

THE C.L.S.



BULLETIN

(Organ of THE CHARLES LAMB SOCIETY, founded 1935)

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No. 169

(Twenty-Eighth Year)

JANUARY, 1963

A NEW YEAR'S GREETING FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Once again I have the honour and pleasure to send a New Year's Greeting to each of our members. Despite our loss in 1962 of several distinguished members we face the New Year with the hopeful expectation that it will prove an active and useful period in the annals of our Society. We have fittingly commenced by adding two stalwart Elians, Mr. T. Edward Carpenter and Mr. Sidney F. Rich to our list of Officers; there is also a prospect that some of our American members will initiate a movement to spread the Elian creed more widely throughout the Western World.

With gratitude for your continued support to our Society and with the confidence that 1963 will win a place among its most successful years, I remain

Faithfully yours,

WALTER FARROW.

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THE CHARLES LAMB BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION—This year's Celebration will be held on Saturday, 9th February at the Windsor Castle Restaurant, Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, S.W.1 (close to Victoria Station), and will be a Luncheon followed by the usual Toasts and concluding with a light tea. Reception from 12-45 p.m. Luncheon at 1-30 p.m.

The Guest of Honour is Professor Douglas Grant, M.A., D.Phil., who is Professor of American Literature at the University of Leeds, and a member of this Society. It is believed the theme of his Address will be Lamb and Hazlitt.

Tickets will cost one guinea which includes luncheon, tea and tips, but excludes wines. Members should apply *immediately* for tickets to Miss F. S. Reeves, 33 Alma Street, London, N.W.5. Cheques or postal orders should be made payable to the Charles Lamb Society.

We look forward to having a good attendance at this annual Celebration, with as many as possible of our Provincial members.

TWO NINETEENTH CENTURY
ARTICLES ON LAMB

with a Commentary by

Professor Geoffrey Tillotson

November 12th, 1962

A delightful surprise was provided by our President, Professor Geoffrey Tillotson, on the evening of November 12th, for among his miscellaneous reading of 19th century magazines he had discovered two articles containing appreciative comments on Lamb. The first article which appeared in the *British Quarterly Review* 1843 was a review of *Moxon's Works of Charles Lamb including his Life and Letters* collected into one volume and was written by George Henry Lewes, for which he was paid £15. This article containing so much in appreciation of Lamb and his writings is not mentioned by any of Lamb's biographers, and in view of its excellence and interest to all lovers and students of Lamb it is being reproduced as a **Supplement to the January Bulletin**. No doubt Lewes obtained much of the information he mentions from his friend Leigh Hunt who in turn had friendship with and first hand knowledge of Lamb who was the central figure when he and his friends foregathered at meetings in the Temple rooms of Lamb.

The second article from the *North British Review* 1846-7 is a review of Rankin's *Modern Painters* by A. J. Scott, Professor of English Literature, University College and Bedford College, London, in which he refers to Lamb's *Essays On the Genius of Hogarth*, and on the *Barrenness of the Imaginative Faculty in the Productions of Modern Art*, and includes a warm appreciation of Lamb's criticism.

The Chair was taken by the Rev. P. N. Doubleday, M.K.C.P., and at the conclusion of Professor Tillotson's talk he said how interesting the evening had been and that some of the descendants of those mentioned in the article had been in later days well known in London's literary activities. The ensuing discussion showed how Elianly the talk had been. Dr. Harold Meene thanked Professor Tillotson for rescuing the article from limbo containing as it did so much valuable light on Lamb's character and writings. Thanks to the Chairman was proposed by Miss Annette Park. The Elian Reading was given by Miss G. Taverner who had chosen the essay *Readers against the Grain* from the *Lepus Papers*.

