

to be assistant in the Jet department where I was always at hand to act as a kind of Secretary to the Manager when the correspond^{ence} was too much for the shorthand writer to tackle along. Here my slight knowledge of shorthand proved useful.

The business at this time consisted of but two departments Jet and Silver and had been built up from nothing by the proprietors upon the work of the Whitley fishermen who made Jet-ornaments in their spare time. ~~At the time~~ ^{When} I joined, there were a

few men engaged in making ^{upon the premises} set ornaments
of a superior character under the
leadership of John Linstill whose sister
Mary Linstill was at that time a popular
Yorkshire novelist - living at Whitby. I soon
got on very friendly terms with her brother
who was interested in the monogram designs
I used to do occasionally. He was an intelligent
and skilful workman and his sister was
the first person of any standing to give
me any encouragement in the little
writing I did now and then.

The shorthand writer I have mentioned
was the most rapid and accurate stenographer
I have ever seen, and I have known many.

He came from Birkbeck College and is
still counted among my friends although
the one story I may tell of him would make
the fact surprising. He was a strongly
built man with a beard and mop of hair
both turning grey and on one occasion
asked me to guess his age. I looked at
him and thought it wise to under-^{rate} rather
it,
than over-estimate his ^{own} age. I said to

myself "You look forty but may be younger. Shall I say thirty-five - you can't be less." So to give him the benefit of the doubt I guessed Thirty-four. His eyes twinkled with fun and he said "you're eight years out" "well" I said "I should scarcely have thought you were forty-two" "Forty-two" he all but yelled "Jim twenty-six"

Many years later when he was clean-shaven I asked him if he remembered the incident. "I should think so" he said "It nearly cost me my life. I told it one day to a man who was

shaving me and he laughed so much it was a wonder he didn't cut my throat."

Our principal was a very strewd but self educated man and after he had built up a big business of many departments and went for an ^{extended} holiday cruise he was reported as saying that 'he was glad to be on 'terra cotta' again'. But like

most men who force their way through to such a position he was wonderfully competent and made a success of everything that he touched. His favourite motto was

"Procrastination is the thief of time," and
 at last in order to impress it upon us
 all he had the saying carefully framed
 to hang up where we could all see and
 profit by it. Unfortunately he could not
 decide just where to hang it & for many
 a long day it remained in his office.

I was with him for a full ten years and
 under his guidance opened first the gold dept
 and then the diamond dept. Unfortunately
 the remuneration did not keep pace with
 the promotion and seeing no prospect of

greatly bettering my position except by becoming a country traveller, a berth I did not as a newly-married man could I decided to look about for a more remunerative if not more congenial occupation. Thinking I had secured this I gave a week's notice and a day or two later was astounded by the principal coming and saying to me "I don't want you to leave thinking I didn't appreciate you so I thought of giving you a gold watch". I have it now after nearly fifty

an 18th lever in a hunter-case that still
 keeps time like a chronometer. He was
 very cordial to me at leaving and

shortly afterwards invited me to a dinner

he gave to the firm at the Holborn ^{Restaurant} ~~House~~

It was here I remember he was suddenly

called upon to say 'grace'. It may have

been for the first time in his life but-

I never saw him so much embarrassed.

He hesitated for a minute or two and then

said "For what we are about to receive, or
~~we~~

may we all be truly thankful er er. I hope
 you'll all enjoy your dinners."

Kept in touch with him even after he became blind and it was not long before his death that he told me he had in mind to write a book about business that he thought would be of practical help to others (I should have been surprised if it were not) and that he would like me to take it down from his dictation and whatever he got for it should be mine. But the scheme got no further.

During my ten years at jewellery there was much that occurred not

directly connected perhaps with the business, but of considerable importance in my life. For one thing in the very early eighties

I had an attack of what was later labelled

neurasthenia which was probably of a

much more serious character than I

realized at the time. I will not attempt

to describe the start of it nor the symptoms

of the illness during the many months

it lasted. Possibly if I or my people had

been better off I should not have had

the attack or if I had it would not have

been of such a prolonged character. I
will only say that my recovery dates from
the intervention of Mr. J. T. Magruder one
of my earliest Barbican friends it will
be remembered who at last prevailed
upon me to go and see his own doctor,
a very wise physician who began by
recommending a break and a change
was sensible enough to prescribe a
routine which I was sensible enough
to follow and at last began to shake me
from my trouble. I shall never forget

what I went through in the meantime
yet I have since been glad to have had
the experience for it has been the means of
a self-mastery that has been of quite
incalculable value to me and in addition
it has enabled me to see ^{not} of serving others
similarly afflicted to get up out of the
slough of Despond in which they were.

The fact that this trouble came upon me
after the revolution in thought had begun
no doubt added to it but was in no
way the cause of it.

In 1883 came the event I have already
alluded to meeting with the mate to whom
I am still attached with more than cords
of steel. That our meeting was soon
followed by serious events in her family
will be realized when I say that before the
year was out in fact shortly after her
18th birthday her father died leaving
a wife and five daughters three young
boys whose ages ranged from 11 to 4
and another son who was born before
that fatal year ended. The four eldest

girls had been very wisely dealt with by their parents, three of ~~these~~ them very soon acquiring first class certificates under the London School Board & the other occupying a managerial position that made her self supporting. When I add that her mother developed a serious illness which was accentuated by the loss of her infant posthumous son it will be readily seen why the wedding of the three eldest girls was delayed. ~~At~~

At last in July 1889 the two younger

of the three eldest daughters were married
on the same day at the same church &
I was bridegroom to the youngest of the
girls - one of the three schoolmistresses.

Someone has said that the first year
of married life is not always the
happiest and our early experience went
to confirm this gloomy view. In the first
place immediately afterwards it became
clear that I must set about making a
bigger income and in November 1889 I
took the step, it seems now a hazardous

one, of transferring myself from the Jewellery
 to Advertising. My later experience amply
 justified it but for the first year or two
 I had the feeling of having burnt my boats
 without first learning to swim. It seemed
 to me that making bricks without straw
 was child's play to what was expected from
 me, and my depression was the most
 serious maybe I have ever experienced.

