's dreaming; young minds are thinking thoughts longer far than any vista that ever met our gaze; and the descriptive article is helping us to touch the pulse and hear the throb of the movement that is going to rejuvenate our old world.

He wants to know.

But over and above all this, I want to know "where it is all to." We are, and properly, so intent on winning that we hardly have time to think of what winning will mean. What will it mean? As a man who for over forty years has trodden the stones of Fleet Street—that causeway of Democracy—it is borne in on me that Democracy will at last come to its own. Democracy with a big "D" too, for, as the immortal Joan said of her standard, "It has borne the burden; it has earned the honour." It is inconceivable that this cataclysm can pass and leave Democracy where it was. And the chief lines upon which it will develop will, I think, be these. A *national* morality in which the sanctity of human life will have a big place; the millions no more to be flattened and crushed at the whim and the overblown egotism of a score of ambitious men. Justice will be acknowledged as the highest human virtue; youth no longer

to bear the main burden and pay the price of fatuous or senile error; and women to share in the governance of the world, not because they are brave enough to break windows, but because they are the mothers of men.

A LETTER HOME.

FROM ONE IN FRANCE.

ON June 30th, 1916 (the eve of the advance of July 1st), Sergeant Leslie Coulson, son of Friar Coulson, wrote a letter to his mother and father, the substance of which his father has here endeavoured to express in verse. Sergeant Leslie Coulson (12th Rangers) died of wounds received in a charge against a German position, Les Bœufs, October 8th, 1916:

DEAR FOLKS, in this deserted place
  The Huns have wrought their havoc well;
The church is shattered to its base,
  The very graves are ploughed by shell.
A heavy gloom is in the air,
And desolation everywhere.

No women smile at cottage doors,
  The fields are waste where grew the wheat,
No stream of merry children pours
  From school along the village street.
The roofless school looms gaunt and wan,
And those whose homes were here are gone.

The mothers with their babes in arms,
  The girls and boys, the grey old men—
Are gone. These burnt and blackened farms
  Can never be their homes again.
Ruin and solitude hold sway
To tell—the Hun hath passed this way.

The windows of the little shops
  Are eyeless sockets, blank, forlorn;
From gaping roofs the plaster drops,
  The doors are from their hinges torn.
And everywhere poor harmless trees
Sway wounded branches in the breeze.

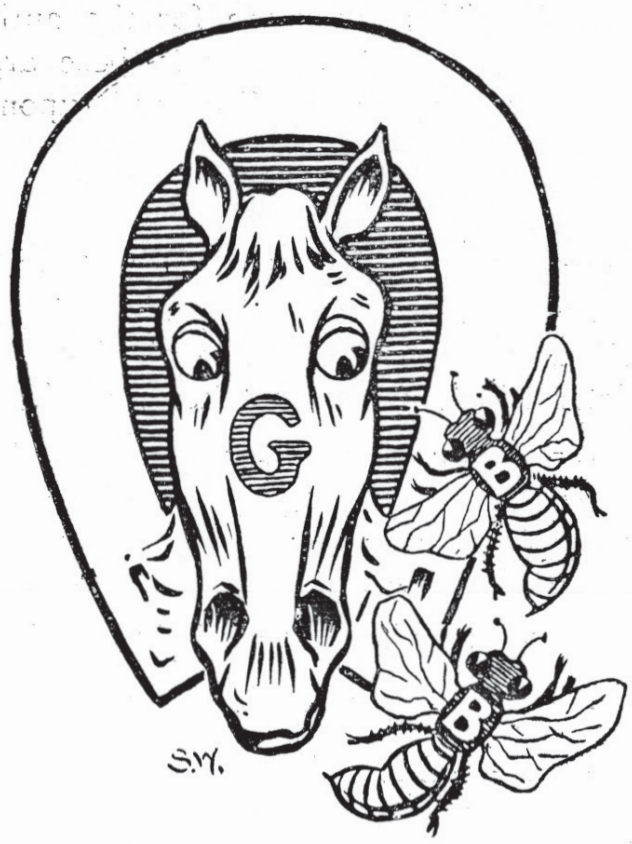
Dear folks at home, to us who go
  With glory to the great advance,
'Tis good to think that from such woe
  In England as has stricken France
'Tis ours to save our land and kin.
That is the joy we bear within.

