

ST. DUNSTAN'S REVIEW

For Men and Women Blinded on War Service

No. 324—VOLUME XXX [NEW SERIES] JANUARY, 1946

PRICE 3d. MONTHLY.
[FREE TO ST. DUNSTAN'S MEN]

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Pensions White Paper

IN previous REVIEWS I forecast improvements in war pensions and allowances, and now they have come in a White Paper published by the Minister of Pensions just before Parliament rose. My ship has been delayed three weeks, so that I am able to comment upon them from my office instead of sending my friends a message from somewhere on the ocean.

On another page the Editor is publishing a summary of the White Paper, and a letter which I have written to the Press. By reading these two, St. Dunstaners will gather what the new proposals are, and the view which we take of them at St. Dunstan's.

In the main the concessions are familiar, for they have been the subject of many representations from the British Legion for a long time, and I have frequently written about them in this journal and spoken about them in the House during recent years.

The two most important are, firstly, the increase in the flat rate pension from 40s. to 45s. In our British Legion deputation to the Minister we asked for £3 flat rate, and we are disappointed with 45s. And, secondly, the recognition of a disabled soldier's wife and children for allowances, even if the marriage or the births take place after the disability. There is a limitation on this, namely, that the wives and children will only be recognised if the disabled man marries within ten years of his leaving the Service, and this seems to me to be a petty meanness in an otherwise generous concession; I hope the Minister will alter it. Actually this concession will not benefit St. Dunstaners to a great extent financially, because St. Dunstan's itself has been paying the wife's allowance from its own funds for some months and has always paid a children's allowance. But nevertheless it is a just recognition of a proper claim, and I am sure all will welcome it.

I will not refer to the details here, except to comment upon two points of special interest. One is the doubling of the Attendant Allowance for men who are doubly disabled. I asked personally for this at a recent deputation before the Minister of Pensions, and am very gratified by his recognition of the claim. The other is the small, but valuable, concession of a payment to compensate the limbless for the wear and tear of their artificial limbs upon their clothing.

On the whole the White Paper is a considerable step forward, and I think St. Dunstaners would wish me to express our thanks to the Government. But, on the other hand, as will be clearly seen from my letter, I do not regard this as a final settlement which will endure

for many years. On the contrary, I think that the whole subject of war pensions and allowances is so important that it should be given the fullest possible consideration by a Select Committee, before which representatives of ex-Servicemen can appear and give evidence.

I hope my letter to the Press will start political thought upon this subject, so that we may in due course deal with the whole question of how the nation's debt to the men who have been disabled, and those who have been bereaved in its service in both wars, may be discharged with satisfaction to all concerned. Meantime, as will be seen from the note on another page, Mr. W. G. Askew, who, it will be remembered, was our most skilful and successful Pensions Officer before he became Secretary of St. Dunstan's, and who still advises us on matters of Pensions policy, will take up various points that arise out of the White Paper with the Ministry and will in due course write to every St. Dunstaner telling him where he stands.

IAN FRASER.

St. Dunstaner in New Year Honours

Many congratulations to J. R. Lynch, of Ruislip, Chief Telephone Operator at Fulham Installation, Petroleum Board (Shell-Mex), who received the award of the British Empire Medal (B.E.M.) in the New Year Honours List for services rendered in the Petroleum Industry.

Our St. Dunstaner, who has worked for twenty-four years under Shell Mex B.P., Ltd., has received the personal congratulations of the Minister of Fuel and Power upon his award, and from Sir Andrew Agnew, C.B.E., Chairman of the Petroleum Board.

St. Dunstan's, New Zealand

On Saturday, November 24th, Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Cyril Newall, Governor-General of New Zealand, officially opened the New Zealand St. Dunstan's. The weather was perfect and great public interest was shown in the ceremony.

A cable from Sir Ian Fraser, placing on record the pleasure of St. Dunstan's Executive Council at the incorporation of the Blinded Servicemen's Trust Board, and the opening of the New Zealand organisation, and granting the request for affiliation with the parent body, was read at the ceremony and received with appreciation by the Board and the trainees. St. Dunstan's Executive Council has nominated Donald McPhee, a St. Dunstaner of the last war, as its representative trustee on the Board in New Zealand.

