

ST. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW

For Men and Women Blinded on War Service

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CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

IN August last, after considerable pressure from Parliament, the Government introduced supplementary pensions and allowances for wives and children, payable in cases where seriously disabled ex-Service men were unable to undertake ordinary employment. This concession did not go so far as I had advocated, but it represented a very substantial benefit to a large number of ex-Service men whose need was very great, including many St. Dunstaners.

Just before Christmas Parliament passed, with the approval of Members of all parties, the Second Reading of the Disabled Persons Bill, and by the time you read these words I expect the Bill will have passed all its stages in the House of Commons. This Bill establishes a Register of disabled persons who are defined as being those who, from war or industrial or other causes, are handicapped in the securing or retention of employment. The Bill then makes it compulsory for employers who have more than twenty-five employees to employ a quota or percentage of disabled persons in their factories or plants or offices. The quota or percentage is not fixed but will be varied from time to time according to circumstances.

In the early days of the war I explained in the REVIEW that we were undertaking research and enquiry with a view to finding jobs in ordinary industry which blinded men could undertake, and that we hoped that these enquiries would lead to good results, not only for the war period but afterwards. We have, in fact, placed in ordinary industry in ordinary jobs at ordinary wages over a hundred blinded soldiers of the last war and twenty-seven younger men and one woman of this war, and we have established at Church Stretton, our Training Centre, industrial workshops in which various industrial processes, such as the working of a capstan lathe, and of a router, and assembly work and upholstery—and other processes are to follow—which will enable our men to undertake relatively skilled jobs. There is no doubt that young men who can be trained and placed in ordinary industry are in a favourable position, for they get good and regular wages and enjoy the company of sighted workmen and girls and the ordinary working day and social life of a modern factory. Our anxiety has been lest these jobs should end with the war, and the Disabled Persons Bill, when it becomes law, will go a long way towards ensuring permanent employment for those who prove themselves capable of undertaking it. The Bill is thus a great step forward for all disabled persons, and speaking for St. Dunstaners and for disabled members of the British Legion, I feel justified in giving it a cordial welcome, and in referring to it in the House as a valuable addition to our social services. In my opinion it is the humane and intelligent way of dealing with the problem of disabled persons. It will not merely make them happier, but will also contribute to the nation's wealth.

More than twenty years ago the British Legion asked for a measure of compulsion to secure the employment of disabled ex-Service men. Now at last it has come and this is a

good example of the advantages of National Government. For what stood in the way of the introduction of such a measure in the various governments of all Parties which we have had in the last twenty years or so was the reluctance of employers to accept compulsion and the reluctance of Trade Unions to see any priority given to disabled persons and to admit them to membership. Now in the stress of war these sectional interests have given way to the national need, and a most useful measure is well on the way to its place on the statute book.

In my speech on this subject, I asked that during the next few years a preference should be given to disabled ex-Service men if by any chance there were not jobs for all. Mr. Bevin, the Minister of Labour, in his reply to me, said that he would give an administrative preference and that should circumstances require it he would take other steps to make sure that the ex-Service men and women were taken care of.

In the past there have been individual cases where blind persons have been re-engaged by their firms for factory work, but St. Dunstan's was the first to set out on a research campaign in this matter, and we can claim the credit for having blazed a trail which played its part in inspiring the Government to take this important step, and which will, I believe, be of inestimable value to all disabled people, and particularly to our own St. Dunstan's blinded men and women.

I also obtained an assurance from the Minister that employers would be free to give employment under the quota to disabled ex-Service men and women if they wanted to do so. This is a very important statement, for it preserves for the ex-Service community their right to a voluntary preference, and enables organisations like St. Dunstan's and the British Legion to continue their good work of organising the employment of ex-Service people and of persuading employers to give them a preference wherever this is necessary.

Developments at Church Stretton

The increase in our numbers due to this war has been very considerable, and it has been necessary for us greatly to increase our accommodation and staff at Church Stretton. For some months I have been negotiating with the War Office to give us the use of hotels and hutments and other buildings which they have requisitioned in Church Stretton. At first they were unwilling to give way because they claimed that the presence in Britain of so many troops of our own armies and of the American and Canadian armies rendered this impossible. But the value of personal contact with the men in charge was demonstrated by the kindly way in which the Adjutant-General and the Quartermaster-General, whom I went to see personally, cut through the red tape and agreed to the principle that the little town of Church Stretton should gradually become St. Dunstan's own centre.