The only thought at which I quail
  While smoke of battle dims the blue—
The thought that makes my cheek turn pale
  Is that long agony for you.
Suspense and fear, and visions red,
Drear days, and haunted nights of dread.

I know, who play the soldier's part,
  Dear folks of mine across the foam,
The straining gaze, the troubled heart,
  The ache of those who wait at home.
The fighter's is a happier fate
Than theirs at home who watch and wait.

If I should fall, do not be sad,
  But think that I was proud to make
My offering—very proud and glad
  To do this thing for England's sake.
I shall go happy, recollect,
With colours flying, head erect.

O recollect, and do not grieve,
  But, in your garden 'mongst the flowers,
A wreath of happy memories weave,
  To comfort you in lonely hours.
For I, dear folks, I shall be one
With flowers and grass, and wind and sun.



CLUB NOTES.

We all have our different methods of work. Here is Sir J. M. Barrie's: "8 pipes 1 ounce, 2 ounces 1 week, 2 weeks 1 chapter, 20 chapters 1 nib, 2 nibs 1 novel." It is evident that he does not use either a stylo or a typewriter. And yet his handwriting is almost as illegible as Horace Greeley's. Greeley once wrote a letter to a member of his staff dismissing him, and the dismissed one, confident that it was impossible for anyone else to read the letter, took it to another editor as a personal recommendation from Greeley, and was at once made a member of the staff.

Friar Joseph Shaylor's interesting and comprehensive pamphlet on "Some Thoughts on Bookselling: Its Past and its Future," is well worth reading, particularly the section which deals with Fiction and Cheap Reprints. He thinks that the question of the cheap reprint is often a debatable one, some maintaining that it interferes with the sales of the more expensive editions, others that it often creates interest in a particular book, and,

through its issue, inquiries are made for the author's previous books. From some points of view both these arguments have in them an element of truth, but it all depends upon the character of the book.

Who shall say that we are not a poetical nation? I found the following stanza, spelling and all, written in "The Trial of Surin *v.* Star," in the Court of Queen's Bench (1869), "An Action by a Sister of Mercy against her Superior":

"I would I were a Nun,
To wear the vale,
To watch the sick,
To feed the pore,
And to obey God's holy lore."

The home of the Friars:

Anderton's Hotel, in Fleet Street, where a remarkable journalistic event took place on March 23rd last—the putting up to auction of the goodwill of the *Standard* newspaper—has a very long history. It succeeded and replaced the old "Horn-on-the-Hoop" tavern, known briefly as the "Horn." This tavern can be traced back to the fourteenth century. In 1385 it was in the hands of John Phippe, a currier, and twenty years later it was sold by another proprietor, Thomas Atte Hay, to the Goldsmiths' Company, to whom it still belongs. In Stuart days the "Horn" was the haunt of "gallants of the Inns of Court," and a sufficiently suggestive entry occurs in the register of St. Dunstan's Church hard by: "Ralph, slaine at the Horne, buryed." The present hotel dates from 1880.

A certain piscatorial Friar, who shall be deservedly nameless, sends me this fish story:

"Talking about fish, have you ever in your search for epitaphs"—(he wrote "epigrams," but I think he meant epitaphs)—"seen this one by the widow of an angler who was supposed to have been swallowed by a big pike when he

tumbled overboard, the said pike being eventually captured. As it contained some florid waistcoat buttons, which she identified, the sorrowing widow had the pike interred, and put up a stone over it with the following inscription:

"He was an honest angler,
The tales he told were true;
Tho' some were old and musty
And others strangely new.