My position fortunately was secure for
 a year at least but as the days dragged
 by my prospects of success seemed to

to grow darker and on the last day
of June 1890 our first-born son arrived

He came to a troubled house however
and was not a week old when I was
knocked down in Watling Street by an
empty crate falling from the top of a
piled up Railway van. Fortunately
the day was wet and my umbrella broke
the violence of the blow but it was
of such a character that my head did not
cease to ache for three or four months
and owing to conditions at home I

was obliged, and fortunately able, for about a week to conceal the accident from my wife and to get what treatment I needed, apart from the doctor, at my mother's home.

I would not choose perhaps to dwell on the dark side of what should have been the most joyful period of my life till then but for the fact that it was not long after this before relief came and in a manner that seems even to-day worth recounting.

then the weird conclusion that there was
and could be nothing in the world worth
fearing except fear itself - and such fears
was of course absurd. I am not in the
least exaggerating when I say that this
was the most crucial point ⁱⁿ of what I feel to
be my spiritual evolution, or rather
revolution. I was by no means at the end
of my troubles but I feel I was at the end
of my hopeless troubling. Until then I seemed
to be sinking in a sea of despair but I
had now clutched a rope which still gave

me a feeling of re-assurance even when
the waters closed over my head again as
they certainly did.

I do not propose, at this point anyway, to
enumerate the fears I faced at this time. I will
only say most positively that the list was as
complete as could be. In making these
~~whimpering and discursive notes~~ I have
~~aimed at doing two things: to set down as~~
~~clearly as possible the view of man's position~~
~~in the Universe~~ ^{at} which I have arrived after at
least half a century of what I regard as ~~rather~~

~~thinking and to state the conclusions at which~~
~~I feel compelled to arrive in regard to that~~
~~universe) It will doubtless have been noted that~~
~~I have in my notes approached the subject~~
~~much in the way that I took to arrive at my present~~
~~views. This I think is better than if I began by~~
~~presenting my final conclusions before detailing~~
~~the steps which ultimately led to them.~~

From the time of leaving Barbican up to my
wedding the ties connecting me with any form
of church were gradually relaxing. I was
married in the Church of England and

occasionally attended the services at the same Church where my youngest brother-in-law was a chorister. Later I got into the habit but only for a time of attending a local Baptist Chapel at which my fellow bridegroom played the organ. I mostly sang in the choir on Sunday mornings. I might possibly have continued at Hare Court but it was too far away. I was drawn to attend church or chapel largely by my love of music as well as by a love of mixing with my fellows and hearing what was to be said by educated men in the pulpit, even against the views I held.

The Baptist minister was an eloquent and sincere man of broad views whom I came to know personally and certainly liked. He became eventually chairman of the Baptist Union and a celebrated preacher.

In spite of these things in his favour I began to feel more and more that I was in a false position both in his choir and congregation.

For a time I went more or less frequently to a Presbyterian Church which had the advantage of being much nearer my home & where the preacher was already well known and regarded as highly intellectual & broad.

minded. But one Sunday morning I heard
 him speaking to the children and telling them
 that they would shortly be going out into the
 world and he begged ^{them} while laying up treasure
 for themselves also to lay up treasure in
 heaven. I was bold enough to write and
 ask the reverend gentleman his authority
 for the also, and he replied that the laying
 up of ~~the~~ treasure upon earth was not wrong
 per-se but only if it offended the single eye.
 I am afraid I wound up the brief discussion
 by saying I thought he would agree that if

Added to the troubles I have mentioned was the fact that I had broken with my orthodox past so far as religion was concerned and began to feel that I was without God or hope in the world. It was exactly at this stage, and I know well the very spot place where it began that I took myself in hand and determined to face and examine my fears and see just what it was I feared. I looked as clear-eyed as I could at all the possibilities of the situation and came to what seemed

the laying-up of treasure upon earth were
not unchristian it was at least un-Christ-like

Today nothing, I fear, would tempt me to engage
in such a discussion but I note it here as
a passing indication of the slackening of
the ties binding me to places of public
worship and soon after the practice of going
completely lapsed.

But meanwhile events were still trying
to the point of terrifying. Our first-born boy
was a fine fellow, well-grown and walking
easily at 1 year old. His sister arrived

when he was a year and four months old
and while his mother was still in bed with
her he was seized with a mysterious illness
which we fought as well as we then knew how
under the guidance of the local doctor but
three months later he died a death I
cannot bring myself to describe here after
47 years. The beginning of his trouble was
an alarming swelling of the lymphatic
gland in the abdomen & the final stage
was meningitis. I cannot refrain from
stating my belief, since confirmed by

medical men who heard the symptoms,
that he was a victim of vaccination. He
had been vaccinated by the G.P. three times
and on the third occasion to make it certain
of taking the vaccine was rubbed in.

I have been pined three times since because
I would not have any other child vaccinated.

Those who have an inclination to things
psychic may be interested in two happenings
on the day he passed. I was alone in
the room with him on the night of his going.
I was not eager for anyone else to witness

the horror - when several of those who were waiting in another room declared they heard singing apparently proceeding from the room where he and I were. About the same time a little before he went, my wife's brother came into the house; he was undoubtedly psychic and saw as he told us next day the little fellow coming down the stairs.

Having these two incidents in mind I wrote

for his card the lines
 'we held his dear hands but we could not detain him,
 The voice of the Lord was so urgent and sweet,
 And the angels sang jubilate so to regain him
 His soul unpolled, unsullied his feet.'

