

ST. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW

For Blinded British Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen

No. 211.—VOLUME XX. [NEW SERIES]

PRICE 6d. MONTHLY.
[FREE TO ST. DUNSTAN'S MEN.]

SPECIAL JUBILEE NUMBER, SEPTEMBER, 1935



THEIR MAJESTIES
KING GEORGE V AND QUEEN MARY
1910-1935

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St. Dunstan's and the Silver Jubilee

AS soon as the official celebrations for the Silver Jubilee of their Majesties the King and Queen last June were first considered, the question arose as to the best way in which St. Dunstan's could associate itself in an expression of loyalty to the Throne on that occasion. Many schemes were carefully considered and eventually the overwhelming consensus of opinion was that by far the best way in which to celebrate the occasion was to provide an opportunity for St. Dunstaners to celebrate it themselves.

As a result, it was decided that, instead of the customary annual reunions held in different spots all over the country, it should be arranged that, this year, in celebration of the Jubilee, special Jubilee Reunions should take their place in important selected centres, and so, during the weeks before and after the actual Jubilee Day, St. Dunstan's Jubilee Reunions were held all over the United Kingdom and in the Irish Free State. The largest, inevitably, was the one that catered for the men of the Home Counties, which was held at the Royal Albert Hall, London, and attended by the Prince of Wales, who delivered a moving address. Some five hundred St. Dunstaners and their escorts were then present and the occasion was a memorable one.

No less memorable were the Jubilee Reunions that were held in provincial centres. The first was at York. This was followed by a meeting at Edinburgh, which was attended by all Scottish St. Dunstaners and men from across the Border in England. Then came meetings at Manchester, Bristol, Birmingham and Brighton. These were followed by Reunions in the Irish Free State at Cork and Dublin, and the series of ten ended with the meeting at Belfast. The Chairman and Lady Fraser attended all but the Irish meetings, at which Colonel Eric Ball presided, and Sir Neville Pearson, Colonel Ball, Captain Appleby, and Miss Greenwood, in turn, supported Sir Ian at the meetings in this country.

At every meeting not only the programme but the menu for luncheon was the same. In each case the proceedings started with a reception by the Chairman, at which he was enabled personally to meet during those two months the great majority of the 2,000 men now under the care of St. Dunstan's. Luncheon followed and then after the Loyal Toast, there was a silent toast to the memory of our Founder, the late Sir Arthur Pearson. Speeches by the Chairman and others followed, and then there was community singing. After that, there was an afternoon's dancing and then tea. And so home again—with a host of pleasant memories stored away for the future. To keep these memories green, a special Souvenir Programme was prepared, which was presented to each man, together with the Jubilee Gift of a silver ash tray. On the programme at each Reunion were printed the names of all those St. Dunstaners invited to the Reunion, and in this way an afternoon of fleeting enjoyment was made a permanent memory.

At each meeting, too, a collection was taken on behalf of King George's Jubilee Trust Fund, and as a result it was possible to present the Prince of Wales with a contribution to the Fund of £68. 1s. 10d. Each time the Chairman asked men present their opinion on the matter, and in every case the idea was greeted with the utmost enthusiasm. No man was asked to give more than sixpence, and the success of the result proved only once more what everyone already knew—the firm and continued loyalty of the men of St. Dunstan's to the Throne of this country. That was one of the chief reasons of the great success of these ten St. Dunstan's Jubilee Reunions.

Twenty Years After

EVER since the good old days of 1915 and onwards, when everyone at St. Dunstan's knew everybody else, it has always seemed rather a pity that as time has gone on, many old comrades have inevitably drifted apart. Men who have shared the same experiences and gone out into the world facing the same difficulties, have a bond between them which later friendships can never quite replace.

Some wonderful friendships were formed in those days of the "House," the Bungalow, the College, and the other familiar old places, and although the reunions which have been held for years now have brought together many men, they have only been able to apply to St. Dunstaners living in the same area. Much as we should have liked to, it would have been an impossible task to bring together at any one time all those men who have passed through St. Dunstan's, but the Silver Jubilee of Their Majesties, The King and Queen, gave us an idea which helped to provide the next best thing.

This idea was a series of larger Reunions, each covering such a wide area that a large number of men who had not seen each other since their training days would at last have an opportunity of meeting. Every St. Dunstaner in the area covered by a Reunion was asked when replying to his invitation to remind Headquarters of the actual year and "House" of his training. These particulars were printed on a special Jubilee Badge and sent to him to wear on the day. When the great day came men of one year were grouped with other men of the same year, and speedily they themselves formed into "House" groups. And the result? Bedlam! As far as we could gather, most of the conversation consisted of "Do you remember?"

