

The Hop Leaf Gazette.

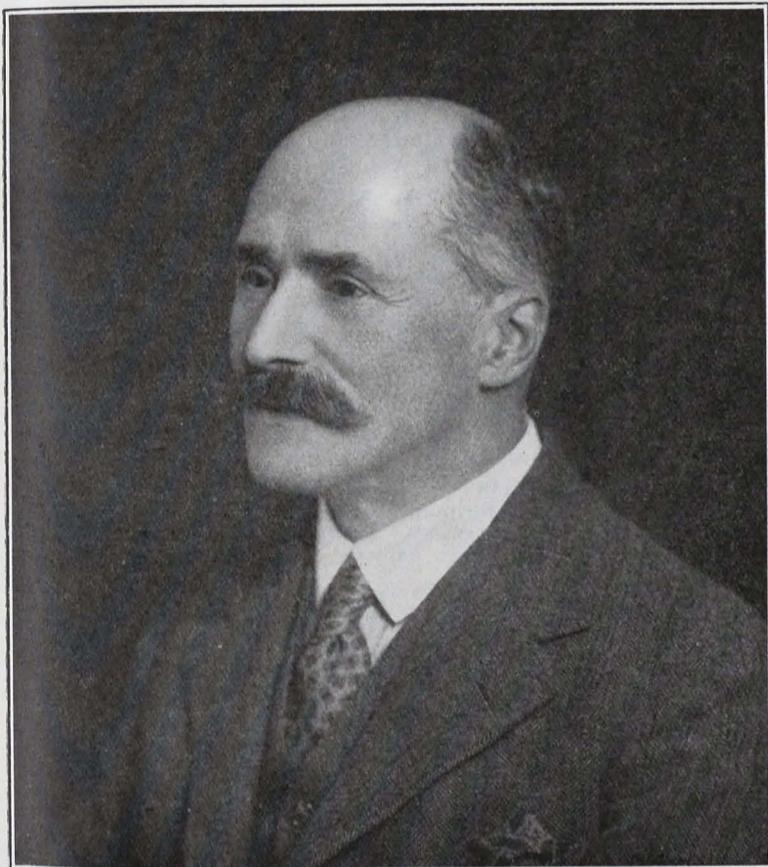
*The Monthly Journal of
H. & G. SIMONDS, Ltd.*

Edited by CHARLES H. PERRIN.

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1928.



MR. C. E. GOUGH.

EDITORIAL.

MR. C. E. GOUGH.

On our frontispiece we publish a portrait of Mr. C. E. Gough, Manager of the Branch Department.

Mr. Gough was born on the 20th April, 1867, and joined the Firm at Oxford Branch in September, 1881. Subsequently, in 1889, he was transferred to the Branch Department at Reading, and after holding the appointment of Chief Clerk until 1907, he succeeded the late Mr. J. W. Lindars as Manager. This office is one of the premier positions on our Firm and includes the control of all Home and Foreign Branches as well as the Military, Export and Advertising Departments.

The concentration of these various departments under one head will reveal to readers the extraordinary amount of diverse and technical knowledge required. In his policy and grasp of detail, Mr. Gough exhibits a wonderful faculty for handling all branches of the Firm's business, which can only be acquired by actual experience over many years.

In past years, Mr. Gough played a fine game of cricket and was a great asset in the Brewery C.C., being exceptionally keen behind the wicket. He also played some very fine strokes and rarely missed a catch in the field. At tennis, Mr. Gough was a strenuous opponent and he would always make an attempt to return balls which the average player would decide were hopeless. He only abandoned this form of sport a few years since, when he realised that his enthusiasm exceeded his physical ability. Fishing was also a favourite pastime of Mr. Gough's and some day he hopes to again take up that form of recreation. At present, to quote his own words, his "sole hobby is work—no man can serve two masters."

He is an eloquent speaker and his talent in this direction is evinced at the annual meeting of Branch Managers, when his remarks usually are forceful and to the point.

MR. H. G. WILLIAMS' PROMOTION.

We are all very pleased to see that Mr. H. G. Williams, M.P., has been appointed Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade. It is not only an honour to Mr. Williams, but an honour to the town of Reading. It cannot be too clearly emphasized that though, as a candidate, he is run by one party, as Member for the Borough

he represents all sections of the community. He is, in short, Our Member. He is following in the footsteps of some very illustrious men, but all will agree that Reading has never been more ably represented. He has been aptly described as a "walking Blue-Book." Certain it is that no man has a greater grasp of the details of the trade and economic questions of the day and equally certain is it that this recognition of his outstanding abilities is only one step forward in what will undoubtedly prove a very distinguished career. Mr. Williams is winning his way to the front in politics by sheer force of character and hard work, and he richly deserves the high compliment that has been paid him by the Government of the day.]

A CHORUS OF PRAISE.

Mr. Williams' appointment has been received with a chorus of praise from the Press. *The Times* says:—"The Prime Minister has evidently remembered with gratitude the support which Mr. Williams gave to the Minister of Labour when the Unemployment Insurance Act was under discussion. While many members of the Conservative Party were indifferent and some were actively hostile, Mr. Williams came to the rescue, time after time, and showed a detailed knowledge of a complicated subject which was surprising in one who had not been at work in the department concerned." *The Observer* says: "The Government is strengthened by the accession in subordinate officers of Mr. Duff Cooper and Mr. H. G. Williams, both of whom have won their spurs in debate by the most solid kind of ability."

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS TREAT.

There have been many happy gatherings at H. & G. Simonds' Social Club, but none more so than that which took place on Saturday, January 7th, when the members' children participated in their annual treat. With Christmas trees, the room gaily bedecked with flags, bunting and Chinese lanterns, and the children wearing fancy paper caps, the scene was indeed a festive one. Some kind friend brought down a bumper box of choice sweets and the children were also each given a gift from the Christmas trees, tea and cakes, oranges and bananas. In addition, there was an excellent entertainment. All this must have entailed a vast amount of work on the Hon. Secretary and his helpers. We congratulate them, and all who assisted, on the tremendous success of their efforts. The merry laughter with which the room resounded and the very happy faces of the children must have amply repaid all who laboured so unselfishly on behalf of their little guests.

A TRUE FISHING STORY.

Under the auspices of the Reading Fishing Club, twenty-eight anglers participated in a competition from the Promenade, Caversham, on Saturday, January 21st, and not a single competitor caught a fish. One of the anglers did not like the pitch allotted to him and, withdrawing from the contest, chose a "swim" more to his fancy. No sooner had the referee sounded "cease fishing" than this particular fisherman had a bite and landed a roach weighing 2 lbs. 9 ozs. J. Norris is the name of the gentleman who landed this fine fish.

THOSE D—— DOTS.

There is some correspondence in the Press as to whether public school boys are more casual than their predecessors. The other day a parent was telling his son an anecdote of Burke and Goldsmith, and mentioned that he had found it in Boswell or Johnson.

"But," said the bright youth, "Boswell did not live at the same time as Johnson, did he?"

"Boys differ," commented a headmaster. "Some of them take no interest in literature, but are absorbed in science, and very good at it. I have known a boy who confused Ben Jonson and Dr. Johnson but who had a fair grasp of the Einstein theory of relativity. Possibly boys do not, on the whole, differ very much from generation to generation."

Don't forget the famous story of Lord Randolph Churchill, who had had a classical, not a modern, education and at the Treasury made his celebrated reference to decimals on a tabulated document. "I never know what those damned dots mean."

PUBLIC PRAISE FOR THE HOP LEAF GAZETTE.

At the annual dinner of Licensed Victuallers, held at Caversham Bridge Hotel recently, the Mayor of Reading (Alderman J. Rabson) paid a very warm tribute to THE HOP LEAF GAZETTE. He said he found its pages most informative and considered the GAZETTE a production of high literary merit. Thank you Mr. Mayor!

MR. ERIC'S PIGEON.

In last month's issue of THE HOP LEAF GAZETTE it was mentioned that Mr. Eric Simonds shot a pigeon and in its crop were 28 acorns. As a result, that pigeon has become quite famous and has been mentioned in many papers throughout the country. To be so widely quoted, proves the importance of our great little journal.

THE BREWERY KINGFISHERS.

Almost every day a pair of kingfishers may be seen near the water which runs by the Brewery yard. These brilliantly coloured birds, flashes of amber and azure blue, have frequented the precincts of the Brewery for years. It has often been said that as these birds hover over the water their beautiful colours attract the fish. But we very much doubt this as the gorgeous colours of the birds are all on the upper parts, the lower parts being of a much more sombre hue. Be that as it may, however, the birds are adept anglers and may be frequently seen diving into the water and returning to their perch with a small member of the finny tribe.

"THE BOOK OF THE INN."

Last month we made brief reference to this interesting book and we make no apology for again alluding to it. In his preface the Editor (Thomas Burke) truly says: "The Christian Church began in the stable of an inn, and to this day the inn figures in our minds as the material counterpart of the church. It succours and fortifies the mortal, in time of need, as the Church succours and fortifies the immortal. It is the stage of a pilgrimage. We find there refuge and solace, sleep for weariness, meat and wine for hunger, chance company and the brotherhood of men. In almost every old village of England the church spire or tower denotes the position of the inn. For centuries they have stood together, complementing each other in a beautiful wedding of spirit and sense; and, despite the conspiracies of certain evil-disposed persons to sever them, they still stand. Should we abolish the inn, we might as well prepare to abolish the church, for when men have forgotten how to rejoice they will have forgotten how to pray."

AT THE HEART OF LIFE.

No institution of English life has gathered about it so lustrous an accumulation of story. Being at the heart of life, our inns are for ever young; and they carry their dower of story and association with the centuries as lightly as the youth of the past carried his staff of forest oak from their yards, or the youth of to-day carried his golf-clubs. Throughout literature and history they recur, and their very names and signs are the poetry of travel. They have lived in the stream of daily life these six centuries, among the simple and among the great. They have known common festival and portentous assembly. Whatever in the state fell or shifted, they remained; being in turn resting places, council chambers, courts and moot-halls. Departed Kings have surrendered within their walls; Princes have lain in hiding or have faced their assailants; commissioners have fought great causes across their tables. At all times, since their beginning, they have been the

centre of the life of their times, and in their rooms our fathers before us have sat and talked, or tarried a little between great enterprises; have feasted, despaired, been happy. The very word "inn" lights up the mind as its actual windows light up a dark and rainy road.

FULL OF GOOD THINGS.

"The Book of the Inn" is full of good things. Here is a selection from Dickens:—

"I say," remonstrated Bob Sawyer, looking in at the coach window, as they pulled up before the door of the Saracen's Head, Towcester, "this won't do, you know."

"Bless me," said Mr. Pickwick, just awaking from a nap, "I'm afraid you're wet."

"Oh, you are, are you?" returned Bob. "Yes, I am a little that way. Uncomfortably damp perhaps."

Bob did look dampish, inasmuch as the rain was streaming from his neck, elbows, cuffs, skirts and knees; and his whole apparel shone so with the wet that it might have been mistaken for a full suit of prepared oilskin. "I *am* rather wet," said Bob, giving himself a shake, and casting a little hydraulic shower around, like a Newfoundland dog just emerged from the water.

"I think it's quite impossible to go on to-night," interposed Ben.

"Out of the question, sir," remarked Sam Weller, coming to assist in the conference; "it's cruelty to animals, sir, to ask 'em to do it. There's beds here, sir" said Sam addressing his master, "everything clean and comfortable. Wery good little dinner, sir, they can get ready in half-an-hour—pair of fowls, sir, and a weal cutlet; French beans, 'taters, tart and tidiness. You'd better stop vere you are, sir, if I might recommend. Take advice, sir, as the doctor said."

"Very well," said Mr. Pickwick, "then we will stop here."

"Lights in the Sun, John; make up the fire; the gentlemen are wet!" cried the landlord. "This way, gentlemen, don't trouble yourselves about the post-boy now, sir. I'll send him to you when you ring for him, sir. Now John, the candles."

The candles were brought, the fire was stirred up, and a fresh log of wood was thrown on. In ten minutes time a waiter was laying the cloth for dinner, the curtains were drawn, the fire was blazing brightly, and everything looked (as everything always does, in all decent English inns) as if the travellers had been expected, and their comforts prepared, for days beforehand.

BE CHEERFUL.

Be cheerful. Look cheerful. Try and feel cheerful. Cannot this be our good resolution for 1928? It is no good to go about with a doleful face, this never helped matters yet. Even if you are worried and troubled, remember that other people are worried and troubled too, even if they do not show it, so don't impose your worries and cares on them.

What a jolly world this would be if everyone tried to be cheerful.

Greet those with whom you come in contact with a cheerfully spoken word. You will be surprised how it helps the day along.

Keep a cheerful spirit.

OBITUARY.

The sympathy of all readers will go out to the widow and family of the late Mr. J. D. Hammond, who passed away on the 9th January, after completing 49 years service with the Firm. Mr. Hammond commenced his employment at our Brighton Branch and after serving there for about three years, he was transferred to Farnborough and held the position of Chief Clerk there at the time of his death. Although Mr. Hammond had been ailing for the past eighteen months, his death came as a shock to everyone who did not know he was so ill.

We would also offer the deepest sympathy to Mr. F. L. Maskell, of Portsmouth Branch, who recently lost his father. We understand that his mother is also seriously ill and we hope she may have a speedy return to health.

THE HUMAN TOUCH.

An escaped convict who sacrificed his liberty rather than allow his companion to be taken back to Parkhurst alone, came before the Isle of Wight Court recently.

He was Walter Raynor, aged 24, a bootmaker of Leicester, and in the dock with him was Albert Williams, aged 27, of Hammer-smith. They were sent for trial on charges of committing three burglaries after their dash for freedom.

Both had been serving sentences of three years' penal servitude.

A policeman said that after the men had been at large for nearly three days he met them at Northwood. Williams said that they were fishermen from Yarmouth, but when the constable said

that he would take them to the police station Williams turned to Raynor and said: "He has got me. You beat it. He cannot take us both."

To this Raynor replied: "If you are not coming, I will give in."

Both of them ought to have a better job than gaol.

THE LATE MR. J. E. BEASLEY.

We sympathise with Mr. Beasley, of the Cask Office, in the death of his father. As the *Berkshire Chronicle* says:—

The late Mr. J. E. Beasley was one who rendered good suit and service to the community in many ways. Not the least useful was the indefatigable work he put in on behalf of the Reading Athletic Club, and it was during his secretaryship that it achieved its greatest prestige. Mr. Beasley's chief desire, however, was that the club should be of value in training the youth of Reading and district, helping them to develop their limbs and to become strong and healthy. The R.A.C. has certainly rendered very valuable service in that direction. Then, after Mr. Beasley's retirement from the postal service he was not idle. He had a considerable share in building up the Reading Horticultural and Horse Show Society, whose exhibitions in Mr. Oliver Dixon's field have won ever-increasing popularity, and are now firmly established. Then he was returned for the Reading Town Council, and though he lost his seat later on political grounds, he was not deterred from again offering his services to the public, and he became a member of the Board of Guardians. Such keenness to serve the community should be recognised, and Mr. Beasley's death will be much regretted.