It will be seen that though I had broken with orthodoxy, its terms still came ^{naturally} ~~away~~ to me in moments of trial. What comfort I was able to take in these very trying times came I feel sure from other than ordinary religious sources. Apart from the experience I have alluded to when I faced my fears I had begun to feel less alone by finding that many others had passed through similar periods of doubt and depression & had come to the light. I found Carlyle's Sartor Resartus very illuminating and on

the whole cheering. Emerson helped me too and at last I came into mental touch with Tolstoy from whom I feel I have gained more than from any other writer. Here was a man, whose position as one of the greatest novelists of all time was freely accorded by the verdict of critics all over the world, brought up in the strict Greek Orthodox Church, who from religious conviction not only radically altered his literary output but renounced his very considerable property including

his copyrights and, although still living with his wife and family, dressed as a peasant & in a great measure shared the lives of the so-called Communist people. This was a phenomenon indeed.

Tolstoy influenced ^{me} more than the Clarion men, whose Socialism however, even before the penny edition of Merrie England, appeared had left its mark upon my thinking. So much

so that I became a member of the Socialist Club at the junction of Shoe Lane & St Andrew's Hill Holborn. Who remembers it now?

Yet, small as was the establishment and cheap
as were the meals served there, the members
included the names of many who were
either then or have since become well-known.
Tom Main was I remember very friendly &
always doing his best to make young members
feel at home. Miss Gladstone who afterwards
became Wm. Ramsay Macdonald was a
very valued official I believe. Then there was
Harry (now Lord) Snell. The Rev. Percy Dearmer
and his wife Mabel Dearmer were to be met
there and the husband and wife poets

Ernest and Dollie Radford. Dr & Mrs Panther

took lunch there; so did Holliday Sparling

the husband of May Morris, daughter of the

Poet. Mr & Mrs Sidney Webb I only saw upon

one occasion, and I think the only time

I ever spoke to the Bowler of the Clarion

was on his only visit there that I can recall

Sixpenny fish dinners were I remember

a well patronised item on the menu. On

one occasion I found the fish uneatable

and left it. When G. G. Desmond, then, I believe

Poor Man's lawyer, came in, I warned him

but the dark-eyed waitress said "Don't you believe him - it's beautiful." Of course he ordered it and left it. I pointed out the fact and told the girl in a jesting spirit I should warn others off fish. "If you do," she said "I'll make them have it." And she kept her word in several more cases.

The Club Fancy did not have a long life and was not exclusive in its membership as it was there I met J. C. Kenworthy of Croydon and F. R. Henderson later of the Bomb Shop who both regarded themselves

if they admitted any label at all, as Tolstoyan Anarchists. Remember on one occasion feeling a shock of surprise when Jo Foygreen of the International Peace & Arbitration Society said to me "You're a bit of an anarchist, aren't you?"

It was the company I was keeping I suppose.

One rather unexpected result of my change from jewellery to advertising was the opportunity it gave me for extending my acquaintance. I found that to get the new business necessary if I

was to succeed at all I must endeavour
to interest desirable clients with new
designs which had perforce to be of my
own invention. In this way I was able
^{towards} ~~at~~ the end of my first year to secure
a considerable "Chocolate" account by
a simple and economical design
which my principal told me was the
envy of at least one of the two biggest
of English Chocolate manufacturers.

Another, smaller design, brought
me into touch with the Social side

of the Salvation Army where I made the acquaintance of Captain Webster the picturesque and fascinating Secretary to the then Major Lamb. I may say here that my friendship with 'Teddie' Webster lasted not only long after he left the Army but lasted until he passed away last year, while ^{with} Commissioner Lamb when we meet very rarely nowadays, I am still upon very friendly terms. I always feel that he and Mrs Lamb have been two of the greatest

of the S. A.

My design was for an adlet. of
 Salvation Army matches "Lights in
 Darkest England," an industry then
 conducted under Commissioner Cadman
 a very remarkable little man, getting
 nearly blind then, who had been I
 think before his conversion a Chimney
 Sweep and prize-fighter. I remember
 going at Captain Webster's request to
 sing & recite to the match-girls at their
 factory and one of the funniest

things I can remember was a speech by Commissioner Cadman taking as his theme a humorous recital of mine. It convulsed not only the girls but the fairly eclipsed reciter and gave me an idea of what had brought the little man to his present rank.

Webster & I became such friends that we frequently dined together and I recall that I used to meet him with other officers at an underground restaurant in Queen Victoria Street.

owned by one "Barge" nothing I fear
 but my friendship would have taken
 me there as a squib I wrote at the
 time may testify

"Oh, Barge, descending to thy cell
 Is much like going down to hell
 And you, who gaily revel
 In sizzling our misguided 'soles'
 And 'sich like' on your kitchen coals,
 Why you are like the devil"

I believe others beside Captain
 Webster saw the effusion and did
 not condemn it as one might have expected

I had known of William Booth when

his organisation was known as the
Christian Mission - I was at Lerrains at
the time and I remember that a driver
of theirs was the father of two of the earlier
of the Salvation Army lassies. His wife
was a speaker at the meetings and
upon occasion when I was silly and
ignorant enough to express a boy's
doubts about the suitability of women
preaching her husband said to me
with a flourish of his whip - I was driving
with him at the time - "Ah, it's all a

question of compacity. Now my wife has a much greater compacity for preaching than I have. All the same he was one of the most earnest, if narrow, men of the type I have met & would I imagine be as ready to give himself as he was his family to the Cause. On another occasion I remember him saying to me "Yes, my boy, that's it 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me'"

Although after meeting Webster I

saw and heard the General upon several occasions I only spoke to him once that was upon Hadley Wood Station - I was living at New Barnet - and I was able to give him a piece of information he needed but what it was I quite forget. I was never in the least drawn to his army but there was no denying the tremendous force of his character and I shall not readily forget the sight of him at his wife's funeral procession in Queen Victoria Street.