OLD FRIENDS

It was one of the happiest features of all the Reunions that we were able to have with us many V.A.D.'s and voluntary helpers of the old days. They did their share of the questioning and remembering, too. We could probably fill a couple of pages or more of this Review with the list

of the names of all the good old friends who came to the different Reunions. This is of course impossible, but we cannot resist the temptation of mentioning some of them—past and present—those who will probably be known to the greatest number of our men. Here is a short list, in alphabetical order: Miss Bamberger, Mrs. Bannister, Miss Bonell, Mrs. Broughton, Miss Cunynghame, Miss Davies, Miss Deane, Mrs. Giorgi, Miss Gray, Miss Hodgson, "Mr. H.", Sister "Pat" Irvine, Mr. Kessell, Nurse Lloyd, Miss MacAndrew, Miss McCall, Miss Monro, Sister Ninnis, Miss Pain, "Auntie" Read, Miss Boyd Rochfort, Miss Stacey, Miss Staddon, Miss Stein, Matron Thellusson, the Rev. J. E. Williams. At the London Reunion many St. Dunstaners had the pleasure of meeting Sister Sutcliffe—Sister-in-Charge at Headquarters—for the first time. The After-Care Visitors in each district are to be congratulated upon the splendid local arrangements they made for the different Reunions. Present and past After-Care Visitors and our good friends the past and present Technical Visitors, all came along and vied with each other to make each Reunion the most enjoyable. While one person who was absolutely indispensable at every Reunion was Bill Tovell.

Every Reunion had its music. Regimental or Dance Bands played at all the provincial meetings, while the Royal Air Force Band put up a great show at the Royal Albert Hall.

Cigarettes and beer for all St. Dunstaners, chocolates for their wives—all were buckshee, very generously presented by well-known firms, while many friends came forward with motor-cars for the transport of the guests to and from the various meetings. The coloured souvenir programmes presented to each man were given to St. Dunstan's, too, by the printers.

We had one regret. That it was not possible to meet the St. Dunstaners from the Dominions as well, on this great occasion. But were they forgotten? Not on your life! It seemed that every fresh talk brought up the name of someone now overseas, but whom these reminiscences brought very near.

The crowning moment of all the Reunions was the visit of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales to the Royal Albert Hall. It was an unforgettable sight. Tier upon tier of tables, decorated gaily with yellow and blue irises. Every seat at every table occupied by a St. Dunstaner or his escort. The huge organ covered by a Union Jack that hung from the roof to the ground. The Flags of the Dominions, surmounted by the St. Dunstan's Standard. Then the entry of the Prince of Wales. The applause was deafening, while never has "God Bless the Prince of Wales" been sung with more enthusiasm.

Eight St. Dunstaners were presented to His Royal Highness, representing all St. Dunstan's men. R. Biggadike, of Boston, was there on behalf of English St. Dunstaners; W. Watt, of Montrose, for those of Scotland; A. J. Caple, of Cardiff, represented our Welsh men; S. Kelly, of Leytonstone, the Irish St. Dunstaners; W. Tout, of Exeter, those of Canada; S. K. Jerome, of Wokingham, represented the blinded Anzacs; H. A. Stayt was the representative of South Africa, and M. Costello, of Newent, was the representative of Newfoundland.

At the conclusion of the meetings, a silver ash-tray, bearing St. Dunstan's Badge, was presented to every St. Dunstaner. Ash-trays were also sent to those who could not come, and will be sent with copies of this Review to all our Overseas St. Dunstaners as well.

Those who attended the Reunions will need no reminder of this Jubilee Year. The meetings will live in their memory for years to come, both as an expression of their loyalty to Their Majesties, The King and Queen, and as a link with those never-to-be-forgotten early days at St. Dunstan's.

From every side praise for the organization of the Reunions has poured in, and the highest tribute must be paid to Mr. Askew and Mr. Ottaway and the staff at Headquarters, and to the Local Visitors, to whom the success of these meetings is due.

A St. Dunstaner, writing to Headquarters, speaks for his two thousand comrades when he says: "It was one of the most marvellous days of our lives—a triumph of organizing ability."

The Prince of Wales at the Albert Hall

THE London Reunion was held at the Royal Albert Hall on Monday, June 3rd, when over five hundred of our men from London and the Home Counties, together with their escorts, were present to meet the Prince of Wales. The Prince reached the Albert Hall directly after luncheon and was received by Sir Neville Pearson, Bt., Colonel Eric Ball, Sir Arnold Lawson, Mr. W. G. Howarth, and Mr. W. G. Askew. On entering the Hall His Royal Highness was met on the platform by our President, Lady (Arthur) Pearson, and our Chairman, Sir Ian Fraser, who, on behalf of St. Dunstaners throughout the Empire, welcomed him to this Jubilee Reunion.

The Prince of Wales said:

Sir Ian Fraser, Lady Pearson, Ladies and Gentlemen. I can assure you that it is a very sincere pleasure for me to attend this great reunion. I think it is a very happy idea of St. Dunstan's, that great organization which you know so well, to celebrate the King's Silver Jubilee Year by having not only this reunion in London, but several others throughout Great Britain.