ALWAYS THE SAME ANSWER.

Ask any of your friends to put down any shillings and pence, the pence to be less than the shillings, as for example:—

s.	d.	
11	9	reverse figures and subtract.
9	11	

1 reverse figures again and add.

10	1

11	11

The answer is always 11/11.

BERKSHIRE OPERATIC CLUB.

The Berkshire Operatic Club is this year giving, in aid of the Royal Berkshire Hospital, the delightful musical comedy "Miss Hook of Holland," and it is interesting to note that several members of the Brewery Staff are taking part, including Mr. E. H. Kelly, Mr. G. Weaitt and Miss M. Hayter.

The Club has already subscribed over £1,125 to Reading charities. Mr. F. A. Simonds is one of the Club's Vice-Presidents.

SUCCESSFUL SPILL CLUB.

We are again able to congratulate the "Bedford Arms" Spill Club on another splendid collection this year, the proceeds of which benefited The Queen Victoria Nursing Home. May we extend our best wishes to the veteran Chairman (Mr. G. Pocock) on attaining his seventieth birthday; may he see many more in which to continue the good work. Also a great deal of work was done by Messrs. Fortnum, Wickins and Host Spong, who were responsible for taking the collection.

THE LIGHTER SIDE.

DOCTOR: Your temperature seems to have taken a drop.

PATIENT: Can't you fix it so I can do the same doctor?

* * * *

EXCRUCIATING!

What's a man-of-war?

A cruiser.

What makes it go?

It's screw, sir.

Who goes with it?

It's crew, sir.—*Fishing Gazette*.

* * * *

Well, what is wrong with your husband?

I think doctor, he is worrying about money.

Ah, I think I can relieve him of that.—*Passing Show*.

* * * *

What is the definition of "Nothing"?

A bung-hole without a barrel.

THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE HOSPITAL CONTRIBUTORY SCHEME.

ANNUAL MEETING OF BREWERY BRANCH.

The Annual Meeting of the Brewery Branch of The Royal Berkshire Hospital Contributory Scheme was held at the Brewery on January 14th. The meeting, presided over by Mr. S. Bird, was exceptionally well attended, every Department of the Firm being represented.

Mr. E. Bailey (Hon. Secretary), in his annual report, said that the Branch started in November, 1923, and the total sum raised to date was £1,393 11s. 3d., a most gratifying result (applause). In 1927, the contributions amounted to £317 2s. 6d., a decrease on the previous year of £38 18s. 8d. This decrease, Mr. Bailey pointed out, was due to the reduction in the weekly contribution from 4d. to 3d. The number of contributors amounted to 559, an increase of 11. The number of patients from the Brewery Branch treated at the Hospital was no fewer than 114 (27 In-patients and 87 Out-patients), an increase of 17. Mr. Bailey went on to speak of the splendid scheme for helping the various large Hospitals of the country, organised by the Stock Exchange Dramatic and Operatic Society. This Society, by the sale of a splendid magazine at 2s. 6d. per copy, distributed no less than £42,657 amongst the Hospitals in 1926, and it is hoped that even that figure was beaten in 1927. The purchaser of a magazine also had a chance of getting one of the splendid and novel gifts, valued at £15,000, which were given by generous donors. He (Mr. Bailey) was pleased to say that he sold nearly 100 copies of the magazine to friends at The Brewery. The Society had allotted the sum of £343 to The Royal Berkshire Hospital this year (applause).

The Pin Prick cards, in aid of the new Orthopædic Hospital, had realised the sum of £10 3s. 11d., made up from the following amounts: Cellars, £3 19s. 11d.; Maltings, £1 15s. 6d.; Brewery, £1 14s. 3d.; Wine and Spirit Dept., 11s. 5d.; Offices, £1 6s. 4d.; Scalds, 5s.; and per himself, 11s. 6d. He thanked them all for their kind support during the past year, the collectors for the prompt manner in which they paid in the weekly contributions, and Mr. A. G. Rider for kindly auditing the accounts (applause).

The election of three Governors by ballot, to represent the members at the Annual Court held at the Hospital, was then proceeded with. There were six candidates. The three successful ones were Mr. S. Bird (Maltings), Mr. F. G. Millard (Delivery Dept.) and Mr. J. Penn (Beer Cellars), in the order named.

Mr. S. Bird said that the next business on the agenda was to elect their Secretary for the coming year. He paid a warm tribute

to Mr. Bailey for his past services and said that nothing was too much trouble for him to do on behalf of the Hospital. They all realised that he was the right gentleman for the post, and the members would be grateful if he would consent to again act as their Secretary (loud applause).

Mr. E. Bailey thanked Mr. Bird for the kind references to himself, and the members for their renewed confidence. The many friends at The Brewery helped him considerably and made his duties comparatively light. He added that he would be glad to take the names of any at The Brewery who were not yet in the Scheme.

Mr. Bailey has again prepared a Departmental Summary which will make interesting reading for the members of The Brewery Branch.

Department.	Amount Contributed.			Number of Members.	Cases treated.
	£	s.	d.		
Bottled Beer Stores ...	12	11	9	37	4
Beer Cellars ...	47	1	3	84	24
Brewery ...	24	2	11	39	7
Building ...	27	17	2	45	12
Canvas Store ...	6	7	4	15	5
Cooperage ...	10	4	11	19	1
Engineers ...	21	19	10	39	5
Loading Stage and Horse Transport	26	18	0	32	13
Maltings ...	13	7	7	22	4
Mechanical Transport ...	33	1	7	52	16
Scalds ...	29	3	11	47	10
Stables ...	11	8	1	18	1
Wheelwrights ...	8	9	1	14	—
Wine Stores ...	9	16	0	20	5
Offices ...	34	13	1	76	7
	£317	2	6	559	114

This Summary shows the material benefit that the Hospital Contributory Scheme is to the members, for no fewer than 114 cases were treated from this Branch alone. The cost of keeping up such a great Hospital as the Royal Berkshire is immense and the Scheme helps in no small degree the efforts of the Governors of the Hospital to keep it on a sound financial basis. Those who have been patients at the Hospital speak in glowing terms of the kind and sympathetic treatment they have received. It is a great and noble work that Hospital Doctors and Nurses perform. Their lives, spent in an atmosphere of pain and suffering, surely come under the category of self last. With indomitable courage they daily go on with their wonderful work, often very tired, and always with that cheerfulness and sympathy which is characteristic of their great profession. The least that we can do to show our appreciation of their heroic efforts on behalf of suffering humanity is to help in every way to raise funds for the great local institution, The Royal Berkshire Hospital.

F.K.

LICENSED TRADES PROTECTION AND BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION.

ANNUAL DINNER OF READING AND DISTRICT ASSOCIATION.

VERY SUCCESSFUL GATHERING.

The sixth annual dinner of the Reading and District Licensed Trades Protection and Benevolent Association was held at Caversham Bridge Hotel, Reading, on Thursday, January 12th, and proved one of the most successful functions the Society has yet held. The Vice-President (Mr. A. Froome) was in the chair, and the large company included the Mayor (Alderman J. Rabson), the Borough Member (Mr. H. G. Williams), Mr. F. W. Bargery (president), Mr. G. W. Smith (secretary), Mr. A. S. Cooper (treasurer), Mr. F. A. Simonds, Mr. J. Healey and Mr. P. T. Crisp (past presidents), Councillor L. E. Quelch, Mr. H. G. Hawkins, Capt. Blandy (acting solicitor), Mr. H. Rutter (chairman of the Windsor and Eton Licensed Trades Association), Mr. A. W. A. Webb (late secretary), Mr. E. T. Norman (representing National Trades Defence Association), Mr. A. Wheeler, Mrs. P. Moss, Mrs. H. Smart and Mrs. W. Morgan (hon. secretary, chairman and hon. treasurer women's auxiliary) and others.

During the evening the president's jewel was presented to Mr. F. Bargery by Mr. J. Healey.

A FLOURISHING SOCIETY.

The loyal toast having been honoured, "The Reading and District Licensed Victuallers' Protection and Benevolent Association" was proposed by Mr. W. H. Rutter, who, referring to the principal guests present, mentioned that Mr. F. A. Simonds would soon be taking over the office of High Sheriff for the county. He was sure Mr. Simonds would fulfil his duties with credit to himself and the county generally, and he hoped the only hanging he would have to attend would be the hanging of memorials to the defeat of those busybodies who were using their money and activities in opposition to one of the greatest needs of the people in the country. He was perfectly certain it would be better if those persons used their riches to help those unfortunate people who were at present suffering from an excess of water than in following the phantom of trying to find out about the extremists that indulged in alcohol. He spoke of the various resolutions passed at the National Convention, particularly mentioning that passed in regard to the request for a reduction in licensing duties, the need for which was greater to-day than ever before if only for the reason that many assessments had been increased, and under the new Rating and Valuation Act were

likely to be still further increased. It was no concession on the part of the powers that be to grant that reduction because the precedent had already been accepted by the Government. He thought it full time they got what they asked for, and he thought they were entitled to the concession being made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his next Budget. Mr. Rutter said he understood the society was flourishing both financially and numerically, not only on the men's side but also in the women's auxiliary.

Mr. G. Smith, in responding, said he hoped those who had been apathetic would do their utmost to attend the annual meeting of the society and try to put more vim into the work. He thought it time they infused new blood into the society. It was only by continuity of effort they had any chance of defeating their opponents who were devoting millions to their fight against the trade.

A FOOL'S PARADISE.

The toast of "Kindred Societies" was proposed by Mr. F. A. Simonds, who said there was a great necessity for unity in the ranks of the trade and for consolidating their organisations. Many licensed victuallers were living in a fool's paradise because, thinking there was a cessation of hostilities in their opponents' camp, they thought the Pussyfoot and Prohibition dangers were over; but they little knew the funds that were flowing into the opponents' coens and that were being accumulated ready for an attack on the trade when they thought they could most damage it. He appealed to all members of the trade to unite and to get as many members as possible in readiness for the time when they were called upon to face a prohibition or local option attack which, when it came, would sure to be a vicious and venomous one.

Mr. E. T. Norman, who replied to the toast, reviewed the work of the National Trade Defence Association, one of the principal objects of which was to watch over at all times the interests of the trade, both in and out of Parliament. The time had come when the Government had got to do something for the trade. "D.O.R.A." should have been repealed a long time ago; they were given to understand that as soon as the war was over the Act would be repealed, but they still had to suffer under its restrictions.

Mr. A. Wheeler proposed the toast of "The Visitors," and the Mayor responded.

TRAVELLERS OR HUMBUGS.

The Borough Member also responded, and replied to the criticism passed upon the Government. Fortunately, he said, he was not responsible for formulating the policy of the Government, but he was acquainted with the threefold programme put

forward by the Association Mr. Norman represented. There were, frankly, difficulties about two parts of it, but something should certainly be done with regard to the stabilisation of hours. It was an absurdity that on one side of Oxford Street houses should be open until ten o'clock and on the other side until eleven—that was sheer unadulterated stupidity. With regard to the bona fide traveller, it had been said there were bona fide travellers and bona fide humbugs. That raised a very difficult problem. Anyone would say that a legitimate traveller should be able to obtain refreshments, but he did not see how they were going to do it without re-introducing the old problem that existed before the war. The members of the trade should work out a satisfactory scheme and submit it to Parliament. He thought it was up to them to supply the technical information. He was not an expert on the subject of licensing duty, but it was obvious that the less they paid the better they would be pleased. (Laughter.) He wondered whether their present system of the duty being based on the annual value was best, or whether it would be better if they considered the system prevailing in the clubs. It always seemed to him that to tax two houses at the same rate, although one might do more trade than the other, was unfair. Of course, there might be a complete answer to his theory, and it was up to the trade to supply the most detailed information to Parliament. Members of Parliament were not technical experts and could only give decisions after hearing the opinions of experts, and as far as the Licensed Trade proposals were concerned, they had received no detailed information. The licensing duties, he said, might continue, but he could tell them that as a result of the recent report on "D.O.R.A.," licensed victuallers would be able to sell Woodbines an hour and a half longer.

Mr. Rutter said an anomaly would be created if the houses were rated on the same basis as the club *viz.*, on the amount they took. Different prices obtained in tied and free houses and the tied tenants would be called upon to pay a large duty. He added that several deputations had waited upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer and supplied him with detailed information regarding the matters referred to by Mr. Williams.

Other toasts included "The Ladies and Members of the Reading Women's Licensed Trade Defence Association," proposed by Mr. H. G. Hawkins and acknowledged by Mrs. Phillis Moss, and "The President and Officials," which was honoured on the proposition of Mr. A. S. Cooper, Mr. A. Froome responding.

Songs and other musical items arranged by Mr. G. Smith were given during the evening.



"YE OLDE GRIFFIN"



THE NEW GRIFFIN
REBUILT 1906 • PROPRIETOR J. TAYLOR.
CAVERSHAM
TELEPHONE 764 READING

The above are photographs of Ye Olde and the New Griffin, Caversham. Mr. Taylor, as mentioned in our last issue, has just completed 21 years as landlord of this well-known Inn.

A CHAT ON INNS.

An English inn—a reminder of all that is sturdy and healthy in English life, an institution that, despite the efforts of Pussyfoot busybodies, is still flourishing. Other countries have inns, but surely the English inn is different. To the student and lover of the countryside the very sign is a history book, for it is the traveller who really loves the inn, whose welcome sign holds out to him rest, and, for refreshment, the drink of all good wayfarers, ale.

Modern methods of transport have perhaps driven some of the old inns off the main roads, but if the traveller will desert the highways beloved of the motorist and explore the by-roads he will find many a picturesque inn and much history. The inn at one time played a more important part in the life of the country, for it was the only meeting place for all sorts and conditions of men. It was club, market, council chambers, and sleeping place all in one, and not infrequently the resort of political conspirators and highwaymen.

Of all modern writers, Charles Dickens has perhaps done more to immortalise the inns than any other and all his famous books are full of references to them. *Pickwick Papers* fairly teems with travel by coach and post-chaise, and the good cheer and times to be had in an English inn. These times are perhaps difficult for us to visualise, hedged in as we are by D.O.R.A. and other examples of grandmotherly legislation, which should have been wiped out long ago.

Through all the works of Dickens runs a glorification of the hostels and inns of the country and, despite all drawbacks, the same spirit and atmosphere can still be found by all who will take the trouble to seek. The search will be well worth the trouble, for in the humble inn as distinct from the lordly hotel, one will find not only the local colour which will add interest to the call, but also the good old farmhouse fare which, washed down by a tankard of ale, makes a feast for all.

The question may be asked: Where are these places to be found? One has not far to go: the Home Counties can give us quite a number all within easy distance of the numerous bus routes from Reading and of which we will name a few.

The White Horse at Woolstone, Berkshire, is well worth a visit as it lies nestled under the famous White Horse Hill, which will be familiar to all readers of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. It is one of the few links remaining in the South of King Alfred's battles.

