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Edited by FRIAR G. B. BURGIN.

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DINNER TO COL. JOHN WARD.

October 17th, 1919.

Prior—FRIAR A. MACCALLUM SCOTT, M.P.

Topic for Discussion—LIFE IN SIBERIA.

Among the Guests were : Major Sir Archibald Sinclair (Military Secretary to the Secretary of War), Mr. W. Davidson, Mr. Singman (of Petrograd), Capt. Arthur Watts, and Mr. A. E. Stenning (of Vladivostock), Dr. Robert Scott, Mr. C. J. Nelson, Major Raymond Smythies, Mr. J. Mewburn Levien (Hon. Secretary, Royal Philharmonic Society), Col. Rosetti (Rumanian Attaché), Capt. L. A. Hussey (Member of the Archæological Staff in Sudan and of Sir Ernest Shackleton's Antarctic Staff), Lord Sandon (Assistant-Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for the Colonies), Col. Wade (Editor-in-Chief, League of Nations' Union), Mons. Palmié, M. Cross, Mr. Ravensworth Hart, Dr. Lawson Smith, Mr. E. Aitken Davies and Major Birtchnell.

In giving the toast of the evening, the Prior remarked that Col. John Ward stood in no need of an introduction to any gathering of his countrymen. Before the war he was a conspicuous and outstanding figure, both politically and individually, in our public life ; he achieved a fame in which his hat was as well known as the collar of Mr. Gladstone or the orchid of Mr. Chamberlain. Our public men were judged not so much by what they achieved in days before the war. We now applied to them the question : " What did you do in the great war, daddy ? "

In all these eventful years, Col. Ward had been a man of deeds, not words. He hoped that his voice would be more frequently heard in the future ; it would be like a gust of fresh air. At the outbreak of war, Col. Ward recruited no less than five battalions of

the Middlesex Regiment, known as the "Navvies' Battalions." His achievements in Siberia were some of the most extraordinary exploits in the history of the British Army. Four thousand miles or more from his base, swallowed up in the vast recesses of a huge continent, often with a broken line of communication, for over a year he was the defender of British interests, the maintainer of British honour, and a redeemer of British pledges.

Col. John Ward, M.P., thanked the members for their cordial reception, remarking that "after the fine things said about me, I feel that my cap will not fit me—I shall have to get another when I go downstairs." The first order for him to go to Siberia was in November, 1917. Then instructions came from home cancelling this order—"the usual diplomatic procrastination which ruins our efforts in almost every part of the world." Eventually, the order came for the expedition in June, 1918. He equipped half his battalion at Singapore. So hurried was the departure that half of the battalion was already on board ship in Hong Kong harbour when the vessel containing the other half drew alongside; grappling irons were thrown over; the men were bundled headlong from one ship to the other; and away they went.

We were the first of the Allied forces to arrive at Vladivostock, just a few days after the Bolshevik régime had disappeared as far as that town was concerned.

Col. Ward gave a graphic description of the chief encounters between the Allied forces and the Bolsheviks, the latter being composed in the main of Magyar and German prisoners of war. He related some stirring episodes of the operations on the Ussuri, and the Battle of Doskoi. Eventually, the Allied force arrived at Omsk. Then it became a question as to the form of Government which should be established, and the diplomats took the usual course of trying to make a compromise where a compromise was not possible. "It is impossible to shake hands with a man who has murdered your family, or taken possession of your house." All the twaddle we had to hear in Paris about getting these people to meet together was the most stupid proposition he had ever heard. They could not understand the situation, or they would never have insulted the loyal and orderly element of the Russian

people in bringing forward this proposal. The usual compromise was adopted, and " confusion became worse confounded."

As indicating the state of the country, the speaker mentioned that many officers were murdered ; there were no police to preserve order. At last the officers, in a sort of blind vengeance, hit out. When twenty officers were killed, the dead bodies of twenty citizens lay in the streets the following night. This was the only way to stop the butchery of the officers. " This is the worst of revolutions, and you will find the same thing here if you are stupid enough to indulge in one." As regards the future, the speaker pointed out that we had received no pledges from Denikin ; on the other hand, we had definite pledges that Admiral Koltchak would establish a Government on democratic lines. He was absolutely English in his ideas, and has a profound admiration for our institutions.

Friar Hamilton Fyffe, appearing in the rôle of *advocatus diaboli*, claimed that there was something to be said for the Bolshevists. He believed that the Bolshevik Government was the only one capable of carrying on at all in Russia ; it was not the sort of Government we were accustomed to—neither was Czardom. Col. Ward had stated that we could not expect the people whose families had been murdered by the Bolsheviks to have any communications with them ; it was just as fair to say that the people whose families were murdered under Czardom could have nothing to do with the people who represented this system. They considered that Admiral Koltchak and General Denikin each represented the old order.

The great trouble about Russia was that we knew nothing as to what was happening there. A policy of suppression had gone on all the way through. We had the *Daily Herald* taking up the position that everything the Bolshevists did was right ; whilst in the anti-Bolshevist papers, it was urged that everything they did was wrong. If he were a Russian, he would most certainly be a Bolshevist ; he would be inclined to give them a run for their money. In Russia, he should be inclined to give himself a run for his money. A Hungarian was travelling through Russia in company with a number of Bolshevists, who made the passengers in the carriage produce their money. This was shared out all

round. The Hungarian had 7,000 roubles—in the "share-out" this was reduced to 300. At the next station most of the passengers who had been despoiled left the train. Others joined the train—the Hungarian had a brain-wave, and stayed on. The same process was gone through, and the Hungarian completed the journey with 14,000 roubles instead of 7,000. This shows the advantage of accepting whatever Government happens to be in power for the moment. It was a dangerous thing to interfere in the present state of affairs in Russia.

Major Sir Archibald Sinclair (of the Intelligence Department) referred to the results which had followed the Bolshevist experiment in Hungary as being "dangerous, disastrous and purely destructive." It was a form of Government set up against the will of the people. The Bolshevist experiment was pure terrorism; it destroyed the forces of land, labour, and capital, and left the country in an exhausted state.

Friar Harold Spender considered that we were faced with two questions—whether Bolshevism was a good thing or not, and whether Britain should interfere. Bolshevism was cruel, barbarous, always brutal, and generally infernal. Instancing an incident of Bolshevist rule, Friar Spender stated that one of Reuter's correspondents was put in a dark dungeon with forty other men. At twelve o'clock at night the door was opened and three numbers of the prisoners were called out, in mock imitation of some episode in the French Revolution; the three men were shot in the sight of their comrades, to encourage the others. "All I can say," he concluded, "is, I don't believe that civilization, and the freedom and happiness of mankind can be based on such bloody brutality."

Friar G. B. Burgin was inclined to view the whole matter from a standpoint not touched upon—that of the Russian temperament. We had to consider the life of the Russian peasant since the time of Katherine 1st; the utter gloom of the vast steppes; the blatant piety of the village priest, all the time trying to make a comfortable living out of his starving parishioners; the fanatical imagination of the Russian peasant, whose only escape from his day's hard labour was Vodka. After partaking of Vodka, not wisely, but too well, he was pursued by visions of happiness which were never to be

realized. He woke up in the miserable dawn and went to his miserable work; he came back to his miserable hovel, where he indulged in a few hours' miserable sleep. This had been going on for centuries. We had to consider the temperament which such a long course of treatment involved. The peasant became an animal, with a vague consciousness that something ought to be better ordered and more beautiful in his life. One day an agitator came along and said to him: "You are a fool wasting your days on these things—rise and slaughter those in possession." He rose, killed, and pillaged, until satiated with blood; then filled with remorse, not knowing what to do with his life and what was to become of him, he sat down and wept, exclaiming: "In whom am I to trust—is it my own people or a man like Col. John Ward, who has come to teach us the true meaning of life, how to attain our birthright of happiness and to taste the joy of freedom from oppression."

The Prior thanked Col. John Ward, on behalf of the Club, remarking that the members would look forward with confidence to his resuming his activities in the House of Commons, and his bringing back again the realities of discussion.

DINNER TO LORD JUSTICE SIR HENRY DUKE

(President of the Divorce and Admiralty Division of the High Court of Justice).

October 31*st*, 1919.

Prior—FRIAR THE HON. GILBERT COLERIDGE.

Topic for Discussion—

THE LAW IN RELATION TO SOCIAL STABILITY.

Among the Guests were: Messrs. Stuart Bevan, K.C., Herbert du Parcq (Barrister), William Paynter, K. G. Jayne, J. Campbell Nelson, Charles Burgin, Edward L. Burgin, Mr. John Hinds, M.P. (Lord-Lieutenant of Carmarthenshire), Major L. N. Vincent Evans, Major T. Emlyn-Jones (late of the R.A.F.), Mr. L. V. Taylor, Mr. C. E. Best, Mr. S. W. Turner, Deputy Walter Bull, J.P., Mr. R. Storry Deans (Barrister), Mr. A. C. Stanley Stone,

C.C., Capt. Trustram, C.C., Mr. Robert Girling, Mr. Alexander Neilson, Mr. C. E. A. Bedwell (Librarian, Middle Temple), Mr. J. C. Squire (Editor, *London Mercury*), Mr. E. Showler, Sir W. H. Dunn, Bart., Mr. A. C. Nesbitt and Mr. V. Sullivan.

In giving the toast of the evening, the Prior said that it was most appropriate that Lord Justice Duke should be the Club Guest, for the reason that the early part of his life was spent in journalism. He afterwards took a bold and brave step—he was called to the Bar. This required a great deal of patience, industry, and character. Lord Justice Duke heroically took the plunge ; he had swum across the river and landed on the other side. One incident in his political career was unique. In 1910, he was returned to Parliament with a majority of one vote. This reminded him of the saying of Archbishop Magee, when he was discussing in the House of Lords the value of the Government majority. He said : " My Lords, for my own part, I can never believe in the infallibility of the odd man." We all knew that the odd man in this case returned the member for Exeter.

During the war, Lord Justice Duke was Chairman of several useful committees. In 1916 he became Irish Secretary, when he tackled one of the most super-human problems any human brain had considered. This task of Sisyphus did not crush him. He was afterwards appointed Lord Justice of Appeal, and he had recently been appointed President of the Probate, Admiralty and Divorce Division of the High Court.

Lord Justice Duke initiated a discussion on " The Law in Relation to Social Stability," and expressed his gratitude for the touching kindness with which the Prior had referred to episodes in his life. It had been a life of constant work. He did not think it was inopportune when the " house was rocking," and we were feeling the vibration, that we should consider the question of social stability. Was there anybody there who could define law under a week ? He would not try to define the law ; it might take the form of 5*s*. and costs, a death sentence, or some less punishment. It was the foundation of the social fabric ; it was the binding quality which cemented the social fabric ; it was the very spirit and soul of society. Where there was no law, there was no society.

Lord Justice Duke traced the development of laws from the Mosaic code down to the Roman period, and, referring to our own laws, quoted the dictum of Sir Edward Coke, that " The common law in England is the perfection of human wisdom." It deserved high praise because it was the product of our own race. At the time of the Norman conquest, the Saxon people made a demand to William the Conqueror that they should live by their own laws. That wise man and great soldier adopted their proposal with enthusiasm. This country had had for long generations great qualities, one of the chief of which was its indomitable love of liberty and justice. Equity or equality was the basis of common law.

The speaker reviewed the various revolutions which had taken place in France and in this country, and showed that the community was very much what we make it and that what we made it depended upon the laws. We were now living in a revolutionary age. He believed that among large sections of our people there was a profound sentiment of dissatisfaction about parts of our law—not the common law. There were a great many laws which govern the daily life of the people, on such matters as marriage, relationship of the State, the possibility of carrying on the domestic life of the country. All these things were brought in question. These discussions were going on not amongst foolish people in the street, but amongst people of various classes. In conclusion, the speaker urged that the common sense of the community—that sense of sympathy and justice and all the faculties which make up civic virtue—should be represented perfectly and effectively in the making of our laws and their administration.

Friar Whale, referring to the remarks of the Prior that Lord Justice Duke was the first member elected by a majority of one vote, mentioned a case where a candidate was elected by a majority of one in a constituency of three electors. One was absent and the two others were the landlord of the estate and his butler. The late Mr. W. Willis, K.C., was elected for Colchester by one vote ; it was said that this vote was that of the notorious lunatic in the district. He defined law as harmonizing order and progress.