As you know, since the Great War I have travelled very extensively; there is hardly a centre of Great Britain that I have not visited, and there are very few of the Dominions and the Colonies with which I am not familiar; and for that reason this, to St. Dunstan's as an organization, is not my first introduction. I have met St. Dunstan's men in all the corners of the earth. When I think of the conversations that I have had with those men, who have had the misfortune of losing their sight through gunshot wounds during the War, I am impressed once more by the sense of that great Imperial spirit which brought men from all parts of the Dominions and Colonies to fight side by side with the men of this country and to share their sacrifices.

That is one thing that comes to my mind from this meeting. The other, even more remarkable, is the way that you who have had this misfortune have settled down to different lives, and have settled down cheerfully, anxious to help yourselves in every possible way. I know that St. Dunstan's has done a great deal for you, and I know that your families and your friends help you whenever they can; but I know that you like to help yourselves, and that is what you have done, and that is why, with your wonderful co-operation, this great organization has been able to be so successful.

I would like to congratulate St. Dunstan's on its various activities. I will not enumerate them, or keep you any longer with a speech

this afternoon. I congratulate St. Dunstan's, but most of all I congratulate you, and all those men blinded in the War throughout this country and the Empire. I admire your courage, your resource, and the way that you have overcome blindness.

I think you know you have my best wishes, not only for a pleasant reunion this afternoon, but for the rest of your lives.

The Chairman then presented His Royal Highness with a cheque for £47. 15s. which represented the total of the individual subscriptions collected at the meetings already held throughout the country towards King George's Jubilee Trust Fund. The Prince, receiving it, said that it made him very happy to think that they approved his idea of having the Trust as a permanent remembrance of this great year. The Trust was to be devoted to the welfare of the coming generation.

Eight St. Dunstaners, representing England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, South Africa, and Newfoundland, and Miss Adeline Thellusson, representing the V.A.D. staff, were presented to the Prince by Colonel Ball, and His Royal Highness had a short conversation with the members of the group.

The Prince then left, walking down the length of the hall amid cheers and the singing of "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow."

Before the arrival of His Royal Highness, Sir Neville Pearson, proposing the toast of "St. Dunstan's," said:—

I have been asked, and it is a great privilege at this time and on this occasion to have been so asked, on behalf of your President, my mother, Lady Arthur Pearson, to commend shortly to your notice the toast of "St. Dunstan's."

Only a few days ago in this vast hall their Majesties the King and Queen were present at a great jubilee festival of English music. At the conclusion of that programme, at their special request, the whole audience joined with the choir and sang Blake's "England."

Blake was a mystic poet who lived some 150 years ago. His mind was a mind that dwelt among the angels. I can still seem to hear the last words of that anthem echoing around this hall—"... we have built Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land."

That might well be a vision of what St. Dunstan's has enabled you to do. You came back from the War maimed and shattered. Now, upon the foundations of your own energies this, our brotherhood, has created in your hearts a dwelling place comparable in splendour to the one of which Blake dreamed.

The nation's history is a record of the

difficulties which it has overcome. You are the living pages of that history. You came in full manhood as strangers to a world of blindness. By breaking down its barriers you have not only set up a standard of achievement and endeavour for yourselves, you have created an ideal which will live long after you have perished and which will open up new worlds to people who have hitherto dwelt in the shadow of despair. Men to-day admire your courage. Posterity will thank you for the great things you have done.

In pre-war days your friend, my father, was a successful business man. But true fame came to him borne upon the wings of night. Those same wings have brought to you fame, life, vigour and achievement and the consciousness that you have become something greater than yourselves. They have brought to you the pride and the knowledge that the stuff of which you are made has withstood adversity and has gained that victory over blindness which was your final goal. Your fame lives on. We still can hear the rustling of those wings.

The days of the War are over but the spirit of St. Dunstan's remains. It was born in carnage. It lives in glory. Your President and your Council hope and believe that a nation, ever grateful to you for the services you have rendered, shall see that the standard of life set by St. Dunstan's for those who wear the St. Dunstan's torch shall be theirs until the day comes when there is none left to need the comfort of that sheltering flame.

In giving you the toast of "St. Dunstan's" I ask you to drink to the sacrifice of the past, to the glory of your present achievement and to the sure belief that a generous people will enable us to keep your flag flying proudly in gratitude for that sacrifice and as a standard of hope and encouragement to blind communities throughout the world. I give you the toast of "St. Dunstan's," coupled with the name of your great leader—Sir Ian Fraser. (Cheers.)

In his reply Sir Ian extended a warm welcome to those present, and drew attention to the fact that with them that day were General Sir Frederick Maurice, President of the British Legion, Major J. Brunel Cohen, Honorary Treasurer of the Legion, and Capt. William Appleby, who were members of St. Dunstan's Executive Council representing the Legion. With them also was Sir Beachcroft Towse, V.C., the Chairman of the National Institute for the Blind—himself an old soldier and a friend of the blind.

Sir Ian concluded:—

I have no more to say except, on behalf of all present, to thank Sir Neville Pearson for the kind and generous things that he has said to us. We are very proud of St. Dunstan's. (Applause.)

(continued on page 8).