I may not have mentioned before that I had started rhyming in some amount of earnest by reason of the encouragement given to me by Frank Earl one of my earliest Youth's Institute Chorus, who also had the distinct such as it maybe, of giving me my first commission to write verse for profit. At one time it made a small but quite welcome addition to my income. It was the same old friend that gave me the introduction that led me to take up advertising. During the twelve years for

1889 to the end of 1901 I found time to polish up
 my rhyming to the point of completing
 a set of twenty-four Triolets - two for each
 month, one purporting to be what the
 poet sent to the magazines & the other what
 he said to himself about the same month.

The work would not pass ^{now} the test of my
 own or my daughter Dorothy's criticism
 but drawing a bow at a venture I sent
 the twenty-four items to Robert Barr as
 editor of the Detroit Free Press (London edition)
 which had quite a measure of popularity

here and produced I well remember
excellent Christmas numbers at ⁶ which
consisted in the main of a complete
story by Robert Barr (or Luke Sharp
his nom-de-plume on the paper) or by
his brother James Barr who at that time
wrote under the name of Angus Even
Abbott. To my great joy I had a very
humorous letter from Robert Barr
enclosing a cheque for a farthing, drawn
by himself, and what made me rejoice
that while he could not use my verse

in the Detroit Free Press he hoped to use it in a new magazine that he and Jerome K. Jerome were about to start. This proved to be 'The Idler' and my rhymes illustrated appeared in the first two numbers & then ceased which of course made the others useless. I wrote and asked the reason and was invited to call where I saw the sub-editor, G. B. Burgin, (the man who has since produced novels by the score and whose nephew is now a distinguished Cabinet Minister) and

Robert Barr himself whom I had not
previously met. ^{He was a most amiable man and} the little matter in dispute
was settled at once. G.B. Burgin & I were on
friendly terms for years - I wonder now
he is in the eighties if he remembers me.

To round off this section when James Barr
started "The Harlequin" a short-lived humor
weekly, he accepted (and paid for) some
verse of mine which I had revised much
to its advantage at the suggestion of his
brother. I wonder if anyone reads
Robert Barr to-day. Some of his work

would I guess be worth it. I have on my shelves one volume "The tempestuous Petticoat, which I must remember to try again some day.

Even while I was in the 'Jewellery' I had written a few humorous sketches for recital which some time afterwards I offered to "Wit and Wisdom" a literary weekly to which a rising young writer J. M. Barrie occasionally contributed.

I was introduced to the editor by J. B. B. another Youth's Institute chum, who was

then making his way in the printing and publishing world, and my 'stuff' was accepted and paid for. This was about the time of the advent of Anonimo and I well remember that one day I was talking to Henry Klein the music publisher then on Holborn Viaduct who had just published a song of which the words were mine when a friend of his came up to whom he introduced me. It was Mr. Harold Harnsworth (now Lord Rothermere) and when he

heard that I was contributing to "wit
and wisdom" he said, with scorn, "what's
the use of writing for that? They only pay
5/- a column. Why don't you write for

Answers - we pay a guinea a column

There was I fear too little of the finance
about me and too little of the ready-
writers of what Answers might be
inclined to take to adopt his
suggestion. As a matter of fact - I
have always been too busy earning
enough to meet the demands made

upon a small income to devote the time necessary to make my pen a very profitable tool.

While upon the subject of rhyming I think I should set down an incident that occurred the day after our wedding. We were sitting together upon a cliff top seat, at Shanklin, I think, whither we had walked from Ventnor through the Landslip, when my beloved suddenly began to recite "The Owl and the Pussy-cat."

She did it in a way that somehow made me

think it was her own, and to the credit of

my critical judgment rather than to my general knowledge I jumped up in great excitement saying "Is that your own?"

If so I will make a name for you." You may guess how humbled I felt to find it was already a classic of which I had never heard - Edward Lear & Lewis Carroll were unknown names to me then I had been earning a little cash writing verse!

I may say here that although my wife has published but little, and not a line of verse, all I do is submitted to her judgment

which I rightly respect very highly. Indeed I may say that it was only after meeting her that I began to find any freedom in verse or prose.

Here perhaps is a fitting place to set down the simple fact that the only volumes to my credit (or not as the case may be) are "Crumbs of Verse" published by my wife's brother, C. W. Daniel; "Lake Lalos and other rhymes" published by the Utopia Press and put together at the suggestion of Robert Blatchford;

and "Kip and Flip" again published
by C.W. Daniel. These were all favourably
reviewed, Miss Mabel Quiller Couch I remember
pointing out in reference to "Crumbs" that
I had the faculty for writing original nursery
rhymes. Some time later when the Saturday
Westminster offered a prize for this
type of verse I sent in three specimens
any one of which, said Maornie Rorpe Smith,
would have taken the prize. Are they not
written in the Book of the Westminster
published by Methuens?
problems? Where the curious may if they

can find a copy see some of the other competitors I then met.

Lake Lalso, ~~has~~ rather some of the rhymes in that volume, have been quoted to my surprise, although no anthologist has ever used or suggested using them.

"Foreigners" was quoted appropriately enough by the Dutch writer D. Renier in his volume "The English are they human" whose book however ^{to my shame} I have not yet seen,

and I understand he has made another very kindly reference to me in a later work. Nikola(?) Gubsky

has also honoured me with a reference.

But the most curious thing came to light when a brother-in-law was reading aloud from a book by Kate Douglas Wiggin entitled "Mother Carey's Chickens" when my ^{little} daughter was accidentally present & to her surprise she heard her uncle reading a passage from "I bought a ship and went to see," which Mrs Wiggin spoke of as an ancient rhyme ^{of the Mother Goose period.} after I had seen the volume ^{I wrote the author} pointing out that I was not so old as he appeared to

think and ~~pointing~~^{telling her} out the name of
the volume she was quoting from. I had
in reply a very kindly and complimentary
letter with a copy of the book ^{containing} with a
handsome inscription & a promise to
make a further reference if a second
edition should be called for. She said
on hearing from me she had procured
a copy of my book in New York - this
I fancy must have been an unillustrated
copy published at my friend Jack Boyle's
suggestion to secure the American copyright.