In illustration of one of his points, Friar Whale related an incident of Lord Thurlow receiving a deputation of dissenting

deputies, who wanted representation. Having heard them out, Lord Thurlow burst forth: "I am against you, my God, I am Church of England, damn it; I am for the Established Church because it is established; if you get your damn religion established, I will be for that." This was one side of the question—the question of order.

Mr. Herbert du Parcq related the story of Lord Bramwell standing at the gate of his country house smoking his pipe one summer evening. A number of boys were playing cricket on the village green close at hand. The village constable asked Lord Bramwell if he would like the noise stopped. His lordship remarked: "Constable, leave them alone—they are settling the Common Law of England." The speaker pleaded for a full restoration of the jury system in the Law Courts. This method of trial had been largely dispensed with since August, 1914.

The Prior suggested as a definition of law, the axiom: "the greatest happiness of the greatest number." It seemed to embody the stereotyped public opinion of what was for the public good. He threw this down as a "bone" for the assembly to worry over.

Friar Dr. Leslie Burgin dissented from this definition and rejected the "bone" as containing no meat which he could consume. If he worked for many weeks and even years, in preparing a definition of law, it would be impossible even then to secure one on which two lawyers would agree. Dr. Burgin lamented the lethargy shown by the people in discharging their duties as citizens, and urged the importance of spreading enlightened opinion. Education was the panacea for nearly all our evils.

Mr. Storrie Deans supported Mr. Du Parcq's plea for a complete restoration of the jury system, and also advocated working-class juries. The administration of the law must have the confidence of the people. If they wanted a fair-minded body of men, he would recommend a body of English workmen, who had a wonderful sense of justice and fairness; this was what was required on a jury. The lowering of the qualification of a juryman would do something to quiet the unrest which was going on in the country.

Mr. O'Sullivan pointed out that it was perhaps most significant that Lord Justice Duke had not referred in his discourse to the rigid principles of law, but rather to the consciousness of the

common people, and the sense of fair play and right which was common among men. Professor Dicey had stated that anything Parliament promulgated was good law, but he did not accept that constitutional doctrine. If Parliament said that his friend, Mr. Shansfield, should be prosecuted because of his religious opinions, that would be an unreasonable law. There was a moral content in law. The promulgation of Parliament must correspond with reason and national justice if the laws were to have validity.

Lord Justice Duke briefly replied to the chief points raised, and, on behalf of the Club, was warmly thanked by the Prior for his admirable address.

A RUBBER PRINCESS.

By G. B. BURGIN

(*Hutchinson & Co.*, 6*s.* 9*d.*).

There are few novelists who decline publicity, but this charge I can most certainly bring against our hard-worked editor of the *Whitefriars Journal*. Most of our Members know that all incidents of importance, be they titles, incidents of travel, or even the issue of a novel by one of our Members, are duly recorded in our *Journal*. When I ventured to suggest to Friar Burgin that the issue of his new novel, although it is his fifty-eighth production, should find a notice in its columns, he said: "No, I could not allow it. As editor, my position forbids." I hope, therefore, the editor will pass this feeble attempt at a notice for which the writer, and not the editor, takes all responsibility.

Having read *A Rubber Princess* with great interest and pleasure, I must confess that I cannot help wondering where the author obtained his plot and incidents; but all who know him can bear witness to the fertility of his brain and the resourcefulness of his wonderful memory.

The story opens in the early years of the war, and is centred in London near Gray's Inn, the locality helping greatly in unfolding the doings of one of the leading characters. Although the paternal personages of the book are well portrayed and lovable characters,

yet the novel is really a fascinating love tale in which love has many tortuous ways but in the end realizes its full happiness. It is quite possible to understand this when the author tells you that one of his delightful heroines "swims as well as she walks, and had for eyes, human forget-me-nots."

All who know the author of this book, and the happy way he has of telling a story, will say after reading it, that it is a real Burgin repository, for few incidents pass without a stop being made to tell a story relative to the occasion, and, as brother Friars know, in story-telling he is unequalled. The book is written with humour, is full of everyday life, and will amply repay the time given to its reading.—JOSEPH SHAYLOR.

EDITORIAL NOTE.—*Although for the last sixty odd years we have followed Friar Burgin's career with the closest personal interest, we are reminded of the old countryman who turned to his wife when they came out of a theatre, and said: "Well, you* WOULD *come." Friar Shaylor* WOULD *insist on this kindly notice appearing in the* JOURNAL, *and the editor was forced to yield to his genial pressure.*

DINNER TO W. L. GEORGE.

November 7th, 1919.

Prior—FRIAR ST. JOHN ADCOCK.

Topic for Discussion—NOVELS AND NOVELISTS.

The Friar said that the guest of the evening needed no introduction: "by his works you know him." Mr. George was born in Paris, we need not say how long ago, was educated at the Paris University, and served his turn in the French army. He came to England, where he had to learn his own language. Mr. George

became London correspondent for two or three Paris papers. He had taken an active interest in politics, especially in the land, emigration, and housing questions. His first book was published twelve years ago, entitled *Eugenics of Social Progress,* giving the results of his own investigations; he handled the subject with significant practical common sense.

Mr. George became a novelist eight years ago, his first work being *A Bed of Roses,* and did not exclude from his picture those darker aspects of life and experience. He had the courage of his opinions, and championed the cause of the suffragettes long before it was a fashionable thing to do it. While advocating woman's rights, he was so unsparing a critic of the women of the movement that it occasionally got him into trouble; people asked for careful criticism, but did not want it. Mr. George looked both ways, and hit freely out.

The guest of the evening, in opening a discussion, explained that as he was in the presence of thirteen novelists, two publishers, and a perfect crowd of reviewers, he was in a difficult position. Those he mentioned would be annoyed—those he did not mention would be annoyed also. Half a century ago people did not start writing novels until they were 35, and kept on until 90. Young men had taken to write novels in the university, and now with *The Young Visitors,* juveniles were beginning to write in the nursery.

The speaker classified modern novelists under three heads—Neo-Victorian, Edwardians, and Neo-Georgians. Mr. George endeavoured to make it clear that this classification must not be taken too literally, and that he had no intention of trying to force a diversity of people into one mould. He grouped together people of a certain distinction, arising in the same period, and united by certain analogies of method or of temperament. In the Neo-Victorians were Wells, Galsworthy, Bennett and Conrad, who were concerned with social problems—labour and, like Samuel Butler, with religion. These men constructed their stories on the old lines. The Edwardians comprised Beresford, Oliver Onions, D. H. Lawrence, Cannan, Compton Mackenzie, Frank Swinnerton, Walpole, E. M. Forster and himself.

A distinguishing feature of this section was that in most of the works there were no social, political, moral or theological ideals. The authors contented themselves with chronicling a life from the beginning; they presented a view, not how to build up the State but how to live and develop our lives. The young generation did not knock at the door—it took a flying kick. The Neo-Georgians mentioned were: James Joyce, Wyndham Lewis, Romer Wilson, Virginia Woolf, May Sinclair (in her new manner) and Dorothy Richardson. Amongst these people there was an extraordinary difference from their predecessors. Mr. George quoted selections from some of these writers.

The Guest showed that in many of their works, the above authors took the characters and made them say not what they thought but what they felt. What they got out of this sort of writing was that nothing much happened. He described some of the work as "waspish and old-maidish," the sort of stuff which was usually produced "by a woman who has not been loved enough," and there was an avoidance of the literary conventions which existed. We were living in a period of intellectual barbarism; every man must be dominating. We had to fight for our ground. This new literature, this "greenery-yellow" formless sensationalism was not the sort of thing which answered this period. We had come out of a tragic five years, which had been dignified by sacrifice and heroism which was something good to see, and we were coming to a period of strife when nobody would co-operate.

Mr. C. S. Evans characterized Mr. George's address as one of the most penetrating pieces of criticism which he had heard for a long time. The new novelists appeared to give bits of life to be put together again by the reader. The futurist methods displayed the first symptoms of insanity. He hoped that these methods were not going to grow into our art, for it was only through sanity they could hope to do good things.

Friar Percy Alden dealt with the question from the point of view of a novel reader, and told the story of a prisoner about to be sentenced to death, and was asked if he had anything to say. A friend in court was anxious to speak on the prisoner's behalf.

The judge asked the accused if he was anxious that the man should be heard. Prisoner replied: "My lord, if he wants to speak, he can do so as long as he likes, but, for God's sake, hang me first." "I think that may be your feeling," Mr. Alden added, "if I make a long speech." He deprecated the indifference shown to social reform and other important problems by many modern novelists. Some of the novels failed to serve any good purpose and were not worth reading. He would like to see a novelist seriously take up the labour question.

Friar G. B. Burgin made an interesting reference to his early associations with the Prior, remarking that in his work as a reviewer, he had always "tempered justice with mercy." As regards the speech of the evening, in the words of a Friar whose serial had been returned by a publisher, "it leaves me cold." So many aspects had not been touched upon; Mr. George had dealt mainly with the emotions of the writers. In his young days, he had foolish hopes, aspirations and ideals that a novelist had a mission and some useful purpose to serve in the world. The real mission of novelists was not to keep on informing the world of its tragedies but to help portray its joys and to make the world happier by the perusal of his works. After all, the personality of the novelist did not matter.

The novelist ought to bear in mind the story of the French outpost captain in the Peninsular War who, as there was little chance of fighting that evening, was invited to supper by the officer in command of the English outpost. He was very hungry, and accepted the invitation. In the middle of the meal, fighting began again, and he rushed despairingly back to the French side and rallied his men. His general sent for him and said: "Had you not rallied your men, I would have had you shot at dawn. Young man, when you are hungry, supper is good, wine is good, but honour is better." When invited to share in the fleshpots at the expense of his art, the novelist should always remember, even though he go hungry, that "honour is better."

Mr. Frank Swinnerton contended that the young contemporary novelists were "trying to leave the world a little wiser than they found it." Modern novelists were trying to get down to facts.

" I have a cheerful temperament," he added, " but I can assure Mr. Burgin that I am not going to falsify what I believe to be the actual experience of mankind." Mr. George, he considered, was unduly pessimistic as to the future, and seemed to suggest that novelists, like everybody else, were trying to cut each other's throats. There was an extraordinary amount of sympathy between novelists. Mr. Swinnerton quoted, with approval, a statement appearing in a recent review : " A writer of the present day who does not live the social life, is unknown ; a novelist leading a social life has no time to write." The young novelist was so beset with a series of invitations and flatteries that he had not the opportunity of doing good work.

Friar Ward Muir considered that there were two sorts of writers —entertainers and novelists. He was gratified to find that in the list of serious writers mentioned who were not entertainers, there were so many names of women. Although in the nature of things women had not had the experience of men, they had had other experiences equally valuable and interesting.

Mr. Warwick Deeping mentioned that when he came back to England, the two things which pleased him most were a picture of Constable's in the National Gallery, and Thomas Hardy's works. He was rather old-fashioned, and he thought in the future we should have to get back to simplicity, and try to escape the self-consciousness which was the bugbear of novelists. This was the lesson which the war had taught us. Personally, he had no fear as to the future.

Friar Coulson condemned the methods of " the man with the muck rake " in some classes of novels. It did not matter as to the cigarette smoke and other details ; what mattered was that which entered into the hearts and souls of the characters.

Friar Tedder thanked Mr. George for his most interesting description of living personalities. He was bound to say that some of the names he had heard for the first time. From what Mr. George had told them, he did not think we should be very much interested in some of them. He thanked Mr. George and the novelists present for the many hours of delight they and their predecessors had given him.

On behalf of the Club, the Prior acknowledged their indebtedness to Mr. George for his brilliant address.

Mr. George briefly replied to the criticisms of his address.

FURTHER EAST THAN ASIA.

By WARD MUIR.

With a memory still grateful to Friar Muir for his most interesting book on the *Observations of an Orderly*, one naturally turns to his new volume expecting to find his "observations" still further extended to the East; but, instead, there is unfolded a most romantic story full of thrilling events from the first page to the last.

Kellock, an American, a poet and a born lover of adventure, who has recently lost a fortune, agrees to obtain for a doctor, a flask of opal oil from the Sultan of the Isle of Pulo. This oil is supposed to cure all diseases and to have a charm which can only be realized by those whose blood is pure and who are clean of breed; and although the hero is told that those who go ashore on this island never come back again, he decides to risk a journey to this volcanic island of mystery.