ST. DUNSTAN'S JUBILEE REUNIONS—A Pictorial Record



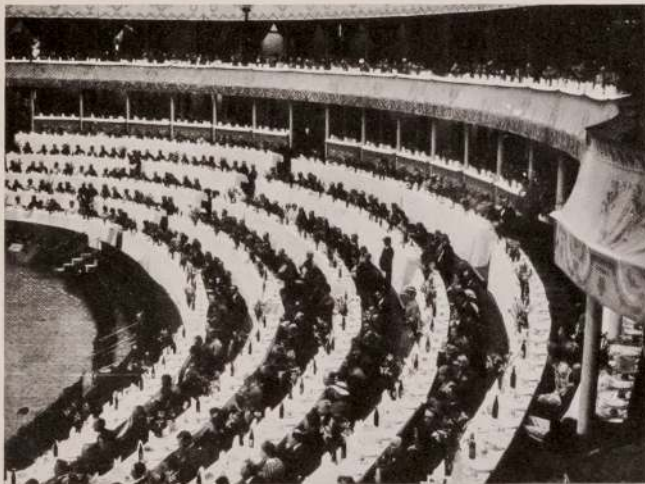
York Meeting.



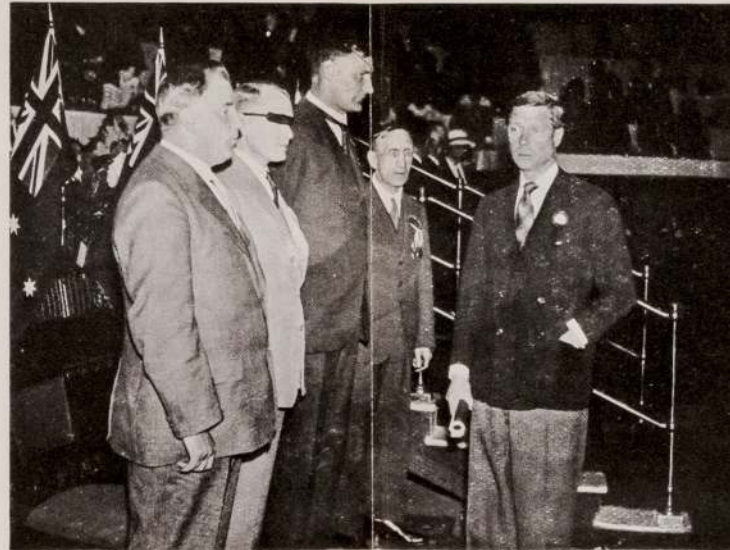
Sir Ian and Lady Fraser, Colonel Ball, Miss Thellusson and Miss Hamar Greenwood at Brighton.



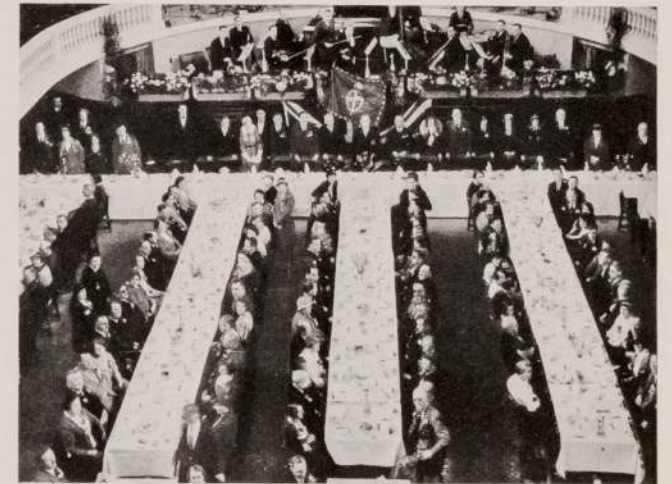
A General View at Edinburgh.



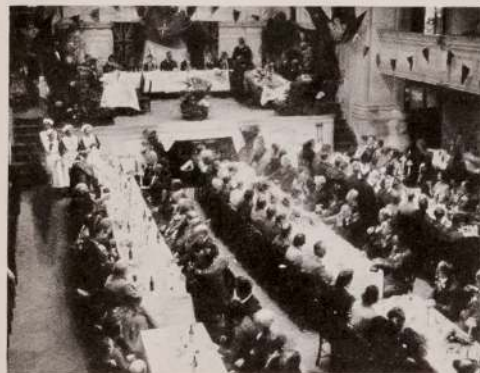
A General View of the Albert Hall Meeting.



The Prince of Wales with St. Dunstaners at the Albert Hall Meeting.

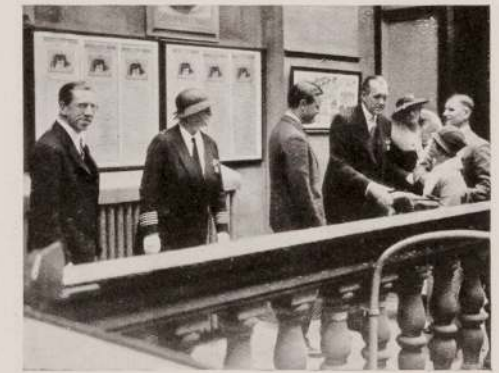


The Celebration at Birmingham.