The War Office has now agreed in principle to give up gradually all its accommodation in Church Stretton to us, and we have already taken over two hotels and a number of houses and many hutments, which are being converted to our use. By Easter time we shall have accommodation for between 200 and 250 blinded men and women of this war in Church Stretton, and as the year proceeds we shall be able to develop further if necessary. We are accustomed to think of the War Office and other government departments as hard-hearted organisations which never listen to a human plea for consideration, and I should like, therefore, to take the opportunity of thanking the Adjutant-General and the Quartermaster-General, and their representatives at Chester and in Shropshire, for their appreciation of our difficulties and for their recognition of our needs and their generous action in meeting them.

When the development in Church Stretton is fully organised we shall have one central school and recreation centre and a number of houses in different parts of the town where the men will live. From this point of view the new St. Dunstan's now being increased and built up will be similar in many respects to the old St. Dunstan's in Regent's Park, where all the workshops and schoolrooms were in one place and the men lived in a number of houses round about.

After-Care Reunions

Speaking to a small number of St. Dunstaners who had lunch with my wife and me in Bristol the other day, I said that it was a curious thing that in the fifth year of war we should be able to arrange this luncheon party, whereas we had been unable to arrange similar gatherings the earlier years. It is a matter of congratulation, primarily, I suppose, to Lord Woolton, but to the country generally, that this should be so, for you would have expected feeding arrangements and transport to have been worse now than it was before, but in fact they are better. At any rate the fact is that I have been able, during the past year, to meet small numbers of St. Dunstaners in some of the big towns which I have had to visit, and I have had a small number of reunions which have been of the greatest value to me in enabling me to learn how the old St. Dunstaners are getting on in spite of war-time difficulties. I am afraid it is impossible to re-establish the old reunions in a widespread way at the present moment, and such meetings as are possible consist only of those who live in the centre of the big cities. This is very unfortunate for those who live far afield in the countryside, and my wife and I would very much like to meet them also, but I'm afraid we shall have to wait until better times before that becomes possible, for catering arrangements cannot be made for large parties, and long journeys such as men and their wives used to undertake in the old days are too difficult in these times.

Christmas and the New Year

Lady Fraser and I have had some wonderful messages from all over the world from St. Dunstaners and their families. We thank them very much for their kindly thoughts, and send to all our friends in our widespread St. Dunstan's family our very best wishes for good luck in 1944.

IAN FRASER.

St. Dunstan's Bridge Club

The Annual General Meeting of the Bridge Club will be held on February 19th, at 2 p.m., at Headquarters, Park Crescent. The Chair will be taken by the President of the Club, Sir Ian Fraser. Any St. Dunstaner interested in Bridge will be welcomed. It is hoped to be able to hold a class for beginners or intermediate players as well as the inter-club league, which was so successful last year.

R.P.C.

Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes

Congratulations to Bro. W. Lowings, R.O.H., Past Grand Chamberlain, who has been elected Provincial Grand Primo of the province of Winchester for the second time in ten years.

Prisoner-of-War Promoted

Eric Maskell, son of Mr. and Mrs. P. T. Maskell, of Rochester, who is a prisoner-of-war in Poland, has been promoted to Flight Lieutenant.

Freedom—Then Recapture

Thomas Nelson, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Nelson, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, after being free for two weeks at the time of Italy's surrender, has been recaptured and is now a prisoner in Germany.

Reported Missing—Now Safe

Geoffrey Rowe, son of Mr. and Mrs. Rowe, of Burslem, who was reported missing, has now written to them from a prison camp in Java.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. D. Batchelor, of Ratley, a sergeant in the R.A.F., who was reported missing in the East, has now returned safely to his base, having apparently been picked up by a boat.

Wounded

Our late St. Dunstan's son, Albert Baker (Chaddesden) has had his right leg amputated as a result of wounds.

