

THE C.L.S. BULLETIN

(Organ of THE CHARLES LAMB SOCIETY, founded 1935)

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Charles Lamb and the Old Bookstalls.

By AN OCTOGENARIAN *Bouquineur*.

The second-hand bookstalls, not to overlook the second-hand book shops, were to Lamb a perennial delight. Readers of the *Essays* and *Letters* cannot fail to notice his fond, almost loving, references to the bookstalls, in his day much more common than nowadays. They were "bright shadows of true rest" in his pre-superannuation days. There, "he drank of the brook in the way," and was glad. In this connection he was not alone, for Southey had a perfect mania for the bookstalls; he could not pass one, in spite of engagements. Leigh Hunt, too, was a keen bookstaller. He tells us, "nothing delights us more than to overhaul some dingy tome and read a chapter gratuitously."

Lamb, writing to Manning on November 28th, 1800, enumerates among the sights and pleasures of London, the old bookstalls, "Jeremy Taylors, Burtons on *Melancholy* and *Religio Medicis* on every stall." I often wonder what has become of these once common objects of the bookstalls. Only once have I noted a quarto copy of the '*Religio Medici*' on sale; never a sign of Jeremy Taylor nor of Burton. Has the "iniquity of oblivion blindly scattered her poppy" over them?

On January 30th, 1801, he tells Wordsworth that "the print shops, the old bookstalls, parsons cheapening books" are among the things which work themselves into his mind, without a power of satiating him. I envy Lamb's experiences of "parsons cheapening books." Only once have I come across an instance of this. I was in a shop, and taking down a book I noticed the price marked was 20/-. I remembered that in the catalogue 15/- was the price. "Ah," said the owner, "I have a parson who always knocks down the prices; and knowing he wants this book I have marked it 20/-. When he calls he will offer 17/6 and will go away congratulating himself. I, too, will be satisfied, as I shall gain 2/6!"

Writing to Robert Lloyd on February 7th, 1801, Lamb says, "Let them talk of lakes, mountains and romantic dales, all that fantastic stuff," and he proceeds to extol the sights of his beloved London, not failing to declare, "give me the old bookstalls of London." In his letter to Bernard Barton (25th March, 1829) we have a delightful account of his "finds" on the bookstalls in the Barbican, then a quarter of the City where bookstalls abounded, but in my City days a wilderness of ugly warehouses. Lamb relates: "I have brought home from stalls in the Barbican, the old '*Pilgrim's Progress*' with the prints—*Vanity Fair*, etc.—now scarce, four shillings, cheap. And also one which I have oft heard and had dreams of, but never saw in the flesh—that is in sheepskin—the whole theologic works of Thomas Aquinas. My arms ached lugging it a mile to the stage; but the burden was a pleasure such as old Anchises was to the shoulders of Æneas or the Lady to the Lover, in the old romance, who having to carry her to the top of a mountain (the price of obtaining her) clambered with her to the top, and fell dead with fatigue. Oh, the glorious old Schoolmen." I would like to hear of any member of the C.L.S. who has followed in Lamb's train. I can recall one winter's evening some fifteen years ago coming across the large folio edition of Hogarth's works, with notes by John Nichols. Having purchased it, the next thing was to get it home, a distance of half a mile. The vendor corded the massive volume (it measured $28 \times 20 \times 2\frac{1}{2}$), and I started off. Every hundred steps I changed hands; the volume seemed to increase in weight, and by the time I reached home, I was dead tired. I put the book behind a trunk, where it remained unobserved for several months, which enabled me to assert truthfully when discovery was made, that I purchased it months ago.

(To be concluded).

OBITUARY.

*gone before
"To that unknown and silent shore."*

SAMUEL EDWARD WINBOLT (1868-1944).

We deeply regret to record the death, on February 16th, of Mr. S. E. Winbolt, M.A., to whom the Society is indebted for three notable gifts. In 1940 he presented the Charles Lamb medal won by him in 1886 as the English Essay Prize at Christ's Hospital; also a monograph on James Boyer, of which only 25 copies were printed, and his own loyal study of the three famous old "Blues," Lamb, Coleridge and Leigh Hunt. As boy and master, Mr. Winbolt spent the greater part of his life at Christ's Hospital. On his retirement some 15 years ago he gave himself to the exploration of Roman sites, mainly in the S.E. of England. He was also the author of popular guides to the Thames, and the Cotswolds and to Kent.

