

THE C.L.S. BULLETIN

(Organ of THE CHARLES LAMB SOCIETY, founded 1935)

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No. 74 (Twelfth Year)

NOVEMBER, 1946

REPORT ON INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE BRADFORD BRANCH OF THE CHARLES LAMB SOCIETY.

The first Branch of this Society was formed at Bradford on Saturday, 28th September, 1946. Mr. Wyndham T. Vint, M.A., presided and about twenty members and their friends were present. The meeting was held in the Library at Laycock's Rooms, Albion Court, Bradford. Mrs. Kathleen C. Asquith of 61, Oakleigh Road, Clayton, Bradford, who had been responsible for the preliminary arrangements, was unanimously elected Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of the Branch with a Committee comprising Miss D. Smith and Messrs. W. Asquith, C. Elsy, and Wyndham T. Vint. Miss N. Blackburn was subsequently co-opted a member of the Committee.

Among those present were Mr. E. G. Crowsley, Hon. General Secretary of the Society, and Mr. H. G. Smith, one of the Society's Corresponding Secretaries, and member of the Council, himself a Yorkshire man. Mr. Crowsley briefly outlined the aims of the Society and the purpose of that meeting, and emphasised that the success of any Branch depended not merely upon the endeavours of the Officers and Committee, but the wholehearted co-operation of all the members. He appealed to every member to influence their friends to support the Branch for it was by this means the most satisfactory results were achieved.

Mr. H. G. Smith contributed two short papers, the first comprising some verses entitled "The Only One—and Which?" being a variant on that perennial, ever-fascinating, ever-elusive problem, The Favourite Elia Essay. After staking claims for several the conclusion reached was that the only possible solution was—to keep the Lot! The second paper was "The Rubaiyat of Elia Khayyam," an Omar-esque portrayal of the main incidents in and the chief characteristics of the life of Charles Lamb and his selfless devotion to his sister Mary.

Greetings for the success of the Branch were received from the Lord Mayor of Bradford, the Director of Education, Messrs. Edmund Blunden, J. Lewis May, Walter Farrow, S. M. Rich, S. L. G. Huxstep, F. E. Sandry, G. D. Robertson, of Glasgow, Miss A. M. Ferraro, and a telegraphic message signed Charles Lamb, were read at the Meeting.

After tea a Committee Meeting was held at which Mr. Wyndham T. Vint was elected Chairman, and Mr. Elsy, Vice-Chairman. At this meeting it was agreed to hold monthly meetings alternately on Wednesday evenings and Saturday afternoon and that the Branch should be called the Bradford and District Branch.

Mrs. Asquith cordially invites members to send her the names and addresses of possible members living in the Bradford district. K.C.A.

Ernest Frederick Lewis Memorial. The response to the Chairman's appeal in our September issue, for contributions towards the purchase of a Bookcase to be dedicated to the memory of the late Ernest Frederick Lewis has been gratifying. Will those members who wish to subscribe, and who have not yet done so, please note that the Fund will close on 31st December, 1946. Contributions should be forwarded to Mr. S. L. G. Huxstep, Hon. Treasurer, 37, Tavistock Square, W.C.1.

Miss Mispah Gilbert Retires.

One of the Founders of the C.L.S., and our first Treasurer, Miss Mispah Gilbert, F.L.A., Borough Librarian of Brentford and Chiswick, retired recently after twenty-six years service in that office. She hopes to start on a world tour this month with a friend; and the BULLETIN, in offering best wishes for a long and happy retirement, ventures to hope that on her return to these shores she will find time to resume her early interest in the Society's affairs.

CHARLES LLOYD

A Request for Information.

MISS JOYCE L. KELLOGG, of 2097, Abington Road, Cleveland, Ohio, who is preparing a study on Charles Lloyd, would welcome information on any of the undermentioned items.

