

TWO POPULAR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT "WELCOME" FRIENDS.

The Reception given by Major R. W. Barnett, M.P., and Mrs. Bayne, and Mr. J. W. W. Hopkins, M.P., and Mrs. Hopkins, L.C.C., on Friday in last week to the Officers and Committees of the South-East and South-West St. Pancras Conservative and Unionist Organisations, at the Public Hall, Prince of Wales Road, N.W.5, was a very gay and enjoyable affair. The strenuous work of the Election, and the success which had resulted therefrom, formed a common bond of union between those present, who were naturally elated at the return to Parliament of the two popular Members, for which they strove so earnestly in the months preceding the fateful test on December 15th. But once again it was demonstrated that those who work best can play best, and earnest workers were transformed beyond recognition into the lighthearted crowd who danced gaily to the strains of Harper's famous band or, in the disguise of various fancy dresses, paraded the hall, competing for the beautiful prizes subsequently presented by Mrs. Hopkins, together with those won by the successful players in the Whist Drive which took place in the Small Hall.

At 9.30 the two Members made brief speeches endorsing the message which greeted the guests from the platform in large letters, "Welcome," and from the applause with which their remarks were received it was evident that their popularity is still at its zenith.

Sir Herbert Jessel, to whom Major Barnett referred as "the Architect of Victory," also spoke, and impressed upon the audience that the forthcoming Session would be a very strenuous one, and if their Members were not seen in their constituencies as often as they might wish, it should be realised that it was because they were doing what they had been elected to do—their duty in the House of Commons.

Amongst those present were to be seen many well-known Nurses, who had worked strenuously to secure the return of Major Barnett, "the Nurses' own M.P.," and who were delighted to have the opportunity of meeting him and testifying to their pleasure at his return to Parliament, and their gratitude (most rare of virtues) for his invaluable and lasting services to their profession.

Refreshments were served at the buffet in the Large Hall throughout the evening, and at 10 o'clock the main buffet in the Small Hall was opened, and many of the guests formed sociable little parties at small tables and enjoyed the many good things provided.

Dancing continued till nearly 12 o'clock, when all combined to agree that the evening had been most enjoyable, and a great success, and that sincere thanks were due not only to the hosts and hostesses, but also to the General Secretaries, Mr. J. T. Hughes and Mr. H. W. Ingram.

BOOK OF THE WEEK

"CLAIR DE LUNE."*

This story of a musician and composer who placed his art before the interests of his young wife has many points besides that of a good narrative.

The descriptive and imaginative powers of the author, who, by the way, prefers to be anonymous, are of no mean order.

We may say, for the information of our readers, that the title refers to the musical work upon which Charles Evelyn was absorbed to the exclusion of all else.

He lived a Bohemian life before his marriage, and had no wish to change it. He was very fond indeed of pretty Kitty, a near neighbour and companion of his in their childish days. Albeit Charles was an Evelyn of Temple Evelyn, and Kitty the sister of a yeoman farmer, George Dent.

There had been an understanding for some time between the two which Charles had drifted into, and Kitty had accepted with restrained passion which Charles never suspected.

And now Philip, the elder Evelyn, was dead, killed by a fall from his horse, leaving Charles in a position to marry. Yes, he was very fond of "Kitty-wee," but marriage was another matter.

Kitty had always felt doubtful as to the exact state of the feelings of her charming and irresponsible lover, and in a moment of extreme peril to the lives of both of them she puts the question to him.

"Don't, don't laugh at me; you're not quite like other men, and I—I'm sentimental at heart like all women. But you do love me; if we had lived you would have married me, not only to satisfy George—you would have liked to be married to me?"

Then he lied to her. "I would give my soul to be married to you now."

The moment of peril passed, and Charles was irrevocably pledged.

He had drifted into his engagement without looking to its end or his own limitations, but now he realised that ties of human union were not for him.

All the bent of his nature turned towards solitude and freedom. Even his friends tired him when they came too near.

All his life he had remained essentially cold to women, and he was ice-cold now to Kitty Dent, for all her beauty. Evelyn half hated her for begging from him what he had not to give. But one must fulfil the obligations of a gentleman.

George Dent, fond though he was of Evelyn—in any other capacity than that of a brother-in-law—asks Kitty what sort of comfort she expects to get out of Eve, "when you've got six children all down with the whooping cough."

* By the author of "Jenny Essenden." (Cassell & Co.).

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