REPORTS OF RECENT MEETINGS.

THE A.G.M. AND A LADIES' AFTERNOON.

The ninth Annual Meeting of the Society was held on January 15th. Mr. Farrow, as Chairman, congratulated Mr. Crowsley (Hon. Secretary) on his excellent report of the Society's activities, including the acquisition of 45 new members during 1943, and Mr. Lewis (Treasurer) had husbanded the finances with unremitting care. Mr. Crowsley had prepared a map of the British Isles, flagged to indicate the location of members, which threw into relief the districts with no membership. Attention was also drawn to the printed programme for 1944. The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts were formally approved.

Official business ended, the members present were favoured with three short papers to illustrate "Some favourite books of Charles Lamb," preceded by a Reading from "Grace Before Meat" by Miss A. M. Ferraro. The first was on "John Woolman's Journal" and was given by Miss F. Reeves, who had truly followed Elia's advice—"get the writings of John Woolman by heart"—with obvious benefit to her hearers. The next was from Miss D. G. G. Smith, a spirited criticism of "Frankenstein," that horrific tale by Mary Godwin, and delivered with a gusto worthy of Hazlitt; a summary in verse of her opinion of the merits and demerits of the book was most amusing. Miss Budd concluded the trio of papers with a sketch of "The Complete Angler" and its author, and with choicely phrased sentences which would have charmed Elia himself, conveyed the beauty and quiet atmosphere of the writings of that old worthy, "the very spirit of innocence, purity and simplicity of heart."

Messrs. Farrow, Lewis, Crowsley, Gilchrist and Smith took part in the subsequent discussion. A memorable afternoon, with a feast of wit, sentiment and literary excellence from lady members, whose talents had hitherto been unsuspected.

H.G.S.

THE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION.

This annual event, in its War-time guise as a "Tea," took place on the Saturday afternoon before February 10th, the Guest of Honour being Mr. James Agate, the well-known critic. Mr. Farrow presided over a numerous gathering, introducing the Society's guest in his usual happy manner. Mr. Agate's address was preceded by a reading from Lamb by Mr. E. F. Lewis. What Mr. Agate had to say in proposing "The Immortal Memory of Charles Lamb" was characteristically trenchant. He would have none of the "gentle" Elia; but not for Augustine Birrell's reasons, derived from a sympathetic appreciation of Lamb's essential strength of character. He developed the thesis that in Elia, the true Lamb was deliberately sublimated. The *real* Lamb was to be sought—and found—in such criticisms of him as that of Carlyle; his humour was "waspish," his punning, his drinking, his practical jokes, these revealed the far from "gentle" authentic Charles Lamb. The *Essays of Elia* only concealed him. Mr. Agate playfully warned the Society against making a hero of such a character, and concluded with a "threat" to found another and more realistic Charles Lamb Society himself. Mr. S. M. Rich moved the vote of thanks to Mr. Agate for his brilliant, if provocative, address, and the Hon. Gilbert Coleridge seconded. Sir Frank Brown, in voicing thanks to our Chairman, expressed the pleasure of all at the presence at that meeting of his grandsons, safely returned from America. This was seconded by Mr. A. F. Bishop and enthusiastically received.

Greetings from absent members were received from the following:—Mr. Edmund Blunden, Mr. J. Lewis May, Miss Joan Temple, Mrs. M. Oglethorpe, Mr. G. D. Robertson, Mr. D. Paterson, Miss P. A. Sheppard, Mr. W. Wicks, Mr. H. G. L. King, Miss I. Westcott (with a poem), Miss C. M. Scott, Mr. T. C. Hughes, Mrs. A. E. Martin, Mr. N. C. Shaw, Miss S. A. Coltar, Mr. J. W. Fildes, Miss D. G. Slater, Mr. W. A. Gibson Martin, Mrs. K. C. Asquith, Mrs. K. Northrop, Mrs. G. Thurley, Mr. H. C. Robinson, Rev. W. C. Mitchell, Miss A. H. Holland, Mrs. A. H. Kemp, Mr. J. P. Collins, Mr. F. A. Downing, Lt. S. F. Rich, R.N.V.R., Miss K. Wildman, Mr. C. Baddeley, Mr. D. W. Walters, Mr. L. Hayman. I.D.T.