Another, the Waterloo, at Cholsey. Again, within a short stroll of this inn one is on ground full of history. A walk will take one on to the famous Ickniel Way, which is a pre-Roman road, more commonly known, perhaps, as the Ridgeway. From Cholsey runs the "Fair Mile" and joins the Ridgeway at Lowbury Hill, a well-known landmark for all Down lovers. Another well-known hill is Blewburton Hill, near Aston Tirrold, which was the headquarters of the Saxon King Ethelred. The barrow at the foot of the hill is still known as Ethelred's Camp. This King marched from there to Kingstanding Hill at Moulsoford and fought a battle with the Danes, driving them back over the Thames.

After visiting these ancient landmarks the traveller can follow the Ridgeway past Churn Ranges and drop down into a typical old English village, Blewbury, which can give us several examples of the rustic inn, one of which is The Barley Mow. The old inn was destroyed by fire recently and has been replaced by a modern and up-to-date house, but even if the old house has gone one can be assured of every attention in the new.

The Jolly Farmer, at Sandhurst, is another interesting inn to visit and is the source of many a story of the highwaymen who once infested the road.

The Waggon and Horses, at Hartley Row, was once a well-known posting house.

The White Hart, Hook, was a famous coaching inn of the day and many a tale is told of it and the days of the London-Exeter mail.

One could go on quoting only space will not permit, but to the traveller we would say, a visit to any of these places must not be taken in haste, for good ale should be sipped. It has been the drink of generations of Englishmen. Labourer, farmer, yeoman and hunting squire have quaffed it at leisure in these inns, and, surely, the traveller can spare time to take in all the old associations of these places.

F.M.

CHRISTMAS IN AMERICA.

Flasks, cocktail-shakers, glasses, and decanters are sold everywhere with charming disregard of the law. Apparently there are to be no sensational raids on the bootleggers. Those which do occur will be used as an excuse to increase prices. But the supply seems to be well organised this year, despite the disappearance of Rum Row. Whisky prices are rising to £16 a case, and there is great home-brewing activity.—*The Observer*, of December 18th, from its New York Correspondent.

THE LIGHTER SIDE.

Parson (*to small boy at garden gate*) : What are you crying for, Tommy ?

Small boy : Father's dead.

Parson : What were his last words, Tommy ?

Small boy : He didn't have any sir, mother had those.

* * * *

An Irishman, Scotsman, and a Jew were invited to the golden wedding celebrations of an Englishman, and it had been explained to them that it was usual for guests to bring something suitable for the occasion.

The Irishman took a goldfish.

The Scotsman a Gold Flake cigarette.

The Jew took Mr. Goldstein.

* * * *

Two Americans were walking down Broadway.

The shorter of the two was son of the taller, but the taller was not father of the shorter.

What relation were they ?

(*Mother and son*).

A GREAT THOUGHT.

A strange picture we make on our way to our chimeras, ceaselessly marching, grudgng ourselves the time for rest : indefatigable, adventurous pioneers.

It is true that we shall never reach the goal ; it is even more than probable that there is no such place ; and if we lived for centuries and were endowed with the powers of a god we should find ourselves not much nearer what we wanted at the end. O toiling hands of mortals ! O unwearied feet, travelling ye know not whither ! Soon, soon, it seems to you, you must come forth on some conspicuous hilltop, and but a little way further, against the setting sun, descry the spires of El Dorado. Little do ye know your own blessedness, for to travel hopefully is better than to arrive, and the true success is to labour.—

Robert Louis Stevenson.

OUR LADIES' PAGE.

As far as I can recollect no one has yet given in these pages a general survey of the historic and ancient town of Reading, the home of the Brewery and the native place of many engaged therein, and as it may be that quite a number of the Firm's employees situated away from Headquarters have never visited the town, a few lines may be of interest. The town is pleasantly situated in the Thames Valley, in the extreme north of Berkshire, the River Kennet, a tributary of the Thames, passing through the centre. The Brewery stands directly on the banks of the Kennet. On the north side of the town is the boundary line between Berkshire and Oxfordshire, viz., old Father Thames, who provides excellent boating during the summer months. Some of the prettiest scenery of the Thames Valley is to be found in the vicinity of Reading and during the river season steam launch owners are well booked up with parties from various parts of the country who recognise the beauties of the country which we, who live within easy access, often fail to fully appreciate. But to come back to the town itself, we are very justly proud of its historic associations, and due mention is made of the town in the earliest records of English history, while throughout the ages it has been frequently visited by the reigning monarchs of the country. Massive high walls, some of them ivy-covered, are all that now remain of the once famous Abbey of Reading, founded in A.D. 1121 by Henry I.

Another fact of which the town is proud is the reputation it has of being exceptionally clean, and as you walk along the wide and well-paved streets you cannot but notice that there is justification for this pride.

Reading is well equipped with good shops of every description and there is really no need to journey afar to shop : in fact, I have heard several people say they prefer to shop in Reading and without a doubt one would have difficulty in finding establishments of better class than those of Messrs. Heelas and Wellstead.

The town is also well provided with places of amusement, both indoor and outdoor. There is the County Theatre, where one is generally sure of seeing a good play ; the Palace Theatre, which produces a good variety entertainment twice nightly ; and two Picture Houses, viz., the Vaudeville and the Central Playhouse. The former has of late years been enlarged and now ranks as one of the finest picture houses in the South of England. True, it never lacks a full house, and both the pictures shown and the orchestra are of the highest class. For outdoor recreation we have two beautiful parks, viz., Prospect Park and Palmer Park,

situated at the west and east ends of the town respectively. Both are well equipped with tennis courts (hard and grass), cricket and football pitches, and putting and bowling greens. The latter park has also a running track on which the A.A.C. often hold meetings.

Added to these we now have the "Sol Joel" Playing Field at Earley, on the outskirts of the town, but within the Borough, and this is also well provided with all the necessaries for outdoor sports. Open country spaces are within easy distance of the town, and frequent bus services run to such places as Peppard, Mortimer, Wellington College, Finchampstead, Stratfieldsaye, etc., all of which are noted for their lovely scenery.

Before closing these notes mention must be made of the two fine bridges that cross the Thames at Reading. Both are of recent build and are generally known as the Reading and Caversham Bridges respectively. The first-named is built in a single-span of reinforced concrete and is a fine specimen of its kind.

The Caversham Bridge is a much larger structure, built with two spans and very wide, and is truly a magnificent piece of work.

M.P.

MOTTOES FOR MOTORISTS.

Here are a few mottoes for motorists:—

"Pedestrians should be seen, but not hurt."

"Say it with brakes and save the flowers."

"Don't kid about safety; you may be the goat."

"Time saved at a crossing may be lost in the emergency ward."

"No domestic science course is necessary to enable a girl to make a traffic jam."

Footprints, taken on the lines of our finger-print system, are being used for identifying criminals in Ceylon, where a great part of the population go barefoot.

BREWERY JOTTINGS.

Many anxious enquiries were made in "our" office for the last month's HOP LEAF GAZETTES, particularly as they were a day or so late in coming out. The Christmas holidays put matters a little behindhand. As it was a very good number the contents compensated all for the little extra wait.

The photograph of Mr. H. F. Lindars was a very good reproduction. It would need a far abler pen than mine to give an adequate impression of Mr. Lindars. He is revered by all for his charm, kindness and courtesy, and it is safe to say he has no enemies.

Mr. J. Taylor, the subject of Thumbnail Sketch No. 2, is well known to the writer both from the standpoint of a fairly regular customer and also as a friend. It is safe to say that "Joe," as he is universally called, is known throughout Reading and Caversham. Although he never likes to be away from his post of duty, "The Griffin," he never relaxes his various outside activities, and the other Sunday evening was singing and playing his concertina in the Large Town Hall, Reading, before a delighted audience of 1,600 people. So, you see, all Publicans—perhaps "hotel proprietor" is the correct word—are not necessarily Sinners.

The Editor mentioned about a line entered for *Answers*. I have been in for quite a number of these literary competitions in the various periodicals, but without any great success. I think 5/- represents the most I have ever won. Nevertheless, it is a fascinating pastime for those who care for it. What is needed mostly is plenty of faith, a good supply of sixpenny postal orders and careful watching of the winning lines that are published to try and discover what the Competition Editor wants. Generally speaking, the winning lines are clever. One of the best published (in my opinion) was in "Bullets" some years ago, thus:—

Example: Down and Out.

Winning line: Scottish Airman spotting Sixpence.

It is in no boastful spirit I write this: in the last issue three of the articles were written by members of the Correspondence Office staff, the total of which is five. Other Departments please note and beat this. It will please the Editor (who has unearthed quite a lot of talent in unexpected quarters) also if you write. It gives you a greater pardonable pride in THE HOP LEAF GAZETTE, which naturally takes on a more homely aspect in your view, for it is nice to know you have had something to do with its production.

Having survived the snow and ice at Christmas and the New Year, we at Reading have been troubled with floods. The Kennet, which flows swiftly past the Brewery at all times, rose several feet in one night and part of the yard was under water for a short while. Fortunately, the waters went down quickly in a day or so. The Thames was very wide indeed at Caversham Bridge, overflowed its banks and invaded the fields adjacent, causing truly miles of floods. The various samples of weather experienced this winter no one wishes repeated for a long while: perhaps a cynic would say not until next summer. Our transport were not able to deliver goods in some instances, owing to snowdrifts, deliveries were held up owing to floods and the travellers were unable to get to their customers in some districts. Mr. A. Lock, one of our oldest "Knights of the Road," tells me he doesn't remember when the weather was so bad for deliveries.

Misfortunes never come singly, so 'tis said. Mr. H. Shepherd, Assistant Cashier and Resident Clerk at the Brewery, on Saturday, 31st December, in the evening, had a 'phone message from our lorry driver that, owing to the snow, he was unable to get any farther than Kingsclere—he was on his way to Newbury—and would "stand by." Mr. Shepherd put matters right as far as possible in this respect. Then another message from Didcot to the effect that our driver was unable to get back from there. Again matters were fixed up. (Putting matters right means letting the respective wives of the drivers and mates know what has happened and arranging for a relief party, etc.) After all this, in comes the Caretaker (Mr. Moorey) to inform Mr. Shepherd that his boy had just been carried in having been knocked down by a motor cycle. Quite a chapter of upsets. Fortunately, although the lad was rather badly knocked about—it was a pure accident—no bones were broken, and he is now well on the road to recovery.

Answering the telephone the other day the following conversation took place: "Hello! Is that H. & G. Simonds?" Answer: "Yes, Sir." "Oh, I am glad to have got you at last for they put me at first on to the *Waterworks!*"

The New Year opens for us in a very busy manner for the bills have to go off, a rather heavy quarter, and this meant that the General Office staff had to work on Saturday, December 31st, till late in the afternoon. Fortunately, there was no cup-tie or first team match at Elm Park. Overtime immediately starts for the quarterly balancing and goes on for just over a week. After the usual alarms we balanced to a ha'penny, so everyone was well satisfied and pleased.

Mr. C. B. Cox, of the General Office, took his departure from us on Monday, January 16th, for Newbury, having been promoted to an important post with the South Berks Brewery Co. He will be missed in the Offices and elsewhere for his unfailing genial personality appealed to all. We all wish him success in his new sphere and although the wrench from the Brewery is a real one to him we feel sure he will do well in his new surroundings. For myself, I feel his going very much, for without being yet in the sere and yellow I have known him since he was a boy, we having been near neighbours for many years. I know he remembers with glee the time when he used to throw stones at me—what a way of showing admiration—but, fortunately, it was not a case of David and Goliath in the result. May he prosper.

Our football note for this month is considerably brighter and although the relegation "bogey" is not yet absolutely finished with, Reading's position in the League is much more satisfactory. The turning of the tide took place just before Christmas, and the players have done remarkably well ever since. Football is now a topic of joy and the cup-ties being in full swing enthusiasm is red-hot. By the time these notes appear Reading will have played Leicester City—a fine team and attraction—and the result will be known. However, at the moment all supporters are very optimistic. Nothing succeeds like success, and whilst quite a number of games earlier on in the season were characterised by a tremendous amount of legitimate keenness on the part of the players, the result invariably went against the Club. Players who seemed to be lacking in cleverness compared with last season's splendid form, have all come on together and the whole side is really playing well. Long may it continue. Swansea F.C., who provided Reading with their first away win of the season, will begin to think that Reading are not nice to know. Plymouth Argyle are playing well and with their new centre-forward may have to be reckoned with for promotion. They will have deserved it if they attain their desires. Portsmouth are by no means out of the wood although they are playing better. Brighton seems a half-way team. I hope I am not misjudging them, for have they not one of Reading's old stalwarts in S. Jennings? I am not up-to-date with regard to Woking F.C., but they are a good amateur side and doing well. Years ago, when Mr. R. V. Goodall, now mine host of the George Hotel, Basingstoke, used to be at the Brewery, we heard a lot about Woking at the Brewery Bar and a tremendous amount of "leg-pulling" used to go on. However, it was all honest fun. I might mention that Mr. R. V. Goodall has been a regular supporter of the Reading F.C. for many years and sees all the first team matches at Elm Park.

Have you heard the tale of the Jew treating the Scotchman? No! I am afraid you never will!

W.D.

WORDS OF WISDOM.

In the game of life it is better to score by honours than by tricks.

Fire is the test of gold ; adversity of strong men.

Revenge of a wrong only makes another wrong.

Solitude is as needful to the imagination as society is wholesome for the character.

God made the country, man made the town.

Do not talk Arabic in the house of a Moor.

Genius is nothing but labour and diligence.

Of big words and feathers many go to the pound.

Toil on, faint not, keep watch and pray.

The wife is the key of the house.

My heart resembles the ocean ; has storm and ebb and flow ;
And many a beautiful pearl
Lies hid in its depths below.

In politics, merit is rewarded by the possessor being raised, like a target, to be shot at.

Gentleman is a term which does not apply to any station, but to the mind and the feelings in every station.

Religion is the best armour in the world, but the worst cloak.

Don't despise a small wound or a poor relative.

THE LAMB THRIFT CLUB, THEALE.

The annual share-out took place at The Lamb, Theale, on December 20th, after a most successful year, the returns showing, for eighty members, £246 8s. 6d.

In addition to each member's contributions they received 6/8, which was due to the hard work of the esteemed President, Mr. S. F. Poulton, Major D. Bird (Chairman) and the Committee, to whom special thanks are due. Others worthy of thanks are Mrs. W. D. Poulton and Mrs. E. Bird, etc.

During the evening a smoking concert was held, the President taking the Chair. Those who contributed towards the evening's success were : Mrs. W. D. Poulton, Mrs. I. A. Goodey, Mrs. A. Martin, Mrs. Goswell, Mrs. Denchfield, Mr. S. F. Poulton, Major D. Bird, Mr. H. Roberts, Mr. W. Collier, Mr. G. Race, Mr. G. Day, Mr. G. Davis, Mr. F. Morris, Mr. S. Nicholls, Mr. F. Boxsey, Mr. F. Taylor and last, but not least, the worthy pianist, Mr. Denchfield.

At the close, the Chairman thanked all responsible for such a pleasant evening.

Mr. H. Roberts proposed the health of the Chairman, which was received with musical honours. The health of Major and Mrs. E. Bird, proposed by Mr. G. Race, was also heartily received.