French Hid Ring from Nazis

Walter (Dickie) Richardson, now at St. Dunstan's Training Centre, has just recovered a signet ring in unusual circumstances. In 1944 he was shot down over France while serving as an air gunner in a Lancaster bomber. After baling out, he wandered for eight hours before he was eventually taken by two Germans to a French hospital near St. Dizier. While the Germans were out of the room, a French doctor filed a signet ring which he wore from Richardson's finger and gave it to a hospital attendant, who promised to return it after the war. Richardson gave him his name and address, but had little hope of ever seeing it again.

Quite recently a British business man, Mr. S. W. Vickery, visiting the St. Dizier branch of his firm, was handed the ring by the branch manager, who told him its history. He was the hospital attendant. Mr. Vickery, on his return, at once got in touch with Richardson's home address, and then with St. Dunstan's, and the ring was handed to him. Mr. Vickery offered to have the file cut in the ring repaired, but Richardson prefers that it should remain broken as a souvenir of his experience.

Promotions

The son of Mr. and Mrs. F. James, of Hove, now in the Middle East, to the rank of Major.

Benny Skelly, now serving with the Indian Army, to the rank of Captain.

Colin Wardle (East Haddon), of R.E.M.E., and now in India, to Sergeant Instructor, attached to the I.E.M.E. He is only nineteen.

Personalities

A. Abram, of Reddish, has been elected Vice-President of his branch of the British Legion.

★ ★ ★

A. J. Radford, of Castle Cary, who, with his dog, Mac, has collected regularly for the Red Cross Penny a Week Fund since it began, finished with the grand total of seven hundred pounds, and has received an individual testimonial for framing. They both entered for the Welcome Home Carnival, when Mac received first prize as best dog in the show, and Jack carried off a second prize (as a Texas cowboy) in a torchlight procession.

★ ★ ★

Sapper McKay, who wrote the "Ode to Charlie Hawketts," which appears on this page, was blinded in action in Germany, when he also lost his right leg and received severe injuries to his other leg and both hands. At Stoke Mandeville Hospital his topical verses on personalities there are much appreciated by his friends and members of the staff. Charlie Hawketts, of course, is the brother of our old friend, "Bill" Hawketts.

★ ★ ★

A correspondent in "John Bull" recently wrote: "In these austerity days you can imagine my feelings when two fully-trained boot repairers told me that my best pair of shoes was past mending. Eventually I sent them to a blind repairer—an ex-Serviceman of the last war, trained by St. Dunstan's. Within four days they were back, soled and heeled, and nearly as good as new."

S. Purvis, of Seghill, Northumberland, was responsible for this tribute to our boot-repairers.

★ ★ ★

Captain Kenneth C. Revis has arrived in India with Mrs. Revis, where he will act as Assistant to Sir Clutha Mackenzie at St. Dunstan's Training Centre at Dehra Dun.

★ ★ ★

The D.L.I. cap badge which W. Rickaby, of Battersea, wore all through the 1914-1918 war has also gone right through the Burma Campaign, being worn all the time by his nephew.

★ ★ ★

C. Firth, of Heswall, a St. Dunstan's shop-keeper, has sent our Appeals Department £56 10s. from the collecting box on his counter during 1945, and £8, which was the result of a draw.

St. Dunstaner Honoured

From the "Daily Express," Scottish Edition, December 22nd, 1945:

"Blind ex-journalist, Mr. Fred Martin, is the new Vice-Convenor of Aberdeenshire. Mr. James Cruickshank becomes Convenor."

Frederick Martin, a blinded officer of the last war, was one of our earliest St. Dunstaners, and for years has been one of the most prominent men in Aberdeen public life. He was awarded the C.B.E. for his services in 1942.

As well as his election as Vice-Convenor of Aberdeenshire, he has been appointed Chairman of the Education Committee of the County, and St. Dunstaners everywhere will wish him the best of luck in these two most important new posts.

Brighton

On December 31st, Mrs. D. Sutcliffe retired from the Matronship of West House, Brighton. During her eleven years' association with St. Dunstan's, Mrs. Sutcliffe has acted as Sister-in-Charge at London Headquarters, and as Matron of the Melplash Home until the return to Brighton at the end of last year.

Those St. Dunstaners who knew her will join with us in sending her our very good wishes for the future.

Mrs. M. Ouseley has been appointed Matron of West House, Brighton, in the place of Mrs. Sutcliffe. Commander Paul, now released from his war service, has returned to take up his appointment as Commandant of the Home.