LAMB'S SCHOOL.

On March 11th, to a large audience, Mr. G. A. T. Allan gave an illuminating address on Christ's Hospital. Mr. Farrow opened the proceedings by reading an extract relating to the Hospital from Mr. J. Lewis May's "Charles Lamb." Mr. Harold Edwards, as Chairman, introduced the speaker. Mr. Allan quoted the Toast—or as he preferred to call it—the Prayer: "The Religious, Royal and Ancient Foundation of Christ's Hospital: may those prosper who love it, and may God increase their number." This Prayer is solemnly repeated at all gatherings of Old Boys and official functions, and

it crystallises the history of the School and the affectionate feelings of its alumni. Mr. Allan took this as the keynote of his address, and as a son of the House and one who for fifty years had served its deepest interests, he felt qualified to enlighten the members of the Society with some account of its history and development.

The original buildings were inherited from the Grey Friars, through the instrumentality of Henry VIII, but it was not until 1552, following upon Bishop Ridley's famous sermon on Charity, that Edward VI took steps for the establishment of Christ's Hospital for the education of poor children. A precious manuscript of 1582, now after many vicissitudes in the possession of the Hospital, contains the story of the foundation.

The City of London as a corporate body, the City Companies, and individual Lord Mayors and Aldermen have been generous benefactors with money, houses, lands and equipment. From the earliest days the City took the Hospital to its heart, and that feeling still exists although the School now continues its glorious functions at Horsham. The Bluecoat boys have ever had the affections of City men, and the old railings in Newgate Street invariably attracted passers by to pause and look on the boys at their play.

Most of the first alumni were children taken in for shelter from the streets and from homes that were no homes, but they were not foundlings, because strict enquiries were made for the parents of those taken in. Yet the foundation was from the beginning an educational establishment, and this basis has persisted through the years. Mr. Allan gave fascinating extracts from Charters, Acts of Parliament and Minutes of Committees, and these glimpses of history in the making were enlivened with snatches of sympathetic and genial wit. He laid special stress on the work of Samuel Pepys as a Governor of the School, and particularly as the founder of the Royal Mathematical School for the benefit of boys destined for the Royal Navy and the Merchant Service.

The Great Fire of London of 1666 damaged the Hospital, and the children had to be carried away to Islington, Ware and Hertford for boarding out until the necessary repairs and new equipment had been provided.

The Girls' School was coeval with the Boys' School, having the same Governors and administration, and the same traditional spirit; and the number of girls proceeding to the Universities is as high in proportion as the boys.

In 1902 came the removal of the boys to Horsham after many years of discussion and objection and counter proposal, the new school buildings being formally opened in 1906 by the Prince of Wales.

The distinctive garb of the boys is no doubt a modified survival of the ordinary dress of the Tudor period, but the caps did not disappear until 1857. As regards the yellow linings of the coats, it was solemnly decreed in 1638 that the linings should be dyed yellow "to avoid vermin, by reason the white cottens is held to breed the same."

The greatest privilege of the scholars is the prescriptive right to present an address to the Sovereign on the occasion of the first State visit to the City after the Coronation, and this privilege has extended from Queen Elizabeth in 1559 to the Present King George VI and Queen Elizabeth in 1937. The Annual Orations on St. Matthew's Day became the archetype of the modern Speech Day; the Spital Sermon, too, is preached on the second Wednesday after Easter when the Lord Mayor entertains the schools at the Mansion House and distributes largesse.

On the literary side it was hardly necessary to mention Charles Lamb, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Leigh Hunt, or George Dyer, whilst in more modern times were Thomas Barnes, editor of the "Times," and our own Edmund Blunden.