GEORGE CRUIKSHANK. 1792-1849

An Address by J. C. Trevis

December 8th, 1962

George Cruikshank was born 27th September, 1792, the second son of Isaac Cruikshank a Lowland Scot who came to London in 1770. He was a precocious child and his earliest sketches date from when he was between eight and eleven years of age—one of these was a "Children's Lottery Picture" dated 1804. His earliest desire was to go to sea but his mother opposed this and he had some preliminary lessons in art from his father. In 1805 he did two etchings of "Horse Racing" and "Donkey Racing" and thenceforward he was launched as a professional artist. Of real art training he seems to have had none. Yet it was an artistic home, his father working on copper etching, the mother colouring the plates, and George helping in his small way with drawings, etc. Introduced to the theatre when young his style developed, as perhaps was natural, in a theatrical and flamboyant way, helped no doubt by his acquaintance with Edmund Kean and other actors. He continued to turn out sketches, caricatures, illustrations for songs, etc. From 1811 he became a political caricaturist, dealing with Napoleon, the Corn Laws, the purchase of the Elgin Marbles, and Princess Charlotte and her marriage. William Hone used many of them for his *Table, Year and Everyday Books*. One plate which Cruikshank regarded as the great event of his artistic life was the so-called Bank Restriction Note of 1813. On his way home in this year he saw the bodies of several women hanging from the gallows opposite Newgate Prison, convicted for the crime of uttering false one-pound notes. Impressed by the horror of the scene he forthwith designed with great detail a "Bank-note—not to be imitated." This captured the public taste so much that the police had to clear the crowd that gathered outside Hone's shop where the "Bank-note" was on view. Hone realised above £700 from the sale of the prints, and Cruikshank claimed that his design had put a stop to the punishment of death for forgery, allowing for a little exaggeration in this statement (one of Cruikshank's failings) his contribution to the cause of humanity was of great value. He continued to pour out social and political caricatures, some of them lampooning George IV and his amours, etc. More work in book illustration followed including "Life in London" 1821 a joint effort with his father, and Carey's "Life in Paris", though his knowledge of France was gleaned from a day trip to Boulogne and from the work of other artists. Ranked by others as his master work were the illustrations to Grimm's *Popular Stories* 1814

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26, showing his droll and whimsical spirit, fairies and elves with fanciful backgrounds. From 1828 onwards he turned out an enormous amount of work. His father Isaac, a minor caricaturist, died in 1811.

Thereafter the two brothers George and Robert continued their work and in addition managed to enjoy the gaieties of London and its life of the period: George regarding himself as the man about town, the "buck of the period"

In 1837 he did many designs for Bentley's Miscellany, including *Oliver Twist* and *Sketches by Boz* by Dickens, and *Jack Shepherd* and the *Tower of London* by Ainsworth; his illustration of Fagin in the Condemned Cell was an outstanding example of his art. Some disagreement arose between Cruikshank and Dickens through his claim that the story and incidents of *Oliver Twist* were his; no doubt some suggestions Cruikshank might have made were utilised by Dickens in drafting the novel. Both men were of a highly inventive nature with a grotesque imagination and both loved London and its characters, and each may have been assisted by the other's ideas. At any rate he was the predestined illustrator of Dickens.

In 1847 came another important turning point in his career, the publication of *The Bottle*, a direct contribution by him to the cause of teetotalism, depicting the downward march of degradation of a family through drink. He himself became a strict abstainer and devoted himself wholeheartedly to the temperance crusade.

He died on 1st February 1878 and was buried temporarily at Kensal Green, and on 29th November his remains were removed to St. Paul's, with an epitaph by his widow:

In memory of his Genius and his Art,
His matchless Industry and worthy Work
For all his fellow-men.

His *magnum opus* in the cause of temperance was a huge cartoon seven feet eight inches by thirteen feet three inches, "The Worship of Bacchus", crowded with figures and detail of every kind: the cartoon was presented to the National Gallery by subscribers in 1860 and its resting place is now in the cellars there.

In person Cruikshank was a well-built man, below the middle height, with a high forehead, blue-grey eyes, a hook nose and a pair of original-looking whiskers, and wearing a false lock of hair clipped with elastic to hide a bald patch. He resisted discipline and yet joined the Middlesex Rifle Volunteers, ultimately becoming their Lt. Colonel. Full of energy, a merry and jolly old gentleman in later life, humorous, argumentative, his own ideas the best, contradictory, cordial and lovable. He was generous, he was splenetic, he was flamboyant, and he was secretive, and when in the role of a public man he was larger than life. He

loved a comic scene and a comic character, he could draw infinite grotesque detail, but he could not draw a horse or a beautiful woman. His entire life was a study in extremes. He was as a caricaturist the last representative of the school of English caricature formed during the reign of George III and the Regency of the Prince of Wales, and the successor of Gilray and Rowlandson though in many ways lacking their ferocity of design. Yet with a fertility of design and a gift for characterisation, unflagging energy, his contribution to the comic gallery of London life in the first fifty years of the 19th century is unrivalled. What a character for Charles Lamb to have pondered over!

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Mr. R. Meadows White (in the Chair) in introducing Mr. Trewin said that the occasion was one that Elia might have chuckled over, namely, a professional actor introducing a dramatic critic. Mr. Trewin is also a writer—"Up from the Lizard" an engaging story of his life in Cornwall, and a book on Sir Frank Benson. And Cruikshank on whom Mr. Trewin was to speak was also a man of the theatre, apart from his work as caricaturist.

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Following an animated discussion Mr. Arthur F. Bishop proposed thanks to Mr. Trewin for such a delightful and characteristic summary of Cruikshank's work. If the shadow of Lamb and Cruikshank could meet what talk would ensue!

Mr. H. W. Meyer thanked the Chairman for his comments augmenting points made by Mr. Trewin and his cheerful duty as Chairman.