There have been other 'great expectations' beside those of Charles Dickens.

The Crank's Table.

After meeting Frank Henderson I neglected the Socialist Club and frequently joined him for lunch at a Vegetarian Restaurant in St. Bride Street where fruit luncheons were a speciality. Here we occasionally met R.B. Suthers and W.T. Wilkinson both of the Clarion then at 72 Fleet Street & later got to know Father Power the London representative of a Birmingham Brass firm. He had

been interested in Socialism & I think
it was seeing Suters or Wilkinson with
the Clarion in their hands that led him
to make their & our acquaintance.

He was then by no means an old man -
he never will be now - and we called
him 'Father' because his wife always
addressed him in that way. She was
by the way Aunt to the Rev. Vale Owen
who later made a meteor-like name
for his papers on Spiritualism
published in the Daily Mail!

190

At the time I was rapidly getting to dislike
meat and going regularly to St. Bride Street
for lunch. ~~Over~~ I remember a curious
experience we had there. Among the
regular visitors but not at our little
table was a young man who came in
had his meal quietly and left to return
very shortly and start all over again.
I don't know how long it was before
the riddle was solved and we found
that Harold and Loftus Hare, twin
brothers in business together had

to lunch at separate times. They were then so amazingly alike that even after Harold had been living with me and my family for about six years I had to scrutinize them carefully at times to make sure to which of them I was speaking.

There is always something mysterious about growth and although I have fairly set down the unintended beginning of the Crank's table it is difficult to explain its development which was fairly rapid.

192

nor can I be certain at what period
in its growth it received its name
or who gave it. We expanded I suppose
by accretion fostered by the lively talks
of some of its members - you needn't
look at me, I am not prepared to plead
guilty to much more than interested
listening, as a rule. Father Power
was always a great raconteur and
seemed to have a library, intangible of
course, of many volumes of good
stories and interesting experiences.

193

The table I remember gradually changed its position owing to the increase of its numbers and occupied the longest spread against the wall, absorbing in its progress old visitors and attracting others from outside who gradually came to hear of it. To-day its general complexion would be somewhat suspect and it would be regarded probably as a medley of 'left' forces. Many I am sure who attended occasionally would not feel honoured at being regarded

194

as among its members. Yet here were to be met and not infrequently F. May Thomas Assistant Manager & dramatic critic of the Daily News. At times he was joined by his father A. May Thomas the co-editor with Charles Dickens of 'Household Words'

He was a very distinguished looking elderly man. Sometimes Miss Thomas would be there and Ernest Parke, at one time editor of the Star and still an honored director of the News Chronicle group.

It was at the Crank's table as I reminded

195

F. Moy Thomas the last time we met that
he recruited three distinguished members
of the Daily News Staff. I wonder who remembers
them now but they deserved the adjective then.

They were W.B. Hodgson who became known
as a Daily News Commissioner and
might have gone to great lengths had
not diabetes claimed ^{him} as a fairly
youthful victim; George Haw who
wrote the life of Will Crooks, left the Daily
News to become a Secretary to Lloyd
George and who also passed away

196

all too young as he was gathering distinction

Finally there was G. G. Desmond, qualified

barrister, practising, as I have previously

said in my note upon the Socialist Club,

as poor man's lawyer who now became

Nature writer upon the D.N. He is still

I believe a member of the Labour party

has made regular but unsuccessful

attempts to represent it in parliament.

He had I remember chambers in Pump

Court at the very top of the building

where he managed to keep a hive of

bees. He was too sound and reasonable

I am sure to let any of them get into

his bonnet. During the war he managed

in spite of being much over age to join

the army as a 'Tommy' was taken

prisoner and was black-marked by

hot-mouthed patriots for speaking the

truth as he knew it about the ^{fair} treatment

he received in Germany. No one however

who knew him would doubt the word of

'Uncle Gee Gee', as he had been known

to children as no one would question

198

the warmth of his generous disposition -

I should much like to meet him again.

I see that I have spoken of 'members' of the Grant's table but of course there were no members, only visitors some intermittent and others fairly regular.

I could not hope to give any idea of the talks that went on there but in my recollection

W.B. Hodgson, E. Warren, J. F. Green were among

the most distinguished brilliant of the serious

talkers while F. Moy Thomas and Fatter Power were

pre-eminent on the lighter side. But

199

it may be unjust to divide them in this way for all at times were in turn light and serious in their talk. That the general level was unusually high I am convinced both by my own happy memories & by the remark of a journalist who declared there was more good 'copy' going to waste at the Crank's table than anywhere else in London. I remember too that The Globe then a Tory evening journal on the Westminster & Pall Mall lines devoted its front page article with the turn-over to a description of it. I think it began

to fade in glory when the proprietors of the Restaurant introduced fish into its menu. The smell was too much for some visitors and although a move was made first of all to a ^{Vegetarian} restaurant on the north side of Holborn & finally to the still-flourishing Food Reform Restaurant in Farnival Street - it never was quite the old Crank's table.

Domestic and otherwise.

It would be erroneous to assume from the notes above that I had ~~sought~~ ^{been seeking} relations

sense of the word. We were not tame likenesses of each other but we were both rebels against the conventional view of married life, and of many other things as well. My wife was an ~~instinctive~~ ^{far} rebel and is ^{far} more intuitive than I am but where one has perhaps seen a little farther ahead than the other it has never been long before we were moving along side by side and our life difficulties, and they have been not a few, have drawn us together instead of driving us apart. Future notes may in

from a drab domestic life and a hopeless kind of business. Whatever may be said of the latter, my domestic life was anything but drab. My choice at least prevented that. Even before our wedding we had decided that our union was not to be a mere sentimental marriage. We both held ideal views upon which we were wholly agreed and while our resources might be too moderate in amount we decided that they should be held in common and used to build up a home in every sense

a way illustrate this.