With many a detail from old records, old wills and old minutes, Mr. Allan concluded with the remark that Christ's Hospital was a thing without parallel in the country and *sui generis*, and, as Bishop Middleton put it, the noblest institution in the world. From its foundation it has been actively employed in helping the poor, in spreading the best education, in encouraging the children to be useful citizens and to give good service to the community. May it continue to prosper with the blessing of Heaven and the approval of Man!

Mr. E. J. Finch proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Allan for his fine address, full of polished gems taken from tried and trusty documents. He himself remembered looking through the Newgate Street railings at thirteen years of age (in 1878). It was with the greatest pleasure that he had brought with him a portfolio of prints and portraits concerning Christ's Hospital and which he asked Mr. Allan to accept.

Mr. Farrow seconded with a reminiscence of the Society's visit to Horsham when the Hon. Gilbert Coleridge's plaque of Charles Lamb was unveiled a few years ago. A vote of thanks to the Chairman was proposed by Mr. F. V. Hallam.

H.G.S.

New Members. We heartily welcome the following additions to our ranks, and congratulate Mr. Crowsley on the success of his efforts:—

Mr. J. Agate, Flat 1, Queen Alexandra Mansions, Grape Street, W.C.2. Mr. I. L. Arnison, 84, Lincoln Road, Bush Hill Park, Enfield. Mr. H. F. Atkin, Bembridge, Brambletye Park Road, Redhill. Mr. W. Atkins, Rockness House, Nailsworth. Miss M. G. Barnes, Stroatley Rough, Haslemere. Mr. W. R. Batty, 11, Park Road, Southport. Mr. N. Bell, Sea Mist, Brixham. Mr. A. H. Buck, Coleridge B, Christ's Hospital, Horsham. Mr. J. T. A. Burke, 21, Brookfield, N.6. Mr. G. Chapman, 17, Scott Road, Bishop's Stortford. Mr. W. G. Check, 1, Combe Corner, Winchmore Hill, N.21. Mr. A. H. Cloud, 37, Thayers Farm Road, Beckenham. Rev. G. H. B. Coleridge, Cornwood Vicarage, Ivybridge. Mr. W. T. B. Collyer, 22, Weymouth Road, Blackheath, S.E.3. Miss C. L. R. Cooke, 7, Burghley Road, Leytonstone. Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Cooke, 20, Lymington Road, Hampstead, N.W.3. Mrs. W. F. Copeland, 118, Beddington Gardens, Carshalton. Miss P. A. Barton Cox, 49, Avonmore Road, W.14. S/L. A. W. Davison, 20, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C.2. Mr. C. Elsy, 212, Dudley Hill Road, Eccleshill, Bradford. Miss B. Fairweather, Faside, Newton Mearns. Mr. M. Buxton Forman, 46, Marlborough Hall, St. John's Wood, N.W.8. Miss W. M. Gadbury, 147, King

Henry's Road, N.W.3. Miss E. J. Hallam, 55, Adolphus Road, N.4. Mr. G. Rostrevor Hamilton, Swan House, Chiswick Mall, W.4. Mr. F. Hardy, 17, Queensberry House, Richmond. Mr. L. M. Harrod, Central Library, 68, Holloway Road, N.7. Mr. T. Herd, 37, Austen Road, Jordanhill, Glasgow, W.3. Mr. H. W. Howe, The School House, Keswick. Mr. D. Hudson, 37, Overstrand Mansions, Prince of Wales Drive, S.W.11. Mr. F. A. Hutchison, 37, Tavistock Square, W.C.1. Mrs. A. H. Kemp, Junabee Post Office, Junabee, Queensland. Mrs. G. Long (Marjorie Bowen), 46, Markham Square, S.W.3. Mrs. F. D. Macdonald, 187, Pinner Road, Harrow. Mrs. M. Marshall, 155, Upperby Road, Carlisle. Miss P. W. Massey, 6, Kemplay Road, N.W.3. Mr. H. J. Massingham, Reddings, Long Crendon, Aylesbury. Mr. W. Musther, 4, Spur Road, Orpington. Mrs. N. J. Pichon, 24, Boscastle Road, N.W.5. Rev. A. H. Sayers, Orchard Close, Monmouth. Mrs. E. Smith, 40, Windermere Road, Great Horton, Bradford. Mr. F. Swinnerton, Old Tokefield, Cranleigh. Mr. A. J. J. White, Earlham, Pentley Park, Welwyn Garden City. Mr. C. H. Wilkinson, Worcester College, Oxford. Mr. T. H. Willcox, 63, Burbage Road, Herne Hill, S.E.24. Miss E. Woodwell, 10, Basing Hill, Golders Green, N.W.11.