After a journey full of eastern romance and excitement, Kellock obtained an audience alone with the Sultan. He stared at the hooded figure on the dais, the eyes of which were the only sign of life visible, and the Sultan said: "Do not fear; . . . to you I wish to speak. . . . To you I wish to reveal myself; . . . you are a man." "And *you*," declared our hero, "are a woman!"

It is from this point that the romance commences. The heroine is described as "elusively beautiful, with a small mouth, straight nose, and a chin voluptuous, yet firm, with a perfect symmetry and proportion about it all. From her ankles to her breast, her contours flowed in serene and subtle curves. The curves of her bare arms were beautiful. All was beautiful."

Although many of the results of this fascinating interview must be left to the imagination of the reader, yet a thrilling story of love and romance naturally follows, with an interesting account of the opal baths, the gaiety of the Pleasure House, the treachery of the Buddha priests, and the great earthquake which eventually swallows up the island of Pulo. The hero and heroine escape only to meet with fresh troubles. " Jewel's body slipped from the hero's grasp and went down, down to its tomb in the depths."

The book appeals to all who love a thrilling romance and can only be put down when the last page has been reached.

—JOSEPH SHAYLOR.

DINNER TO THE RT. HON. LORD ROBERT CECIL

November 14*th*, 1919.

Prior—FRIAR ROBERT DONALD.

Topic for Discussion—THE NATIONAL OUTLOOK.

Among the Guests were : Sir Hedley Le Bas, Mr. H. W. Massingham, Mr. Frank Dilnot, Mr. R. C. Macfie, Mr. Joseph Clayton, Lieut. Donnelly Aitken, Mr. F. W. Goodenough, Mr. J. C. Bosustow (of Shanghai), Mr. Reginald Watson, Mr. C. A. Stephens, Rev. Isaac Shimmin, Mr. F. Vivash Robinson, Mr. Hinde (President of the Institute of Journalists), Mr. Geo. Springfield (President-Elect of Institute), Mr. Hamer (Senior Councillor), Mr. Thompson, Capt. R. A. Coulson, Colonel Malone, M.P., Mr. E. H. Rudd, Sir John Causton, K.C.B., Mr. A. C. Wratislaw, C.B., Capt. Cyril Helm, D.S.O., Mr. T. H. Roberts, Mr. Henry Smalley, Rev. H.

Martyn Sanders, Mr. T. Lewes Sayer, Mr. Walter Bull, C.C., Mr. Geo. J. Hocking, Mr. C. Rudy, Mr. F. Lindley Jones, Sir Ernest Wild, M.P., The Hon. Lionel Guest, Mr. Henry F. Grierson, Major Raymond Smythies, Mr. George Swaffield, Mr. G. Howard Davies, Rev. Dr. Garfield Williams, O.B.E., Mr. W. T. Cranfield, Mr. Joseph Hayward, Mr. P. L. F. Perkins, Mr. Gordon Piper, Mr. Robert Major, Mr. H. H. Fawcett, Mr. W. M. Gaul, Mr. Geo. Lansbury, Mr. J. W. Frings, Major A. E. Panter, R.A.F., Mr. Mackenzie, Mr. Davies, Mr. L. G. Sloan, Sir W. H. Dunn, Mr. C. E. Lawrence, Mr. S. V. Teddy, Mr. Bernard Kettle, Colonel Andrew Balfour, Captain L. A. Hussey, Mr. N. R. Udal, Mr. G. J. P. Arnold, Mr. J. W. Cross, Lieut.-Col. D. Borden Turner, Mr. A. M. O'Brien (Organizing Secretary of League of Nations), Mr. E. W. Lynam, and Baron J. Malstromer (the Swedish Charge d'Affaires).

The Prior expressed his satisfaction at the numerous attendance, constituting a record gathering. "I have explained to Lord Robert Cecil," he continued, "that in spite of the name of the Club, it is not a religious order, and although we may be a pious-looking set, we are not so pious as we look." Lord Robert Cecil required no words of introduction from him—he was one of the most distinguished men in the empire ; he had inherited a great name and had maintained his position by his own merits. He had the characteristics which we welcomed in all public men—he was honest, sincere, and he had courage. The possession of these great qualities had made him one of the most esteemed and most influential men in the country. But for the services of Lord Robert Cecil, the League of Nations would not be where it is to-day ; he was the real founder of the greatest thing which had emerged from the war.

Not many people knew of the immense services which Lord Robert Cecil had rendered as Minister of Blockade. He inaugurated a new system at the Foreign Office of taking the newspaper men into his confidence. He kept in touch with the representatives of the London journals and with the American correspondents, and during that time not one of those newspaper men ever abused that confidence.

Lord Robert Cecil said that he had prepared a most learned discourse on ecclesiastical affairs which no doubt would have

received a very patient hearing from the Prior, but he was now told that the Whitefriars were not a religious Order. "The Prior had said that the Friars were not as pious as they look"; I am sorry to hear it. I beg you to believe that I am not so ecclesiastical as I look.

His lordship then proceeded to discuss the national outlook and showed that in the process of political changes since 1832, the vast majority of power had now passed to the wage-earning classes. This was observed at the last election by certain questions and by a gust of national feeling, which resulted in an election which did not represent the true feelings of the country. It was quite clear that at the next General Election, the Labour Party would enormously increase its membership. Whether it would secure a majority over all the other parties might be doubtful; that it would become one of the largest, if not the largest party, was not open to question.

What was going to happen if this occurred? The most disastrous thing that could happen would be the division of political parties based on class. There appeared to be three broad subjects on which such divisions might take place. There was first the financial question. We had an enormous burden in the gigantic debt; each class would be anxious to place upon the other class the greater part of the burden. He hoped that this would not be the dividing issue—nothing would be more disastrous than a division on that point, if it could be avoided. Then there was the question of an industrial policy. He believed there was only one possible solution of the industrial problem; the changes must take the form of transferring to the wage-earners a much greater share in the control of industry than they possess at present. There remained the big question of foreign policy. At present it could not be said that there was a real division of opinion on that point; he was clear that this would always remain so. The League of Nations idea meant a much wider outlook on all questions of foreign policy; it meant the definite acceptance of the view that there was such a thing as national altruism. Personally he doubted whether that implication of a League of Nations was fully realized by its friends or by its critics. When we were approaching problems of foreign politics, it would not be assumed that because British

interests were not involved we need not bother about it; we must go further than that.

The Speaker was not going into the Russian question—Heaven forbid! He might have something to say on this question in the House of Commons, in an assembly less instructed and less impartial than the present. Whatever policy was adopted as to Russia, it must not be based on considerations as to what would be best for the commercial interests of this country; we must go further afield than that and try to find a solution in the interests of Russia herself and of the world's peace. This was what he meant by the League of Nations' spirit. An enlightened love for others would prove ultimately to be in the interests of this country. He was not at all clear that when a number of questions arose that it would not be found on the question of the application of this principle would be the great dividing line between the parties of the future. A great opportunity was presented to us, and if we take advantage of it we might be laying the foundation of a new era of great importance in the general prosperity and peace of mankind. If we did not take this chance in the coming ages, it would be recorded as the greatest defalcation from a national opportunity that had ever taken place.

Mr. J. Hinds, M.P., considered that no generation had a greater problem to solve than the present one. We must drag from our hearts all suspicion towards one another and as regards other countries in the world. We all gave lip service to the League of Nations, but something more was needed. It meant sacrifice, and as Lord Robert Cecil had stated, "national altruism."

Col. Malone, M.P., referring to the Russian question, said the British public were very much frightened that Bolshevism would spread in this country. This fear, he considered, was groundless. The British people were quite different in mentality from the Russians. It was important that the Russian problem should be settled before the winter set in. He believed that the majority of the people of this country realized that things were not so bad as they had been painted by the press. He urged the necessity of a removal of the blockade. The majority of the people of this country would welcome a conference such as that outlined by the Prime Minister on the previous day.

Sir Ernest Wild, K.C., M.P., pointed out his difficulty in dealing with the national outlook in a five-minutes' speech, especially after listening to a speech from a real statesman—a man whom we all admired whether we agreed with his views or not. Whether Lord Robert's views were transcendental or not, they were honest. He disagreed with the proposition that the last General Election did not represent the minds of the people. We had a House of Commons which was trying to do the work for which it was elected ; during the six or seven months Parliament had been sitting, there had been more real democratic legislation passed than was the case in any previous Parliament. Although we were called a coupon-ridden Parliament, we were the most independent Parliament of modern times. He deprecated the unfortunate internecine conflict between the Northcliffe Press and the Prime Minister. The second " fly in the ointment " was the attempted interference by America in British politics. The people of this country were not going to stand " Mr. Pussyfoot." The third difficulty was that everybody was teaching the gospel of grab instead of the gospel of give. As to the financial position, we were faced with proposals for a capital levy and Premium Bonds. He ventured to think that Premium Bonds would win.

Friar Hamilton Fyfe described himself as a " standing dish " at these gatherings. " If you invite Col. Ward to speak on anti-Bolshevism," he said, " I have to get up in support of Bolshevism —perhaps not a difficult thing for me. When a learned judge speaks on law, I have to represent the burglar interest. If they asked an author to talk about the latest literature, I have to take up the cudgels on behalf of early Victorian literature." He had a difficulty that evening in taking the position of the " official opposition," for he found nothing in Lord Robert Cecil's speech to oppose. The two men whose views had broadened during the war, and whose love of humanity deepened, were President Wilson and Lord Robert Cecil. At the back of what President Wilson and Lord Robert had said to us since the war, was love. What we had to do to make the world better was to look at it from the other fellow's point of view—from the point of view of the other fellow's wives and children.

Mr. Wallace, M.P., expressed the view that he had seldom listened

to a speech of a more lofty tone, or delivered with the same conviction than the speech of Lord Robert Cecil. There were two supreme tasks before us. The first was national—that consisted in setting our own house in order, and to settle the difference which had arisen between labour and capital. We had entered into the war with high ideals, and the world's conflict had left us more materialistic than ever. He was certain that this was a passing phase. He was quite certain that it was only in the spirit of Lord Robert Cecil's speech and only by an application of the principles enunciated to-night that the civilized nations of the world could possibly solve the problems by which they were confronted.

Mr. George Lansbury contended that the present position of the country was more serious than was realized by those who wrote leading articles or made speeches in Parliament. The capitalistic system had broken down, He would not be content until the system was reorganized for service and not for profit. This problem had been continually before the country and no settlement had been found. They might jeer at the Socialist proposals, but let them find another settlement. What the press and the churches should preach was a love of humanity, and a gospel which would make life better for everybody.

Friar Dr. Leslie Burgin dissented from the view of Col. Malone that there was nobody in this country who feared Bolshevism. As to the possible future changes, we could not want anything better than enlightened labour at the head of the State. It was essential that we should break down something of our insularity, and to give a sympathetic consideration of continental problems. Sir Ernest Wild would not have "Pussyfoot." In dealing with this particular problem, we must have an alternative for the public-house. He condemned the methods of certain sections of the people who gibed at British institutions.

The (Padre) Rev. H. Martyn Sanders cited incidents in British history to emphasize the importance of a broad outlook—"the seeing of visions."

Lord Robert Cecil briefly replied to the principal points raised, and at the close he was thanked by the Prior on behalf of the Members and Guests.

DINNER TO SIR NEVIL MACREADY.

November 21st, 1919.

Prior—FRIAR H. R. TEDDER.

Topic for Discussion—PUBLIC NERVES AND THE PRESS.

Among the Guests were : Frank L. D. Elliott (Assistant Commissioner of Metropolitan Police), Morgan Williams (Commander of Special Constabulary, H.Q.C.D.), H. Westbury Preston (Sub-Inspector of Special Constabulary, H.Q.C.D.), Brigadier-General Duggan, D.S.O., Fred Catling, Walter Thornton, Major J. A. Arrowsmith Brown, D.S.O., Mr. C. J. Wilkinson-Pimbury, C.C., Mr. Stanley Stone, C.C., Sir Frederick H. Norman, Lieut.-Col. Melville Macnaughten, C.M.G., Mr. George E. Lee, Artist, Sir Basil Thomson, K.C.B., Mr. D. C. H. d'Avigdor, Mr. Swinfred, Mr. J. H. Quinn, Mr. Herbert Jones, Mr. E. A. Baker, M.A., D.Litt., Alderman Abbott, Colonel F. S. Brereton, R.A.M.C. (Author and Historian), Mr. Henry Curtis, F.R.C.S., and Sir John MacAlister, (Secretary of the Royal Society of Medicine).