The Manchester Reunion.

Here are photographs of all Reunions
in England and Scotland



The Chairman and Sir Neville Pearson greeting guests at Bristol.

The Prince of Wales at the Albert Hall (continued from page 5).

During the day the following telegram was sent to His Majesty the King: "Two thousand blinded soldiers, sailors and airmen throughout the Empire under the care of St. Dunstan's express their loyalty and wish Your Majesty Many Happy Returns of the Day.—Ian Fraser"; to which a reply was received as follows:—

"The King sincerely thanks the blinded soldiers, sailors and airmen for their kind birthday greetings.—Clive Wigram."

York

The first meeting of the series of Jubilee Reunions was held at Exhibition Buildings, City Art Gallery, York, on Friday, May 10th. Sir Ian Fraser, who was accompanied by Lady Fraser, presided, and Colonel Eric Ball was also present. A civic welcome to St. Dunstaners attending was accorded by the Deputy Lord Mayor, Alderman A. R. Fox, who read a message from the Lord Mayor and paid a tribute to the work of St. Dunstan's which he described as one of the finest things in the British Empire.

Sir Ian replying said:—

We were King's soldiers, sailors, and airmen. We did what lay in our power to serve during the War, and we will try by work, example, and cheerfulness to serve the people in times of peace. We will say to the people who have done so much for us—we will carry on.

I am sure millions of people were deeply impressed by the broadcast speech made by the King on Jubilee night. What a lot is conveyed by a voice besides words. If I mistake not, the King was moved by the thought of the millions who had joined to wish him luck on Jubilee Day and who were listening to him then. Emotion was in the voice, and in our hearts too. And after a day's work that might have tried many younger men, and with a formal ceremonial evening before him, the King had a special word for the children, and for the unemployed, and the disabled. We were touched by this as we were touched by his reference to his blind subjects in an earlier broadcast. We are grateful for the interest the King has always taken in his blinded soldiers, sailors, and airmen, whose lifelong welfare is the privilege and responsibility of St. Dunstan's.

A telegram expressing loyalty was sent to the King and an answer in acknowledgment was read during the course of the meeting.

Colonel Ball described the work of St.

Dunstan's as the biggest brotherhood of the blind or the disabled in the world.

Edinburgh

The Edinburgh Reunion took place at Victoria Hall, Leith Street, on Thursday, May 16th. The Chairman again presided and Lady Fraser was also present, as were Captain Wm. Appleby and Mrs. Appleby.

Sir Ian gave a warm welcome to the blinded Scotsmen present, and also to those who had come from the other side of the Border who were joining their fellow St. Dunstaners in Scotland for the first time. He announced that the following telegram had been sent to the King on behalf of those present:—

"Blinded soldiers from Scotland and the North of England at St. Dunstan's Jubilee Party, Victoria Hall, Leith Street, Edinburgh, beg your Majesty graciously to accept loyal Jubilee congratulations and wish Your Majesties continued health and strength."—Ian Fraser.

Later in the evening a cordial acknowledgment of the message from His Majesty was read to the company.

Captain Appleby, speaking after the luncheon, said that at all times the mind and the body must be kept in complete unison in order that the soul of the individual could be preserved. In recreation they kept the physical body fit, and in work they kept the mind occupied. This was the ideal of St. Dunstan's.

Manchester

The Manchester Reunion was held at Houldsworth Hall, Deansgate, on Friday, May 24th, and more than two hundred men from Lancashire, the Isle of Man, North Wales and Cheshire were present. Sir Ian Fraser, who was again accompanied by Lady Fraser, presided, and was supported by Sir Neville Pearson. There was also present the Rev. Ronald Royle, Vice-Chairman of the S.E. Lanes. Advisory Committee of the British Legion.

The Chairman, addressing the gathering, again referred to the great solace provided to the blind by wireless. "Wars end and wounds heal" he said, "but blindness remains. That is why St. Dunstan's must go on. The handicap of blindness is

always with us, although we contrive to overcome it in many ways." There was one field, he went on, where all the world was blind with them. That was the field of wireless, and, curiously enough, it was in this field that the most intimate contact was made during the Jubilee between the King and his people. Hundreds of thousands may have seen and taken part in the celebrations, but millions heard the King's speech on Jubilee Night.

A telegram of loyalty was sent to Their Majesties and a message of thanks was read to the meeting later in the day.

Birmingham

St. Dunstaners from Staffordshire, Derbyshire, Shropshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Northamptonshire, Warwickshire, Leicestershire, and Nottinghamshire, attended the Reunion at the Town Hall, Birmingham, on Thursday, June 13th. Sir Ian Fraser again presided, and Lady Fraser was again with him. He was supported by Colonel Ball, and there were also present, Lt.-Comdr. C. R. F. Engelbach, O.B.E., R.N.V.R., and Mr. A. M. Anderson, D.C.M., M.M., President and Chairman respectively of the Birmingham County Committee of the British Legion.