I have said we were married in July 1889.

By November 1892 three children had been born to us, the youngest, a girl, owing perhaps to her mother's grief, at the loss of our first-born, suffering from malnutrition aggravated by medical ignorance. When a few months

old she was reduced to a little skeleton

and we were ^{well on the way} ~~likely~~ to be ruined by the

medical remedies applied, one after the other, and it was only when at last we

rebelled against the treatment and started

2044

feeding ^{without medicaments}
~~treating~~ her on natural lines, that she

began to improve and in a very few

months was one of the bonniest children

one could wish to see and ^{is how} the mother of

a two-year old girlie in many ways

like what she was and an ideal subject

for such an artist as H. Dowd if he

only knew where to find her.

This episode had its effect upon our

views as may be imagined and although

we hold the medical profession in high

honour for many reasons we are no

enthusiasts for either knife or serum.

By the time another daughter arrived in March 1895 we were gradually feeling our way to other changes. Three weeks after the birth of this daughter my beloved mother, who was living near us, passed on; so it will be realized that the earliest years of our married life were not entirely care-free.

For some time we had been moving in the direction of less & less meat partly from reasons of economy and largely

as a matter of taste and health, and just before the latest arrival I definitely decided to give up meat and fish entirely and in a very little while the family followed suit. I have abstained ever since or in all probability I should not be here to pen these notes.

We had also been on the look-out for a chance to move farther out and in 1926⁷ we rented a new small house in Barnet near the Hadley woods.

And here we noted a curious happening:

while we lived in London we had few or no visitors save those of my introducing among my newly made friends such as Captain Webster; Harry Lowrie & Rochester Paggas, both of The Clarion, and accompanying the latter was the new Secretary of the Socialist Club a good natured, and highly cultured giant of the name of Jake - I forget his front name but rather think it was Leslie. He was very slim, stood about 6ft 3in and I heard afterwards become like the remainder of ^{well-to-do} his family, a

Catholic. But when we moved to Barnet we were discovered by old friends and new especially at Bank Holiday times and our little household at such periods grew from six to sixteen and even more and the larder shewed considerable signs of strain with our unexpected and growing popularity. In less than three years we became convinced that we were still too near London and moved out into Essex in ^{Feb} 1899 where our only surviving son was born in the following September and in

209

Easter 1900 we moved into the house where we have lived ever since). The added reasons for coming hither and the manner deserve a mention at least in passing.

It is a common experience of course upon looking back upon the way life has led us, or the way we have come anyhow, to notice how everything seems to be connected with everything else. I have mentioned the fact many pages back that I had been very much impressed with the later work of Tolstoy - I have never read his great

early novels with the single exception of Anna Karenina - and I little thought when I began to read "The Kingdom of God is within you" that his influence would be so potent as to bring me out into Essex.

Tolstoy influenced my thinking it now seems to me in two vital matters. First he abundantly confirmed the view I had come to hold more and more tenaciously that the internal is the only possible authority for any of us. Next he persuaded me much against

my then will to believe in non-resistance.
When I first came across his teaching in
this respect - I was frankly more astonished
than I should have been as a member at
one time of a Christian Church. With
consummate nerve I started in my
mind to prove that the idea was absurd
but, I don't know how long it took,
I discovered that the absurdity was
mine and Tolstoy's conclusion
perfectly sound. My interest in Tolstoy
was considerably stimulated by meeting

others who were more or less convinced of
 the soundness of his teaching among
 whom I should name F.R. Henderson, J.C.

Kenworthy, Arnold Eiloart, ^{Captain} Arthur St. John,
 (of Penal Reform fame, just ^{passed} gone over),
 and the twin brothers Hare.

Many of these were connected with the

Croydon group of Tolstoy admirers

who performed a play adapted by

Eiloart from Tolstoy's *Ivan the Fool*.

Then there was *Stylmer Maude* and later

Tchertkoff (Tolstoy's friend and Secretary.

a Russian Aristocrat of giant build)

and with a grand air that was in a curious way fascinating & never left him during the many years I knew him.

In my recollection he stands out conspicuously as the most thorough-going friend and disciple of Tolstoy that I have known.

There was a group formed after the Graydon Brotherhood had begun to fade which had its headquarters ^{near} ~~at~~ Purleigh in Essex and it was in connection with this Colony that - Aylmer Maude

and Tchertkoff (at that time close friends of each other as well as Tolstoy) ~~that~~ were associated each living near the Colony.

While the Doukhobors (? Spelling) were staying there before they went to Canada I visited the Colony with my wife and we were much attracted I remember by the simplicity of the Russian Peasants. They seemed in appearance at least - we had to talk of course through an interpreter - some of the most charming and beautiful characters we had met.

We spent an enjoyable week-end there and it was suggested to us that we should join the group, my wife, who as I have indicated was fully qualified, to act as schoolmistress in a house to be built specially for our use. But we decided against the suggestion although we remained in friendly touch with the group for many years.

Although we did not feel drawn to a so-called Colony life there were many who wished to settle in the country while

Keeping in touch with the life in London that was providing the resources upon which we lived. We therefore formed a group which included Father Power, F.R. Henderson, 'McWicks' & 'O'Suttens' of the Clarion and some others I cannot now recall with a view of buying a piece of land at first collectively but after purchase to be conveyed to each of separately as and when paid for, with the view of building our homes upon it & co-operating in good-will with no rows or tuss of membership. It was in

short ^{to be} an attempt by free but associated families to get as near to the ideal life of healthy co-operation as in practice proved possible.

By this time Wilkinson (the McWilkes of the Clarion) had visited us at Barnett & our relationship (he was newly-married) became of such a friendly nature that he and J. and Father Power worked hard to discover land suitable for our purpose. At length we found a very desirable lot of two fields 29 acres in all & three

old country cottages which ^{with assistance} we purchased.