Prior H. R. Tedder informed the assembled Friars and their Guests that the honour of filling the Chair that evening had been conferred upon him for no merits of his own, but owing to the fact that he was the senior Special Constable of the Club. This was the first occasion on which his age had brought him honour. He had to propose the health of Sir Nevil Macready whom he looked upon as his official superior—for he had not given up his warrant card.

Having alluded to Sir Nevil's distinguished military career, and his appointment as chief of the Metropolitan Police, the Prior described the English Police as " the best in the world." The letter P stood for the best police, the best poets, the best potatoes and the best petticoats—or the wearers of them. At the time of one of the Jubilees which used to be so frequent, he was told by a distinguished foreign statesman that what struck the foreigners most was that all through the line of route the mounted police were received with tumultous applause. Their Guest was in an

excellent position to discuss " The Public Nerves and the Press," from an entirely independent standpoint. In the first place, the police had no nerves ; their business was to allay the nerves of others. In the second place, the police had been subjected to criticism in the Press, but they have not replied. We might really call the Police " the Silent Service." That honourable title used to be given to the navy, but recently we have had a great number of witty volumes written by various distinguished Admirals in which they criticise each other with great candour. He was afraid that the navy could no longer be described as " silent," and must now be called eloquent.

Sir Nevil Macready, in introducing the subject of the evening, stated that he had studied a little yellow book which gave a list of distinguished authors, artists, travellers and men of affairs who had addressed the Club. He was not certain that he was a man of affairs ; he belonged to the War Office once. On turning to the list, he could only find one distinguished writer with a military title ; he ventured to say that this officer would be prepared to be known from his literary achievements rather than his military ones.

Describing his own position, Sir Nevil said : " By heredity I am an actor ; by profession a soldier ; by compulsion a policeman " The subject he had chosen was one he had heard constantly spoken about. No one had a greater admiration for the Press than he had. The Press in many awkward hours had helped him considerably ; he would give way to no one in his admiration of the " Fourth Estate " as a power in the country. The tired man returning from a heavy day's work suddenly turning the corner was brought up by the sight of a newspaper placard. If, of course, it was only a " John Bull " poster, stating that if the reader invested 5*s*. he could not possibly help winning £1,000, he bought a paper, smiled and passed on. A little further on the tired City man was faced with posters announcing in big letters : " America refuses to ratify the treaty," " Frightful murder in the East End." Or it might be something to do with taxes at a time the unfortunate householder was wondering how he was to pay the next rent or gas bill. He did not think that this was very soothing to the nerves. He had, to ornament his office, two charming posters in large letters

with the words: "Macready must go!" and "Macready makes ready to go." He asked what effect these posters would have on a person who placed confidence in his being at the head of the Police, and said "Thank God I can sleep in peace." After seeing these what a night that person would have.

On the other hand, there was that class of person toiling and moiling in propaganda to "get that blackguard out of Scotland Yard." Think of the joy that this man would feel on reading the posters. A few weeks afterwards what would the poor man feel when he found that Macready had not gone. The Press in their posters should have some consideration for the public.

Then as regards the headlines in the papers; we were cheered or cast down by those at the breakfast-table. On going on with the reading we found that we had sustained an electric shock to our system for which there was no necessity at all. When we got down to the letter-press we found that it was a most feasible thing. There was a more serious side to this question. In these days when most peoples nerves were highly strung on account of the events of the last few years he thought that the best thing was for the nerves of the country to be soothed and not excited.

Sir Nevil gave a concrete example of the harm caused during the miner's strike in Wales in 1910, owing to the sensational reports which appeared in the local press. This was counteracted by Sir Nevil obtaining the services of a *Times* war correspondent, who placed the true state of affairs before the British public. There were people, he continued, who took the Press far more seriously than their Bibles. There was a great responsibility on the Press of this country to try to help in quieting our nerves. The Press wielded a tremendous power, and it might be even a greater factor in helping this country to recover the position it occupied before the war.

Friar Hamilton Fyfe remembered that Sir Nevil Macready in his interesting speech had made use of a quotation; he desired to make use of another quotation which occurred to him. At the beginning of the war he found himself at the British headquarters with two other correspondents who wanted to join the British forces. Whilst they were having dinner at a small hotel, Sir

Nevil Macready and his A.D.C. arrived. Mr. Fyfe said, " I am afraid if Sir Nevil knows, it is all up." In the course of his journalistic duty at Belfast he had been compelled to refer to Sir Nevil's activities in terms which he now regretted. When we had written anything which we think particularly smart we usually regret it sooner or later. Col. Harper (now General Harper) the Provost Marshal told the correspondents they had no business there and required them to report themselves at nine the next morning. The following morning they were compelled to sign a paper undertaking to go away from the British Army and not to get in their tracks again. Sir Nevil stated that he had a great respect for the Press. The quotation which came to his mind was : " It's all very well to dissemble your love, but why did you kick me downstairs."

Friar Rideal gave some interesting reminiscences of his duties as a special constable.

Friar G. B. Burgin said that the Prior had rightly stated that he was the oldest special constable in the Club. His various activities at the Athenæum Club and in other departments set an example which most of us would do well to follow. In the eloquent and charming speech of our guest this evening we had heard a great deal about the Press and its influence on the public nerves. He could bear testimony to this from experience gained in his own and neighbouring households. A friend's housemaid was a stolid young person of 20 summers who never read the papers ; his own cook was an hysterical female of 50 winters who always read the papers and shivered all night waiting for inevitable bombs. One day, the stolid housemaid was sent out shopping and she returned with a basket of potatoes. An air raid came on, and in the middle of this the stolid maid with the potatoes returned to the house. His friend's wife rushed to her aid, exclaiming : " Jane, you must be dreadfully terrified—would you like a glass of brandy ? " Jane peacefully replied : " I wouldn't object to a glass of brandy, ma'm, but, thank God, they didn't hit the potatoes." The next day his wife was dining out without him, and the cat, the cook, and himself were left in possession of the house. Then came another air raid. Cook burst into the dining-room, seized his arm, and said : " Oh, Sir, if you don't come and sit under the kitchen

stairs with me I'll cut my throat." To prevent such a tragedy, he consented to sit under the stairs with cook, and the cat chaperoned them. The cook put the candle on the flag stones; the cat sat down by the candle and proceeded to wash himself. When the bombs came unusually near, cook yelled: "Oh my! Oh my! Oh my!" and hit her head against the top of the stairs. Then she suddenly caught sight of the cat calmly washing himself by the candle and shouted: "Oh Lord, sir! Look at that in-u-man cat a-washing himself!" This showed the harm which came from reading the public Press. Sir Nevil had told us that by heredity he was an actor, by profession a soldier, and by compulsion a policeman; his modesty forbade him to add to this description that, in addition to these varied professions, he was a silver-tongued orator. "He touches nothing that he does not adorn." He would make an appeal to Sir Nevil that should any brother Friar in a moment of forgetfulness "touch" something which ought not to adorn him, Sir Nevil would temper justice with mercy when the offender was brought before him in his official capacity.

Sir John Macalister spoke of the improved conditions of service in the Police. He suggested that in the revival of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas the line "a policeman's life is not a happy one" should now be expunged.

Friar Lindley Jones alluded to his experiences as an inspector of the special constabulary, and the high standard of efficiency which characterized the police forces of this country.

Col. Macnaghten, who described himself as "the son of a policeman," stated that since leaving the army he had become a "Whitehall limpet." They had had many shocks from the Press, and he was afraid that they would not be "Whitehall limpets" very much longer,

Alderman Abbott, of Manchester, instanced a case of injury having been caused to the commercial interests of that City, owing to a sensational statement having appeared in the Press.

Friar Hugo Vallentin, who claimed to be the only alien in the Club, spoke of the superiority of the British police force compared with that of Sweden.

Friar the Hon. Gilbert Coleridge paid a tribute to the great services rendered by the special constabulary during the war.

The Assistant Commissioner recalled that during the war a bomb fell on a stack of coal near the police headquarters at Scotland Yard. He reported the incident to the Receiver as follows: "A bomb fell on the open yard on your stack of coal; the coal promptly extinguished it." During the first two years of the war they were deluged with stories of German spies, mostly from ladies. Most of these stories were spoilt after a careful sifting. None of the spies went as far as the Tower. In one case a lady, whom he knew to be extremely amiable, telephoned that she had learnt from her Italian footman that at a hotel in Sloane Street there were a number of German and Austrian servants who were engaged in cursing England. This might have provided a scare head-line "A nest of German spies in Belgravia." When it was reduced to writing it was found that the footman had not been at the hotel for seven years. He had been employed as a scullion in the kitchen, working extremely long hours for poor pay, and he came to the conclusion that surely the chef must be a German. During the war his cook, who was a newspaper reader, was found to be in a dreadful state of terror. His wife inquired the reason. The cook replied: "Ma'am, the war is lost." This was in the middle of the summer offensive in 1918, and his wife assured her that things were going splendidly. "Oh, no, ma'am" was the reply, "the *Daily Mail* says that Foch is going to strike."

Commander Morgan Williams related some of his experiences as a special constable. Amongst the duties performed was the standing in a food queue in the East End for some hours; then an old lady would suddenly put a baby in the special's arms. The baby sometimes urgently wanted "first aid," and the only implement was a napkin and a safety pin. This was a time when they realised the meaning of tact. If they had had to look after the morals of Hyde Park for one year, as the specials had done, and got through without any casualties, they would know what patience meant.

The Prior, in thanking Sir Nevil Macready, described his speech as "one of wisdom, enlightened with wit, and radiating with kindly feeling."

Sir Nevil Macready briefly replied to some of the points raised.

WHITEFRIARS' CHRISTMAS DINNER.

December 18th, 1919.

Prior—FRIAR W. LINDLEY JONES.

Club Guest—CAPTAIN EVANS, of the "Terra Nova."

The Prior confessed that he felt like "the fly in amber." He explained for the benefit of the lady visitors that the Club consisted of two sections—the one comprised the brainy men who were great talkers and the other the silent men who were sometimes very useful. He belonged to the latter section; he believed he was the only representative coming within that category at that dinner. He asked their sympathy because this was absolutely his first appearance in the capacity of Prior. It was not that he was afraid to take the chair, but what he feared was the Club toast. He had heard this toast given in a variety of manners; he had heard it delivered with great dignity by Friar Spurgeon, and with all the charm of the silvery-tongued Friar Leslie Burgin. He had heard it mumbled and stuttered by others. Immediately he decided to take the chair, the toast became an absolute bugbear to him. It ought not to have been the case, as he had some claim to be considered an elocutionist, of sorts; he had won a prize for this sort of thing. On one occasion, he reached the apex of success. He was reciting "Gone with a Handsomer Man" before his landlady; he had reached the words "Curse you!" when he heard a tapping on the wall from next door. Then came an inquiry at the front door: "Oh, Mrs. Smith, is something troubling your young man lodger?" This was a testimony that he could recite, and he made up his mind that he would not be beaten by the Spurgeons and Burgins. One evening to the astonishment of his family circle, he commenced to recite the toast. His wife looked up with her usual wifely smile and said: "Why waste time in learning the toast—you can read it just as well." This was why he read the toast that evening.

The second resolve he made was not to follow that awful example of some Priors and become too talkative, but instead of keeping that resolve he had become a mere chatter-box. In proposing the health of the Club guest, the Prior remarked that he

supposed it was usual for the Prior to look up " Who's Who " to find something of the career of the chief guest. He was quite sure that that volume could not tell him anything he did not know of Capt. Evans of the " Terra Nova.' Capt. Evans lived in the hearts of his countrymen ; he was a superman who had helped to keep our coasts clear of enemy submarines, a man who had been overwhelmed with honours and tributes, but in spite of this he remained the simple naval man he had had the honour of talking to that evening.