Herbert George Lea, son of Mr. and Mrs. H. Lea, of Hulland Ward, Derby, is wounded and in hospital.

Church Stretton Notes

We broke up for Christmas after three weeks crowded with activities—we were going to say "engagements," but that would be ambiguous—we have nothing fresh to report in *that* line.

The Musical Society led off with a Concert: founded a year ago with somewhat highbrow aspirations, they condescended on this festive occasion to a variety programme varying from Mozart to melodrama; we had some of Jock Steel's latest compositions, including old Scotch airs in modern settings; fresh stars from men and staff were added to our constellations, and there was never a dull moment.

That afternoon we had received a friendly visit from H.R.H. Princess Royal, who asked if she might come to see the new developments since her more formal visit of two years ago: Lady Boyne accompanied her. The Meccano and Boot Shops seemed to attract her most: in the latter both she and Lady Boyne wished they could be among Mr. Kitson's customers and could have their shoes repaired in two weeks instead of six. At Tiger Hall she chatted with many of the new patients, and after a detailed inspection of Belmont and its activities she went over to Brockhurst and was much interested in the upholstery machines and inspection. She stayed to tea with the men. As a result of her visit, the Director received the following letter:—

DEAR MR. BANKES-WILLIAMS,

The Princess Royal desires me to thank you very much indeed for all the arrangements you had made for Her Royal Highness's visit to St. Dunstan's on Tuesday last.

"It is hard to put into words what one feels about such a visit, but to see such triumph over physical disability, and such an undaunted spirit of determination and cheerfulness is a very inspiring thing, and the Princess felt this most strongly. She would like you, and all the staff, to know what admiration she felt for the wonderful work you are doing there, and she sends her best wishes to all the patients and trainees. She trusts they will make good progress and be successful and happy in the very varied jobs for which they are training.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) SYBIL KENYON-SLANEY,
Lady-in-Waiting."

Each of our two "houses" gave a Christmas Concert. On December 14th the "Brockhurst Follies" made their debut in a bright, breezy and well-dressed concert party production. The entertainment was varied, with Mrs. Hyde, Jack Lee, and Fred Ripley in real racy mood; Bob Birchall, Jack Simmons and Freddie Mills showing much talent in character sketches; Bill Morris in song with accordion; Jimmy Delaney, the perfect little lady; David Bell, the ballad singer; "Killy" with a song with a swing; and Mr. Fraser in light comedy. The cast opened and closed with a good theme song, and the chorus also used much imagination in its witty introduction of the various topical events in life and training. The show was well received and popular opinion voted it a great success.

The show was ably compèred by Jimmy Delaney, and all thanks are due to Mr. Fraser for his good work as producer; Eric Fletcher, stage manager; Ray Tittle, the dresser; Mrs. Crowson, the wardrobe mistress; and Miss Poulton, of Church Stretton, the pianist.

The Longmynd Concert was voted to be the best we have ever had, and great credit is due to Leslie White, who has worked hard for three years to keep his concert party going, in spite of fresh ventures which might tend to cut across his domains. This was an All Star Variety Programme. Fortunately, Gwen O'Bern was back from hospital just in time to be one of the chief attractions, with her very rich soprano voice and charming personality—she delighted us in solos and duets with Leslie; Ray Vowles is an old favourite with his accordion; and another fresh discovery is W. Young, who had sung so beautifully at another show that he was specially asked to join the Longmynd singers. The high spot of comedy was given by "the three married men" (in reality three very too hard-boiled bachelors), namely, Leslie, Alf Wigglesworth, and G. Blackmore, who declared that matrimony had brought them to their present pitiable plight; they appeared again later, at a more advanced age, as three old crocks in the last stages of dilapidation.

We are indeed fortunate in having Lady Buckmaster on the staff, with her uncanny flair for discovering hidden dramatic talent,

Anyone who has organised theatricals can appreciate the vicissitudes of despair through which she passes. Even after she has given endless auditions and selected her cast, the tale of Job's misfortunes pales before hers—but, like him, she emerges triumphant. This year's production, entitled "Five Minutes," was even more successful than those of the two preceding years. It was almost impossible to realise from the alert movements of the actors, and their quick repartee, that only one among them could see, and we congratulate not only the producers, but Elsie Aldred (the heroine), Ted Dudley (her "fiancé"), Sean McNamara (the villain), Monica Sey (his confederate), and Jimmy Green (the not entirely incorruptible policeman).