"He wore a fancy waistcoat
(The buttons numbered seven);
Its pattern like a chess-board—
Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

More anecdotes from my "colleague," as they say at the Stores when the usual man is not there, Friar Ward Muir:

You know the old lady who was complaining that her husband was not meeting with success in his ingenious work of trying to cross onions with violets, so as to get an onion taste with a violet smell. But I don't think that he deserved it any more than the genius who tried to breed carrier pigeons from parrots, so that the children birds, if they lost themselves, could ask their way home.

There happened a rather interesting matter in the Egyptian local courts the other day. According to the law there, a man, in order to divorce his wife, has but to go before a Cadi and state that he divorces her and the matter is done. He may not, however, re-marry that woman unless she has married someone else in the meantime and been divorced from him. Well, the other day, in the native court, the Cadi thought he saw a suitor attempting to bribe one of the ushers, and so had the offending person up before him. The suitor, being confident of his innocence, swore that he would divorce his wife were his protestations untrue, which is a very usual form of oath there. Thereupon the Cadi, being as he considered an eye-witness of the offence, officially confirmed the divorce. So Mohamed had to wend his way homeward a bachelor once more.

Garge, of the neighbouring village, stood before the recruiting officer, who recorded on paper his answers to the various questions.

"Denomination?" asked the officer, still writing.

Garge scratched his head.

"Denomination?" This time the officer looks up. "What's your denomination?"

Garge felt in his pockets.

"No, no. What I mean is—what persuasion are you: where do you go on Sundays?"

"Ratting!" beamed the enlightened George.

A Friar who, lest he should be suspected of a tendency to humour in war-time, desires to remain "synonymous," sends me the following piratical ballad, which he admits having stolen from an American source:

"An' behind th' stern
Of our wicked ark
We could see the fin
O' a hungry shark.
Cos he knew that day
Ere th' sun were dim
There'd be food an' enough
Fer th' likes o' him!

"An' beside our boat
With a keen rel-ish
He wagged his fin,
Did that horrid fish.
And he says as plain
As a dumb fish can,
'I'll thank ye soon
Fer a nice planked man.'

"So we took th' ship
An' we rigged th' plank
While th' passengers
Shook an' shrieked an' shrank.

An' onder th' place
Where he's got no chin
Th' shark were tuckin'
His napkin in."

We have had two remarkable speeches at the Club this session. One was by an "Anzac," and the other was by Mr. Will Crooks. Both were triumphs of personality. There was a heartfelt humanity, a large toleration and sympathy for the struggles of the poor in the latter's speech which moved us all very deeply. But the speech of the season—a speech to which the reporter has failed to do justice—was Friar Russell's magnificent tribute to the "Spirit of Christmas" at the Club's Christmas Dinner. I have heard many good speeches in the course of a long and arduous life, but this was the finest.

The reporter missed many of Mr. Crooks's best anecdotes. One was about a table where a few old workhouse couples could have their meals together. An old inmate was very dissatisfied. He said: "You see old So-and-so at the 'ead of the table?" "Yes. What of it?" "Well, *he carves,* and up at his end they get all the tit-bits." The arrangement lasted a fortnight.

At a recruiting meeting Mr. Crooks wound up with a request for three cheers for Lord Kitchener. "No, no," said a woman's voice. "Three cheers for the recruits."

A boy in khaki home from the front was called a "b—— fool" by a drunken waster. He was about to tackle the waster when Mr. Crooks interfered. "You be off home, my boy, and leave him to me. I'll set the women at him."

Friars will join with me in hearty congratulations to Friar H. R. Tedder on the occasion of his recent marriage, and wish

him all the happiness he so well deserves. Although Friar Tedder is the busiest man at the Athenæum Club, which has the best arranged and tended library in the United Kingdom, he does his four hours as a "special," and has many other patriotic activities.