SEVEN BRIDGES BREWERY BURIAL CLUB.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

Employees at the Reading Brewery, who are not members of the Burial Club and who were in the Firm's service prior to October 9th, 1925, are reminded that, in accordance with Rule 4, they must make application for membership to the Committee not later than October 8th, 1928.

It should also be stated that the three years' grace applies to all intending members, dating from the time of their employment by the Firm.

At the present time the Club has 388 members and since the Annual Meeting, last June, eight levies have been made and a total of £136 11s. 0d. paid out in benefit.

E.B.

SOCIAL CLUB.

THE ANNUAL DINNER: A VERY ENJOYABLE GATHERING.

The Annual Dinner of H. & G. Simonds' Social Club was held on January 23rd and was a most successful function. A larger company than usual attended, and four of the Directors were present, thus showing, as they do in so many ways, their real interest in the welfare of those privileged to serve the Firm. An excellent spread was provided by Mr. Parslow, there was an entertaining musical programme, and the proceedings generally were of a highly enjoyable character. The President (Mr. F. A. Simonds) occupied the Chair, and others present were Mr. Fred Simonds, Commander H. D. Simonds, Mr. J. H. Simonds, Mr. F. C. Hawkes (Chairman of the Club), Mr. H. L. Chaplin, Mr. C. Bennett, Mr. A. R. Bradford, Major Kaye, Mr. S. Bird (Treasurer), Mr. W. Bradford (Secretary).

The President mentioned that their venerable Chairman (Mr. Blackall-Simonds) was in India and he was sure their best wishes went with him. He knew Mr. Blackall-Simonds would be thinking of them. He had received apologies from Mr. S. V. Shear-Simonds (Vice-Chairman), Canon F. J. C. Gillmor, Mr. C. W. Stocker, Mr. C. E. Gough, Mr. E. S. Phipps, Captain Drewe, Mr. H. F. Lindars and Mr. J. D. Carter.

Friends from the Hythe Brewery, through Mr. A. P. F. Chapman, wired wishing all a happy evening.

THE POPULAR PRESIDENT.

Mr. F. C. Hawkes proposed the toast of "The President." They felt very honoured in having Mr. F. A. Simonds as their President. It was an incentive to the officers of the Club to carry out the objects for which the Club was founded. They hoped Mr. Simonds would long be spared to carry out his many and arduous duties. Since Mr. Simonds had been a member of the Directorate the Firm had achieved wonders in the realm of business, and all were proud to be associated with a firm so prominent in the world of commerce. They were very pleased that Mr. Simonds had been selected by the King as High Sheriff of the County. (Applause.) They trusted that Mr. Simonds would be blessed with good health to carry on his great work in the future as ably as he had done in the past.

The toast was most enthusiastically received.

MERITED CONFIDENCE PLACED IN IT.

In acknowledgment, Mr. Simonds thanked the company for the very cordial manner in which they had drunk his health. As to the activities of the Club it had well merited the confidence which the Directors placed in it. (Applause.) They liked to think that the staff had such commodious premises wherein they could meet for social intercourse and recreation. As to the business, they had conquered a great many worlds, but still had more to conquer. They must all co-operate in their endeavours to increase the business, for the bigger the trade they did the better was it for all concerned. (Applause.)

At this stage, Mr. Simonds had to leave for Hythe, where he was attending a similar function the following day, and Mr. Hawkes took the Chair.

DEPARTMENTAL TOURNAMENT CUP.

Mr. S. Bird proposed the toast of "The Vice-Presidents" and said how very pleased they were to see any of their Vice-Presidents at their various functions. He hoped Mr. Blackall-Simonds would benefit in health from his trip abroad. Two years ago the Vice-Presidents gave them a silver cup for a departmental tournament, and as a result the Club's receipts increased, as also did the membership. That cup had tended to add to the social amenities of the Club and to increase the good fellowship of its members. (Applause.)

The toast was received with the greatest cordiality, and Commander H. D. Simonds, in reply, said that as that was the first occasion on which he had met a lot of them together since his marriage he would like to take the opportunity of saying how much he appreciated their generosity on that occasion. (Applause.) They were certainly spending a jolly evening and he congratulated those responsible for the excellent entertainment.

Mr. J. H. Simonds also responded and said he was very proud to be a Vice-President of the Club, which played so important a part in the social life of those engaged at the Brewery.

REFLECTED GREAT CREDIT ON OFFICERS.

The toast of "The Club" was entrusted to Mr. C. Bennett, who fully endorsed all that had been said by previous speakers regarding the fulfilment of the objects for which the Club was brought

into being. He thought that the right attitude should be one of gratitude for all that had happened in the past, including the provision of the premises and the excellent traditions set up. As regards the present they might feel particularly satisfied, as the members were very happy and the Club was financially sound. He thought it reflected the greatest credit on the Officers and Committee, and spoke volumes for the way the members in general had backed up their efforts. As to the future, it should be the firm resolve of every member to do his utmost to uphold and maintain the Club and its traditions and see that nothing happened to tarnish a splendid record.

SAME PERSONNEL.

In response, Mr. W. G. Cook pointed out that the personnel of the Committee of the Club was the same as when the Club originated seven years ago. That showed that those responsible for the management of the Club gained and retained the confidence of the members. (Applause.) Much of the success of the Club was due to the geniality of their Chairman, the hard work of the Secretary and the fact that they had a good Steward and Stewardess. (Applause.)

Those contributing to the excellent concert were Mr. S. Hinton, Miss Phyllis Bosley, Mr. Eddie Stock, Mr. R. E. Burkett, Mr. George Smith, Mr. E. H. Kelly and Mr. G. Wait (songs). Messrs. J. Maxwell and J. Champion were responsible for a very amusing sketch, and Mr. Syd. Clacy gave a conjuring exhibition. Miss Bradford was the efficient pianist and Mr. Good played the violin.

BILLIARDS LEAGUE.

DIVISION I.

MONDAY, 2ND JANUARY, 1928.

<i>Caversham Constitutional.</i>				<i>H. & G. S. Social.</i>			
S. Hall	...	...	133	v.	A. Howard	...	150
W. Fenton	...	...	150	v.	R. Clement	...	93
F. Crane	...	...	103	v.	A. Dalton	...	150
J. Bristowe	...	...	150	v.	G. Boddington	...	130
J. Carr	...	...	114	v.	R. Griffiths	...	150
T. Hinton	...	...	83	v.	R. Broad	...	150
			733				823
Handicap	...	...	150		Handicap	...	100
			883				923

Winning Team, H. & G. S. Social by 40 points.

MONDAY, 16TH JANUARY, 1928.

<i>H. & G. S. Social.</i>				<i>Caversham Constitutional.</i>			
R. Clement	...	...	150	v.	T. Hall	...	76
A. Howard	...	...	150	v.	W. Fenton	...	81
A. Dalton	...	...	150	v.	J. Bristowe	...	66
G. Boddington	...	...	150	v.	F. Crane	...	107
R. Griffiths	...	...	150	v.	T. Hinton	...	113
F. Braisher	...	...	150	v.	J. Carr	...	115
			900				558
Handicap	...	...	100		Handicap	...	150
			1000				708

Winning Team, H. & G. S. Social by 292 points.

BILLIARDS LEAGUE.

DIVISION II.

MONDAY, 2ND JANUARY, 1928.

<i>H. & G. S. Social.</i>				<i>West Reading Liberal Club.</i>			
H. Davis	...	...	100	v.	G. Bedwell	...	90
A. Jacobs	...	...	100	v.	C. Wells	...	85
C. Weller	...	...	65	v.	J. Evans	...	100
W. Sparks	...	...	100	v.	J. Brooks	...	70
W. Hinton	...	...	85	v.	F. Mason	...	100
G. Winslet	...	...	83	v.	G. Taylor	...	100
			533				545
Handicap	...	...	30		Handicap	...	30
			563				575

Winning Team, West Reading Liberal Club by 12 points.

MONDAY, 9TH JANUARY, 1928.

<i>Tilehurst Constitutional.</i>				<i>H. & G. S. Social.</i>			
J. Marshall	...	...	82	v.	H. Davis	...	100
R. Whichelow	...	...	100	v.	A. Jacobs	...	72
J. Brakspeare	...	...	97	v.	C. Weller	...	100
O. Parr	...	...	92	v.	C. Chapman	...	100
R. Matchwick	...	...	65	v.	W. Hinton	...	100
R. Aitken	...	...	70	v.	A. Weight	...	100
			506				572
Handicap	...	...	70		Handicap	...	30
			576				602

Winning Team, H. & G. S. Social by 26 points.

DEPARTMENTAL TOURNAMENTS.

FRIDAY, 30TH DECEMBER, 1927.

Games.	CELLARS.		OFFICES.	
	Name.	Points.	Name.	Points.
Billiards	W. Curtis	0	G. Boddington	1
"	J. Rumens	0	H. Davis	1
"	G. Moss	1	G. Poole	0
Dominoes	H. Holloway	0	W. Bradford	1
"	W. Wheeler	1	C. H. Perrin	0
"	H. Nickless	0	H. Davis	1
Crib	A. Simpkins	1	L. Browne	0
"	J. Benford	0	H. Shepherd	1
"	G. Lunnion	1	F. Freeman	0
Shove Halfpenny	F. Mason	0	C. Cox	1
"	J. Iremonger	0	R. Broad	1
"	H. Holloway	1	H. Shepherd	0
Darts	A. Shiers	1	W. Wild	0
"	H. Nickless	1	R. Broad	0
"	J. Cannon	1	—	0
Shooting	J. Cannon	0	S. Moore	1
"	J. Gough	0	H. Osborne	1
"	A. Shiers	0	A. G. Rider	1
		8	10	

FRIDAY, 6TH JANUARY, 1928.

Games.	REST.		TRANSPORT.	
	Name.	Points.	Name.	Points.
Billiards	F. Braisher	0	A. Dalton	1
"	S. Bird	0	D. Gilbert	1
"	F. Belcher	0	H. Bell	1
Dominoes	H. Stanbrook	0	J. Embling	1
"	T. Osborne	1	G. Marsh	0
"	J. Edgington	1	G. Shipton	0
Crib	C. Thatcher	1	A. Grove	0
"	J. Morris	0	D. Witts	1
"	W. Newport	0	F. Hamilton	1
Shove Halfpenny	A. Nash	0	D. Witts	1
"	F. Humphries	0	F. Adey	1
"	F. Cross	0	H. Hinxman	1
Darts	A. E. Nash	0	J. Champion	1
"	A. Comley	0	F. Adey	1
"	F. Shipton	0	H. Taylor	1
Shooting	H. Prater	½	S. Whiting	½
"	J. Croft	0	J. Maxwell	1
"	F. Collins	0	E. Champion	1
		3½	14½	

FRIDAY, 13TH JANUARY, 1928.

OFFICES. v. COOPERS.

This match is postponed until a later date.

FRIDAY, 20TH JANUARY, 1928.

Games.	BUILDING.		CELLARS.	
	Name.	Points.	Name.	Points.
Billiards	C. Chapman	1	W. Curtis	0
"	W. Hinton	0	W. Wheeler	1
"	G. Cook	0	A. Simpkins	1
Dominoes	A. Ayling	0	D. Rose	1
"	P. Maynard	1	H. Nickless	0
"	W. Judd	0	J. Benford	1
Crib	W. Seward	0	J. Benford	1
"	N. Wells	0	G. Lunnion	1
"	A. Barley	1	J. Iremonger	0
Shove Halfpenny	C. Dobson	1	J. Maslen	0
"	T. Stacey	0	A. Maskell	1
"	W. Seward	1	F. Edwards	0
Darts	B. Eymore	0	J. Cannon	1
"	E. Tate	0	D. Rose	1
"	C. Chapman	0	A. Shiers	1
Shooting	H. Mitchell	0	J. Cannon	1
"	A. Baldwin	½	J. Salisbury	½
"	W. Seward	1	E. Baker	0
		6½	11½	

ANNUAL TREAT TO MEMBERS' CHILDREN.

The annual treat given to the members' children at Christmas time was held at the Club on Saturday, January 7th. Commencing at 3 o'clock, the little ones were entertained by selections of popular songs, given by a Jazz Band arranged by Mr. Eric Curtis, who was ably assisted by Miss Gladys Taylor at the piano and Miss Kathleen Curtis with songs. The choruses were enthusiastically responded to by the children who seemed well acquainted with all the songs of the day.

After the children had sung themselves nearly hoarse, Mr. J. Champion and Mr. J. Maxwell gave a very amusing sketch, and their jokes, together with their characteristic "make-up," provided further fun. This was followed by a Punch and Judy show by Mr. Jess Smith, which also proved very popular. Tea followed and this was much relished. Paper caps added an air of festivity. Each child was the recipient of a nice present from the Christmas Trees which had been very effectively prepared by lady helpers.

Mr. C. Lailey again acted as Father Christmas and made frequent visits to the children with sweets kindly given by Mr. C. Bennett.

On departing, after a very enjoyable time, the children were given oranges and bananas.

The room, with the artistic lantern decorations kindly lent by Messrs. A. H. Bull, Ltd., presented a very pleasing appearance.

Great credit is due to the members of the Committee, the ladies and others who assisted to make the event one of the most successful held.

EACH TO HIS OWN.

"Among London's strange occupations are cart-minding, selling hot water in the markets, and painting door-knockers."—

News item.

Within a modest public house,
When set the dying sun,
Three men partook of half-and-half,
Three souls that drank as one.

The humble liquor cheering them
Within the proper place,
Their talk turned to their sep'rate lots
(As often is the case).

"My pennies come," the first one said,
"From minding carts, and such ;
A gentle soul at heart, I am,
So I don't mind them much."

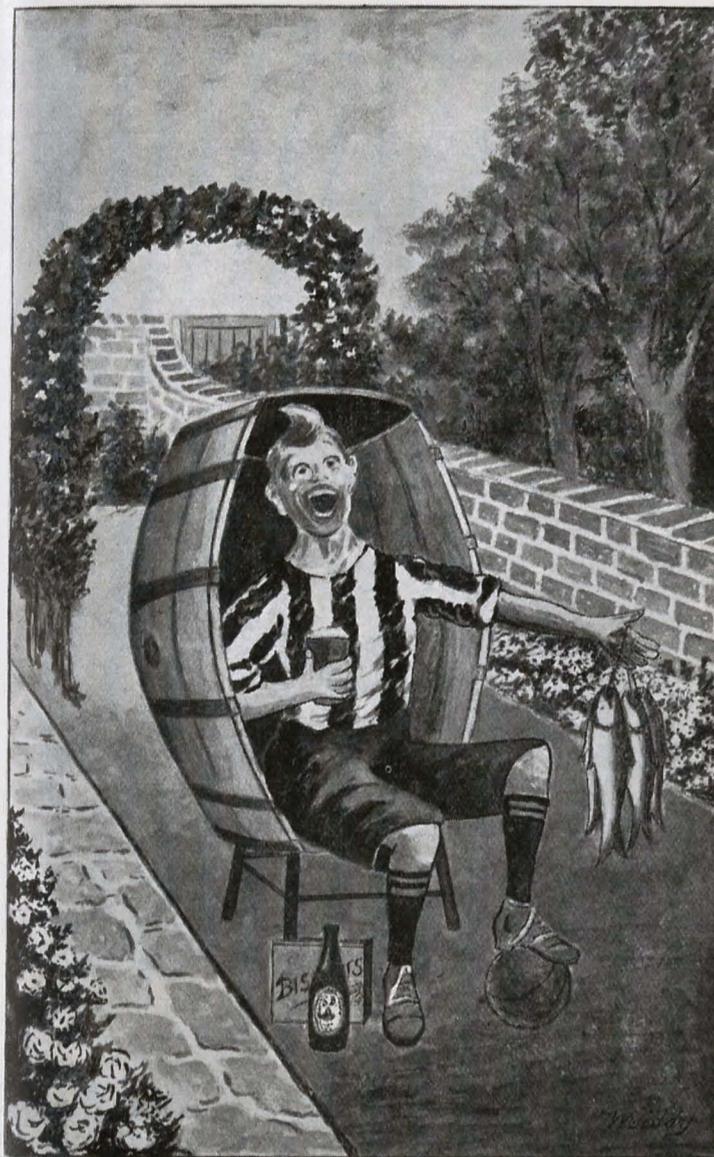
"Hot water," said the second one,
To stick his twopence in,
"Is how I earn *my* fish and chips—
It isn't bad—with gin."