I. Books.

Any book by Lloyd *except* the following: *Nugae Canorae, Desultory Thoughts, Poems Second Edition*, with Lamb and Coleridge.
Sessions, Frederick, *Literary Celebrities of the Lake District*, London, 1905.
Leigh Hunt, *Literary Pocket book*, 1819-1822.
Mary Hays, *Emma Courtney* and *The Victim of Prejudice*.

II. Manuscripts.

"Manuscript Diaries and Original Poetry, including Tecumseh, An American Epic, 52 Spenserian Stanzas, etc., in a folio vol. of 262 pp.; a quarto album containing MS. plays and sonnets, including a poem on Wordsworth, etc., 222 pp.; MS. Diary of a Tour in France, etc., in 5 vol. 8vo." Sold in January 1929 to Spencer. In 1937 these were still in the possession of Mrs. Spencer, who denied me access to them.

5 MS. volumes in handwriting of Lloyd, containing, as well as verses and stories, and a tragedy, a story in French entitled "Isabelle" etc., one vol. being signed and dated 1825. Sold at the Anderson Galleries in 1920, second part of H. Buxton Forman Collection. Probably part of above, but data is different, so might be another set.

"Autograph Manuscript of *Isabel: A Tale*." This came up at auction this summer, 1946, Raphael King told Mr. Barry of Stonehill's, New Haven.

"Original manuscript poems in French and English, by Charles and Louisa Lloyd, 71 pp. 4to written about 1827." Sold by Stan. Henkels on Dec. 22, 1904.

"Copybook containing about 20 pages in the handwriting of Charles Lloyd, not dated." Sold by Anderson Galleries (Phelps Library), Dec. 6, 1912.

Collection of letters of Lamb and Lloyd to Southey, poems, etc. Sold at Anderson Galleries, Nov. 29-30, 1920. (Clawson Library).

Autograph letter from Lloyd to Talfourd, from Woodfield, 6 March 1822 concerning a quarrel with Wordsworth. Sold by Maggs several times. May be in the New York Public Library.

Gifts.

The Hon. Librarian gratefully acknowledges the following additions to the Society's collection of Eliana:—

From MR. G. BULLIMORE—Rosamund Gray; Recollections of Christ's Hospital and other Essays by Charles Lamb (1835).

From MR. E. G. CROWSLEY—The Years of Victory (1802-1812) by Arthur Bryant.

Commentaries and Questionnaires in English Literature:—

No. 17 Lamb's Letters by D. F. Dale (1927).

No. 57 Lamb's Prose and Poetry by P. W. French (1927).

No. 109 Essays of Elia and Last Essays of Elia by F. W. Robinson (1934).

From MR. E. B. HILL.—Copies of Correspondence which passed between Miss L. I. Guiney, and Bertram Dobell in connection with the latter's "Sidelights on Charles Lamb." Correspondence refers to certain emendations made by Miss Guiney.

From THE LONDON PASSENGER TRANSPORT BOARD.—Copies of "The Proud City" series of Posters including the one illustrating the Temple Church and Library and containing a quotation from Charles Lamb.

From DR. CATHERINE M. MACLEAN.—"The Making of a Poem—The Prelude." The typescript of a Broadcast Talk by Dr. Maclean on Wordsworth's Prelude.

"Hazlitt and the Challenge of our Time." The Typescript of the lecture by Dr. Catherine M. Maclean to the Society on 22nd June, 1946.

From the REV. A. J. TRELOAR, B.A.—"The Hills and Streams of Hertfordshire," by Rev. A. J. Treloar—contains poems on Charles Lamb and Hertfordshire.

Forthcoming Meetings.

Monday, November 11th, 1946: H. J. Cowell, F.R.S.L., on "Thomas Fuller and his Worthies."

Monday, December 16th, 1946: The Dramatic Group will present selected scenes from Lamb's Specimens including extracts from Heywood's "The Golden Age," Beaumont and Fletcher's "Philaster," Middleton's "The Witch," and the Duke of Newcastle's "The Triumphant Widow."

"The Wife's Trial" by Charles Lamb will form Part II of the performance.