This play was to have been preceded by a sketch with the cast of repatriated men who had performed it at Kloster Haina. As it was found impossible to revive it at such short notice, they gave instead, under the baton of Edward Larkham, a short variety programme, in which Johnny Ince was inimitable as a Lancashire lad; Ron Ellis was at the drums, and W. Young not only delighted us with his fine tenor voice, but showed how the mouth organ can be as melodious as a violin.

Some weeks ago Norman Perry suggested an open competition in Braille Interpoint Reading.

As a result a competition was arranged, with two classes:—

- (1) Open to all Brailleists in training.
- (2) Open to those who had learnt for less than a year.

There were about a dozen entries for the preliminary test. This was followed a few days later by the finals, for which three had been chosen from each class as follows:—

From Class (1): D. Fleisig, N. Perry, B. Bright.

From Class (2): T. Norman, E. Aldred, V. Formstone.

On this occasion the test was held in public, in the Braille Room, and we congratulate the "Chosen Six," who thus broke the ice for future competitions: all acquitted themselves right well, several giving quite dramatic interpretations of the lurid passages which were chosen from "Green Hell."

The judges declared D. Fleisig to be winner in the first class, closely followed by N. Perry. Tony Naumann is the second; and

the result was so satisfactory that this will probably become a half-yearly event.

We offer our congratulations to Colin Beaumont Edmonds, who received his M.C. at Buckingham Palace from the Duke of Gloucester, deputising for the King; to Lord Normanby, who becomes M.B.E. in recognition of his work for our St. Dunstaners in Germany; also to Mr. Pomfret Kilner on his appointment as head of the newly-founded Nuffield School and Hospital of Plastic Surgery at Oxford. In spite of heavy calls on his time in the South of England, Mr. Kilner comes here sometimes twice a month to perform his miracles of grafting and facial and orthopaedic reconstruction, working hours on end after the long and tiresome journey.

The following have passed tests during December:—

Typing.—L. Stent, J. Dalton, P. Spring, B. Josey, M. Elias.

Braille Reading (Interline).—A. Reynolds, J. Lee, T. Brougham, C. Beaumont Edmonds, S. Callaghan.

Braille Reading (Interpoint).—E. Aldred, A. Wigglesworth, A. Naumann.

Braille Writing.—W. Robinson, M. Barstow, A. Reynolds, E. Aldred.

Admitted to Hospital.—Spr. I. C. McMillan, R.E. (20), Pt-Askaig, Isley; Spr. C. E. Roberts, R.E. (26), Penkhull, Stoke-on-Trent; Pte. R. G. Blewett, U.S. Army (20), Euclid, Ohio; Pte. E. R. Jensen, Q.O.R.W. Kents (24), Willesden, London;

From Tembani.—Dvr. T. Barber, W. Yorks Regt. (40), Warrenby, Yorks; Pte. C. W. Bates, R.A.S.C. (36), St. Albans, Herts; L-Sgt. J. Inness, Gordon Highlanders (26), Mirfield, Yorks; W-Sgt. C. N. L. Nicolson, R.E. (23), Broughty Ferry, Angus; Gnr. F. W. Oxenham, R.A. (32), Bircoates, near Doncaster; Dvr. H. Patience, R.A.S.C. (38), W. Croydon; Spr. H. Petty, R.E. (29), Leeds, 9; Parachutist A. C. Simpson, Special Air Service Regt. (25), Retford, Notts; Dvr. F. Watkinson, R.A. (28), Ford, Plymouth.

Discharged from Hospital, later to return to Training.—Pte. G. Allen, Pte. B. Bright, Pte. W. Burnett, Pte. L. Cook, Gdsmn. S. Doy, Spr. D. Fleisig, Rfsmn. T. Hart, Pte. J. Legge, Pte. D. Parmenter, Rfsmn. J. Shepherd, L-Cpl. P. Timiney, Pte. F. Wareham, Spr. A. Baldwin, Pte. C. Hobbs, Pte. J. McConnell.