It is about a mile from where I write,
but, alas, although I moved with my wife
and family into the immediate neighbourhood
of our purchase, disagreement - set in
(poor human nature) and only one of
our group ever built and went into
residence. Seeing how things were going
and realizing that even if we built there
we should be an added mile away from
the railway, as consideration for a
man who never rode a bicycle, my wife

saw the house I was in just being built and said "if you can buy that I will stay in Wickford." And somehow I managed to buy it. As soon as our decision was made Wilkinson bought the next plot of ground to us and put up a house designed by Raymond Unwin (he had no title then) & Barry Parker and lived there next to us until business called the whole family away to Potter's Bar & we lost our dear neighbours. And we were neighbours. A small gate leading

from one garden to the other was never
more than latched and we probably
had more things in common than we
should have found possible in any artificially
made Colony.

perhaps I should ^{say} livelihood.
Life in London however still held me

and I became interested, in a curious way
again, with The Christo-Theosophical Society,
which held meetings at the home of Mr
Mrs Richard Stapley in Bloomsbury
Square - a very attractive house then, but
now replaced by a building quite alien

to the house we knew.

Once more it was through meeting again an old member of the Youth's Institute that I came to make the acquaintance of outstanding people who have helped to form the view of life that I now, and believe lastingly, hold. It was by a chance call upon business that I met Lucking Javener once more. It was his father who had so kindly in the ^{late seventies} ~~eighties~~ housed the Youth's Institute. 'Luck' was then a stocky, sturdy youth, dark and desperately in earnest, facing life even then with a courage and confidence.

that made light of the physical disadvantage of which he could not but be conscious. He was brilliant at sketching with pen and pencil

wrote ^{fluently} ~~easily~~ I believe in prose and verse, was

'the Shylock' in our very amateur trial scene from

"The Merchant of Venice" and could have played "Zuipo"

with equal if youthful distinction. He was very

serious-minded and one would have said quite

the most orthodox of our little group. Now nearly

twenty years later we were mutually astonished

to find that our views had moved very largely

on parallel lines and he was now assisting

J. Bruce Wallace M.A. (lately a distinguished and early member of The Fabian Society) in editing his little monthly magazine "Brotherhood and in running The Brotherhood Church in Southgate Road. The magazine persisted for many years but I fear has now succumbed but so far as I know Bruce Wallace still lives in Dublin where he went many years ago. He must be now in his own eighties and although he has doubtless seen the fading of some of his dreams he has not I feel sure lost faith in life and in the essential soundness

of the Universe. He was always a welcome and distinguished visitor and friend at the Stapleys and once I remember came with his friend Tanner to see us at Barnet. It was after his visit that

my wife was ~~giving~~ ^{listening} to our two girls of about ~~our two girls of about~~

5 and 6 a reading lesson from the New Testament, a favourite book with them, ^{they} ~~she~~ had chosen. The subject was the feeding of the five thousand

and Margaret the elder, ~~and the elder~~, looking up from her book said

"was that true mother?" "well dear," said Mother

"what do you think about it?" Margaret reflected.

and then said "I think ^{the people were so pleased} were so interested listening

with Jesus that they forgot they were hungry! I

remember' she added "when Mr. Bruce Wallace came to
 see us ~~the~~ the other day ~~that~~ listening to him talking
 I forgot ^{to have my tea} ~~the bread & butter on my plate.~~"

This is an unvarnished tribute to Bruce Wallace.

I don't know if he has heard it - uttered by our
 beloved Margaret - when at Barnet (she was only
 a little beyond Seven when we left).

Before going farther I may say that Lucking
 Taverner at this period had become a friend
 of G. F. Watts who allowed him to make
 replicas of some of his most famous
 pictures - I have one of 'Hope' now - and

was so accessible that when my wife & I joined
a small party of Taverners, ^{at Watts's home} ~~we~~ mingled with
us freely and shewed us many of his
masterpieces. Taverner afterwards became a
minister of the Unitarian Society and died a
few years ago. I hear this year that his son -
a B.A. and married I believe to another B.A. (or the
equivalent - is in the same ministry.

To return to the Christo-Theosophical Society.

Among those to be met there were Mary Everest
Boole, Annie Besant, Herbert Burrows, and
the Swami Vivekananda and his youthful

Successor. Both were teachers of the Vedantic philosophy and it is possible that Vivekananda may have founded it - I understand that having passed on he is regarded by many in India as a God. As I remember him he had all the imperturbable calm that distinguishes some Indians and was for the rest anything but an ascetic in his appearance.

Of all I met here however Bruce Wallace & Mrs Boole stand out pre-eminently. Mrs Boole was the widow of George Boole the mathematician and was of no mean standing herself.

G. K. Chesterton I believe spoke of her as one of the most distinguished women alive. Years after I met her again when she and Florence Daniel (peace to her ashes) became so closely attached that upon Mrs Daniel - the wife of my brother-in-law C. W. Daniel devolved the charge of her books still published by the C. W. Daniel Co.

Here I may be allowed to interpose a story Mrs Roole told me, and gave me liberty to publish, (which I have already done in a small way) about George Macdonald. Mrs Roole was at that time secretary to Charles Darwin and in that capacity

made one of a group that gathered around
Frederick Denison Maurice which included
many distinguished people in addition to
Alfred Tennyson & Macdonald. One day
Mrs. Cook said to Miss Maurice "Of all the people
that gather round your father the only one
who is not Maurice-and-water is George
Macdonald." "And do you know, my dear," said
Miss Maurice "the only one who would not be
offended by being called Maurice-and-water is
George Macdonald."

Thinking back I feel that while the Christo-

Theosophical Society tended to confirm rather than to add to my views it certainly helped to emphasize the opinion that I had been so long and gradually forming upon the unity of all that is. It was at their meetings that I remember hearing the phrase that the thought of separation is the father of lies, and I recall that Bruce Wallace once said in my hearing that he was "sure separation was an illusion but he could not understand who it was that was eluded". I wish he were near enough to talk over the point with me in his old, dear style.