Both the above meetings will be held at University Hall, 14, Gordon Square, W.C.1, at 7 p.m. precisely.

Charles Lamb Birthday Celebration, 1947.

It gives us much pleasure to announce that the Guest of Honour at next year's birthday Celebration will be Mr. R. H. Mottram, F.R.S.L., the well-known novelist and biographer. The Celebration will take place on Saturday, February 15th, 1947, and full details will be given in the January BULLETIN.

OBITUARY

"Deaths over-set me, and put me out long after the recent grief."

Capt. W. ALEC. EDWARD (1915-1944)

News has only recently reached us of a fatal war casualty to one of our members, who joined the C.L.S. as long ago as December, 1935. W. Alec Edward was born in 1915. In 1925 he went to Christ's Hospital, where he gained the Gold Medal for Classics, and won a Scholarship to Cambridge. He entered Clare College in 1934, where he won the Porson Prize and graduated with an Honours Degree in 1937. When war broke out he was Assistant Registrar at Wigan Training College. He joined up immediately, and before the end of September 1939 he was in training at Camberley Military College. He went to France in May, 1940, was wounded and returned in June in one of the last boats to leave Dunkirk. He went overseas again in 1943. He was wounded once more at Anzio, came through the Cassino fighting without hurt, but was killed just outside Florence in August, 1944. Thus was sacrificed one of the many young lives full of achievement and bright with promise, sacrificed that civilization might survive the most barbarous onslaught against it in human annals.

REPORTS OF RECENT MEETINGS

London - with - the - many - Sins .

At the September meeting, Mr. W. Kent gave a most interesting and informative address on "London in the News in Lamb's Time." Mr. J. H. McNulty was Chairman. The introductory reading from Lamb was given by Miss D. R. Collins, who read the celebrated eulogy of London in his letter to Wordsworth dated January 30th, 1810. Mr. Kent's numerous quotations from the newspapers and periodicals of Lamb's day dealt with a variety of crimes, misdemeanours and curious happenings—murders, hangings, the activities of resurrection men, the vagaries of decrepit watchmen, the rowdinesses of bucks, the miseries of London life, domestic and public, and the eccentricities of some of London's citizens. Interesting as these were, more interesting still were Mr. Kent's pithy comments upon them, delivered in the pungent way we expect from him and enjoy so much. Such a wealth of material provoked a discussion worthy of its wide range. Speakers included the Rev. W. L. Foyle, and Messrs. L. Raymond, G. W. Panzetta, F. H. Postans, E. G. Crowsley, A. Mahoney and S. M. Rich, and the points they raised included matters topographical, sociological, criminal, philosophical and moral. Altogether a stimulating evening; and more than one among the audience noticed that Mr. Kent only used part of his material. May we hope for the remainder on a future occasion?

S.M.R.

Music in the Elian Circle.

With a musician of the calibre of MR. LEVIEN in the Chair interest ran high for the audience which assembled at the Central Club on Saturday, October 12th, to hear DR. PERCY YOUNG, M.A., Mus.D., discourse on "Music in the Elian Circle," and particularly as the speaker was educated in the Lamb "A" House at Christ's Hospital.

Remarking that though Lamb was never solemn he was always serious, Dr. Young emphasised the importance of this in regard to Lamb and Music; his "Chapter on Ears" must not be looked upon as his only contribution to musical thought. Far from it, though it was difficult to get to grips with him on matters musical. Lamb was not an executant but he had a musical mind: he could think musically and this linked him with the Romantic Movement, a movement not confined to literature alone. A writer must be judged by what lies underneath the surface, and Lamb was indeed a many-sided man. Again musicians should always be judged by their approach to the humanities: Lamb fulfilled this test. The essay on "Witches and other Night Fears" presented a shadow-land of pre-existence—and here Lamb was a psychologist before the modern breed of that type arrived—and music performs a similar function. He was not tone-deaf as is often supposed, on the contrary he could not have written "A Chapter on Ears" had he not had an enormous experience of music; the essay is indeed a synthesis of separate ideas which had come into his mind at odd times, and these he developed in his inimitably waggish and tantalising way. Their origin probably came from friendly disputations with Vincent Novello, Leigh Hunt, Alsager and Ayrton, all musically minded men. One potent impulse came from his days at Christ's Hospital where music had been fostered from the 16th century and still is, and Lamb's early impressions would sink deep into his nature.