Ditto, later to Newington House.—Cpl. W. Deuchars, Pte. J. Doig, Tpr. Rodgers, Pte. R. Smith, Cpl. J. Abel.

Ditto, hoping to obtain Civilian Employment.—Dvr. E. Nash-Larkham, L-Cpl. Capon, Gnr. W. Valentine.

Everyone had at least one Christmas dinner.

Brockhurst led off on the 17th, and Sir Ian and Lady Fraser arrived in time, in spite of a long, cold journey through the fog. Next evening Belmont gave a party; the fame of this school of Domestic Science is too well-known for further comment on the refreshments. Gwen and some of the guests sang solos, and it was Sunday morning before the strains of "Auld Lang Syne" brought the party to a close. They still had voice enough to join heartily in the Carol Service at 9.45 in the Chapel Hut; at this, the Rev. Nugee was assisted by T. Milligan and Head Orderly Hawketts in the reading. A similar service was held at 10.45 in Brockhurst Chapel, with R. Bridger at the harmonium, and Mr. Bankes-Williams assisting Mr. Nugee with the reading.

Longmynd dined 120 strong on Monday, on the traditional turkey, Christmas pudding and mince pies, with chocolates sent by Pearson Hall, Toronto—the St. Dunstan's of Canada—apples from Australia, and the toasts were drunk in wine sent by our Australian associates. After proposing the toast "The King," Sir Ian thanked all present, men and staff, for their service throughout the year. He then took us for a rapid survey around the globe, which is now lit by an almost continuous chain of St. Dunstan's torches—in New Zealand, Australia, India—there an old St. Dunstaner has founded a home where we have Indian as well as British ex-Service men.

Again, it gleams in Palestine, Egypt and South Africa; there is still a torch in Kloster Haina, where about seven prisoners-of-war await repatriation. The Atlantic—we have torches in the United States and Canada—and so back to the British Isles, with our big light here. With us to-night were representatives of America and Canada, and from our Allies, a Dutchman; during the past three years we have had Frenchmen and Poles. Sir Ian spoke of the continual expansion of St. Dunstan's up here, and said his task would have been well-nigh impossible but for the help he had received

from the organising staff, especially Mr. Bankes-Williams, Miss Pain, and Mr. Davenport. Quite a number of old St. Dunstaners are on the staff, giving a good lead to the present generation, who in their turn are teaching us valuable lessons by the way they tackled the problems of this new phase of their existence. So once again he would ask us to join in the toast of St. Dunstan's past and present—and absent friends.

Peter Piper, as head of the Entertainments Committee, replied in an excellent little speech, and was followed by Mr. Bankes-Williams, Miss Pain and Mr. Davenport.

The Director then read telegrams of greetings from several old friends, and thanked all for their loyal co-operation in 1943.

At 8.30 p.m. we moved down to the Entertainments Hut for dancing until nearly midnight.

Melplash News

To begin—the Boys and Staff of Melplash Court wish the Boys and Girls and Staff of St. Dunstan's everywhere a very happy New Year and, we hope, Peace.

Melplash has been very gay this Christmas-tide. On December 16th we were invaded by 26 members of the Girls' Training Corps. They gave us a very musical evening, and very entertaining was their comb and drum band. Very many thanks to their leader, Miss Bickford.

On Christmas Eve Miss Pearse, of Morcombe Lake, brought her party to sing carols. She told us that each year they sing for St. Dunstan's.

Christmas Day was the day of the year. What a wonderful dinner, just everything one could desire, not one thing forgotten. It reminded one of the old Christmasses at Portland Place.

We thank all who sent us telegrams; they were read at dinner.

After tea the whole party were invited out to "mine hosts," Mr. and Mrs. E. Houndsell, at the Half Moon, where a very pleasant evening was spent.

We cannot tell you all, especially of the presents, but we may mention our American friends were very good. The boys of the Old Brigade wish them every success and a speedy return home.

All the news for now from up along and down along.

Honours

Congratulations to John McNicholls, St. Dunstan's telephone operator at the Ministry of Labour and National Service, North Western Region, Manchester, who was awarded the British Empire Medal in the New Year's Honours List.