The guests were welcomed on the Lord Mayor's behalf by Councillor R. W. Brosch, chairman of the Health Committee of the Birmingham City Council.

Sir Ian Fraser, after extending a welcome to those present, said:

I think we blinded soldiers have every reason to be proud of our organization when we reflect upon its magnitude and upon some of its achievements. It spreads all over the Empire; it embraces practically all the men who were blinded in the War.

The miracle of St. Dunstan's was that two thousand blinded men had returned to normal life—or nearly so. They lived all over the Empire, taking part in work, play, sport, politics. They were alive: they were not on the shelf. He had recently visited Canada, New Zealand and Australia, and had met practically all the blinded soldiers. In Canada and New Zealand there had been a renaissance in the blind world. There was now national care of the blind throughout these Dominions. This was due to the example of a

young Canadian and a young New Zealander who had been through St. Dunstan's. They had learned to conquer blindness at St. Dunstan's and had returned to their countries to spread the gospel there. Similar victories had been won by each blinded soldier in his own town or village throughout the land.

Speaking after the luncheon, Colonel Eric Ball said:

Our organization has been built up by common sense, by goodwill, by vision on the part of the men at the head, and by sheer hard work. It has been strengthened by the cheerfulness of the men, by extraordinarily generous public support throughout the whole Empire, and by a loyal staff.

A telegram of loyalty and congratulations from the meeting was sent to Their Majesties during the proceedings and a message of thanks was received.

Bristol

The Bristol Meeting was held on May 29th at the Colston Hall, and was attended by more than one hundred and fifty St. Dunstaners, with their escorts, from South Wales, Cornwall, Devonshire, Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire, and Gloucestershire.

The Chairman and Lady Fraser were again present, as was Sir Neville Pearson. Mr. F. C. Luke, the Deputy Lord Mayor, gave the guests a formal welcome to the City. The band of the 4th Battalion The Gloucestershire Regiment, to which Sir Ian himself was attached, played during the afternoon.

Presiding at the luncheon, Sir Ian welcomed the men from the West Country and Wales.

Sir Neville Pearson said:—

St. Dunstan's is the biggest brotherhood of the blind in the world. It also has an organization and a plan more complete than any which has ever been devised for the care of badly disabled people. All the blinded soldiers throughout the Empire, numbering 2,000, are under the care of St. Dunstan's, and will be looked after until the last of them dies. Our financial plan is unique, for we intend that at the end of ten years St. Dunstan's will be endowed. Thus, while memory lives, and before the War has become a matter of history, we shall have made certain that the nation's debt to the men of St. Dunstan's has been repaid.

A telegram expressing loyalty and congratulations was sent to Their Majesties on behalf of those present.

Brighton

The Brighton Reunion took place at the Corn Exchange, on Tuesday, June 18th, when men from Sussex and Hampshire were present. The Chairman, who was accompanied by Lady Fraser, again presided and was supported by Colonel Eric Ball, Chairman of the Brighton Home Sub-Committee and Senior Member of St. Dunstan's Executive Council, Miss M. Hamar Greenwood, and Miss Thellusson, Commandant Matron at the Brighton Home. There were also present the Mayor and Mayoress of Brighton, Alderman and Mrs. S. G. Gibson, the Mayor and Mayoress of Hove, Councillor and Mrs. C. S. Loadsman, Brigadier General E. J. Phipps-Hornby, V.C., C.B., C.M.G., and Colonel C. F. Grantham, President and Chairman respectively of the South-Eastern Area of the British Legion.

The Mayor of Brighton welcomed the visitors and, expressed his admiration for St. Dunstan's and its men. "Nothing during my term of office," said the Mayor of Hove, "has given me greater pleasure than to be associated with some of the jollifications of the brave men of St. Dunstan's."

In proposing the toast of "St. Dunstan's," Colonel Ball described how he first became interested in St. Dunstan's. He said that in the latter part of 1915, after he had been serving in France for several months, he found himself in hospital in the next bed to a young blinded officer. He did his best to cheer his companion, with very little success.

On the third day Sir Arthur Pearson arrived with a very charming young lady. Sir Arthur talked to the blinded officer, and the charming young lady sat on my bed and talked to me. She told me about the work of St. Dunstan's, and suggested that when I was fit, I should take some of the officers and men from St. Dunstan's for walks in Regent's Park. From that day until now I have never lost interest in the work of St. Dunstan's, and I never shall.

Coupling the toast with the names of Sir Ian and Lady Fraser, Colonel Ball said the charming young lady who first interested him in the work was Lady Fraser :

"tactful, tender, patient, yet with the energy of three strong men."

In his reply Sir Ian said that arrangements were being made to ensure that the Brighton Home, as well as all the other facilities needed by the men of St. Dunstan's, should be carried on so long as any St. Dunstan's men survived.