Thomas Ravenscroft and Thomas Brewer were the first musicians of Christ's and were renowned, the former for the authentic text of "Three Blind Mice" as well as a famous Psalter, whilst the latter wrote numerous tavern songs for most of the public-houses in London. Who writes tavern songs to-day? The essay on Christ's Hospital reveals Lamb's love of music, and the School undoubtedly gave him a rich musical background. Leigh Hunt was brought up in an atmosphere of home music and was familiar with the songs of James Hook, and Lamb would also hear them in his young days; incidentally this year is the bi-centenary of Hook's birth. Lamb also liked Thomas Arne's music, especially his song "Water parted from the Sea." On the other hand Lamb could not stand Italian opera; he preferred the domestic type of music, although as he related to Manning, he was fond of that realistic opera "Thais." He also enjoyed "The Beggars' Opera" and in a letter of Ayrton praised "Don Giovanni." Bear in mind that Ayrton was a genius of both music and literature, and a great figure in the English musical renaissance; he also maintained opera at the Haymarket Theatre when others would have deemed it as an impossible task. Then again the era in which Lamb lived was a time when actors and actresses could sing as well as act, and he mentions that Mrs. Burrell's voice haunted him even at his desk in the India House. His admiration for Fanny Kelly's acting qualities is well known, but not so familiar is the fact that her uncle Michael Kelly wrote excellent incidental music to "Blue Beard." Such music was the kind Lamb would hear when he went to the theatre. Other theatrical favourites he mentions in his writings were Bannister, Sayers, Dick Suett, Kean, Munden,

Mrs. Jordan and Mrs. Siddons, and all these had good musical voices in addition to dramatic fame. Lamb loved the old songs prevalent in the days of Ben Jonson and the street ballads. At Captain Jackson's there were songs in plenty and the two daughters sang: "their proficiency was a nightly theme—the masters he had given them—the no-expense which he had spared—they could not sing without the instrument!"

Lamb appeared at his best as a literary artist in a genial transmutation of a Jonsonian theme, for example, the New Year's Coming of Age, which shews such an artistic integration: "Shrove-tide, Lord Mayor's Day and April Fool joining in a glee, 'Which is the properest day to drink'." And then "old Mortification went floating home singing 'On the bat's back do I fly'." Lamb made no technical mistakes in this essay. Lamb's prowess as musical critic came out when he wrote about John Braham in his letters to Manning, quintessential praise yet acute, as when he says that the foundation of Braham's success was his sense not only of the music but sense with understanding, "his singing finer than Mrs. Siddons' or Mr. Kemble's acting—the brave little Jew." Braham was essentially an English singer, in his singing literature and music were woven together in the real English style. Lamb's criticism shews that he could think musically. The sound of bells, too, had a fascination for Lamb; their upward appeal was in the spirit of romanticism, echoing Handel's setting of Milton's L'allegro to give an impression of nature's upward influence. The rhythm of Lamb's prose is essentially musical, and New Year's Eve, A Quaker's Meeting and Old China are examples of contrasting rhythmic styles. Lamb's friend Vincent Novello was a musician with a fine Italian perception and keen imagination, and he was led by Lamb to take up musical research, going back to original sources, and Lamb's correspondence with him shews a detailed and uncommon musical knowledge. Lamb was a many-sided genius, and music was an essential part of his make-up; he was a superb musical critic and in essence a musician.

Dr. Young interspersed his address with a wealth of appropriate quotation together with piano-forte illustrations of music and songs with which Lamb was familiar, and which were a delight to the ear, including: A song and a Lesson by Hook; Michael Kelly's Grand March; a song Why Soldiers, Why; a glee Which is the properest day to drink; a passage from Mozart's Requiem; and an extract from Clementi.