Ode to Charlie Hawketts

Our Charlie is busy by day and by night,
At washing and shaving he gets no respite,
He gets us our fags and gives us a light,
I don't need to tell you he's a bit of alright.

He takes us to bath, and to "dot 5,"
And in between times he goes to Ward 5.
He's always as busy as a bee in a hive,
Without him we'd all be more dead than alive.

He does his job well, he knows all the tricks,
And without him, I'm sure, we would be
in a fix.

So I think you'll agree, as I finish this rhyme,
Let's hope he'll stay here for quite a long
time.

T. E. MCKAY,
Ward 4 X, Stoke Mandeville.

Church Stretton Notes,

Surely our Christmas, 1945, jollities will be a life-memory of gaiety and happiness to all who took part in them. Whether because of our record numbers or because of its being the first peace-time anniversary, or our last Christmas celebration in Church Stretton, it certainly surpassed all previous records. Each house had its own banquet, a triumph of organisation for all concerned—turkey, with every conceivable etcetera, delectable Christmas pudding and mince pies, all served hot, plenty of drinks (but not too many!), sing-song and mistletoe . . . (censorship here!). Then all assembled at the Central Hall to dance to K.S.L.I. and St. Dunstan's own bands, with spot prizes, buffet and beer till 11.30 p.m.

On the previous Monday our good Wolverhampton friends had thrown a marvellous party at our own Canteen and Dance Hall, including all staff in their royal invitation. Dancing, presents, cigarettes—and as for food, we were feasting on the surplus all next day! Tuesday, two more Christmas parties; Wednesday, Christmas tea at the Granada (Shrewsbury cinema) for all trainees. Then St. Dunstan's "Fol-de-Rols" gave a rollicking show, "Treasure Island," on Thursday for the troops, and on Friday to a packed Hall, ourselves and Church Stretton friends. The stage represented a wonderful galley, complete with shields, oars, prow, figurehead (Donald Duck!) and rudder—Mr. Beasley's handiwork—the company appearing as gay buccaners, with the sepulchral voice of Captain Hook threatening at intervals to sink the ship; this was eventually represented with a terrifying thunder-storm, putting to shame all mere Drury Lane effects! Congratulations to all concerned—organisers, dressers, soloists and chorus.

Previously the Musical Circle had given an excellent concert, only marred by the rumour that this was its final swan song; but all agreed with Mr. Stanners, the announcer, that so much talent must be kept together in some form. It included a Musical Quiz—a C.S. team being beaten by a St. Dunstan's four, 17 to 12. Could you explain the difference between a piano duet and a piano duo? or between a drum and a kettle-drum? or say which instrument can play the highest, and which the lowest, in an orchestra? The Church Stretton Ladies' Choir, conducted by Mrs. Steel,

assisted with some charming songs, including "The Spirit of Night," specially composed for them by Jock Steel.

Welcome invitations have been accepted from Battlefield Camp, Attingham Hall, Toc H, A.T.S. Signals, and Harlescote Social Club, while visiting dance bands have included Shawbury R.A.F. and Foden's Works Band from Sandbach, besides some lunch-time concerts.

A Play-Reading at Longmynd, "The Late Christopher Bean," was rendered with spirit and keenly enjoyed.

Among the fifteen leaving us: J. Carney, H. Macartney and S. Fowler have been trained on the capstan lathe; Cyril Parker is starting work at Grantham Products, Grantham; Norton Christal returns to his school-mastering at King William College, Isle of Man; W. Thomas is to have a course at the London School of Weaving; M. Clements takes on assembly work at Messrs. Santon's, Ltd., Somerton Works, Newport; Tom Daborne and F. Palfrey will be starting in businesses; Ken McIntyre is repatriated for a short time to South Africa before going to a University over here; and one or two are fortunate in regaining enough sight to qualify for other training, where they will still be shepherded. Blessings on each one.

Many old St. Dunstaners will feel with us how very strange the place seems without Mrs. Broughton. There is no one connected with St. Dunstan's who has given more devoted service for so many years, including Regent's Park days. All her friends know how fully she gave of herself, and will agree she has richly earned a rest; and all will wish her comfort and happiness in her own little home.