"Carts is my job," resumed the first.
The second then demurred,
"Hot water" was his call in life ;
"What's yours ?" they asked the third.

"What's mine ?" said he, with sidling eye.
(He was a rogue, I fear,
And painted knockers fixed on doors),
"Well—mine's another beer !"

—Henry William Hanemann, in "*Life*."

A short life in the saddle, Lord,
Not a long life by the fire.

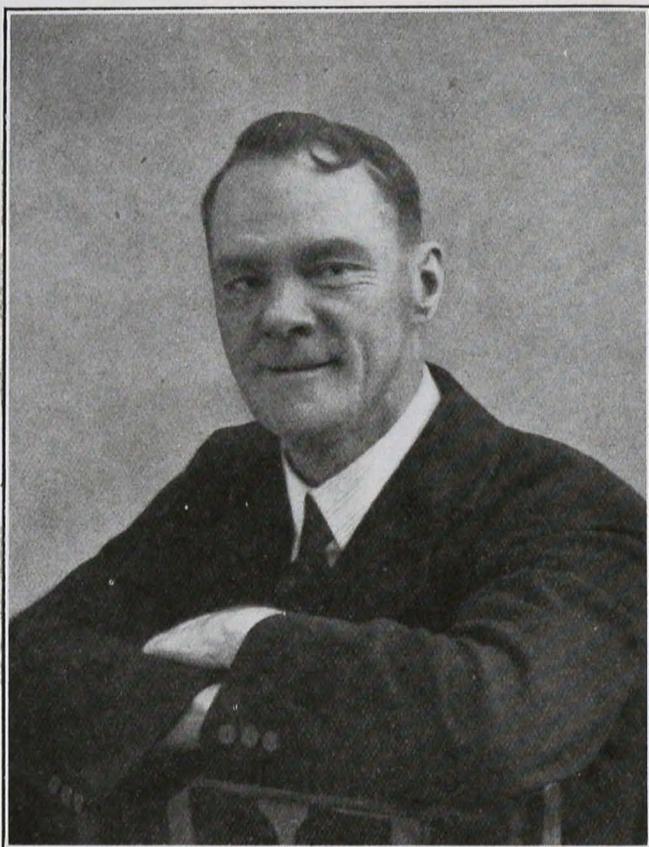


THE REAL READING.

In the 3rd round of the Football Association Cup, played on 14th January, 1928, Reading gained a victory over Grimsby by 4 goals to nil.

THUMBNAIL SKETCHES.

NO. 3.



MR. G. W. SMITH.

(BY C.H.P.)

The subject of my thumbnail sketch this month is Mr. G. W. Smith, the genial landlord of the Russell Arms, Oxford Road, Reading. Mr. Smith is a man of many parts and, with his partner, was for a number of years a familiar figure on the stage, where the clever cross-talk and simultaneous dancing made their turn particularly popular. Before joining up to do his bit in the great war, Mr. Smith organised 484 concerts for the wounded soldiers. These

entertainments were given in the thirteen hospitals in Reading and district, to the great delight of the audiences. Mr. Smith received numerous letters of appreciation from many parts, including Australia and Canada. He is still much sought after as an entertainer or as M.C. at dances. His post as Secretary of the Reading and District Licensed Victuallers Association entails a great deal of work. Fond of sport, in his younger days Mr. Smith was a good runner and he also handled a pair of sculls well. Skilled in the terpsichorean art, Mr. Smith has instructed many in dancing. Another sphere for his activities has been the Reading Philanthropic Institution, of which he has been a prominent member for over thirty years.

In spite of these many other calls on his time and energies, Mr. Smith may almost always be found at the Russell Arms where his cheery greeting and downright good fellowship are as refreshing as the wholesome beverage he dispenses to his numerous customers.

His wife and his son render him invaluable assistance and are equally popular—which is saying a good deal.

 THE LIGHTER SIDE.

END OF A PERFECT DAY.

"Och, aye, but I've found a lovely dentist; he gives his patients a drink after every tooth he extracts to revive them."

"Then what are you so gloomy about? Did he run out of whisky when you went?"

"No; I ran out of teeth."—*Passing Show.*

* * * *

During a recent Irish census a Civic guard called on a lady of uncertain age for census paper. "This form is not completed; you have omitted to put down occupation." "Better insert 'Spinster,'" replied the lady. "Begob, ma'am, that's not a profession, it's a pursuit," replied the limb of the law.

* * * *

A doctor says that the drinking water in Scotland is the purest in the world. This should tempt some of the inhabitants to taste it.—*Sunday Graphic.*

"And how did you like the sermon on Sunday, Mrs. Jones?" asked the new curate with a simpering smile. "Very good indeed, sir," said Mrs. Jones, "and so instructive. We really didn't know what sin was till you came here."

* * * *

"Waiter," said the fussy diner, "I want some oysters. But they mustn't be too small or too large, and they mustn't be too salty. I want them cold, and I want them in five minutes," "Yes, sir," replied the waiter, who was under notice, "how will you have them, with or without pearls?"

* * * *

PANTOMIME HERO: "A horse, my kingdom for a horse."

VOICE FROM THE GALLERY: "Will a jackass do?"

PANTOMIME HERO: "Yes; come on down."

* * * *

THE VICAR (to oldest parishioner): "And so you're ninety to-day, John?"

JOHN (heartily): "I be that, sir, ninety years to-day."

"And lived all your life in the village?"

"Not yet, sir."

* * * *

WHY many men get married is because of a miss understanding.

* * * *

REGGIE: "So you've just got back from your holiday. Feel any change?"

CHARLIE: "Not a penny."

* * * *

"Your uncle seems rather hard of hearing?"

"Hard of hearing! Why, once he conducted family prayers kneeling on the cat!"

* * * *

WIFE (in a telegram from a spa): "In four weeks I have reduced my weight by half. How long shall I stay?"

HUSBAND (wiring back): "Another four weeks."

When the vicar called the family were at supper. Hurriedly, mother put the bottle under the table.

"Good evening," she said; "it's stormy to-night."

"Yes," replied the vicar; "no doubt we shall get some more hail."

"I don't think you will," remarked little Willie; "mother has just put it under the table."

* * * *

"Yes, it was the biggest fish I have ever hooked—and before I realized it I was pulled clean out of the boat!"

"You must have got a nasty wetting."

"Not a bit of it. You see, I fell on the fish."

* * * *

"And now," said the woman speaker, "if there is a man here who will acknowledge that he would deceive his wife, let him stand up."

In the back part of the hall a meek-looking little man rose to his feet.

"Do you mean to tell me," said the lecturer angrily, "you are so debased that you would deceive your wife?"

"Oh, I beg your pardon," he explained. "I thought you said 'believe.'"

* * * *

"Why," asked the magistrate severely, "did you strike your husband with a kitchen chair?"

"Because," said the lady, "I couldn't lift the kitchen stove."

* * * *

FIRST SPORTSMAN: "How long did it take you to skate?"

SECOND DITTO: "Oh, several sittings."

THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he
 That every man in arms should wish to be?
 —It is the generous spirit who when brought
 Among the tasks of real life hath wrought
 Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought:
 Whose high endeavours are an inward light
 That makes the path before him always bright. . . .
 Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,
 And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train!
 Turns his necessity to glorious gain. . . .
 'Tis, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,
 Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,
 Or left unthought-of in obscurity—
 Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
 Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not,
 Plays, in the many games of life, that one
 Where what he most doth value must be won:
 Whom neither shape of danger can dismay
 Nor thought of tender happiness betray;
 Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
 Looks forward, persevering to the last,
 From well to better, daily self-surpass;
 Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
 For ever, and to noble needs give birth,
 Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,
 And leave a dead unprofitable name—
 Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;
 And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
 His breath in confidence of heaven's applause:
 This is the happy Warrior; this is He
 That every Man in arms should wish to be.—

Wordsworth.

ACCIDENT TO "LOTTIE" COLLINS.

In a collision with a motor car Mr. "Lottie" Collins, a prominent member of the Brewery Cricket Club, received rather serious injuries. He was taken to the Hospital, where eleven stitches were put into the wound on the top of his head. His face, leg and hand were also cut.

Though still an out-patient, he is progressing very satisfactorily and will soon be back in harness again.

A NATURE NOTE.

Those who thoughtfully fed the birds during the recent severe weather were well rewarded for their trouble by the entertaining ways of their little feathered friends. No matter if you live in the heart of the town you will throughout the hard weather have a constant stream of visitors to your bird table if you keep it well supplied with food. My bird table takes all sorts of forms.

No sooner had I prepared the meal and returned indoors than the sky appeared to simply "rain" birds. From all directions they came. There were starlings by the dozen, blackbirds, thrushes, missel-thrushes, sparrows, hedge-sparrows, chaffinches, greenfinches, great-tits, blue-tits, cole-tits, wagtails and one reed-bunting. It is not often one sees a reed-bunting so near the centre of the town; their habitation is by the riverside. Handsome little fellows they are, with black heads thrown into relief by a white collar.

Of all my guests the starlings were the most greedy, and made no end of noise as they jostled one another and fought like fury over any particular dainty morsel in the meat line. One greedy starling stole a piece of bread from a poor little cock-sparrow. But the sparrow was the embodiment of pluck, and so harassed the starling as she flew round and round that she eventually let the bread drop. Both birds descended almost as rapidly. The next thing I saw was the sparrow rising with the bread, the starling remaining on the ground disconsolate. But she was soon back at the bird table.

And as I watched the starlings feeding, with their busy beaks probing almost everywhere, I thought to myself what untold good an army of these birds must do on the land, ridding it of millions of pests that mean so much harm to the farmer. And when the snow had gone I noticed too, that the tits were searching every likely-looking spot in the fruit trees and making a meal of tiny insects. In this way they are, and should be looked upon as, some of the gardeners' best friends.

DOWN THE CHIMNEY.

One starling, by some means or other, fell down a chimney and landed in a well-known resident's bedroom. When the lady of the house went upstairs she heard in this room peculiar sounds emanating from behind the dresser. Thinking a burglar was in the house she hastened downstairs and apprised her husband, son, and the fox terrier. Well armed, the two members of the sterner sex cautiously entered the room and Pat, the dog, became extraordinarily excited. Meanwhile Mrs. ——— waited in the kitchen

with the poker. Well, the starling was caught and given its liberty. A good job it was not a burglar, for what with the master of the house, his plucky son (a Reading School boy), both prepared for any emergency, Pat prepared for anything, and Mrs. ——— anxious to play her part with the poker, that burglar would have had a rough time!

SHORT RATIONS FOR THE LARKS.

But to return to the snow. It meant very short rations for the poor larks. As I walked up Broad Street I noticed hundreds upon hundreds flying just over the house-tops. It was snowing fast at the time. They seemed feeble and forlorn as they winged their way they knew not whither, for, with inches of snow covering every acre of the countryside, where were they to obtain their next meal?

AS STILL AS A STATUE.

I was standing by a trout stream that meanders through a wood when a heron alighted about fifty yards away. For half-an-hour he stood still in the water, like a statue. My feet and hands were aching with the cold, but I dared not move or the heron would have spotted me. Then, suddenly, the heron moved his head. The next moment, with a lightning-like stroke, he had seized something in the water. I thought to myself "so that is how you catch the trout is it," when to my surprise I saw that the bird had caught a water-rat—a vole to be precise. He took it out into the meadow a dozen or so yards from the river and released it. But the poor little rodent had not run three yards before the heron struck it with its powerful beak. Three times he struck the rat, which appeared to succumb to the savage blows. The heron then picked up the rat and swallowed it whole! The bird then strolled back to the river and probably trout was the next item on his menu card. I stole silently out of the wood and left the heron standing in the water as still as a statue.

STOAT'S HEDGE-SPARROW MEAL.

Crossing the meadows I saw the footprints of a stoat, and wondering what mischief the little fellow had been up to followed the trail. Right across one meadow he had gone, and I noticed he had run along the bottom bars of two gates. Then he continued in and out of a hedge. He had entered moles' holes and rats' holes and had even run along the top of the hedge. And then I came across a little bunch of feathers, those of the hedge-sparrow. The stoat had had hedge-sparrow for dinner for there was every evidence of where and how he dined. Still following his track I came to a

holly-tree. Beyond the tree there were no footprints. I tapped the tree and saw a movement high up on one of the branches. There sure enough was the stoat. I snow-balled him and presently down he came. He jumped a ditch, ran straight to a rabbits' bury and disappeared in less time than it takes to tell.

FOLLOWING THE FOX.

Next I got on to the track of a fox, and a pretty dance he led me too. I followed him for miles and to continue the pursuit had to jump one ditch that was quite as wide as I could manage. He led me right up to the head keeper's cottage! I learned much of Reynard's habits, for he had evidently spent the best part of the night on the prowl. But, for the present, we must not follow the fox further, it would take too much time and space.

C.H.P.

HELPING THE HOSPITAL.

It was pleasing to read in the *Berkshire Chronicle*, January 6th, 1928, that £343 has been received by The Royal Berkshire Hospital as their share of the proceeds of the sale of the *Help Yourself Annuals* in the Reading area.

The Annuals are issued by the Stock Exchange Dramatic and Operatic Society in aid of their Xmas Charity Fund, the moneys collected being disbursed amongst the various charities.

The amount distributed for the year 1926 was £42,657 which was a record.

It is gratifying to know that the members of the Hop Leaf Firm well and truly did their part for our County Hospital, nearly 100 annuals being sold on the Firm.

Great praise is due to the above Operatic Society for inaugurating such a splendid Scheme in quite novel form.

The gifts, 1,697 in number, were distributed over a large area, and although none of our contributors received a gift, nevertheless they are pleased that such a large sum of money was raised for this worthy object, and intend to try their luck another year.

A.J.J.

BRANCHES.

GIBRALTAR.