But to return to Wickford. (How many hundreds of times have I returned to it?)

So far I have said but little of our removal from Hertfordshire to Essex. But inter-county travelling

was a different thing at the end of the nineteenth

Century from what it is to-day. There were no

motors on the roads and as for the roads

the difference is all but unbelievable. We

moved by road and the vans had to halt

for the night somewhere on the journey. It

was therefore necessary for us after seeing

them off at Barnet to spend a night somewhere

between Barnet and Wickford and we accepted with great gladness the hospitality so readily extended to us by the Wilkinsons, who at that time lived at Finchley, so far ^{myself} as I and our daughter Queen was concerned.

The others had to separate some going to the Sister-in-law who was married with us. We were, you see, by this time a considerable household. In addition to my wife and self we had three daughters aged 7. 6 & near 4;

There was our kindly young help, Amy, an old friend of my wife's family who joined us

while still in London to help with the children and who after spending forty-three years under our roof has just gone on her last journey in her ninety-third year. (She may re-appear in these notes later.)

Tentatively we had decided to rent two small houses about a mile from the station which had just been erected - we were the first tenants - and my wife, whose qualification as a Schoolmistress stood her in good stead, proposed using part of the second house for school purposes, and the other part to house

the overflow of our fairly considerable party.

The vans were expected to arrive in the early afternoon of an early February day but, alas, owing to the character of the roads and possibly of the horses and the men they did not arrive

until past ten at night - & I leave you to

picture our plight without beds or any other furniture and three young children.

We managed however to get fires going & to

put the children to sleep as comfortably as possible on the floss with a covering of

newspapers and anything that could be

devised

, while we waited as patiently as we could.

I think it was nearly six the following morning before the vans left us. It was a trying experience but we were at last really in the country and some of us at least began to enjoy the added freedom and freshness.

The Power family followed in two weeks and took a house some half-mile nearer to the village. Their coming was very welcome as they brought with them a family of six children, three boys & three girls, in

addition to a very faithful help: the children became at once chorists and fellow scholars with our own and we soon began to settle down to our new life.

I think it was with the hope of obtaining a home supply of milk that the Powers invested in a goat but I am not sure that their hopes were fulfilled. The goat had the appetite of its kind and one of its earliest meals consisted of half a dozen rose bushes carefully planted in the little front garden by Father Power. Its

next outstanding feast was when it got into the little drawing room and browsed among the sheet music thoughtfully left near the piano. But the goat was by no means the only animal in the Powers' Zoo.

There were I remember a lamb, a donkey, and a cat that reared jackdaws. The lamb was so much of a babe that it had to be fed from a bottle and the more ribald of Father Powers' admirers asserted that he had to rise from his warm bed in the cold early Spring to suckle the lamb. The donkey would have been

fairly well behaved, I believe, if it hadn't been for the goat who upon one occasion managed to get over a hurdle that was thought to be high enough to keep him out of mischief and was followed by the donkey who however got stuck fast in getting over and had to be released, probably by Father Power.

But to describe with anything like fullness the doings of the pioneering Powers would call for the memory & the clever pencil of Harold Hare who arrived upon the scene during our first Summer in Wickford. He came for a visit

of six days or six weeks I forget which but he stayed for six years and proved a welcome and valuable addition to our little community while he lived with us. It was no small thing for the children to have a man of such wide culture and musical ability to be at once their teacher and playmate. It was wonderful to see him sitting with them inventing and illustrating stories that must have seemed miracles to them. Some of them I pray are still extant. We have I believe an account written ^{and published} some years later ^{part of} of his life with us

in these golden days

~~Looked~~ The Village when we ~~went~~^{came} was not quite what it is to-day. In the census before we arrived the population was said to be between 500 & 600 and it could not have been many

more until we made a sensible (at least) (trust so) addition to its numbers. The nearest hairdresser was 6 miles nearer Southend but a postman 6 miles nearer London came over in his spare time on a Monday market

day to shave or cut hair - but business

called me to London 5 days in the week or so

(241 not used)

242

never troubled him. There was no water supply save the village pump and the kindly heavens (we relied upon the latter for very many years). Folk in the village & its outlying suburbs depended ^{for supplies} upon a little old man who had a little old pony pulling a large barrel upon four low wheels. The barrel was labelled 'Aquarius', I remember, and was filled daily at the Parish Pump. If you missed 'Aquarius' and lived near enough 'Old William' was willing to draw and carry it for you at the same price (was

it - a halfpenny or a penny per pail.?).

William was undoubtedly one of the characters of the place. He lived in one of a bunch of four cottages huddled for support and standing a little back from the road, as they had one way far away from the time of good Queen Bess. My acquaintance with him began when, reporting to my wife the fact that he had giant rhubarb, finer than any I had seen, growing in his front garden, she begged me to buy some. When I got over the low wall (the only way in) and

164

asked him if he had any rhubarb to sell
he answered in broad Dases that he hadn't
any to sell but I was very welcome to some.

This was so different a reception from what
I could have expected that I was staggered but
it marked the beginning of a friendly
acquaintance that lasted till the old man's
end. We joked freely about the generalship
of the Boer war and other matters & were on
excellent terms. One very warm morning
as I was passing with my hat off on the
way to the train "Come in" said Williams

24-5

"you've got time and try gooseberries" are
just ripe. A handful of them will cool you

And they did. He was a typical, stolid Essex

man, not unimpressive in build and mostly

wearing, it seems to me now, a Sou-wester.

His surname I heard but cannot recall.

In any case no one used it. "Old William

was good enough for anybody. I cannot

remember ^{even} the year of his death but his dying

began a sensation I am not likely to

forget. On the day before he died it was

said he sent for the wife of a 3 mile distant