The Quarter's Meetings.

15th April. "Thomas Barnes, Editor of 'The Times.'" Derek Hudson. (Chairman: J. P. Collins.)
13th May. "E. V. Lucas as Essayist." H. G. Smith. (Chairman: Miss Margaret Brown.)
10th June. "Robert Southey." H. W. Howe, M.A. (Chairman: Dr. H. J. Norman.)

All meetings will be held at the Central Club (Y.W.C.A.), Gt. Russell Street, W.C.1, and will commence at 2-45 p.m. precisely.

Charles Lamb and the Quakers.

"We announce the death of an amiable, benevolent, and ingenious man, Mr. Charles Lamb, who died at Edmonton, after a few days' illness, on Saturday, December 27th last, in the 61st year of his life. We consider Mr. Lamb to have been a person possessed of the finest qualities both of hand and heart. It does not appear from his writings that he intermeddled much in the political or theological disputes of the times; but to the estimation in which he held our old dramatic writers and poets we must add the admiration which he always felt for the poetical works of Milton, Sydney, and other standard writers of the same class. Nor was he unacquainted with many of our best Puritan authors whom he respected for their earnestness, variety, and serenity, and above all for their sincerity; and, being himself of a quiet, peaceful disposition, he was fervent in the praise of George Fox and the other founders of the Society of Friends, called Quakers, although he never joined their society." (George Dyer in *The Christian Reformer*, 1835).

HENRY J. COWELL.

Gifts.

A number of gifts to the Society's collection of Eliana have been received, and will be separately acknowledge in our next issue.

CURRENT BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CHARLES LAMB.

FROM FEBRUARY 1st, 1935 (cont.)

- (a) **Books and Pamphlets.**
 Thomas Barnes / of / "The Times" / by Derek Hudson / with selections / from his critical essays / never before reprinted / edited by Harold Child / 3 lines quotations / Cambridge / at the University Press / 1943 //
 Pp. 196: 8 illustrations. Price 10/6. Chapter II: The Circle of Hunt and Lamb.
- (b) **Articles.**
 CHARLES LAMB, BRUCE DE PONTHEIU, AND PORCHER AND Co., by Samuel McKechnie (*Notes and Queries*: 29.1.1944).
 CHARLES LAMB, JOHN MATTHIE, AND TOMMY BYE, by Samuel McKechnie (*Notes and Queries*: 18.12.1943).
 THE CALM, CRAMPED AGE (*Yorkshire Post*: 6.1.1944).
- (c) **Reports of Lectures and Meetings.**
 Tea Party for Lamb: Mr. Agate Warns: Paid up (*Evening Standard*: 7.2.1944).
 Lamb Tea Party (*Yorkshire Evening Post*: 8.2.1944).
 Enfield and Charles Lamb: signed I.L.A. (*Enfield Gazette and Observer*: 11.2.1944).
- (d) **Illustrations.**
 THE HAYMARKET THEATRE IN 1821 (*Radio Times*: 11.2.1944).
- (e) **Short Notes.**
 LAMB AND DANTE (*Notes and Queries*: 18.12.1943).
- (f) **Letters to the Press.**
 Enfield and Charles Lamb, from F. Acres (*Enfield Gazette and Observer*: 18.2.1944, and 10.3.1944).
 Enfield and Charles Lamb, from "Contributor" (*Enfield Gazette and Observer*: 25.2.1944).
- (g) **The Tributary Muse.**
 SECONDHAND SHOP, by Katherine Buxbaum (College English, February, 1943: University of Chicago Press).
 *Sonnet to Elia.

The Editor will be grateful for items or news of items for inclusion in this Bibliography. The co-operation of overseas members is especially solicited. Cuttings should be addressed to Mr. S. M. Rich, 67, Cricklade Avenue, London, S.W.2.