Capt. Evans, C.B., D.S.O., R.N., who was enthusiastically received, acknowledged the toast, and in proposing " The Spirit of Christmas," recounted some of his previous yuletide experiences. Last Christmas, his wife in an outburst of generosity gave the servants a week's leave. Temporary help was engaged, but did not arrive. The household consisted of his wife, himself, a baby of four months and a nurse. He undertook to cook the Christmas dinner ; he was able to get through all right with the aid of a Norwegian Cookery Book. His wife did not blame him when the dinner was served, as she had had no hand in the cooking ; the nurse did not complain—she regarded it as a novelty for the dinner to be cooked by an arctic explorer ; the baby could not complain. He took a proper pride in his own work and ate his share of the turkey.

The most unique Xmas he spent was with Capt. Scott and six other companions, when they pitched their camp in the awful stillness 3,000 feet above the sea. It was quite a humourous Christmas. Probably they had read in Capt. Scott's book how the stores officer produced two little plum puddings from his socks, and one was given to each tent. As far as the navy was concerned, he considered that " the spirit of Christmas was rum." Sailors thoroughly enjoyed their Xmas ; on a man of war the ship's company decorated their messes. The captain or admiral went round the messes and he did not want his Xmas dinner when he had finished, for he was invited to taste the plum pudding, the turkey, mince-pies and sardines.

During the war some of us had the good fortune to be in harbour, where we had a splendid Xmas. He was adopted by a "fairy

godmother "—a big Strait Settlement merchant sent his ship all kinds of grocery for Xmas.

As indicating the spirit which prevails at sea, Capt. Evans narrated an incident which occurred when the hospital ship " Asturias " was mined. A nurse was attending to the wounded, and as the water was rushing into the ward she was urged to leave the ship. She sat down, remarking " my place is with the wounded," and she went down with the vessel.

Yesterday at Newcastle, Capt. Evans continued, I saw a funny little man with a tiny wife. I recognized him as Stoker Brooks, who was wounded with a shell fragment, his back being almost shot away. He made his way to the cabin, and when I went down to see if I could do anything more for him he apologized for leaning on my cushions. If this is not exactly the spirit of Xmas I think it is the spirit of the navy. Later I went to the hospital, and my wife took some things for the wounded. The man's small wife from Newcastle was there, and thanked me for coming to see her husband. I told her that I had recommended him for the distinguished medal for bravery. " Well, Sir," she replied, " I have got strong arms and I can work for him," and she bared her tiny little broom-sticks. " He has served his country and I am proud of him." That is the spirit of British womanhood. During one of the scraps in the Channel people came to my wife, who is a Norwegian, and asked " Is your husband all right? " My wife replied: " He will tell me when he comes home to lunch." That is the Viking spirit.

In a lighter vein, Capt. Evans described an incident which occurred during the Ostend races where he met Mr. Bottomley. Mr. Bottomley had a horse named Ainsworth running, and announced that he was going to put all he could on the horse. Capt. Evans backed the Fox with a small bet and won a considerable sum. After the race, Mr. Bottomley expressed his regret that he had advised Capt. Evans to back Ainsworth. Capt. Evans replied: " You are not so sorry as I am for you, Mr. Bottomley; I have backed Fox."

On another occasion, Capt. Evans was escorting 32 British Allied and neutral nation ships from England to Gibraltar. Owing to the long wait it was difficult to keep the officers fit. A huge ball made

of cork and other things sewn up in canvas weighing 30 pounds was used in a game. The ball went overboard and a boat was lowered to recover it. Lest anybody should write to " John Bull," always a captious critic, he hoisted the code for "man over-board." A little Danish ship hoisted three flags to indicate " much congratulation!" Capt. Evans then described a visit he paid to a convent in Bruges, where he gave a lecture on Capt. Scott's expedition. After the lecture he was presented by the Lady Superior with a silver chalice, holding three quarts. The Mother Superior said : " I wish you to keep this cup for your day's rum." " I have never been in a convent before," Capt. Evans added, " and I am quite sure the Mother Superior has never been on a man-of-war." During the war he never allowed any officer to have intoxicating drink while at sea. When his little cruiser was paid off, he received the following letter from the last man aboard : " Dear Sir, Everybody is demobilized : everybody has a good record and on demobilization all are sorry to leave ; hope we may meet again. *P.S.*— I have burnt the wine books."

In conclusion, Capt. Evans thanked the club for the sincere welcome given to him and Mrs. Evans.

The Prior announced that Mrs. Kimmins, whose name appeared on the toast list to respond to the next toast, had had to leave for the country. Her place would be taken by Dr. Kimmins.

Friar Dr. Leslie Burgin proposed " Sovran Woman." He coupled with the toast the name of Mrs. Kimmins, as he declined to recognize any man substitute. The Prior had given a thoroughly convincing account why he did not know the Club toast. He wanted to congratulate the Prior on one little fact ; he had read it correctly, a thing not done on many occasions. In proposing the toast of " Sovran Woman "—ladies in the aggregate—one feature to be noted was that they have the privilege of changing their minds—not that Mrs. Kimmins' departure had anything to do with this. There was one other body that had elected to change its mind, and that was this terrestrial globe, which was to have come to an end yesterday. In changing its mind, it rivalled almost the supremacy of " Sovran Woman."

Dr. Burgin wished to congratulate " Sovran Woman " on entering the House of Commons ; we could not think of this toast without

coupling Lady Astor's name in some way. The only thing which Lady Astor complained of was that she felt a little lonely, and would like one or two of her sisters to keep her company in the House. The other message she sent was that the perfectly cut navy blue gabardine which she wore on first entering the House would be on view at Selfridge's basement in about a week's time.

Having referred to the important part " Sovran Woman " had taken in history, the Friar pointed out that in the profession of law we could not have a single *cause célèbre* without a lady ; she was always sovereign and supreme. It had been his privilege and pleasure for some weeks to inculcate the elements of English criminal law to lady students, a task which he found very simple ; they absorbed it quite easily.

Coming down to the war, we have had of course, immense service rendered by ladies in the aggregate and ladies in particular, not forgetting Miss Douglas Pennant. There was a wide range of service rendered from the typist and tea drinkers of Whitehall upwards. We remembered the heroic example of the nurse on the " Asturias," to whom Capt. Evans had referred in his simple, moving story. In coupling with the toast the name of Mrs. Kimmins, he had to remind them of her splendid public services in conducting the Princess Louise Military Hospital and a Cripples' Hostel at Chailey. Last and not least of her distinctions, Mrs. Kimmins was wife of a distinguished Friar. In saying that, we recognized that she was the illuminant which puts Friar Kimmins into the lime-light.

In proposing " Sovran Woman," Dr. Burgin desired to make the toast a wide one. We in the centre of the great empire realized the tremendous debt which civilization owed to the wives and sisters of the men who in Kipling's words were stationed " at the outposts of Empire." He wanted in this toast to include a thought for the wives of those who were stationed at Gibraltar and all places all around the chain in all parts of the world coloured deeply red on the map, and those parts which were gradually becoming deeper and deeper pink which had been taken over as a result of the war. He would conclude by adapting the words of the Club welcome : " By this toast we commemorate the ladies fair and bold, fortified by spirit ; the spirit of admiration for their services alike in young

and old; sweetened by sympathy for those who, less fortunate than themselves, have encountered storms. It remains for me as mover of this toast to add the cordial—the cordial of the association of their charms and virtues—and I ask you brother Friars of an Ancient Order to drink to the toast, "Sovran Woman."

Friar Dr. Kimmins, in response, apologized for the absence of Mrs. Kimmins; he had never missed her so much as on that occasion. If he had had some hours of preparation, he might have made a speech equal to the toast. He had great admiration for "Sovran Woman," and he particularly eulogized the work of Madame Montessori in the educational world.

The remaining toast, "The Health of the Prior," was proposed by Friar Sir Vincent Evans, who described Mr. Lindley Jones as not only a loyal member of the Whitefriars Club but a "white man." The toast was acknowledged in felicitous terms by the Prior.

A REMEMBRANCE OF DUNWICH IN 1907.

This group was photographed with a pocket camera by Friar Clement Shorter. The names, reading from left to right are: Rev. J. Allanson Picton, Thomas Hardy, Sir James Frazer, author of *The Golden Bough*, Friar Edward Clodd, and Friar Richard Whiteing. Professor Flinders Petrie is in the foreground. I am indebted to Friar Shorter for permission to reproduce this group.—*Editor.*

ANNUAL MEETING.

REPORT AND BALANCE SHEET.

The Annual Meeting of the Club was held in the Club Room on Friday, January 16th. FRIAR G. B. BURGIN was voted to the Chair, and the Report and Balance Sheet were received and adopted as follows :—

The Committee of the Whitefriars Club have pleasure in recording that it has given continued evidence of vitality during the past year. In the period of the war it was necessary to go slowly, but the membership was maintained, and during the year just closed the former activities have been renewed, though not to the full extent of normal times. The response, however, has been assuring, and it is intended in the coming year to bring back the Club to its full service. Besides the Christmas Dinner, and the Ladies' Night (in May) eight guests of prominence were entertained during the Spring and Autumn Sessions. These were :—Mr. P. W. Wilson, the *Daily News* Correspondent in New York ; Mr. Handley Page, the Aeronautic expert ; Admiral Sir W. Reginald Hall, M.P., K.C.M.G. ; Col. John Ward, M.P. ; the Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Duke ; Mr. W. L. George ; the Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, M.P., and Sir Nevil Macready, K.C.M.G. The respective topics were :—" America and the War " ; " The Future of Aviation " ; " Our Naval Intelligence Service " ; " Life in Siberia " ; " The Law in relation to Social Stability " ; " Novels and Novelists " ; " The National Outlook " ; " Public Nerves and the Press " ; The Priors were Friars Harold Spender, Dr. Leslie Burgin, Sir John Foster Fraser, A. MacCallum Scott, M.P., The Hon. Gilbert Coleridge, A. St. John Adcock, Robert Donald, and H. R. Tedder. Sir Robert Hudson was unable, owing to bereavement, to be Prior at the Ladies' Dinner on May 2nd, and his place was very capably taken at short notice by Dr. Leslie Burgin. Lady Olivier, C.B., E.R.R.C., was the Club Guest. Friar Lindley Jones was Prior at the Christmas Dinner held at the Criterion, when Capt. Evans, R.N., C.B., and Mrs. Evans were the Club Guests.

The gratifying feature of these gatherings has been the large spontaneous attendances. It was necessary to limit the number of private guests at the Dinner to Lord Robert Cecil, which constituted a record in the annals of the Circle.

The Club has suffered the loss, by death, of two members of great charm and individuality. Friar Charles Geake was a comparatively new entrant, having enrolled in 1914, but his intellectual gifts and dry humour made his occasional attendances welcome. Friar Angelo Lewis, who was elected in 1884, belonged to the Veterans and owing to illness and residence at Bexhill had rarely been seen in the Club in recent years. He was, however, one of those who established its fine traditions, and he maintained his regard for the Club right through.

Four members have resigned. Eight have been elected. These are—Friars Edward Salmon, Edwin Oliver, E. C. Randolph, Thomas Burke, Ivor Nicholson, George Whale, Percy Alden, and W. J. Lomax. It is gratifying to find that candidates are pressing for election.

Everyone is deeply grateful to Friar Burgin for his editorship of the *Whitefriars Journal*. Its unique literary interest, keeps those who, from time to time, are unable to attend the functions, in touch with the life and thought of the Club, and preserves its memories for all.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS, 1918-19.

RECEIPTS.

	£	s.	d.
To Balance at Bank, 22nd November, 1918	92	3	0
,, Subscriptions	249	3	4
,, Entrance Fees	15	15	0
,, Interest on £300 London County Council 3% Stock (five quarters)	7	17	6
,, Dinner Tickets	102	3	0
	£467	1	10

EXPENDITURE.

	£	s.	d.
By Rent to Xmas, 1919	65	0	0
,, Club Journal	44	6	1
,, List of Members	8	10	6
,, General Printing	1	11	9
,, Special Printing	16	17	8
,, Postages	10	16	4
,, Stationery and Sundries	6	11	0
,, Gratuities	8	10	0
,, Reporters	4	9	0
,, Typist	3	17	9
,, Dinners (Lyons)	90	7	9
,, Artists	27	4	6
,, Refund (Dinner Tickets)	2	0	0
,, Club Guests		14	6
,, Balance at Bank, 21st December, 1919	176	5	0
	£467	1	10

Audited and found correct,
(*Signed*) ALGERNON ROSE,
WALTER B. SLATER,
3rd January, 1920.