Finally, the shadow of coming events is already assuming shape, and next Christmas should see Church Stretton entirely free of us, and the Ovingdean establishment fully reoccupied. It is another sign of returning peace-time conditions—but to some a jolt, and to many much hard work. Still, we all know that nothing can in any degree affect the continuity and fellowship of St. Dunstan's life.

Congratulations to the following, who have passed tests:—

In Braille Writing.—J. Collingwood, A. Pecket, N. Christal, G. Taylor, A. Somervell, D. Cashmore, B. Temple,

G. Bradley, T. Burge, J. Caswell, R. Slade, G. Lund, J. Bond, D. Donnelly.

In Braille Interpoint.—R. Phillips, R. Holmes, V. Formstone, T. Banks.

In Braille Interline.—J. Cruse, M. Clements, F. Pawson, C. Parker, J. Carney, R. Jones, N. Hopkins, W. Moon, I. Kirkby, G. Eustace, R. Parsons (Moon).

In Typing.—T. O'Connor, R. E. Tibbit, A. Partington, E. Sampson, S. Stinson, W. Veness, J. Lewis, H. McCarthy, S. Connor, A. H. Brown, G. Waterworth, W. Shotton, G. Poole, L. Fensome, J. Gill, E. Terrell.

Social Insurance Bill and the Blind

A deputation, led by Mr. Edward Evans, M.P. (Lowestoft, Labour), consisting of Mr. Frederick Messer, M.P. (Tottenham, S., Labour), Lt. Commander the Hon. L. W. Joynson-Hicks, M.P. (Chichester, Unionist), and Sir Ian Fraser, M.P. (Lonsdale, Unionist), went to see the Rt. Hon. James Griffiths, M.P., Minister of National Insurance, on Friday, December 7th, on behalf of the blind community generally. The deputation urged that, under the new Social Insurance Bill, which was shortly to be introduced, there was a risk that certain civilian blind people might receive substantially less by way of allowances than they were receiving at present, and asked for an assurance that no blind person would be worse off. Positive proposals for improvement in the position of civilian blind people were made. Mr. Griffiths received the deputation sympathetically and said he would consider their representations.

These proposals do not affect St. Dunstaners who are in receipt of war disability pensions, except that Sir Ian Fraser, speaking on their behalf, emphasised the principle that anyone who pays a full contribution to a contributory scheme should receive full benefits, and that, accordingly, all St. Dunstaners who go into the National Insurance Scheme compulsorily, ought to receive the full benefits in case of illness, old age, etc., without their disability pension being taken into account.

Sons and Daughters in the Services

GAMBLIN, Trooper C. T. (New Brunswick, Canada), 5th Canadian Armoured Regt.

GAMBLIN, A.B. F. J. (Canada), Royal Navy.

INGRAM, Pte. D. J. (Maidenhead), R.A.S.C.

PRINTIE, J., Royal Navy.

SMITH, Pte. L. W. (Leicester), R.A.C.

MACFARLANE, Writer Neil Stewart (London), Royal Navy.

Blackpool Notes

All the staff at the Blackpool Home send, through the medium of the REVIEW, warmest greetings to all St. Dunstaners, old and new.

Our Christmas festivities are nearly over, but we have had a happy time. Our newly-acquired friends from the Girls' Hostel gave a party, which commenced about 5.45 and lasted until midnight, with a wonderful programme. We met in the lounge of the Hostel, and there was wine to suit each and every palate. After that a very appetising little dinner was served, followed by a short sing-song. To everyone's delight a private bus arrived to take us to the Palace of Varieties, where we enjoyed a very good show. The bus brought us back to the Hostel for coffee, sandwiches and cigarettes, which kept everyone happy until midnight.

We had a jolly time on Christmas Day, when everybody had gifts from the Christmas tree. The gifts were handed out by "Father Christmas" during the morning. Methinks there will be much competition next year for the role of Santa if Tommy Milner tells all he knows about the fun and games.

A very merry party sat down to dinner after the new Vicar of the Parish had said a few words of greeting, followed by grace. A pipe, given by our good friend, Mr. Lunt, was won by "Lucky Freddy Winter," who had the winning number on his table card. (At the New Year Party, L.F.W. also won a half pound tin of tobacco, which was given to be raffled for the Merchant Navy Fund by J. Power.) At the party in the evening much laughter was caused by Terry Roden and Arthur King when they fooled so hilariously during the game "Under the Blanket."