The award is a recognition of devotion to duty and service during difficult times, including the periods of raids over the area. Our St. Dunstaner, who has been at the North Western Regional Office for the past twelve years, is one of the most popular and cheerful men on the Ministry of Labour's staff, and his colleagues there will join with us in congratulating him upon his well-deserved honour.

Congratulations also to Kenneth Claud Revis, Lieutenant, Royal Engineers, a new St. Dunstaner who has just joined us at Church Stretton, who receives the M.B.E. He was training to be a Civil Engineer when he interrupted his career to join the Army. He served in a Bomb Disposal Company, Royal Engineers.

We are glad to record also that Benjamin Ormond Purse, receives an O.B.E. "for devoted service to the blind." Ben Purse, as he has been widely and affectionately known throughout the blind world for a lifetime, was, in his early years, a strong protagonist in favour of government and municipal action to relieve the handicap of blindness. He led a campaign which had a profound influence on public opinion just before the last war and culminated in the passing by Parliament of the Blind Persons Act, 1920, which placed upon government and local authorities substantial responsibility for the welfare of the blind. For many years he has been one of the most important members of the staff of the National Institute for the Blind, and has always been ready with advice and help. He was the principal contact between our Chairman's office and the civilian blind world in all its ramifications, and St. Dunstan's owes him a debt of gratitude for his services.

Promotion

Dick Doyle, son of Mr. and Mrs. "Micky" Doyle, has been granted a commission in the Royal Irish Fusiliers.

Marriages

ALLEN—CHARLTON.—On January 8th, G. Allen, of Sheffield (returned prisoner-of-war), to A.C.W. Mollie Charlton (W.A.A.F.), at Hull.

BRIGHT—CREESE.—At St. Paul's, Worcester, on January 1st, B. Bright, of Birmingham (returned prisoner-of-war), to Miss Betty Creese.

NAUMANN—PHILLIPS.—On January 10th, at Holy Trinity Church, Brompton Road, Anthony Frank Naumann to Mrs. Felicity Phillips.

Young St. Dunstaners

Marriages

Beatrice (Betty) Bull (Spilsby), on December 7th, to A.C.2 E. C. Step.

Sergeant Bob Brogan (Cambridge), on December 26th, to L.A.C.W. Eileen Crowe.

Herbert Sainty (Woodford Bridge), on Christmas Day, to Miss Rosina Milton.

L.A.C. Joyce Belcher (Hampton), on December 18th, to A.C.1 Norman Barker.

Wren Joan Margaret Pugh (Finchley), to Sergeant William Till, Flight Engineer, R.A.F.

L.A.C. Wireless Operator Oliver Wernham (Bracknell) to Miss Mary Englefield.

Davina Yuill (Overtown), on December 31st, to Mr. John Horn.

Sons and Daughters in the Services

AUBREY, Harold, Royal Navy.

BARLOW, L.A.C. S. (Grimston), Royal Air Force.

BELCHER, Flt. Sergt. Arthur (Hampton), Royal Air Force.

BENTLEY, A.C.1 E. (Manchester), Royal Air Force.

BATTEN, Gunner D., Royal Artillery.

BENTLEY, O.S. W. (Manchester), Royal Navy.

BLACKETT, A. F., Royal Navy.

BROWN, Wren E. J. (Reading), W.R.N.S.

BROWN, Basil (Reading), Intelligence Corps.

CANNING, James, Royal Navy.

FRENCH, L.A.C. P. H. (Brighton), Royal Air Force.

GOBOURN, 2nd Lieut. P. C. C., Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders.

HERMON, Wren Alma, W.R.N.S.

MCNICHOLLS, A.C. Bernard, Royal Air Force.

MAGPHERSON, Sergt. W. J. (Windsor), Royal Air Force.

MORTIMER, L.A.C. H. (Hull), Royal Air Force.

PEARSON, Ivy (Prestwich), Women's Land Army.

POPPLE, Radio Officer Arthur Ian, Merchant Navy.

PRIESTLEY, Eric, Merchant Navy.

SAINTY, Arthur, Royal Artillery.