To begin our February epistle, may we say we have read with a shudder the news of the cold spell in England and are of opinion that the dear old Rock has its advantages after all. At the same time, we are very enthusiastic about skating but have decided to wait until we can afford Switzerland.

By the time this is in print the Atlantic Fleet will be in our Harbour. Their visit is a very welcome one; they have the happy knack of lifting Gibraltar out of itself as it were, and from one who knows, things are always merry and bright during their all-too-short a stay with us. So many of us renew old acquaintances and blow the froth ("S.B.") over old times, that the approach of Easter Season and their departure bring many a regret. Of course, trade gets a wonderful lift in so many spheres, and it is said that even now the numerous cafes are taking in huge supplies in anticipation of catering for the thirsty. We shall be pleased to see the new battleship, or should we say, flagship, H.M.S. *Nelson*, that has replaced H.M.S. *Revenge*, which our parrot says is not coming out this year. We are hoping that the Mediterranean Fleet also will pay us a visit. The combined fleets in these waters last year was a very impressive sight, one that will not be forgotten by many; it raised one's blood to a very high pressure and made one feel more than ever proud of our nationality.

Referring to the period since our last contribution. My! what a memory we have. Christmas draws have taken place, where we waited with high hopes and almost breathless excitement, and went home eventually with just a walking stick in our hands (one that we had taken) and were chided for being late. Whist drives, dances, &c., were numerous and we ended up with the East Surreys' New Year Ball; this was a gigantic success. The East Surreys, being very old friends of ours, we are pleased to record this happy social event. We also had the pleasure of being present at one or two Regimental Xmas Tree Parties and were privileged to see the handsomely decorated dining halls in the barracks on the Rock.

On December 27th, our esteemed Chairman, Mr. G. Blackall-Simonds, accompanied by Mrs. Blackall-Simonds, arrived by P. & O. S.S. *Ranchi*, on their way to India. We trust the voyage will be both pleasant and beneficial, and hope their plans will permit of a longer stay here on the return journey.

On the sports side, hunting is in full swing, there being two meets each week. Racing has made its debut and, although one meeting had to be abandoned owing to the rains, we have had two

very successful meetings. Of course, we won't answer for our financial side of the success; at the moment we are of opinion that our tipster is not up to scratch and are considering his replacement. Football and hockey are the rule and many enjoyable games are to be seen at North Front daily. It is too early to give a forecast of the positions in the league.

Have you read this :—

Scene—Barrack Square.

SUBALTERN : "Sergeant-Major, tell the Company off, please."

SERGEANT-MAJOR : " ? ? XYZPLQ. PLQXYZ. ? ?
? ? LPQXZY. ZYLPQY ? ? ? ? ? ————— ? ? ?
Company told off, Sir."

OXFORD.

We have to report that one more lady member of our clerical staff, in the person of Miss M. Hunt, has left us after eleven years' service with the Firm to embark upon the sea of matrimony. Though we have lost the services of four efficient lady clerks in the past twelve months we console ourselves with the hope that we have gained four good customers in their respective spouses.

For the benefit of those fair readers of the new Ladies' Section, which appears in THE HOP LEAF GAZETTE, we give below an account of Miss Hunt's wedding, for which we are indebted to the *Oxford Times*.

WEDDING AT THE CITY CHURCH.

The marriage took place at the City Church, on Saturday, of Mr. Gilbert W. G. Laitt, of 44, Western Road, Grandpont, the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Laitt, to Miss May ("Peggy") Hunt, of 55, Iffley Road, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Hunt. The service was conducted by the Rev. W. Mansell Merry, and Mr. W. Morris was at the organ. The duties of best man were performed by Mr. S. C. Knight, and the bridesmaids were Miss Stebbings (cousin of the bride) and Miss Nora Newman.

The bride wore a modern dress of ivory chiffon velvet with embroidered veil of ivory net, held in place by orange blossom and myrtle, and carried a bouquet of white carnations and heather. The bridesmaids were attired in golden crepe de chine with shoes, stockings and hats to match, and they carried bouquets of golden chrysanthemums. The bridegroom's gift to the bride was a snakeskin handbag, and he gave books to the bridesmaids, while the bride's gift to her husband was a cigarette case.

After the service, a reception was held at the Masonic Buildings, and the honeymoon is being spent at Brighton. Mr. and Mrs. Laitt were the recipients of many handsome and useful presents, including a dinner service and set of carvers from the Clarendon Press Delegates' Staff, a mahogany clock and barometer from the Staff of Messrs. H. & G. Simonds Ltd., and an oak umbrella stand from the Clarendon Press Rowing Club.



The Bride and Bridegroom.

It was with very great regret that we learned of the sad decease of Mr. J. D. Hammond, late Chief Clerk at Farnborough Branch. He was a man beloved and respected by all who came into touch with him, alike for his genial and kindly manner as for his very fine business ability.

We send our congratulations and best wishes to Mr. W. Beck, of Farnborough, on his becoming a septuagenarian and hope that he is still hale and hearty.

Although another week will elapse before Term commences, the prospective Oxford crew has already commenced training and daily indulges in "tubbing" practice with an occasional outing in the boat. Life generally in our City at this time of the year is more or less dormant, and the Xmas aftermath here is fairly dull and uneventful. But with the commencement of Term our sleepy old Oxford will wake up once more and we shall be lively for another eight weeks or so.

WOKING.

It came as a great shock to us at Woking to learn of the passing of Mr. J. D. Hammond, who for so many years occupied the position of Chief Clerk at Farnborough Branch, as we felt that a connecting link with our early training days had been severed. Mr. F. G. Garside served at Farnborough Branch from 1891 to 1900, and Mr. A. Bennett from 1905 to 1913. Others, too, associated with this Branch in recent years spent their earlier days at the Farnborough Depot, and we acknowledge our debt of gratitude to the one whose memory we to-day revere. Our sympathies are extended to Mrs. Hammond and family in the great loss they have sustained.

A very pleasant event took place at the West Byfleet Social Club on the 31st December, when a presentation of a gold wristlet watch, subscribed for by the members, was made to Mrs. Martin, Stewardess of the Club.

Mr. J. Atfield, the President of the Club, in making the presentation said:—"I have been asked to perform what I consider a most pleasant duty. As you all know, our Steward and Stewardess have now been with us for five years, and I am sure during that time the Club has never been in a more prosperous and happy state. I have been asked to present Mrs. Martin with a gold wristlet watch as a mark of esteem from the members for the way she has assisted Mr. Martin in his duties. (Cheers.) I will ask Mrs. Martin to come and receive this little token of our goodwill."

Mrs. Martin was taken so completely by surprise that she was a little reluctant to go forward. However, Mr. Atfield quickly came to her aid and, amidst applause, passed to the other side of the counter and made the presentation.

Mr. Martin briefly thanked the members on behalf of Mrs. Martin for their kindly thought and said it would further cement the friendship which existed between the members and their two selves.

Mr. H. Webb, Trustee, said he could not think of a better way than making this presentation, to show the kindly feeling the members all have toward the Steward and his wife. He wished to endorse all that Mr. Atfield had said. He hoped in the near future to see the new Club-house erected, and that the present Steward and Stewardess would still be with them when that time came. He could not close without first asking the members to give their old friend, Mr. Atfield, a very hearty vote of thanks for so kindly presiding during the evening. He said that Mr. Atfield was always willing to assist in anything connected with Club life, notwithstanding his various duties outside.

The vote was heartily carried and accompanied by "He's a jolly good fellow."

On New Year's Eve there was a very happy gathering at the Woking Working Men's Club, when a large number of members was present. The Chairman of the Club (Mr. E. Buckmaster) presided and the musical side of the programme was entrusted to those excellent entertainers, "The Austin Seven Concert Party." Mr. Buckmaster gave a warm welcome to several local gentlemen who were present, and during the interval made an appeal on behalf of the Club's Benevolent Fund, which resulted in an excellent response being made. The singing of "Auld Lang Syne" brought a memorable evening to a close.

Many friends in this area, and also at Reading, will be sorry to learn that our Foreman, Mr. F. Pritchard, is now in the Woking Victoria Hospital, where an operation was found to be necessary. Happily all is going well and we are looking forward to the time when he will once again be back in harness.

We are permitted to reproduce below a few lines sent as a Christmas greeting by Mr. Chapman, Auckland, New Zealand, to an old friend associated with the Woking Working Men's Club:—

When you're on the mop, Tom,
Fairly on the flop, Tom,
Celebratin' Christmas as in the days gone by,
Just a thought for old-time faces,
Now in distant places
Some in far New Zealand, where it's warm and blokes feel dry,
Perhaps your arm is achin'
Maybe feels like breakin'
Liftin' up full glasses (and empties to refill),
There I know your arm is tireless,
But if they've got Beer yet by wireless,
A Simonds' "S.B.A." to-day, will do your old pal Bill.

Mr. Chapman was a former Steward of the Club mentioned and it is small wonder, perhaps, that at the festive season his thoughts should turn, not only to old friends, but to the famous "Hop Leaf" Brand.



Woking Daily Service Foden returning to the Brewery.

WOOLWICH.

A few words about the weather would not be amiss, and probably some of the members of the Firm who know the district covered by us, will realize the difficulty our lorrymen have experienced in getting to such places as Biggin Hill, Kenley and Colchester. The latter, which is our furthest point of delivery, was, fortunately, not so hampered by the snow, although since this, the floods have caused a lot of inconvenience. Our men are thinking of joining a motor club so that they can take part in trials and so be suited for any future weather.

When visiting Biggin Hill last week, a road had been cut through the snow which was then quite eight feet deep, and to allow vehicles to pass each other gaps had been cut in the snow at various points, so if you were unlucky and met a lady driver you had to reverse to the nearest gap. Oh, that I were born a lady! In leaving this subject, it would be as well to let you know that there are, even now (11/1/28), large quantities of snow left still, so one can imagine what a terrible time has been experienced by the people in this particular district.

Road widening is in progress in Artillery Place, and we feel sure the Reading and London drivers will appreciate the good work when finished, as it has necessitated careful driving to negotiate the very awkward entrance to the Stores at this Branch. Our Offices, too, will benefit by a more prominent position, giving us much more daylight.

Turning to the business side of life, a hearty welcome is extended to the 2nd Northamptonshire Regiment, just home from Khartoum, whose station is Sobraon Barracks, Colchester, and we are hoping, after usual furloughs, to settle down to a very happy time with them. From a few of the remarks passed by some of the members, the Regiment must have had a very trying voyage; still the thought of returning to "Blighty" no doubt helped to compensate for the bad journey.

We hoped all Branches had a satisfactory report for December and the work crowned by correct balances.

Once again the Cup Ties are here and in our next report we shall be able to probably forecast the Cup winners. That is, unless Reading, Portsmouth and Swansea get beaten in the 3rd Round Proper, because we think they stand a good chance. No, this is not sarcasm, although we have some good teams in London and can, after seeing the Saturday evening paper, alter our favour. So really, *our* team must be in the Final.

VERY NEW OFFICE BOY (who has just handed long columns of figures to employer): "I've added those figures up ten times, sir."

EMPLOYER: "Good boy!"

VERY NEW OFFICE BOY (handing up another slip of paper): "An' here's the ten answers, sir."

SOUTH BERKS BREWERY Co., LTD., NEWBURY.

The South Berks Brewery Thrift Club held its first Annual Dinner at the Dolphin Hotel on January 6th last, some 34 members being present. Unfortunately, one of our indoor and three of our outdoor staff were absent through illness. However, we wish them better luck next year.

After a capital spread, excellently served by the Company's tenant (Mrs. Booth), a very enjoyable and convivial evening was spent, the musical programme being in the hands of Mr. R. P. Burton who came over for the occasion.

In addition to "Club talent," Mr. G. W. Taylor, the popular tenant of the Hare & Hounds, Speen, was a "star turn" in songs and monologues.

Capt. A. S. Drewe—who brought over a party from Reading—was in the chair, and was ably supported by our worthy Secretary, Mr. W. H. Burton. The toasts of the Firm of Messrs. H. & G. Simonds Ltd. and the two Subsidiary Companies were heartily received.

The Joint Secretaries (Messrs. H. H. Stevens and P. Herridge)—who were unanimously re-elected for the ensuing year—gave a short resumé of the year's workings, and revealed the fact that a sum of nearly £160 was shared out.

A vote of thanks was then passed to those who had contributed to the musical programme, and a most successful evening was reluctantly brought to a close by the whole company joining hands and singing "Auld Lang Syne."

Needless to say Mr. C. B. Cox, who has recently joined us, and who we sincerely hope will settle down comfortably amongst us, has been "roped in" and will be "wheedled out" of a "bob" or so on Saturday.

NEMO.

FATAL ACCIDENT TO MR. F. C. BURTON.

The accident to Mr. Frederick Charles Burton, of Kimber's Almshouses, unfortunately had a fatal termination. Mr. Burton, who was crossing the London road at Speenhamland, fell in front of a motor. The owner of the car, a retired engineer, living at Putney Hill, who was proceeding from Bath to London, was only going slowly at the time, and so was able to pull up promptly, but Mr. Burton was pushed for about two yards along the greasy surface of the road. He was taken to the Newbury District Hospital suffering from concussion and shock. Owing to his advanced years—he was 86—his injuries terminated fatally. An inquest was held, when a verdict of Accidental Death, due to the fall and the resultant shock, was returned, the jury exonerating the driver of the car from all blame.

Mr. Burton, who was born in Hamstead Marshall, had lived and worked in Newbury for over sixty years. He was a carpenter and joiner, and when employed by the late Mr. William George Adey, was engaged on the work of the restoration of the Newbury Parish Church in 1867. He was afterwards with the firm of Mr. Samuel Elliott at the Albert Steam Joinery Works, doing much of the carpentry in connection with Greenham Lodge, Beenham

Court, and other well-known country houses which Mr. Elliott erected. He married a Miss Perry, who came of an old Newbury family, her father being for many years the collector of tolls in Newbury Market, Michaelmas Fair and St. Bartholomew's Fair, in which duties she succeeded him. Mr. Burton had spent the evening of his days at Kimber's Almshouses, where he had been resident for fourteen years, and was the oldest almsman. He was also the oldest Oddfellow in Newbury. Mr. Burton was widely respected by a large circle of townspeople. For his age he was an exceptionally healthy and active man, and but for the sad accident apparently might have lived for several years. Much sympathy is felt for his sons, Messrs. Arthur, Samuel and Walter Burton.

At the inquest, the first witness was Mr. Walter Burton, Secretary of the South Berks Brewery Co., who said deceased was his father and was a healthy, hearty and active man for his age, his only apparent infirmity being a slight deafness.

After hearing the evidence the Coroner said he should like to express to Mr. Burton his sincere sympathy in the death of his father, who was so well known as an old inhabitant of the town. He was sure also he would be expressing the wishes of the Jury in extending to the driver of the car their sympathy at the anxiety he must have been put to.

Mr. Burton thanked the Coroner and all those who had so kindly tended to his father after the accident. He also said he would like to associate himself with the Coroner's remarks about the driver of the car.

At the funeral a wreath was sent by the *Staff of the South Berks Brewery*.

HYPHE.