We are going to miss the friendliness of the *conductresses* on the Blackpool trams and buses, but hope in time to win the friendship of the men returning to their jobs, although they will never give our "troops" the warming "luv" to which we have become so familiar.

To-night we are looking forward to a very gay party after the revellers return from the Palace of Varieties, and hope to greet the New Year of 1946 in our usual happy way—sending greetings far and wide to all the big family of St. Dunstan's. May this prove to be a year of Peace and Plenty. Good wishes to you all. B.H.S.

Improvements in War Pensions

A new White Paper on War Pensions has recently been issued by the Government, and we set out below a summary of the changes so far as they affect St. Dunstaners :

(1) The 100 per cent. pension for a Private will in future be at the rate of 45s. a week, as against the present 40s., and the rates for lower degrees of disablement will be increased proportionately. The increase of 5s. a week is given to all N.C.O.s and men; for instance, a Corporal will in future receive 48s. 4d., a Sergeant 51s. 8d., and so on.

(2) In exceptional cases of very severe disablement, and where outside help is necessary, the Constant Attendant Allowance may be extended up to a maximum of 40s. a week. This will only affect those St. Dunstaners who are practically bedridden because of their pensionable disablement, or who, in addition to their blindness, have other war disabilities which make it necessary for them to have outside assistance. The provision applies equally to men of both wars.

(3) A special Hardship Allowance will in future be given to partially disabled men of the 1939-45 war who, in consequence of their disablement, are permanently incapable of resuming their former occupation or of following or being trained for one of equivalent standard. The Allowance is 11s. 3d. a week, or such smaller sum as will bring the partial disablement pension up to the 100 per cent. rate. The Allowance is not payable to men of the Great War.

(4) Men in receipt of pension for the loss of a limb who wear an artificial one will be granted a Clothing Allowance. The Allowance will be £5 a year in double, and £3 a year in single amputation cases.

(5) The existing practice of making a deduction in respect of home savings from allowances paid during a course of hospital treatment will be discontinued. The position of the pensioner who is permanently maintained in an institution will be separately considered.

(6) Family Allowances will in future be given to every pensioner provided that the marriage took or takes place within ten years of the end of his war service. This applies equally to men of both World Wars.

(7) If a pensioner dies as the result of his war service, a pension may be granted to his widow and children irrespective of the date of his marriage and the dates of birth of his children. This provision applies to widows of men of either World War who die or have died after September 3rd, 1939.

These improvements, which apply equally to men of all the Armed Forces, the Merchant Navy and Naval Auxiliary Services and to Civil Defence personnel, will come into effect as from the first pay-day in February.

There are a few points in connection with this White Paper which require elucidation, but within the next few days Mr. Askew will be writing personally to all St. Dunstan's men who may be affected, in order that their pension may be adjusted. It would

be helpful in the meantime if men would refrain from corresponding with Headquarters on this particular matter.

Select Committee Called For

The following letter from Sir Ian Fraser appeared in *The Times* on January 5th:—

To the Editor of "The Times"

SIR,—I ask for a Select Committee of the House of Commons, or, better still, of both Houses, to consider war pensions and allowances. This is not a protest against the present Government's White Paper, for that document, and the White Paper of the previous Government, together with the action that was taken thereon, constitute between them a substantial effort on the part of the two Ministers of Pensions and the two Chancellors of the Exchequer to remedy the grievances of, and act fairly by, men and women disabled by war service and those who have been bereaved.

The shifting of the onus of proof and the giving of the benefit of the doubt in certain cases, by the last Government, has done justice to many claimants. The practical admission to allowances of all the wives and children of disabled men, no matter whether the marriage or the birth took place before or after the invaliding disability occurred, is an important concession of principle in which both Governments shared. And the present Minister's doubling of the attendance allowance for the most seriously disabled is generous. On the other hand, the rise of the flat rate from 40s. to 45s. a week seems to me to be inadequate, and the omission of any *pro rata* rise for n.c.o.s and of any rise at all for officers or "alternative pensioners," appears to be pressing equalitarian doctrine too far.