(*Signed*) EDWARD CLODD,
Hon. Treasurer.

THE FRIARS' CLUB.

Subject for Discussion—

MY TIGHTEST CORNER; AND HOW I GOT OUT OF IT.

By

FRIARS SIR ARTHUR SPURGEON, HAMILTON FYFE, W. H. HELM, KEIGHLEY SNOWDEN, JOSEPH SHAYLOR, HUGO VALLENTIN, SILAS K. HOCKING, THE HON. GILBERT COLERIDGE, HALDANE MCFALL, ALBERT KINROSS AND G. B. BURGIN.

Friar Sir Arthur Spurgeon goes a galloping.

I WAS in my fourteenth year, and, following the usual custom, I was spending my summer holiday on my grandfather's farm in Norfolk. One morning I was enjoying a ride when the horse took into its head to run away. I have no doubt it had a poor opinion of the equestrian ability of the rider and acted accordingly. What a John Gilpin ride that was! We tore along the country lanes at a maddening

FRIAR SIR ARTHUR SPURGEON, J.P.

speed. The fiery charger had a hard mouth and took liberties with my puny pulling. I held on grimly and wondered vaguely what would be the end of the adventure. Would it prove my last ride? Never before was I in such a predicament. The horse galloped on without slackening speed for a moment, and then a sudden swerve pitched me headlong into a furze bush by the roadside. No bones

were broken, but prickles like needles made a marked impression. I was rescued from one tight corner by falling into another, and the after-results were very painful!

Friar Hamilton Fyfe leads off.

I DOUBT whether anyone who was not in France during the first weeks of the fighting in August, 1914, realizes how quickly the Germans overran the country. Back from Mons and Charleroi they rolled the British and French forces. In a week, they had Amiens; within ten days they were close to Paris. When Moore and I (Moore was a *Times* war correspondent) drove up in the dusk to Beauvais just after Amiens had fallen, we were stopped by a double barricade across the road. We might have persuaded the officer in charge to let us pass on foot, but we dared not leave our car. We enquired back along the road until we found a lonely inn. It was dark and shuttered, but our hammering brought from a cottage close by a terrified landlady, who could hardly be convinced that we were not Germans. When she was satisfied that we were English, she opened the inn, cooked supper, laid down mattresses for us to sleep on. She gave us coffee, too, at dawn. As soon as it was light, we were off again.

And Meets a French Column.

Between Beauvais and Clermont, we fell in with a French column legging it towards Paris as hard as they could. We had been warned that the woods were full of enemy patrols, so for a while we slowed down to the pace of these tired and dispirited troops. Then we wearied of the slowness. We determined to push on. To pass the column and cover the men with dust would be bad manners. Could we, we enquired, take a side road that would bring us out on to the highway, in front of them? Yes, we were told, that little road there. We took it, although it was little more than a cart track, and before we had been five minutes parted from the French, we saw two lines of Uhlans coming towards us. We could not turn. To rush through them would have been too risky. Nothing for it but to hand out a plausible line of talk, and hope for the best. We knew we were in a tight corner, for the Germans had threatened to shoot newspaper men, even if they were accredited, and we had no credentials at all. Luckily, my passport said nothing about my profession. Moore's described him

as a journalist. Moore's, therefore, had to be suppressed. As soon as we were surrounded, and the officer asked, as we knew he would do, for our papers, I handed up mine quickly. He read them carefully. Then he asked us what we were doing there. "Mon dieu, monsieur," I said, "we are just two Englishmen motoring for pleasure. We are on our way to Paris. Here, you see, is a permit from the Mayor of Dieppe."

"This is no use," he said, scornfully. We knew that, of course.

"Search the car," he ordered. It was searched thoroughly. While the cushions were taken out and the bags opened and the carpet pulled up, a corporal covered us with the largest revolver I ever saw, at least, it seemed the largest, then. I could see the corporal wanted to let it off. He kept on looking at the officer for instructions.

The Officer is worried.

But the officer was worried. He knew that he was too near the French to do any shooting. We embarrassed him almost as much as his patrol embarrassed us. "How did you intend to go to Paris?" he asked. We knew the name of no place directly ahead of us except Clermont. "We were going by Clermont," we said. At this he came to a decision. "Very well," he announced, "you can go on." He seemed to consider that we, like all the English, were mad, and to say, "If you want to do mad things, I am not going to stop you." He had everything bundled back into the car; the corporal, savagely disappointed, put away his large revolver; we exchanged polite greetings, and went on, immensely relieved.

And sets a trap.

Our frequent enquiries along the road as to whether it was safe were all answered with a cheerful "Yes, yes," but just as we came to the first houses of Clermont, out ran some Frenchmen and cried to us: "Don't come in, the place is full of Germans." These Frenchmen saved us from the trap which the Uhlan officer had laid. We swung round, and whirled back along the road, standing up with our field glasses to see what was ahead. For some distance, low hills prevented our finding any road that led south, but at last we came to one and after a few miles, rejoined our French column.

A very little while after we had turned south, our patrol with four others, came clattering down the road, returning to Clermont. We had got out of our tight corner only just in time.

FRIAR HAMILTON FYFE AND PHILIP GIBBS.

Friar Helm hesitates.

My "tightest corner." No, Mr. Editor, I cannot tell you of that. It was not one of the great ones of adventurous life. I have never been faced by a gigantic grizzly in the narrowest cañon of Colorado, attacked by an insane Arab on the apex of the Great Pyramid, nor threatened with an action for "breach" by a lady possessing a thousand and one of my ungainly photographs. But I will recall a little corner which was much less tight than, as a British citizen, I should have wished it to be, in spite of my satisfaction, as a private individual, at its avoidance.

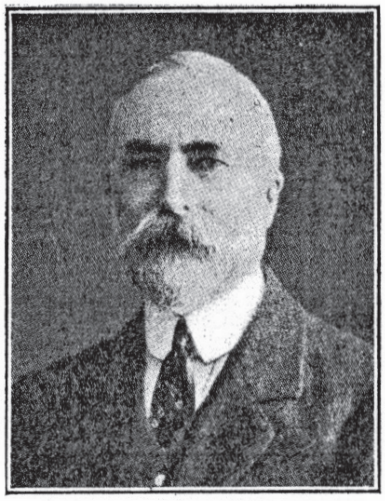
But relents.

One Sunday morning, "before August, 1914" (there ought to be a formula for that phrase, such as "B.A.N." or "B.T.W."), I landed at an English port, on my return from a bicycling tour in France,

some hours late, in consequence of a thick fog in the Channel. My bicycle, with its appropriate baggage, was seized by a sailor and wheeled off to the Customs' office, where it was placed against a wall at the wrong end of a queue of other bicycles, which itself had to wait the disappearance of a lengthy queue of unbicycled passengers. I had to catch a train at a junction several miles away, if an appointment of great consequence to myself was to be kept, and I saw that, if I waited to pass the Customs, I must infallibly miss my train by at least three-quarters of an hour.

What was to be done.

What was to be done? With the instinctive resource of a Whitefriar, I thought of a way out which, however, was not, I fear, quite in accord with the Washingtonian code of our society, and for that I ask pardon from my Brothers of a gracious Order! I wheeled my bag-laden bicycle to the dock gate, where I was duly stopped by a policeman, who demanded that I should exhibit my pass. I did exhibit my pass—but it was the one I had received, in return



FRIAR W. H. HELM.

for a franc, on landing in France some time before. It was printed in French, of course, but it looked highly official and—it served the turn. "Right, pass out!" said the policeman. And out I passed, mounted my gallant and well-geared steed, and caught my train with just one minute to spare. Had I missed it—but that, as Dan Chaucer says, is another story.

Friar Keighley Snowden is cornered now.

I WAS never in a tight corner, till now! It is a duty to entertain the brethren, and I prize it mightily when it comes my way; but here I sit in my corner. Frankly, I have beaten my brains in vain for a funny memory. Once a bull charged me, and I should have been happy with a corner to get out of; but I was then in the middle of a spacious field. There I made a silly stand, and the bull very kindly side-stepped. Perhaps this will do. I believe I was more embarrassed than some Friars look as if they ever had been, for I remember the sense of relief and surprise: it made me shake. I remember, too, being very proud of my resourcefulness, and perspiring for some time freely.

His life one "demnition" corner.

If there *have* been corners—and it is hardly doubtful; life itself has often appeared to me one demnition corner—I must have lacked the sense of drama, and trifled. This examination fails me. I am like the Irish medical student who was asked how he would treat *gonorrhœa simplex*, and said: "With contempt, sor!" Not so can I treat our lively editor, by whom at last I am cornered unmistakably.

Friar Shaylor is startled.

WHEN I received from our busy editor a post-card asking for a few hundred words for our *Journal* on "My Tightest Corner," I was rather startled, but somewhat amused, because, however many times I had been in that condition, I never remember an occasion on which I had been cornered on this "Right little *tight* little Island." However, the card reminded me of a celebrated wit, who was told that one of his friends, a brewer, had been drowned in his own vat. "Ah," he exclaimed, "Floating in his own watery bier, I suppose." On a second reading of the card, I came to the conclusion that our editor referred to something more serious in the events of our daily life.

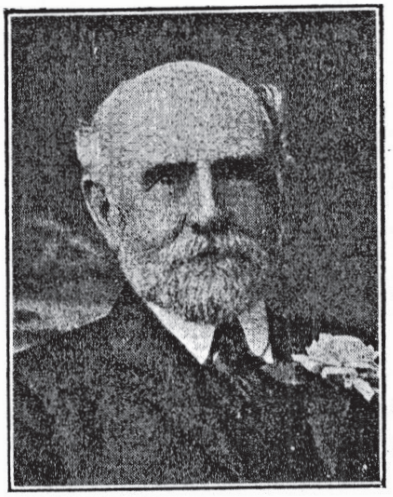
He reflects.

I therefore put on my thinking cap in the hope of finding some event in my life which would fall in with the subject under discussion. I have, however, failed—I was going to say, unfortunately, for I have never been in such a tight corner as, for instance, Daniel

was in the lions' den, or Mahomet when hid in a cave from his pursuers by a spider's web. Though one has had anxious times, I can thankfully say that there has been no room for corners in my life.

A Great Philosopher.

One of our great philosophers declares: "Short is man's life, and narrow is the *corner* of the earth wherein he dwells"; but with all this, there is undoubtedly with everyone some point, period or *corner* which has been most vital to him in his journey through life. There are few, even among the Whitefriars, who could not point to some parting road, where it would almost appear that inspiration had stepped in to guide away from the rugged *corners* of life and into the paths which lead to happiness and success. I can only hope that there are no "Tight Corners" for me in the future.



FRIAR JOSEPH SHAYLOR.

Friar Hugo Vallentin is wary.

DOES the editor really imagine that I am going to tell him, so that he may be able to satisfy the idle curiosity of my fellow Friars? No, Archibald, certainly not! I do not like to deal in realities, my line is more or less fancy goods. If you, my dear Sir, had made your question a hypothetical one: "What corner would you consider the tightest one possible?" or words to that effect, I would have answered you at once, and without reserve. The fact is, that I have often asked myself that question and have therefore the reply ready at hand. The reply is that there is no reply. For instance, what would

be worse to have : cigarettes without any possible access to matches or any other arrangement to light them with, or to have matches without any chance of getting hold of a cigarette ? I do not know myself—I am an expert cigarette smoker—and I doubt if you can solve that problem, either.

He unloads.

Having unloaded my troubles to that extent on your shoulders, I think I can stretch myself a little further and meet you half-way. Although not willing to give away the secret of my *tightest* corner I will relate the story of *one tight* corner, in which I found myself, and how I got out of it. I must confess that I owe that successful escape to the late Artemus Ward.

The Scene.