We know that old soldiers never die, but only fade away. There are two thousand of us now. The actuaries tell us that there will be thirteen hundred of us left in twenty years' time and four hundred left in forty years' time. So you may all cheer up. You have plenty of time to fade away slowly. (Laughter.) I am, however, certain of one thing. However small the number of ex-servicemen may become in the future, the spirit that bound them together during these war years will endure.

Sir Ian referred in terms of deep appreciation to the work of the Staff at the Annexe under Miss Thellusson, who had, to the great joy of everyone, been present at all the Reunions, and in conclusion said:

My wife and I are proud to have the honour of playing our part in the work of St. Dunstan's, and so long as we have your goodwill and your confidence, we will carry on.

From the assembly a message of loyalty and congratulations was sent to the King and Queen and a gracious reply was received.

Jubilee Reunions in Ireland

The singing of "God Save the King" brought to a close the last of the Jubilee Reunions. This was held at Belfast on 28th June, and Colonel Ball, who presided at all three Irish Meetings, said in his remarks that it seemed most appropriate that the last of the Reunions should take place in what was probably one of the most loyal parts of the Empire.

At Cork on the 25th June the chief guest was Alderman Sean French, Lord Mayor of Cork. At Dublin on the 27th June the Lord Mayor was unable to be present, but sent his Deputy, Dr. Myles Keoch, to convey his good wishes.

Mr. Geo. B. Hanna, K.C., M.P., deputized for the Lord Mayor at Belfast. These gentlemen all welcomed Colonel Ball, the men, and their wives to the various cities and spoke generously of the work of St. Dunstan's.

Games, music, and interviews with Mr.

Ottaway filled in the afternoons until tea-time. Mr. T. H. Panton, Mat Instructor, organized and ran the games.

Sister Boyd-Rochfort from Brighton Annexe attended the Irish Reunions, and at Dublin was made the recipient of a beautiful sheaf of flowers on behalf of the men and their wives. At Belfast W. J. Berry—senior St. Dunstaner present—asked Sister Boyd-Rochfort to accept a Jubilee Crown piece made up as a medal with ribbon and the Red Hand of Ulster, together with initialled Irish linen handkerchiefs, from the men and their wives, and a Jubilee wastepaper basket from "Boozy Bob." Colonel Ball was also asked to accept some Irish linen handkerchiefs as a memento of his first Irish Meetings with the hope that he would come again.

Ex-V.A.D.'s of St. Dunstan's early days were present at these meetings and renewed many old acquaintances, as were prominent citizens of the districts who are interested in the work of St. Dunstan's.

A L./Cpl.'s Appreciation of the Albert Hall Reunion

AFTER a hazardous journey from the Thames Valley, my pal, L/Cpl. Exmms and I arrived at the Albert Hall and marched smartly up the steps accompanied by our L/Cpl.'s Escort of three V.A.D.'s and one Boy Scout. We received a L/Cpl.'s salute of a dig in the ribs and a "dud" tip for the Derby from Cpl. Maj. Bill, and trustfully leaving two old overcoats and one hat in the cloakroom, received in exchange one fur coat and a pair of clogs and a shawl when we came away. (Will the owner of the clogs please claim same and return my overcoat?)

After the Reception we trundled down the steps and across the arena to our respective places, and were soon doing justice to the finest buckshee lunch a L/Cpl.'s heart could desire. Speaking from an almost world-wide experience of beer, I voted the beverage provided at this luncheon the best I had ever tasted. Our wives also decided the chocolates were the most delicious they had sampled (and they are some connoisseurs believe me).

The waiters were great lads. I had a long talk with ours and he told me he knew the Albert Hall when it was only an army hut. He admitted he had seen 93 summers, and when I asked him if it was a record for those present he laughed heartily and said his grandfather was the waiter at the next table.

After luncheon we were all in a receptive mood to listen to the very excellent speeches which followed. The impromptu speech of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales went right to the hearts of the troops. I was one of the lucky eight to be presented to H.R.H., and afterwards, when I went down into the arena to meet my friends they all had to shake the hand that had been honoured by that of H.R.H.'s, the result being that I have no skin on my right hand and am carrying it in a sling at present. Seeing me in this helpless condition, my old pal, Sgt. O'Shxx (Hee-hee) got busy with his little white stick with the red light and gave me a few well-earned prods where he thought they would penetrate most.

After a tea that would have gladdened the heart of even a Canteen Sergt. Maj. we were presented with my favourite brand of cigarettes, and the handsome souvenir ash trays (mine has already been taken from me and I have had to fall back on my old ash tray, the carpet). The "All Clear" signal came too soon for most of us, and AFTER "God Save The King" (not before) we managed to grab six bunches of flowers, and were about to scrounge a couple of pipes from the organ and a bit of red carpet to wrap them in, when a bloke with a voice like a C.S.M.'s told us to "as you were" them. We then very reluctantly left "the big smoke" and returned to our sylvan retreat in the Thames Valley, after a wonderful and memorable day.

On the way home I composed the following limerick in honour of my friend; (anyone who likes can have a go at me now. My home town is Wokingham—get busy with that).