However, there is much more in the problem of doing justice, and seeming to do justice, to the men and women who have fought our battles and have been disabled in so many varying degrees than can be seen by an examination of these salient points in the White Papers. For example, who should be admitted to the honourable roll of the war disabled? Only those whose wounds or incapacities are due to service with certainty, or with a certain element of doubt being allowed in their favour, or all those who went out fit and came back incapacitated? Then, upon what principle should the compensation be based? Should it be related to earnings, or likely earnings, in the station of life in which the pensioner found himself? Or should it be related to an arbitrary formula? The present method in Britain is a compromise between these two. Finally, it may be asked, should ex-Servicemen and women, whose disabilities occur at rare intervals in a nation's life and, we may hope, will not occur again, who have been torn away from their homes and have been encouraged to take great risks in our defence, be compensated on a higher scale than those who suffer similar disabilities in civil life?

Many nations, large and small, including four of our Dominions, have tried to answer these questions as a result of the two great wars. I think the facts should be known and the various principles examined so that we may solve this difficult problem, not only to the satisfaction of the disabled men and women themselves, but to the honour of our Parliament and people. We want the facts marshalled for us, we want opinions gathered, we

Housing and the Severely Disabled

Sir Ian Fraser's attention was recently called to two cases of men disabled in the most serious manner who were in a very bad way as regards housing. Application was made to the local Councils for a priority, but the reply was made that these families were not on their lists, as they did not live there before enlistment. It is clear that severely disabled men ought to receive the highest priority, and that unless they can be put at the top of the list where they want to settle, their chances of getting housing quickly are diminished. Accordingly, Sir Ian put down the following question:

To ask the Minister of Health if he will direct local authorities to give a priority in housing to ex-Servicemen who are disabled in the highest degree, which will override municipal boundaries.

Mr. BEVAN: Housing authorities have already been asked, in Circular 109-45, of which I will send the hon. and gallant Member a copy, to give ex-Servicemen every consideration in accordance with their relative needs, and in appropriate cases to waive any residential qualification they may have laid down.

Sir IAN FRASER: Is the Minister aware that some local authorities have passed resolutions confining their housing list to their own inhabitants, and will he bear in mind that these men fought for Britain and not for parish boundaries.

Mr. BEVAN: If the hon. and gallant Gentleman will let me know the authorities who have passed resolutions of that sort, I will redirect their attention to my circular.

Sir Ian, of course, knew of the circular to which the Minister made reference, and it was partly due to Legion activity, and to a Deputation which General Fitzpatrick led to Mr. Ernest Bevin in the last Government, that this circular was issued. Commenting upon this matter, Sir Ian says: "I did not think the circular was strong enough, but evidently the Minister of Health does, so it is now up to every Legion branch to get busy and see that a demand is made for any disabled man to be put at the top of any list where he wants a home."

Young St. Dunstaners

Marriages

On November 8th, Leonard Webster Best (Bournemouth) to Audrey Winifred Atkinson.

On November 5th, Mary Rose (North Berwick) to Frederick Sutch.

On July 12th, Driver Lee (Doncaster) to Margaret Haseldene.

want evidence from the British Legion and St. Dunstan's and the Officers' Association and the Limbless Men's Association and some other bodies. A Select Committee would afford the opportunity for such a study and for recommendations based upon the contributions which members of all the political parties and of the ex-Servicemen's organizations could make. If Parliament settles this matter upon the basis of well-thought-out recommendations of such a committee the result will surely be more enduring and more consonant with the dignity of our country than if it is determined by hurried adjustment between Government and Parliament in a few hours' debate.

Yours faithfully,

House of Commons.

IAN FRASER.

Ex-Servicemen's Hansard

(by our Parliamentary Correspondent)

During December a number of important developments vitally affecting ex-Servicemen took place in Parliament. The principal of these, of course, was the announcement about the middle of the month of sweeping changes in war pensions, which are dealt with elsewhere.

The quota scheme for work for disabled persons is to begin on March 1st, 1946. This was announced by the Minister of Labour, Mr. Isaacs (Southwark, N., Lab.), on December 18th, in reply to Mr. Messer (Tottenham, S., Lab.). Mr. Isaacs said he had made an Order under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944, specifying 2 per cent. as the standard percentage.

This means that from March 1st, 1946, all employers with twenty or more workers will be under a legal obligation to employ their quota of disabled persons. Mr. Isaacs added that the standard percentage would be increased as the numbers on the Register increased. Only those disabled persons who were registered as such under the Act would count for the purpose of the quota scheme. It was in the interests of disabled people who wished to receive the benefits of the Act to apply for registration as soon as possible.