The Elian Reading, a passage from the essay *On the Genius and Character of Hogarth* was given by Mr. E. G. Crowsley.

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THE CHARLES LAMB BUST FROM CHRIST CHURCH

On the 5th November 1935 Lord Plender unveiled a bust of Charles Lamb erected on the north wall of Christ Church, Greyfriars, to mark the centenary of Lamb's death the previous year. The bust was the work of Sir William Reynolds-Stephens, and had been commissioned by the Elian Society, the forerunner of the Charles Lamb Society. A short service in Christ Church followed the unveiling with an Address by Mr. H. L. O. Flecker, Headmaster of Christ's Hospital, Horsham.

In January 1941 during the bombing of London by the Germans Christ Church was reduced to a shell, but fortunately the Charles Lamb bust was undamaged, and it was despatched to Christ's Hospital for temporary safe custody. It has now been re-erected on

the wall of St. Sepulchre Church facing directly opposite the site of the open air gymnasium of Christ's Hospital, prior to the removal of the school to Horsham, and which was the site of the Giltspur Street Compter. Standing by the bust in its present position one can see the spire of Christ Church. On St. Matthew's Day the scholars from Christ's Hospital attend St. Sepulchre's Church to hear the special sermon for that day.

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EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

At an Extra-ordinary General Meeting of the Society held on Saturday 8th December, 1962 at the Mary Ward Centre, 9 Tavistock Place, W.C.1 at 2-45 p.m. Mr. T. Edward Carpenter, B.A., LL.B., J.P. was with acclaim elected a Vice President of the Society.

At the same meeting Mr. Sidney F. Rich, O.B.E., LL.B. was unanimously elected the Society's Solicitor, vice Mr. M. A. Jacobs, deceased.

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FUTURE MEETINGS—Monday, 14th

January, 1963—"Aspects of Jeremy Taylor" by Mr. Hugh Ross Williamson, F.R.S.L. *Chairman*: Mr. H. W. Meyer. The meeting will be held in Dr. Williams's Hall, 14 Gordon Square, W.C.1 at 6-30 p.m.

Saturday, 9th February, 1963—The Charles Lamb Birthday Celebration. Guest of Honour—Professor Douglas Grant, M.A., D.Phil. (See front page for special announcement.)

Monday, 11th March, 1963 — "Thomas Manning," by Aubrey Noakes. *Chairman*: E. C. Thomas.

Saturday, 6th April, 1963—We have pleasure in announcing that on this date Miss Joanna Richardson, M.A., F.R.S.L. will speak on "Two Elian Editors: John Taylor and J. A. Hessey."

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1963—The beginning of a New Year is generally the time to make new resolutions, and better still to keep them. Thus we hope members—other than those who use Banker's orders—have made the good resolution to pay their subscriptions to the Society promptly, for by so doing they are helping the Society and saving much time and work of our Hon. Treasurer—Miss Frieda A. Parsons, 32 Carmel Court, Kings Drive, Wembley Park, Middx.

Let us refresh your memories anent subscription rates:—

(a) For each member residing within a radius of 15 miles of London—12/6, but for each

additional member of the same family residing at the same address—5/-.

(b) For each Provincial member residing beyond a 15 mile radius of London, and for each Overseas member—7/6, but for each additional member of the same family residing at the same address only 3/6.

(c) Corporate Members, i.e. Libraries, wherever located—15/-.

In order to help cover bank clearance charges will American members paying by dollar cheque kindly add 30 cents to the amount of their subscription.

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DRAMATIC GROUP

31st January, 1963. (Thursday). The 17th Annual General Meeting will be held at Courtauld House, Byng Place, W.C.1 7-0 p.m. followed by Members' Papers on their Favourite Actors of the Charles Lamb era. All Members are invited to contribute papers (10 mins. each) first contacting Miss Philpot to avoid duplication.

Nominations for vacancies on the Committee to replace the two retiring members should be sent to Miss Philpot not later than Saturday, 19th Jan., 1963. It should be first ensured that the Nominees are prepared to stand.

Subscriptions: Group Members are reminded that subscriptions for 1963 are now due and should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, Miss Annetta Bazell, 9, Holland Park Mansions, Holland Park Gardens, W.14. Acting Members subscribe 3/6d., Associates 2/6d.

21st March, 1963. (Thursday). Would Members please note that Mrs. M. Fawdry of Pollock's Toy Museum and Toy Theatres will be addressing the Group on "Toy Theatres" (with working model) at Courtauld House, Byng Place, at 7-0 p.m.

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FROM THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

On page 194 of the Bulletin for November, 1962, mention is made of a book of poems, *Grass Widow*, by Constance Hale. This was published by the Citizen Publishing Co., Ltd., 20 Alexandra Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, at a price of two shillings. We understand that the first edition has been sold out, but another edition is at present being printed.