There was a L/Cpl. of Hurst,
Who had such a whale of a thirst,
He grew very stout
And gave a great shout
Of "Oh, what a death" when he burst.

J. J.

What the Press said about the Reunions.

"In the Exhibition Buildings at York on Friday more than 100 soldiers, sailors and airmen who were blinded in the Great War assembled for the Silver Jubilee gathering, which stood out as unique among the tens of thousands of similar celebrations which have been held in this country in the past fortnight.

"It was the first of a series of Jubilee Reunions which are being held throughout the country by St. Dunstan's, and its supreme note by which it will be remembered was that of the high spirits and cheerfulness of the guests."—*Yorkshire Gazette*.

"About 100 blinded soldiers, sailors and airmen from all parts of Scotland and from the North of England attended, in the Victoria Hall, Edinburgh, yesterday, the second of a series of St. Dunstan's reunions in commemoration of the Royal Silver Jubilee. Happy laughter and animated conversation testified to the hearty enjoyment the men and their friends experienced during an entertainment which lasted from noon until six p.m."—*Glasgow Herald*.

"I wonder how many of us have heard the toast 'The King' echoed during the last fortnight? Thousands of us, but not one can have heard so robust and splendid a shout as that which came from the throats of 200 blinded ex-service men in the Houldsworth Hall at the St. Dunstan's reunion of blinded soldiers, sailors and airmen. 'The King, God Bless Him.'

"Shouts of appreciation punctuating every speech, lusty cheers for their hosts, laughing comments—such merry noise as only men of courage and endurance will produce when, now and again, they foregather. I wish I could draw an adequate picture of the peaceful content radiated amongst that crowd of heroes."—*Manchester Evening Chronicle*.

"War-blinded men of St. Dunstan's from all parts of the West of England and South Wales attended a Silver Jubilee Reunion at the Colston Hall, Bristol, to-day.

"Many were the happy meetings between old friends, and the spirit of comradeship was revived in community singing."—*Bristol Evening World*.

"The Royal Albert Hall has staged many great spectacles. None has exceeded, or could exceed, in human interest or delight the St. Dunstan's Jubilee Party held in the Albert Hall yesterday.

"Six hundred blinded ex-service men—sailors, soldiers and airmen—were the guests of honour. They came with their wives and relatives from London and the Home Counties.

"They sat down to lunch; they listened to speeches that must have gladdened their hearts because each speech enlivened their own brave part in the conquest of war's most cruel blow; they

made merry, dancing old-fashioned waltzes and up-to-date fox-trots.

"The Prince of Wales, who takes a deep interest in the war-blinded, came to the party and made a speech."—*Daily Express*.

"The war-blinded men of nine Midland Counties this afternoon renewed their creed of cheerfulness and courage. In the Town Hall, Birmingham, they ate and drank together, they talked over old times, they sang and they danced.

"It was easy to recognize the little knots of guests as they crossed Victoria Square; they were quite the cheeriest people in sight."—*Birmingham Evening Dispatch*.

"In order that the war-blinded soldiers of St. Dunstan's might share in the celebrations of Their Majesties' Silver Jubilee, reunions have been held at various centres all over England.

"It was appropriate that Brighton should have been chosen as the centre for one of these reunions, for the town has been intimately connected with St. Dunstan's since the late Sir Arthur Pearson began his wonderful work with 16 war-blinded patients twenty years ago.

"Lunch was laid for the visitors at numerous long tables and at the back of the President's table was the Union Jack and Torch of St. Dunstan's in scarlet and flame, symbolic of the light which the organization has brought into darkened lives. They were a happy crowd, laughing, joking, and comparing notes of their present-day conditions, and many old friendships were renewed."—*Sussex County Herald*.

"Lieut.-Col. Eric Ball, of St. Dunstan's Executive Council, presided at the reunion of war-blinded ex-soldiers in the Metropole Hotel, Cork, yesterday afternoon. The reunion provided an opportunity for the men residing in Southern Ireland to meet for the renewing of acquaintance and for inspiration in their lives and work."—*Cork Examiner*.

"Fifty blinded ex-service men from different parts of the Free State, were entertained to luncheon in Jury's Hotel, Dublin. Lt.-Col. Eric Ball, senior member of St. Dunstan's Executive Council, presided. Dr. Myles Keogh, Deputy Lord Mayor of Dublin, paid a tribute to St. Dunstan's and welcomed the blinded ex-service men whom, he said, showed great self-reliance."—*Irish Independent*.

"War-blinded ex-service men met at the Carlton, Belfast, yesterday and spent a pleasant day, luncheon and tea being provided, and an excellent entertainment. The occasion was the St. Dunstan's Silver Jubilee reunion."—*Belfast News Letter*.



ST. DUNSTAN'S, BRIGHTON, FLOODLIT FOR THE JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

ST. DUNSTAN'S FOR BLINDED SOLDIERS, SAILORS AND AIRMEN (IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE BRITISH LEGION),
Inner Circle, Regent's Park, London, N.W.1
Printed by THE SHENVAL PRESS LTD., 58 Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1