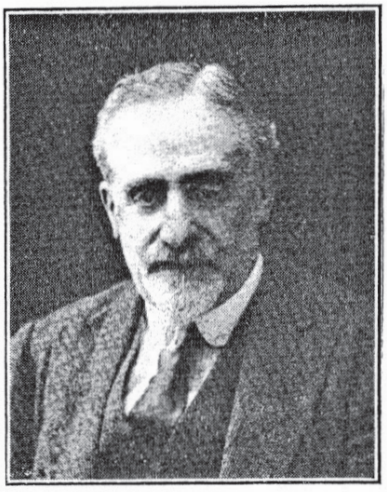
The scene is laid in the capital of the Emerald Isle, and the occasion, a Conference of the British Institute of Journalists, to which function I, together with some other distinguished aliens, had been invited as an honoured guest. Time : many years ago. The Conference lasted a considerable time, and daily there took place long and interesting discussions, to which we—the aliens—listened with admiration and awe. But, according to the programme the tables were going to be reversed. One forenoon was earmarked for the foreign delegates—seven or eight we were in all—so that they might give their British and Irish colleagues the benefit of their own wisdom and relate to them in as unbroken English as possible some interesting item of journalistic life in their respective countries.

The opportunity.

I grasped the opportunity with avidity, and, intending to shine before this distinguished audience, prepared a long and interesting speech on " The Swedish Press and Subscription through the Post Office." But, alas, man proposed, and the President of the Conference disposed. When the sitting was opened, the foreign birds were not allowed to sing their full-throated songs, only to twitter a few notes. The President announced that, as a new excursion had been arranged that day, and as there had been a good deal of talk during the week, he was obliged to limit the time of speech for each of his honoured foreign guests to three minutes. Whereupon he called upon me to open the ball.

His consternation.

My consternation can easier be imagined than described. I could not possibly compress my well-prepared speech into three minutes, and, after all the hospitality I had received, I was not going to rob my hosts of any of the useful information it contained. So I bethought myself of defying the President with the assistance of the late Artemus Ward. I began by telling my audience how I felt myself in the same position as the theological student about whom Artemus Ward relates that when he came to be examined, one professor pointed to a chair and said : " That is the pulpit, we are the congregation, the text, the immortality of the soul ; time, two minutes." My audience laughed immoderately, the President took the gentle hint, and I spoke for over ten minutes without interruption. Possibly some of the audience left during that time to prepare for the excursion, and others, as an effect of the late hours the day before, may have gone to sleep, but that is neither here nor there. I spoke and was reported in *The Irish Times*. I think I have the press cutting still.



FRIAR HUGO VALLENTIN.

Friar Major Albert Kinross is fatalistic.

A TIGHT CORNER, I take it, is one involving danger, and as danger is purely an affair of the mind, and does not exist independently of the mind, and as I haven't got that exact type of mind, I was never in a tight corner. I have seen other people who fancied that they were in a tight corner. They got out of it by the mercy of Providence, but while they were inside it some of them seemed violently excited and in fear of extinction, which proved to my thinking that they were the victims of an incomplete faith. Tight

corners are for the fatalist; he alone is truly at home in them. He gets out because it is Allah's Will that he should get out; and very pleasant it is afterwards. Once I was in a sinking boat, far out at sea. The ship had gone down, the sea was rough and half my companions were sick and finished. We got out of it all right, but one was so infernally busy trying to keep afloat, baling and what not, that one hadn't the time to discuss the tightness or otherwise of that particular corner. Statistics proved that it was ten to one on us. Well, that time we won.

FRIAR KINROSS'S HORSE AND FRIAR KINROSS.

Friar Silas and the Saints.

WHEN I began to scribble, fiction in many religious circles was taboo. Novels and the theatre were placed in the same category, and both unhesitatingly condemned. As a very young parson, I contracted the writing itch, and perpetrated a sort of a novel entitled *Alec Green*. When it was published in book form, I had the temerity to put my name to it. In my church was a dear old saint named Aspden. Like many others, it was his glory and his boast that he had never been to a theatre and never read a novel. "Fiction," he said, "was falsehood." However, to read novels was a sinful waste of time—a soul-destroying occupation; to write them?—Well, he had no words strong enough.

They read his Novel.

Aspden bought *Alec Green* and read it in two sittings—"laughed over it," he told me, "and cried over it." And, of course, accepted it as Gospel truth. Then he startled me and threw me into a

perspiration by suggesting that *Alec Green* should be invited to give a lecture on his experiences. "I have talked to several of our people about it," he said, "and they all agree that we should get a crowd and raise a good sum of money for the church."

His difficulty.

What could I say? For the moment I was completely overwhelmed. Naturally, I did not want to lose his good opinion, and equally I did not want to hurt the dear old man's feelings, and put an end to his boast that he had never read a novel in his life. To tell him that *Alec Green* did not exist and that the story of his adventures was pure fiction would—well, I trembled to think of what the consequences would be. I could not argue with him. He was too old to be shaken out of his beliefs and he was too persistent

FRIAR SILAS K. HOCKING.

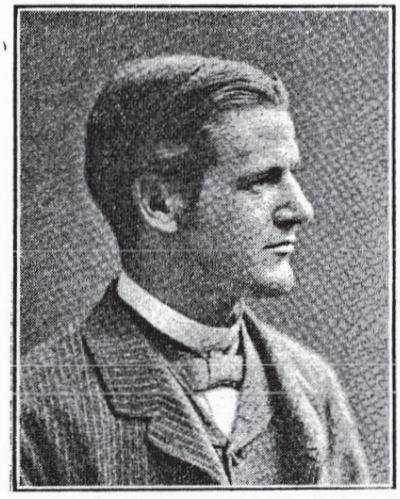
to allow me to take refuge in silence. I could see no way out of the difficulty but by evasion. I admit that to evade a direct issue may not be heroic. To "speak the truth and shame the devil" may show courage, but I doubt if it is always wise. There are times and occasions when it is better that the truth should be withheld. I told the old man that *Alec Green* was no lecturer; that he had never spoken in public in his life; and that I was quite sure that nothing on earth would persuade him to do so.

The Way Out.

"It is a pity," he said, reflectively. So I left it, and so I left him, glad to escape further questions.

Friar the Hon. Gilbert Coleridge "slips" into verse.

When coming down an icy slope one day—
'Twas near the Bosses du Dromadaire—I slipped
And flicked two guides, like summer flies, away.
"Sheer o'er the crystal battlements we fell"
A sommersault I turned, and knew no more
Till, like a peg, I stuck in melted snow
Two hundred feet below. One guide shot past,
And dangled o'er the roofs of Courmayeur,
Which glittered full five thousand feet below,
Like spider on his web. We hauled him up,
And what was our position then? Three men,
All trembling from the fall, and huddled close
Upon a narrow ledge, with smooth ice walls
Above, and slippery knobs of frozen rock
Thrust out, the yawning precipice below,
And, worst of all, we had but one ice axe
Between the three. We thought we'd better die
In trying to escape from such a place,
Than shiver out our lives in silence there.
We slapped each other stoutly on the back,
And started on our perilous ascent.
For four long hours we tried, now here, now there,
With beetling cornices above our heads.
We balanced in our carven footsteps, clung
With bellies sticking close against the rocks,
Zigzagging just like ants upon a wall.
At last we saw a gully topped by sky,
A glorious blue. Up this we slowly crept
Until we gained the shoulders where the sun,
Now setting, flushed Mont Blanc's majestic dome.
My tightest corner? sapient Editor,
Why, every horrid minute of that fright
Was certainly a corner very tight.



FRIAR THE HON. GILBERT COLERIDGE.

Friar Major Haldane Macfall is "desponsive."

I HAVE been ill, so my "tight corner" is somewhat out of date. But in any case, though I have been in tight corners all my life, I am the

most unheroic of mortals, despite my warlike *camouflage ;* in short, a dull, uninteresting dog. " May my portrait," as the peccant Augustus wrote to Miss Pecksniff, when he refused to marry her, but dowered her with the furniture, " make some amends." When I am really well again, I shall hope to join my brother Friars in their literary diversions. Good luck to them all !

FRIAR MAJOR HALDANE MACFALL.

Friar G. B. Burgin explains.

THE proud parents wrote to say that I must be godfather to their third infant because the third child was always the finest and the best able to reflect glory on its godfather. When I consulted married friends, I was told that the duties were not onerous. I must buy a christening robe or a mug for the child, and there the matter ended.

He decides on a robe.

" The child already has a mug ; buy it a robe," suggested a friend of my own immature age. " You can get one at that corner shop in St. Paul's Churchyard. Its quite simple." I agreed with him until I entered the shop and timidly explained what I wanted. " First floor," said a stylishly dressed duchess, and I heard her whisper to another duchess : " Fancy that boy being a father ! " I didn't fancy it, and, as I slowly faltered up the stairs, it seemed to me that I was in for trouble.

The trouble comes.

A beautiful girl came forward. " What can I do for you, Sir ? " she asked. I told her that I wanted a christening robe. Then she wanted to know what age my child was, and whether it was a boy or a girl. Mechlin lace was the more suitable for a girl's robe,

but it was expensive. She could show me some very pretty robes at about ten guineas. I had no doubt she could, but blurted out that I had thought of thirty shillings, and that I didn't know whether the child was a boy or a girl. She smiled and said that it must be one or the other, but that perhaps, in my inexperience, I had omitted to find out from the nurse.

He appeals to the shop girl.

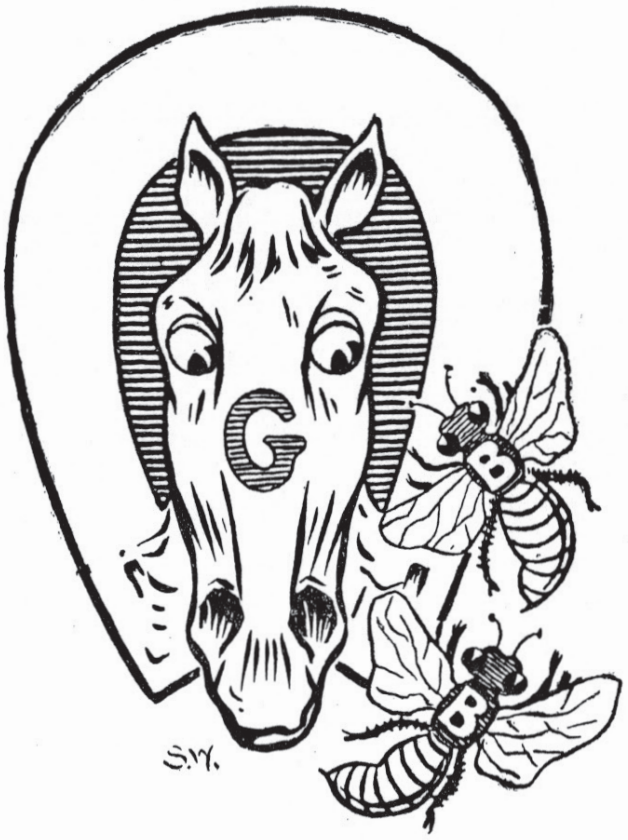
This was the tightest corner I had ever been in but, on seeing my distress, she took pity on me. "I'll run up to the top floor and find you a thirty-shilling robe for your dear little baby," she said sweetly. "You'd better leave the choice to me." And she was as good as her word. "Its real price is two pounds-ten," she explained, "but I told them that I wanted it for a friend whose limit was thirty shillings. Have I got you out of your difficulty? You're looking much happier than when you came in."

FRIAR G. B. BURGIN IN THE DAYS OF HIS YOUTH.

What I thought of her.

Without explaining that I was only a godfather, I told her that she was an angel, and as I marched proudly toward the duchesses downstairs affably expressed a hope to the first one that my twins would look well in their robes. She seemed sorry for me and condescended to sell me two pairs of kid gloves. Then I ran upstairs and presented them to the angel, who blushed very becomingly and said that a young father should not be so extravagant, but that she would accept one pair for her mother! Ah, me!—

"Don't let anybody know—
It was so very long ago!"



CLUB NOTES.

I was wandering through the tented lanes of Barnet Fair last year and encountered a couple of brother Friars who were vainly seeking to recall its past glories. As a matter of fact, kingdoms may rise and fall, men and women be born and die, world wars convulse the universe but Barnet Fair, undeterred by whatever happens, continues on its way at the foot of the quaint little town where Oliver Twist first met the Artful Dodger and was provided by that disreputable but amusing young person with a free breakfast.