The CHAIRMAN expressed his pleasure from having listened to such an erudite and delightful address, and recalled his own association with the Royal Philharmonic Society founded by Novello and Ayrton, whilst in addition the firm of Novello came into being for the express purpose of publishing great music in cheap form for the benefit of the common man. Mr. EDMUND BLUNDEN also emphasised the wonderful display of musical knowledge and insight into Lamb's acquaintance with music which had been given by Dr. Young. The high standard in music maintained at Christ's Hospital undoubtedly had a great influence with Lamb. A vote of thanks to the speaker was proposed by Mr. FARROW, the address having been an intellectual feast and a stimulus for the Society's members. Mr. THOMAS followed with a vote of thanks to the Chairman. The customary reading was given by Mrs. CONOLEY who had chosen "Dick Strype," those lightsome verses written by Lamb in 1803 and first published in *The Morning Chronicle*.

H.G.S.

New Members.

Mr. W. Asquith, 61, Oakleigh Road, Clayton, Manchester; Miss W. Baldwin, *c/o* Dr. Bradshaw, 12, Wycombe Gardens, Golders Green, N.W.11; Mr. H. J. Bishop, 163, Fosse Road South, Leicester; Mrs. Nora Blackburn, 104, Bradford Road, Wakefield; Miss N. Blackburn, 104, Bradford Road, Wakefield; Rev. J. W. Burnside, 19, Carriagehill Drive, Paisley; Mr. J. R. Divers, 1, Colebrooke Place, Glasgow, W.2; Miss J. L. Glazebrook, National Institute for the Blind, 224, Gt. Portland Street, W.1; Mr. P. H. Glover, 64, Mandale Road, Cooper Lane, Bradford; Miss V. K. Harley, Alexandria Villa, Scott Street, Hamilton, Scotland; Miss E. L. Hart, 12, Oak Lane, Manningham, Bradford; Mr. J. C. Leith, 18, Buchanan Drive, Bearsden, Glasgow; Mr. E. A. Manchester, 120, Nithsdale Road, Pollokshields, Glasgow, S.1; Mr. W. Maxwell, 498, Maryhill Road, Glasgow, N.W.; Mr. L. G. Pine, 20, Arundel Mansions, Kelvedon Road, S.W.6; Mr. J. H. Preston, Keats House, Keats Grove, Hampstead, N.W.3; Mr. A. Robertson, School House, Langholm, Dumfriesshire; Miss D. J. Smith, 40, Windermere Road, Gt. Horton, Bradford; Mr. C. A. MacIntosh Thyne, 26, Borland Road, Bearsden, Dumbartonshire; Mrs. Tyman, 16, Eastwood Road, Goodmayes, Essex; Mr. Wyndham T. Vint, M.A., Commercial Bank Buildings, Bradford; Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Webster, Riversdale, Kilmacolm, N.B.

C.L.S. Dramatic Group.

The General Meeting on September 9th was well attended. The Committee's Report, presented by Mr. F. V. Hallam (Chairman) was adopted. Miss M. Henderson, Hon. Treasurer gave a very encouraging report on the Group's finances. The following Officers were elected unanimously: Mr. C. J. Mahoney, Hon. Auditor; Miss D. R. Collins, Hon. Secretary, in place of Mr. A. J. Ford who had to resign owing to pressure of work. The Group numbers forty-three, and it is hoped that all will take part in forthcoming programmes, which will include informal Dramatic Readings, rather than public shows. See "Forthcoming Meetings" for the Group's next presentation.

Current Bibliography of Charles Lamb from February 1st, 1935 (contd.)

(b) Articles.

A REVISED CHAPTER ON EARS, by Dr. Percy M. Young, M.A. (*Music and Letters*: October, 1946.)

(h) Short Notes.

CHARLES LAMB SOCIETY FORMED IN BRADFORD. (*Yorkshire Observer*: 30.9.1946.)

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.