Of course, whatever one does, it is impossible to get away from the war. I would recommend all good Friars to read Friar St. John Adcock's "Songs of the World War" (Cecil Palmer and Hayward), particularly "The Little Sister of the Poor":

"Amid the city's dust and din
Your patient feet have trod;
Wherever sorrow is, or sin,
You do the work of God."

THE CHRISTMAS LUNCH.

(A Drama in Tips.)

Presiding Genius - - Friar Joseph Shaylor.
Friars present: Clement K. Shorter, W. N. Shansfield, W. H. Helm, H. J. Brown, A. D. Power, William Senior, Dr. J. Morgan de Groot, W. F. Aitken, Ward Muir, D. M. Gane, and G. B. Burgin.

The President.

We meet again, after a trying year,
To shake each other's hands and wish good cheer
To one and all. Upon the festive board,
In paper packets, is my little hoard
Of modest silver, flimsy paper notes,
(We guard our gold although we lose our boats),
And eke of coppers for the humble Boots.
Of annual service are these sums the fruits.
Is it your pleasure Robert draws the curtain
And makes anticipation safe and certain?

(*Omnes.*)
Let Robert, with his Chesterfieldian grace,
Draw back the curtain, give our henchmen place.

(*Robert draws back the Curtain. Enter Club Porter, Head Waiter, Cook, Robert himself, and the Head Waitress, all with their customary air of pleased surprise. President hands them little paper parcels with appropriate remarks.*)

HEAD WAITRESS.

My lords—my lords—and all you kindly Gents,
'Twill come in handy, help us pay our rents,
And—and keep the wolf from out our doors.
I thank you one and all for your applorse.
We've done our dooty tho' times have been hard,
And—and (*hesitates*) I have forgot the rest, O Lard.
But what I mean to say is, Friars all,
We're always ready at your beck and call,
And wish you best of luck whatever may befall.

(*Curtsies and exit.*)

ROBERT.

Our humble thanks. Pardon this swelling vest,
It is emotion that upheaves my breast.
I've waited on you now for many a year
(Excuse me if I wipe away a tear),
And though you sometimes have been rather tryin'
I'll go on waitin' till I'm almost dyin'.
Forgive me, sirs, if this sounds all too bold,
I must away—your coffee's gettin' cold—
A thing Sir Francis never did uphold.

(*The curtain falls. Friars drink their coffee, shake hands, the room empties. Another year has gone. So mote it be!*)

I shall be glad to receive photographic blocks of portraits of any members who may wish to be handed down to posterity

in the pages of this journal. They should be two and a half inches high—the portraits, not the members. Though, owing to war-time and the reduction of the Club subscription to one-half, we are unable to provide the usual illustrations to this number, we want every Friar to feel that he is a component part of a noteworthy whole.

To the great regret of us all, Friar Arthur Spurgeon was prevented by illness from being present at the Christmas Dinner and the Club Lunch.

It has been a trying year for all of us, a year which has severely tested our faith, courage and endurance. In wishing every Friar a prosperous and a happy New Year, I cannot do better than quote the memorable words of the rugged Sage of Chelsea :

> "Could each of us vow to do his little task even as the Departed did His great one: in the manner of a true man, not for a Day, but for Eternity! To live, as He counselled and commanded, not commodiously in the Reputable, the Plausible, the Half, but resolutely in the Whole, the Good, the True."

One word more, and I go to the enjoyment of an attenuated Christmas turkey, an apologetic kind of bird, whose somewhat skinny carcase bears witness to the strenuousness of the times. For many years past, Friar Joseph Shaylor has placed beside our plates at the Christmas Dinner copies of his delightful little "Friendship's Offerings." We have grown so used to his kindness that I fear we take it as a matter of course. On behalf of the Friars, I should like to thank him not only for his gifts, but for the way in which he has put his shoulder to the wheel in helping Friar Shansfield, the indefatigable, in all the drudgery of Club routine work. They are both busy men, and have given us of their best. It is mainly to them that we are indebted for one of the best seasons in the annals of the Club.

G. B. B.