* * * *

When I was a boy, there was no railway on the site of the fair, and there were horse races, with real horses and gorgeous jockeys. On one occasion the winner of the first race ran into the hedge at the top of the course, and with his jockey had to be pulled out by the legs, a proceeding which the horse resented by planting what a

policeman described as "'is 'ind 'eels" in the stomach of a fat farmer who assisted in bringing him back to the light of day.

* * * *

An unknown correspondent who read an article of mine about the fair, sends me an interesting explanation of the phrase "Tuppense more and up goes the donkey." There used to be a man at Barnet Fair who elevated a small donkey from a leather socket on his girdle, with a pole which fitted in a similar socket on a leather band round the donkey. Then the mountebank made a collection and, if he were not satisfied with the amount realised, pleadingly remarked "Tuppense more and up goes the donkey."

* * * *

Col. John Ward, C.B., our first guest of the season and Member for Stoke-on-Trent, has returned to his Parliamentary duties and will enlighten the public as to what the Bolsheviks are capable of in Russia. In private, he has no word too strong for them. He is shocked to think that the Labour Party should have called our forces out of Russia, and certainly some of his stories as to the behaviour of the Bolsheviks are very gruesome. Of Koltchak he has a high opinion, thoroughly believing in his democratic sympathies, and he is ready to go bail for him against all the accusations of the "Reds." Colonel Ward has come back very much of a "White." He has not seen any fighting under General Judenitch, and was therefore unable to give an opinion on his tactics. But one thing Colonel Ward is certain about—that the destruction of the Bolshevik tyranny will be an unmixed blessing for suffering Russia.

A few extracts from Col. Ward's speech :—

A Japanese officer once said to me that no sane man would dream of taking English advice on military subjects.

It is remarkable how soon the democrat can become a dictator.

It is impossible, even though you are a Pacifist, to shake hands with a man who is doing his utmost to murder you and your family and take possession of your house.

There are no police in Siberia. You can call them, but they are not there.

In revolutions, you have to save your own life and, if possible, the lives of your friends.

Whatever we may do in Russia in the future, we have given the name of England a first chance. I did it because I have learned to love the people and to like the country.

* * * *

Friar Sir Arthur Spurgeon writes me :—

Angelo Lewis is very ill, and I am afraid he will not be able to leave his room again. I wrote to him recently, and I enclose his reply. The sentence in which he says this is probably the last autographed letter he will ever attempt to write is very pathetic. Lewis was for many years a good friend of the Club. One by one the old stalwarts pass away. We are getting on ourselves !

This is the letter :—

My Dear Spurgeon,

Many thanks for your very kind letter. It is pleasant to find one's self remembered ; all the more so when distance and the lack of meeting have given so much excuse for forgetfulness. There was a time, in my palmy days, when I thought I might last to be " Father of the Friars," but that is " off." I have to content myself with " 80, not out," a pretty good score, and, on the whole, a very happy life.

God has been very good to me in this life, and I trust He will be so in the Great Unknown. I have no fear of death and my only hope is that He will come quietly enough. My worst trial is the loss of my sight, which grows daily worse ; indeed, this is probably the last autograph letter I shall ever attempt to write.

With kindest remembrances to you and yours and to the few Friars who may still remember me.

Yours fraternally,

ANGELO LEWIS.

What can we do but, in spirit, accompany our old friend and brother Friar to the shore of that silent sea to which we must all journey ! Our heartfelt wishes go with him. As Friar Spurgeon says, he has always been a good friend of the Club. And " we are getting on ourselves."

Friar Perkins also writes :—

You will be sorry to hear our good old Friar Angelo Lewis has been very ill for a long time and now confined to his room. He would be pleased, I am sure, to receive a line from the Friars who knew him. He is 80 this month. His wife, also, is a confirmed invalid.

* * * *

Here is a sonnet of Friar A. B. Cooper's which I have had the privilege of reading. Our Club poets have been rather idle lately and I am glad to see Friar Cooper setting them a good example :—

JOHN KEATS.

'Tis writ they say in mystic Eastern lore,
And one prime poet of the West has sung
That, when a babe is on the time-shore flung,
This frail bark brings from some dim heretofore
A soul as old as poesy—nay, mote,
  Oft-born, perchance he spake the silver tongue
  Of Æschylus, or when the world was young
Heard Homer all his sounding lines outpour.

If any such have been then such wert thou,
  O Greek of classic mould, dead, deathless Keats!
For thee the Titans still the heavens did bow,
  And nymphs and satyrs steal from dusk retreats;
And lo! thy Attic woods are whispering now,
  And in thy page the pulse of beauty beats.

* * * *

I am greatly indebted to Friar Crawfurd Price for his courtesy in sending me that interesting and highly informative monthly "The Balkan Review." It is very ably edited and does not confine itself to Eastern politics. For instance, Julia Dragoumis's "Old Greek Tales and Legends" are full of imagery and picturesque detail:—

THE WHITE CLOTH.

"To-morrow is St. John's!" said a woman to her neighbour, "May he be a help to us! Did you not know it, that you are preparing to wash on such a great day?"

"I care nought for St. John," said the woman, "my clothes are ready, and the lye is ready, and I shall have my wash. Do as you please, with your saints and your bells and your bonfires!"

The next day at early dawn, before the sky was touched with red, the woman rose, washed her clothes, and spread them out on the grass and the rocks to dry. Her wash had been successful, and the clothes were white as driven snow.

At noon her man came home; he went round the house, seeking his wife, but not a living soul did he see. Then he went to their neighbour's and asked her, and she told him that she had not seen his wife since she had gone out in the morning with her baskets full, and that perhaps she was guarding the clothes for fear they might be stolen.

The man was hungry, and he ran with angry words to the place where the clothes were spread to dry.

But lo! when he reached it, he found his wife and the clothes turned to stone and there you may see them to this day, in the midst of the field, the flat stones white as snow all around, and the tall stone, which was the woman, in their midst.

St. John had punished her!

* * * *

The Dinner to Lord Justice Duke was a highly successful gathering. Here are a few sentences culled haphazard from a highly interesting and recondite speech:—

No one here could define law under a week.

Law rarely takes an agreeable form when the citizen comes in constant contact with it.

Where there is no law there is no society.

We are living in a land which is throbbing with the revolutionary spirit.

* * * *

It was pleasant at the dinner to Lord Justice Duke to see two such valued friends as Friars George Whale and Coulson Kernahan among us again. Who does not remember Friar Whale's conclusion to an eminently eloquent and interesting speech some years ago. And now, Reverend Prior, as Lady Godiva said, on returning from her memorable ride to Coventry, " Thank God, I am nearing my close."

* * * *

Friar Sir Ernest Clarke writes to the Hon. Sec. :—

MY DEAR SHANSFIELD,

Although I am a great deal better so far as my head-piece is concerned I am still a martyr to rheumatism, and I have only one usable hand. I am not therefore yet fit to associate again with my fellow Friars. I have found the eleven months enforced inaction very trying and wearisome.

With best wishes to the Club at large and yourself in particular,

I am, Yours fraternally,

ERNEST CLARKE.

The sympathy of all Friars will go out to our friend in his long and irksome illness.

* * * *

Friar A. B. Cooper, apropos of the " Novels and Novelist " dinner, writes me thusly :—

I was interested in the discussion last night, of course, but there was a lot of brilliant nonsense talked. The fact is the inchoate school, both in fiction and poetry, believe in themselves vastly, but they will not last. They are a pagan crowd. They think they have the seeing eye if not the understanding heart, but have neither. They are well called the Intellectuals. They belong to the school which toppled Germany to ruin. I send you a bit of parody nonsense which may amuse my brother Friars.

It has often been remarked that there is nothing new under the sun because Shakespeare has said it all. One might have been forgiven if one had imagined Mr. W. L. George's outburst at the Whitefriars' Dinner, on November the 7th, as new, at least. Here it is : " Optimism is damnable. The most despicable character in all fiction is Mark Tapley." Yet, Shakespeare has said the same thing, or else I have dreamt he has. As far as my memory serves—certainly it is not a memory I ever brag about—the passage runs like this :—

By heaven ! I'd damn him everlastingly
Who could an optimistic thought express.
Let's write of tears, of tragedies, of woes,
Use black-edg'd paper, and, with acrid pen,
Spell SORROW in colossal capitals.
I bid you seal your eyes to mirage hopes
That lure you on to evanescent good.
For God's sake let us scowl, and grouse, and groan,
And pen sad records of the sinful world ;
How maids have been deceived, and wives unwed,
Both haunted by an introspective ghost
Which shows them all their heart in coldest print ;
How this man's murdered, that man drenched in drugs,
This raking filth, that wallowing in mire ;
For life's joy's but a fraction of the whole
And misery is meat and drink to man.
So, who would make a song of hated hope,
Tickling the putrid palate of the world
With altruistic platitudes of peace,
Infusing it with sacrificial rot,
And gilding teardrops with the rays of dawn,
Should, if I had my way, be sent to hell,
Pitch'd headlong down the Mark Tapleian steep,
Where optimists, who dare to love the sun
Yet try to hide the dunghill from our sight,
Frizzle and squirm in everlasting hope.

* * * *

Friar Clement Shorter sends me an amusing letter from Sir Horace Plunkett accounting for his non-appearance at the dinner to Lord Justice Sir Henry Duke.

DEAR MR. SHORTER,

Your little note reached me by the *third* post yesterday (Saturday). I stupidly did not look at the date and turned up at Anderton's Hotel, deposited my coat and hat, joined a corner of revellers (whose interest in law and social stability puzzled me) and on innocently asking if they were Whitefriars was in danger of being taken care of by the police ! Pray forgive me, and, if you can, the P.O. I was very sorry to miss Duke's avoidance of one rather intimate aspect of the issue he had to discuss ! For I suppose he kept to this side of the Irish Sea ?

Please make good my disappointment by paying me a visit next time you come Dublin way.

Yours sincerely,

HORACE PLUNKETT.

The Whitefriars' Christmas Lunch, with genial Friar Joseph Shaylor in the chair, was a more than usually festive gathering and very largely attended. Among those present were Friars

Fife, Harold Shaylor, Brown, Clive Holland, Perkins, Slater, Kinross (returned fron the War), Rose, Catling, Jerrold, Vallentin, Aitken, Burgin, Shansfield, Kesteven, Gamon, Ward Muir, Slater and Helm.

* * * * *

This is the occasion on which the Club servants receive their Christmas tips, and our old friend Robert (no one knows his surname) makes his annual speech. He was so unnerved by the applause which greeted his entrance that he forgot his customary ornate and dignified periods; but he afterwards told me in the passage what he had intended to say. He generally waits on us at this lunch and when the dreaded oratorical moment approaches, goes away, and returns with the air of a man who has just dropped in to wish us a Merry Christmas. Most of the other servants were new, and their speeches also suffered from lack of confidence. But everyone else made speeches, including an eloquent little address from Friar Clement K. Shorter who feelingly alluded to Friar Perkins's retirement from the Committee. Increasing deafness renders Friar Perkins unable to attend to a great many things although he continues to play golf with unabated vigour. The usual votes of thanks were passed to the Secretary and the editor of the *Journal* and, as Friar Shorter once remarked on a similar occasion, "All went merry as a Mackenzie Bell."

* * * * *

At the Christmas Dinner, Captain Evans, C.B., D.S.O., R.N., and Mrs. Evans were among the Club guests. Captain Evans, the heroic Commander of the "Broke," which, with the "Swift," made the epic victory in Dover Straits against triple odds, and who earlier in his career was associated with Captain Scott in the British and Arctic Expedition, proposed the toast of "The Spirit of Xmas." His presence for lectures is being eagerly sought all over the country and he paid a great compliment to the White Friars in sparing them an evening.

In the beginning of these notes, I have given a very pathetic letter from Friar Angelo Lewis. The following brief extract from the *Daily Chronicle* of the 29th December, tells the end of the story. We shall all miss him very much :—" 'PROFESSOR HOFFMANN DEAD. The friend of our boyhood, 'Professor Hoffmann,' author of innumerable books on conjuring, passed away, at the age of 80, in Christmas week. He was a barrister and author, in private life Mr. Angelo Lewis, M.A., who wrote for the *Saturday Review* when the late Lord Salisbury contributed to it."

" All, all are gone, the old familiar faces—" or nearly all. " But away with melancholy, as the small boy said when the schoolmistress died and he got a holiday." Our last season has been a very successful one, and we are looking forward to the next.—

G. B. B.

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