SHURROCK, Gunner Frank, Royal Artillery.

STEVENSON, Pte. A. F. (Brighton), Royal Sussex Regt.

STRAUGHTON, N.A.2 L. B., Fleet Air Arm.

WALKER, L.A.C. (Durham), Royal Air Force.

WALKER, Pte. W. (Durham), Garrison Fire Brigade.

"In Memory"

Private Robert Allcock, 4th Suffolk Regiment

We have to record, with deep regret, the death of R. Allcock, of Ipswich, who served from August 4th, 1914, until May, 1916. Coming to St. Dunstan's in that year his sight improved for a while, but finally he was re-admitted to our benefits. On account of his health, however, it was not possible for him to do much boot repairing, the occupation for which he was trained, and he spent many years in hospital, where he died on December 7th, 1943. The British Legion very kindly attended to all funeral arrangements for us. A wreath from Sir Ian Fraser and his comrades was among the flowers. We extend our sincere sympathy to his family.

A.B. O. Cole, Royal Naval Reserve

With deep regret we record the death of O. Cole, of West Appledore. He came to St. Dunstan's in 1925, after he had become blind as the result of an accident on board ship. He was trained in mat-making, at which occupation he continued right up to October of this year. As a young man he took a keen interest in music and played in a number of bands. He had never had good health, but his death on December 17th was unexpected. The funeral took place at St. Mary's Church, Appledore, and members of the Royal Naval Reserve acted as bearers. A wreath was sent from Sir Ian Fraser and his many comrades at St. Dunstan's, and our sympathy is extended to his widow and family, several members of which are in H.M. Forces, in their sad bereavement.

Private William Henry Jones, Labour Corps

With deepest regret we record the death of W. H. Jones, of Kemp Town, Brighton. He was wounded in France in November, 1917, and came to us in November, 1918. Owing to his age he was unable to follow his basket trade for very long. He constantly suffered with malaria. He has for many times been on the brink of death, but has managed to rally round and his actual death on December 13th, in the Brighton Municipal Hospital, ended many years of suffering. Our sincere sympathy is extended to his wife and invalid son and daughter. A wreath was sent from Sir Ian Fraser and his many comrades at St. Dunstan's, and many of his friends living in the Brighton district attended his funeral.

Letter to the Editor

To the Editor, "St. Dunstan's Review"

DEAR SIR,

There is a Braille quarterly magazine, entitled "The Rainbow," which is published for the deaf-blind. About a year ago a correspondent by the name of D. D. Brown, of Edinburgh, wrote saying no deaf or deaf-blind people retained normal speech who have been deaf for any length of time.

His comments were, of course, disputed, but he now says we deaf are merely told we speak correctly so as not to hurt our feelings. One lady has told him she "has never heard a deaf person speak properly."

Our deaf in St. Dunstan's have been deaf from fourteen to sixteen years, and I am asking any of our hearing men, V.A.D.s, orderlies, and any members of the staff who care to, to let us know their frank opinion of our speech. I am not referring to a loud or quiet voice, but to "defective speech," and to us few deaf as a whole.

Yours sincerely,

GEO. FALLOWFIELD.

Silver Weddings

Congratulations to: Mr. and Mrs. Bradford, Heeley, Sheffield, December 26th; Mr. and Mrs. G. Polley, Southall, December 26th.

Deaths

Our very sincere sympathy is extended to the following:—

COLE.—To Mr. and Mrs. B. R. Cole, of East Barnet, whose son, Calvin Brian, born on July 25th last, died in December.

MAY.—To H. May, of Plymouth, whose wife passed away on November 26th.

Mr. J. Rushton Odell

Those St. Dunstan's masseurs who knew him in the early days, will hear with regret of the death of Mr. J. Rushton Odell, who worked with them at the old House. The news of his death, which took place early last year, came to us in a letter from J. Chisholm, of New Zealand.

Prayer

To us who're now bereft of sight
The night is day; the day but night.
But night must fall and then I'm free
To wander forth in search of thee.
Some day o'er us Life's setting sun
Will blend the night and day as one.
When that befalls, I humbly pray
Thou wilt be there to show the way.

C.L.