We owe an apology to the Editor and all readers of Hythe notes for our failure to produce any particulars of our doings for the January issue. This is the more regrettable as it was the first issue of the New Year, but owing to the exceptionally busy time it was found impossible to collect any interesting matter for publication.

Although rather late in the day, we wish the Directors and Staff in all parts, wherever they may be, "A Happy and Prosperous 1928."

"NO SNOW AT HYTHE."

We think the most important item of news from the Ancient Cinque Port is, that we had no snow here during the deluge that swept the country during Christmas. Each morning when we picked up our papers and saw the privations and sufferings of the people in other parts, it seemed most wonderful that here we were enjoying comparatively lovely weather. Boxing Day was very wet, but otherwise we have had nothing to grumble at. Kent seems to have suffered as much as anywhere, and a great deal of damage has been done by floods, especially in Canterbury, Maidstone and the surrounding neighbourhood.

Fortunately for all concerned the worst did not happen until after Christmas, so that we were able to get goods to our customers, even in the remotest parts, and no one went short. All connected with the transport deserve great praise for the good work done through this trying time.

The heavy rain that we experienced during the whole of the Bank Holiday was very unfortunate, as the charity match which Mr. Chapman had arranged in aid of the Kent Playing Fields Association had to be postponed. Mr. Chapman is the local Secretary of this very worthy object. The team included several of the members of the Brewery side, and Mr. Chapman was playing in goal. The match was with the Small Arms School, who had a very strong side, and a good game was anticipated. Undoubtedly there would have been a large number of spectators, given a fine day, and a good sum would have been netted for the Society which Mr. Chapman has so much at heart.

The match was eventually played off on the 14th, but unfortunately, owing to counter attractions, there was only a small company present. The morning was sunny, just like Spring, but during the afternoon a cool breeze swept across the ground which made it rather unpleasant for the spectators. It was an ideal day for football, however.

Owing to the match having to be postponed, Mr. Chapman's team underwent several changes, and with the exception of Mr. Hackney, who played centre forward, it was composed entirely of Brewery members. The following is the team which did duty:—*Goal*—A. P. F. Chapman; *Backs*—E. Blackman and L. Blackman; *Half-backs*—Rose, Benford and Cooper; *Forwards*—F. Blackman, Johnnings, Hackney (Egypt), Hymers and Chester.

It was a great game, and without doubt the two best men on the field were the opposing goalkeepers. Mr. Chapman put up a remarkable performance and nearly scored for his side on several

occasions. Although often found in the opposite goal and doing his best to put it through he yet managed to get back in time to clear all shots at his own goal—a marvellous performance. We think those training runs along the Canal Bank had something to do with it. We should recommend their continuance, and we venture to predict that there would be a great future for him in the winter game. Even now we think the football committee would sign him on and give him a trial in some of their matches. We are digressing. Half-time arrived with Mr. Chapman's side leading by 2—0, but on changing over the game went all against them, although they had quite as much of it as their opponents. The Small Arms School team netted the ball on three occasions, two from penalties. Mr. L. Blackman has much to answer for for these. We wonder if he was bribed, so that Mr. Chapman's abilities could be properly tested. Mr. Chapman failed miserably in his attempt to save them. We noticed a very, very large bottle of Milk Stout standing by one of the goal posts.

It was a great game, however, and those who turned up had good fun for their money. We have not heard at the moment of writing the amount of the gate and collection, but we believe that Mr. Chapman is quite satisfied, taking into consideration all the difficulties that had to be overcome.

1927 has been a notable year in the history of the Brewery from the social standpoint. It has seen the formation of the Football Club and a Concert Party, both of which are showing good results and proving that we not only brew good beer but turn out men who are useful in other directions. The Concert Party have already given two shows and have been much appreciated. They are all very keen, and we predict great things for them, if they only stick together. Their next appearance is, we understand, at the Brewery party, which is given every year by the Directors, to which the wives and children of all employees are invited, and which takes place on the 24th January. We hope to give a report of this event in the next issue, also our criticism of the Brewery Optimists.

FOOTBALL.

The bad patch that the team struck in November continued up to Christmas, and we lost two matches and drew one in succession. Our worst defeat was against Lympne (5—0) on our own ground. This score does not fairly represent the run of the game, as we had a lot of hard luck. Lympne had out an exceptionally strong side for the occasion. The greatest rivalry exists between the two teams, as several of our players played for them before the formation of the Brewery Football Club. Their

Captain too, is an old Brewery employee, which added to their wish to lower our colours. Unfortunately we had three of our best men away, Wonfer our brilliant goalkeeper having left and Rose and Cooper being on the sick list. Undoubtedly the best team won on the day's play, but, as Mr. Chapman so aptly remarked in a little speech he made at the Oddfellows Club, whom we were entertaining on the same evening, it was the first time the Brewery Football Club had been defeated since 1669, and although Lympne should be proud in having accomplished this downfall still we were not downhearted and we looked forward to the return. Since Christmas we have returned to winning form, beating Ashford Wanderers by 5—3 at Hythe, on the 7th. We were to have played Charing in the semi-final of the Ashford Charity Cup on neutral ground at Ashford, but owing to all the grounds in that neighbourhood being under water the match had to be postponed. We expect to win this and get into the final.

Great thanks are due to Mr. Spencer for the interest he takes in the Football Club and but for him we do not think it would have ever come into being. He is Chairman of the Committee and is always there at his post every Tuesday evening, giving good advice and all the help he possibly can. Attending meetings of the League Committees at Ashford takes up a good deal of his time, but he does it willingly to help along the good cause.

The Sports Club has paid several visits to Clubs in the neighbourhood for indoor games, but we are afraid we are not much good as we are always so easily beaten. We think our opponents enjoy our visits however and we are quite certain we do. Mr. Whiting and Mr. Peacock are worth special mention at Cards as they win sometimes and Mr. Chapman and Mr. Hollands at Darts, they win always. Mr. Middleton, of Cricket fame is quite good at Billiards also Mr. Benford (late of Reading) can put up a fair show, but beyond these few we are hopelessly outclassed. We have several younger members coming on, and in course of time we hope to have a team that will challenge Reading.

We have return engagements with the Oddfellows Clubs of Hythe, Folkestone and Cheriton, also with the local Conservative Club, and we have still to meet the Small Arms School, The British Legion and the Oddfellows Club of Dover, so we have a full list for the remainder of the season.

All interested in Football at Hythe congratulate Reading on the turn in their fortunes and we all hope it will continue. If Reading drop to the lower league again the Brewery may get some of the blame therefore the greatest efforts should be put forward to prevent this dire misfortune. Mr. Mullin, we believe, visits

Reading every time they have an at-home match and we know that Mr. Andrews wants to, which is very encouraging. Mr. McConnell spent a short time at Hythe, as a guest of Mr. Eric, during September, and was almost a daily visitor to the Brewery, so we think we should have a share in the praise (if any). We should not have put this forward a month ago.

Whilst on the social side of Brewery life, what about a correspondence Chess Club, Mr. Editor? We think this would be an excellent idea and help us to know one another better. There are no doubt several chess players employed at Reading or at the various branches, and if someone would undertake secretarial duties at Reading and a notice was inserted in the GAZETTE inviting entries, we think a competition could be run, say next winter.

Apropos of our remarks above about the salubrity of the climate of Hythe, and to its freedom from snow and storms, an idea enters our heads which we recommend to the publicity department at Headquarters. Hythe is a holiday resort and its chief industry is catering for visitors. Now H. & G. S. have very large interests here, and they also have hotels and stores, etc., in the large industrial areas from which our visitors come and where there is sure to be some one who would be influenced by a picture or note when deciding where they will go to for their holidays. Our point is this—why not advertise those towns where we have interests, such as Hythe in those other hotels, stores, etc.? We think a few views of Hythe, with a note of some of its attractions—such as sea and fresh water fishing, boating on the canal, facilities for sport, etc.—posted in likely places, would be the means of attracting someone and help to promote trade within the Empire—the H. & G. S. Empire. Every penny spent by visitors, even if they do not stay in one of our own hotels, benefits the firm either directly or indirectly. If there could be a note added that the Secretary or Manager would be pleased to give further information and a list of hotels, it would all be to the good. Here we have several hotels all catering for visitors at varying charges, so that prospective visitors are sure to find something to suit their needs.

We have no doubt that if the above is circulated through THE HOP LEAF GAZETTE and comment invited, the idea can be greatly improved upon.

TAMAR.

The new offices are now completed and we have entered into occupation. It is quite a treat to have a little "elbow room" after the cramped state of the old offices. For the first few days the office staff was almost overwhelmed by the light and airiness of the new premises in comparison with the old barley floor which has been used as a temporary measure during the alterations.

The slight inconveniences of the past few months have added to the appreciation of our new abode and we now look forward to the completion of the new Bottling Stores, which we hope will be accomplished in time for us to cope with a record summer trade.

It was with deep regret and sympathy we learned of the death of Mr. J. D. Hammond, of Farnborough Branch. We are sure his loss will be felt very greatly there and he will be hard to replace.

Our football team has not covered itself with glory during January, but rather "mud." The matches played were:—

		Goals.	v.		Goals.
Jan. 7th	Plymouth Tramways	8	v.	Simonds A.F.C.	2
Jan. 14th	Simonds A.F.C.	4	v.	Plymouth and Stonehouse Gas Co.	3

The match against the Plymouth Tramways was in the first round of the Devon Minor Cup and our defeat by the Trams in this Cup, combined with the beating we had from the Plymouth Civil Services in the Devon Junior Cup, shatter any hopes which had been entertained regarding our carrying off either of these trophies. However, the team will do well to bear in mind "If at first you don't succeed"



The appended photograph taken at Exeter last summer (?) shows some of our supporters of the 3rd Field Brigade, Royal Artillery, enjoying a bottle of "S.B.," which they style "Some Beer" and "Simply Beautiful."

We are very pleased to see Mr. H. G. Williams, the Reading Member of Parliament, has been appointed Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Board of Trade. He is to be the principal speaker

at the annual banquet of the Devonport Mercantile Association to be held on the 1st February. It is something out of the ordinary for us to get a member of His Majesty's Government as the principal speaker for this banquet, although we have had some very well-known personages on former occasions.

It is very remarkable that Reading should have had such distinguished Members during the past twenty years: firstly, the Marquis of Reading, then Sir Leslie Orme Wilson, and now Mr. Williams. There must be something in the air, or is it the —?

DOCTOR: "I have to report, Sir, that you are the father of triplets."

AGITATED FATHER (a Politician): "Impossible! I'll demand a recount."

FARNBOROUGH.

THE LATE MR. JAMES DAVID HAMMOND.

We regret to have to record the death of Mr. James David Hammond, Chief Clerk at Farnborough Branch, at the age of 67 years.

He was in business, as usual, on Saturday, the 7th January, leaving at mid-day as was his wont. He was taken ill early on Saturday evening and passed beyond early on the following Monday morning, regretted by all.

Mr. Hammond commenced business with the Firm at Hove Branch in 1878 and was transferred to Farnborough as Chief Clerk in March, 1891, which position he occupied until the time of his death.

Had he lived until August next he would have completed fifty years' service with the Firm.

Mr. Hammond was a native of Brighton and in his younger days was a good swimmer. It is related that, with companions, he used to swim out to sea with his breakfast on a tray and partake whilst treading water. On one occasion he nearly lost his life.

Mr. Hammond was a most quiet living man, and spent his life between Farnborough office and home. He took a great interest in the local Baptist Chapel. He was a member of the Farnborough and North Camp Lodge of Freemasons, but had not attended for some years. He was a most trustworthy, punctual and conscientious man. He leaves a widow and three sons.

The funeral took place at Farnborough cemetery and was attended by several tenants of the Firm, also representatives of

local Freemasons' Lodge; Messrs. H. F. Lindars, C. Bennett, A. R. Bradford represented the Firm from Reading. Others present included Messrs. A. Goodall, W. H. Wigley, J. M. Hammond, E. Gosney, F. J. Russell, F. Howlett, G. Laney, etc., from Farnborough Stores.

EGYPT.

Dear Sir,

A FEW WORDS OF WISDOM FROM EGYPT:—

The Home life of a Nation is its most beautiful feature.

Sleep is a blessed thing, an easy conscience is the best woer of repose.

Jealousy is the cause of much trouble.

It is only the fool who perseveres in his error.

Every man has his limitations, only the wise man knows them.

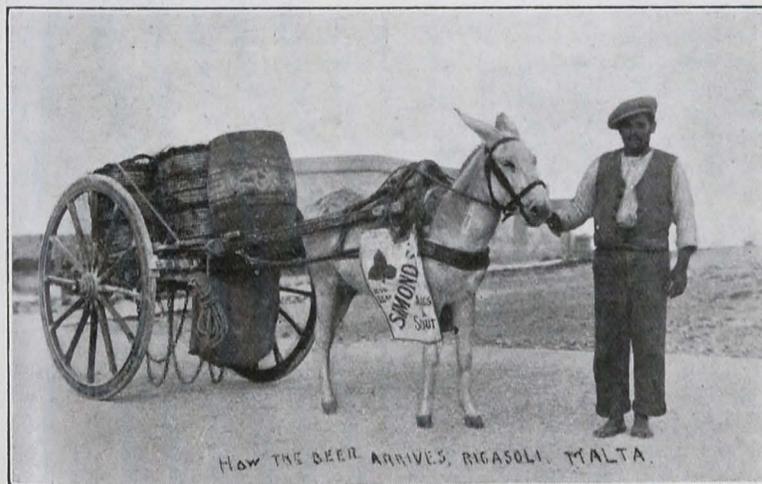
Some men are wiser than they seem, many men seem wiser than they are.

Moderation in all things is seldom wrong.

The world is divided into those who are and those who are not found out.

Only Christianity stands between civilization and the jungle.

The pillars of civilization ofttimes seem very wobbly.



HOW THE BEER ARRIVES, RIGASOLI, MALTA.

Published by kind permission of the photographers, Messrs. Foster & Hopkins.

BRIGHTON.

It is anticipated that the chief item of news in this number of GAZETTE will be the weather, of which we had a strange blend during the Christmas holidays and the week following.

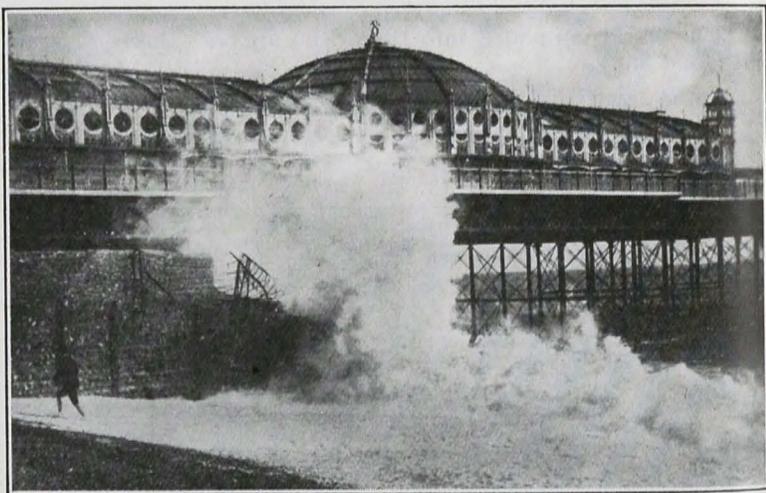
Here, the "Christmas-card" Christmas came this year for a change and was not particularly welcome.