A wide variety of matters affecting ex-Servicemen were raised by M.P.s at question time during the month. Ministers were questioned on such matters as small-holdings for ex-Servicemen, conflicting evidence before pensions tribunals, refitted motor-cars for ex-Servicemen, the rights of ex-Servicemen in the Civil Service, ex-Servicemen undergoing hospital treatment after leaving the Forces, the right of medical boards to question claimants for pensions about their earnings, and so on.

"In Memory"

Private George Eades, 101 Labour Corps

With deep regret we record the death of G. Eades of Virginia Water.

Although he served during the last war from 1916 until March, 1919, he did not come to St. Dunstan's until 1938. While he was with us he did not take up any training, but he was a keen gardener and he made this his occupation.

In June of this year he was taken ill with a heart attack, from which he never really recovered, and his death, on December 7th, was a happy release, as he had suffered so much pain.

Among the many wreaths at the funeral, which took place at Christ Church, Virginia Water, was one from Sir Ian Fraser and his comrades at St. Dunstan's.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to his four daughters in their loss.

Private Frederick Craddock, 21st Labour Battalion

It is with deep regret that we record the sudden death of F. Craddock, of Muswell Hill.

Blinded during the last war, he came to St. Dunstan's in 1925 and was trained in boot-repairing, and he carried on a very successful business until 1936, when he had to give up for health reasons. He then had a further course of training in telephony and took an appointment with the Northmet, Friern Barnet, with whom he worked up to the time of his death on December 8th. He had been in very good health and his sudden passing, at the early age of 46, was a great shock.

We extend our very sincere sympathy to Mrs. Craddock and her two sons in their bereavement.

Marriages

HOLMES—SAYER—On December 5th, at Church Stretton, Winston Holmes, of Nuneaton (new war) to Miss Catherine Sayer. The Rev. A. Nugee officiated and Don Groves, another St. Dunstaner, was best man.

O'CONNELL—VERRATT—On December 12th, at Brighton, Stephen O'Connell to Mrs. Rose Verratt. Orderly H. Legge acted as best man.

PEASE—PAICE—On December 5th, J. R. Pease, of Pudsey, to Miss J. M. Paice, a former member of St. Dunstan's staff at the Bungalow.

St. Dunstan's Bridge Club

Since the last notes of the Bridge Club we have played two duplicate matches with other Clubs—Lyons and Hampstead Town Hall. They were both most enjoyable afternoons, but we lost on each occasion. The League Championship is a very keen affair at the moment; three pairs look like being the winners, with two losses each.

We had a real Christmas party on Saturday, December 8th, when Mrs. Block organised a Bridge Drive for the Club. There were nine tables and several members were successful in winning prizes. Mrs. Block provided a grand tea, reminiscent of happier days. Bridge was continued after tea. In the corner a barrel of beer was installed, and, needless to say, it was freely in use. Mrs. Block and her helpers were most warmly thanked for their hospitality.

The Annual General Meeting of the Club will take place on Saturday, February 23rd, at 2 p.m. All members will be informed as to fuller details. All members of St. Dunstan's will be most cordially invited to the meeting. R. P. COLES.

Insurance Against Fire and Burglary

A subject to which we should all give attention is the insurance of our property. Those who insured at a time when furniture, etc., was cheaper, should consider the great rise in values during the war and, if necessary, arrange with their insurance companies to increase the insured value accordingly. It is fair to say that, generally speaking, the value of furniture and other items in a house are worth at least double their value five years ago.

Those whose property is not insured, and those setting up house for the first time, should not neglect to insure all their property against fire and burglary. An expenditure of a few shillings a year may avoid a total loss of hundreds of pounds.

A comprehensive policy is strongly advised, as this also insures against such damage as a hole burnt in a carpet, as well as injury to an employee, such as a domestic servant, a charlady, window-cleaner, etc.

Mr. Lale, at Headquarters, is our Insurance expert, who is always ready to give advice in such matters, and to arrange Insurance policies for those who ask him to do so.

Silver Weddings

Congratulations to the following, who have celebrated silver weddings: Mr. and Mrs. M. Burran, London, W.1, October 9th; Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Taylor, Vancouver, Canada, December 23rd.