It afforded some excellent exercise on the hills just outside the town, where winter sports became very popular, and tobogganing was freely indulged in. It is said that our manager had several spills from a really fine sledge belonging to another member of the staff.

That vehicle is now in store against another such snowfall, which we in Brighton rarely experience.

We are thankful we had no floods, but very heavy seas in the Channel gave some inspiring effects along the coast.

Our sympathies went out to those responsible for the transport at Reading and Branches, where the snowdrifts and succeeding floods must have caused much anxiety as to how to keep customers supplied.



Rough Sea at Brighton.

On Sunday, January 15th, two of our old Brighton fishermen, Matthew and Mark Gunn, celebrated their 95th birthday. These hardy twins are descended from one, Martha Gunn, who taught King George IV, when a boy, to swim. Many are the tales told of this old lady, who the King delighted to have talks with as he grew older. On one occasion, so the tale goes, the King met Martha emerging from the kitchen of the Pavilion, then the Royal

Palace, with her petticoats bulging more than usual. He thereupon engaged her in conversation, gradually edging her near to a roaring fire in the room. Very soon a stream of molten butter appeared on the floor. There the story ends.

To those who aspire to live to 95, come to Brighton to reside.

We congratulate Reading on their splendid victory in the third round of the English Cup and hope they will continue their successes.

Apropos of the very interesting account of the last Wayzgoose of the Firm, when Brighton was visited. Our foreman, Albert Smith, can remember the event and recalls that the caterer for the mid-day meal had cooked the meats in a none-too-clean copper, with the result that some illness was caused amongst the visitors, but those who took a sea trip in the afternoon were relieved of the uncomfortable after-effects that those who preferred to stay on land experienced.

We are sorry to hear of the death of Mr. Hammond, of Farnborough. He commenced his long career with the Firm at the Brighton Branch, and our foreman remembers him in those early days.

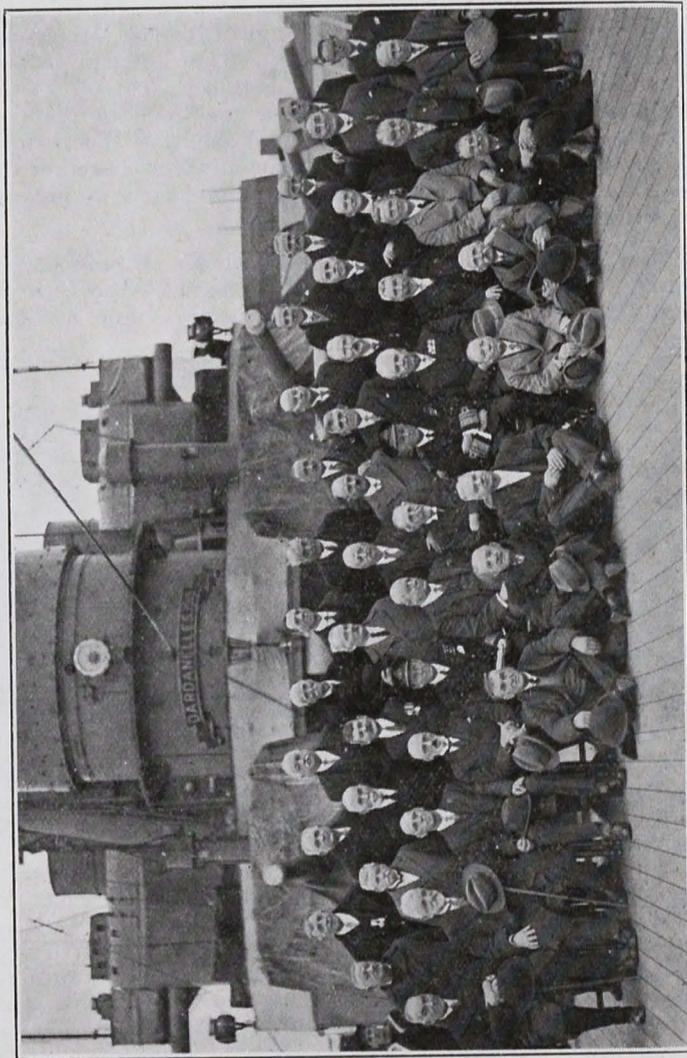
PORTSMOUTH.

OLD SHIPMATES' TEA PARTY.

"RALEIGH'S" CREW IN THE EIGHTIES.

On Tuesday, January 3rd, in the afternoon, a wondering, admiring and critical party of about fifty "Old Salts" arrived on board the 35,000-ton battleship, H.M.S. *Nelson*. They were members of the crew of the cruiser *Raleigh*, on the African Station from 1885 to 1888, and they were assembled on the invitation of two former midshipmen in that ship, in the persons of Admiral Sir Osmond de B. Brock, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., who is now Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth, and Vice-Admiral The Hon. Sir Hubert Brand, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., who as the present Commander-in-Chief of the Atlantic Fleet flies his flag in the *Nelson*. Some of the members of the party had not seen each other for nearly forty years, and the joy when old friends met was good to see. Sir Hubert Brand, who was in uniform, greeted the guests as soon as they made their way up the gangway and set foot on board. There were hearty handshakes as the old men, most of whom had long since left the service, and were white-haired and bent, recalled incidents in their service afloat together. Most of them were Lower Deck Ratings, but among the visitors were several officers who have since risen to high rank and are now on the retired list. The visitors made a tour of inspection of the *Nelson*, and it was then that they started comparing life afloat in

the eighties with conditions of service to-day. The old *Raleigh* was not a quarter the size of the *Nelson*, and she was in the fleet when sail was still used and electricity was regarded almost with suspicion. Some of the old men were so engrossed in their reminiscences that it was with some difficulty they were marshalled to the Admirals' Quarters, where tea was served and more stories of the eighties were related.



This photograph is reproduced by permission of Mr. Stephen Critch, Photographer, Southsea. The Re-union of the "Raleigh" Shipmates on board H.M.S. "Nelson," at Portsmouth.

WELCOME HOME.

ROYAL MARINES RETURN FROM CHINA.

The last batch of officers and men of the 12th Battn. Royal Marines, which has formed part of the Defence Force at Shanghai for the past twelve months, arrived at Portsmouth, Friday afternoon, January 13th. The party, consisting of 6 officers and 198 other ranks, reached Fratton Station a few minutes before 4 o'clock, having taken leave of a number of their comrades when the P. & O. Liner *Mantua*, in which the Battalion made the homeward voyage, called at Plymouth, while the Chatham contingent parted company from the officers and men for Eastney after the ship berthed at Tilbury.

Large crowds assembled at Fratton Station to await the arrival of the train, and the Divisional Band played the Frothblowers' Anthem, which was all the rage when the Battalion embarked for the Far East last January and to the strains of which they left these shores.

On reaching the Barracks the officers and men, who marched through the gates with the unmistakable swing of the famous Corps, were formally received and welcomed back by Colonel-Commandant A. G. Little, C.M.G., R.M., commanding the Portsmouth Division.

The Battalion was approximately a thousand strong when it sailed for China, and 500 men were sent home when the Defence Force was reduced in the autumn.

The wit of past ages will better bear the adjectives of praise by the citement of a fair sample. The qualities of mind undoubtedly change and there is nowhere a better proof of the fact to be found than in consideration of what at one time or another made people laugh. Below we give a few quaint verses taken from the *Oxford Chronicle*, January 3rd, 1902. We must apologise to Oxford Branch, but trust the verses will be found of interest. The verses were compiled by one, Verney Orme.

An unnamed Oxford Undergraduate is held responsible for the following. It is said that the notorious Earl of Rochester put to him this question :

Pray, Mr. Student, can you tell
Which is the nearest way to h—ll.

the retort being :—

Some say Woodstock, I say nay,
For Rochester's the nearest way.

Banbury was, in the days of puritanism, ultra pure ; so much so that drunken Barnaby places his finger on it thus :—

To Banbury came I, O profane one,
Where I saw a puritane one
Hanging of his cat on Monday
For killing of a mouse on Sunday.

East Ilsley has an excellent word for sportsmen and doctors :—
 Ilsley, remote amongst the Berkshire Downs,
 Claims these distinctions o'er her sister towns,
 Far famed for sheep and wool, though not for spinners,
 For Sportsmen, Doctors, Publicans and Sinners.

North Marston once had a rector, Sir Rev. John Shorne, whose virtues gave him, after his death, a popular canonization. He is credited with giving the village a well, which he produced after the manner of Moses. His chief performance was, however, much more difficult, and very justly was recorded upon the church east window. It was there briefly stated :—

Sir John Shorne,
 Gentleman born,
 Conjured the devil into a boot.

Not far away is Wing, said to have been confiscated along with other possessions from a Member of the Hampden family for striking the Black Prince when, with his father, he was visiting Great Hampden. The ode commemorating the occasion reads :—

Tring, Wing and Ivinghoe,
 Hampton did forego
 For striking of a blow
 And glad he did escape so.

The following verse comes from Sunningwell, being sung at Shrovetide :—

Beef and bacon's
 Out of season,
 I want a pan
 To parch my peas on.

SALISBURY.

What lovely, seasonable weather we experienced at Christmas time! So said some people. It is nice to hear these cheerful souls talk that way, but really it is sometimes difficult to agree with them regarding the desirability of the snow and frost when it all comes together, with a little rain to help make things nice and slippery.

In Salisbury and district, as at Reading and other places, it was bad enough when the snow came, but far worse after it had all frozen. It was in the outlying villages, though, that the real hardships were felt, and the villages on the Plain must have been very much relieved when the thaw set in, as it was impossible in many cases to get supplies of food through to them.

At this Branch, although cut off by road for our supplies of beer, we were, for the most part, able to carry on as usual and relief soon arrived from Reading by rail.

Perhaps after a good old-fashioned winter, as some people call it, we shall again have an old-fashioned summer, and we will hope it will be better than the last one.

Most people have heard of the Wiltshire "Moonrakers," but perhaps, all do not know the actual legend.

The story in brief is that, years ago, when smuggling was rife, a publican's two men, "down 'Vizes way," were bringing home, by night, some kegs of brandy. But whilst crossing a bridge, the donkey drawing the cart bolted and the barrels fell into the stream. As the men were trying to rescue them, an Excise Officer rode up. The men told him they were raking for a cheese which had fallen into the water, at which the "'Zizemin" laughing "to see a crazy-headed coon, Reak at tha shadder of tha moon," rode off, and left the ready-witted countrymen to rescue the floating kegs of contraband spirit. And though, to this day, people tease "All Willsheer voke about tha cheese," the latter can retaliate that "Yer cute Excisemin vrum tha town, Wur took in wie a Willsheer clown."

A certain member of our staff one night, just before Xmas, on awakening from sleep, found, to his surprise, that he had got into bed with his collar and tie on. There is no prize for the best solution as to the manner of his celebrations.

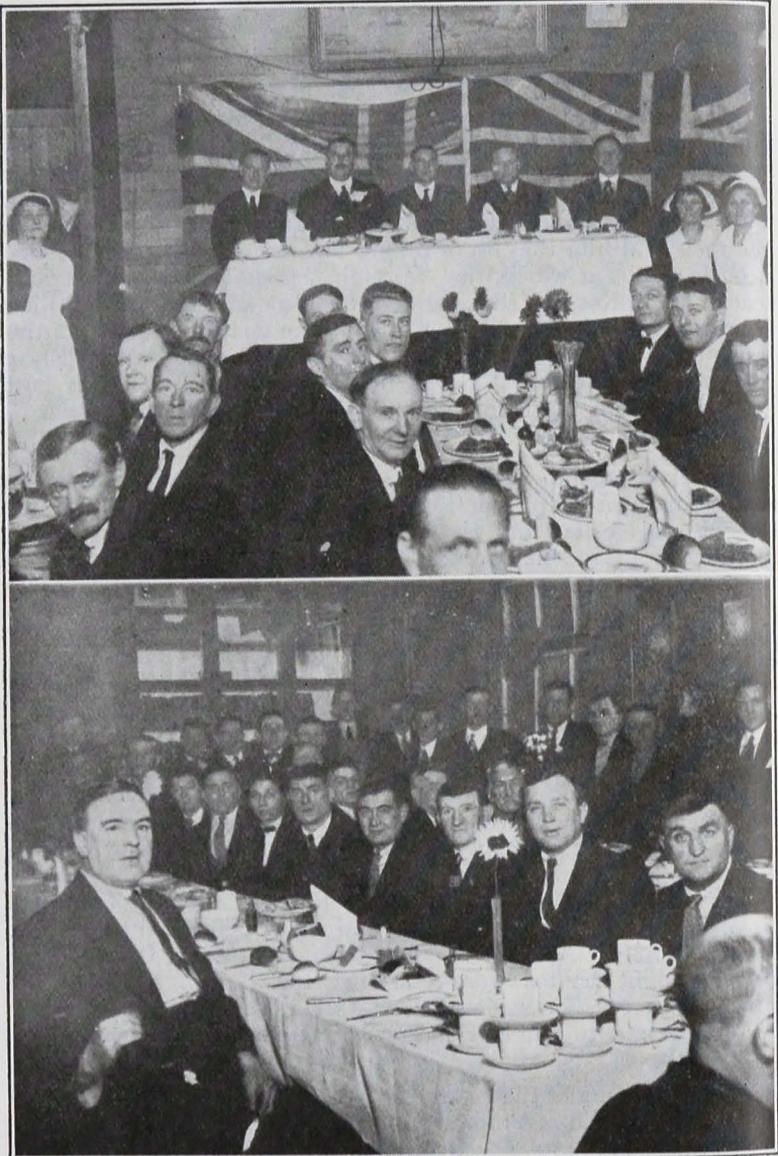
A terrier belonging to a well-known Scotchman has just contracted the habit of drinking whisky—*His Master's Vice*.

SWANSEA.

Bravo, Reading! All here at Swansea congratulate you on your great success in the 3rd Round of the F.A. Cup, much to the chagrin of all our Branches (except Woolwich) who, at the time of writing, no doubt, look forward to a successful replay by Charlton Athletic at Bury. We sincerely hope that the Reading Football Team will go far in the Competition this year and will manage to lift this most coveted trophy. Apropos to our notes of last month, the following two flashlight photos were taken at the British Legion Club, Gorseinon, on the occasion of their Annual Dinner. We are sorry these were not to hand in time for our January number of THE HOP LEAF.

The notes under the heading, "Wonderful Transport Organisation," published in last month's number of the GAZETTE, were very interesting, and prove conclusively the wonderful organisation under the capable jurisdiction of Mr. H. Simonds, in dealing with transport under such trying and very dangerous weather conditions, especially at such a busy time as the Xmas period. Fortunately,

we at Swansea and South Wales in general were treated very leniently, compared with Reading, by the Clerk of the Weather.



Annual Dinner, British Legion Club, Gorseinon.

Bradley & Son, Ltd., "The Crown Press," Caxton Street, Reading.