

**FROM
MEMOIRS OF A
NATIVE**

by

F. J. T. HECKFORD

JOHN DICKINSON & CO., LTD.
CROXLEY MILLS - WATFORD - HERTS.

FROM THE MEMOIRS OF A NATIVE—
MEMOIR IV.
F. J. T. HECKFORD.

DICKINSON AND RICKMANSWORTH.

*Rickmansworth has no famous native in history. Non-native celebrities are Wolsey, Penn, John Dickinson. The two former are the stock-in-trade of historians of Rickmansworth, but the inventor was of more material value to Rickmansworth and the rest of the world than the Churchman or the Quaker.

The invention of the papermaking machine by John Dickinson of England and Louis Robert of France—independently—revolutionised mankind's greatest recorder and messenger of thought. As a Hertfordshire papermaker, John Dickinson set the seal on the fame of Hertfordshire as the County in which paper was first made in England by John Tate*—about 1450. John Dickinson was Hertfordshire's most original scientist. He worked out the mathematics, physics and mechanics of his invention to the triumphant result of making paper on it; he built canal locks, diverted the River Gade, created Croxley Mill and converted Batchworth into his basic mill. By his mills in Rickmansworth, Watford and Hemel Hempstead he was the greatest single factor in the industrial life of West-Hertfordshire.

His line in his business was continued through his daughters; the elder married Frederick Pratt Barlow—the younger her cousin, John Evans. Frederick Barlow managed the commercial, John Evans the manufacturing sides of the business. Frederick Barlow was succeeded by his sons. John Evans by his son, Lewis Evans. John Dickinson, John Evans and Lewis Evans were unique masters of science—neither possessed any science degrees—titles before, or letters after, their names. Vide Miss Joan Evans "My father did not possess even a school certificate"—but they had no need of these commercial assets. They were practical mathematicians, physicists and mechanics, and applied the sciences to the manufactures. John Evans and Lewis Evans

were also chemists and indulged in hobby sciences. Each of the three—in his later life—accepted honours from various bodies, and John Evans was Hertfordshire's most prominent scientist.

He became loaded with honours and for the year 1904, then Sir John Evans, K.C.B., was nominally the first scientist in the British Empire as President of the British Association, annually referred to by the irreverent of the Press and Public as "The British Ass." Each was a leading world master paper maker. A leading British authority described Lewis Evans as "The last great master papermaker of Europe." Born and bred in the Industry—trained as an engineer—he became "The complete Engineer." He knew the chemical from the physical, the physical from the mechanical, and no master or man of the writer's knowledge, had such a comprehensive and deep knowledge of pulp, paper, board and stationery manufacture, mill and factory processes, operations and personnel.

John Dickinson's association with Rickmansworth commenced in 1828 with Batchworth and Croxley Mills. By 1830 he was the employer of the largest number of employed Rickmansworth people, and through succession has continued to be. Croxley Mills is Rickmansworth and the majority of the servants have always lived in Rickmansworth, chiefly Croxley Green. Batchworth was the most important of Dickinson's Mills until its closure. To servants of the other mills "Batcher"* was "only a Rag Mill" a kind of 'Cinderella,' but 'Cinderella' manufactured and supplied her superior sisters with their essential raw material—pulp. Batchworth's characteristic was its "white mill stream" that flowed 'longside Batchworth Highway to the Camel Bridge. It was a symbol of health due to cleansing chlorine in waste Calcium Hypochlorite.

Croxley Mill possessed a grand Egyptian west front—one imagined Cleopatra on its roof watching for the approach of Mark Antony in his barge up the Canal. It was a constant reminder of the forerunner and origin of paper—papyrus.

The Dickinson family spirit obtained throughout the business. Barlow's and Evans' children formed friendships with servants and their children, and native servants' sense of pro-

prietorship was expressed in 'our Company,' 'our Firm,' 'our Mill.' Boys and girls followed parents, grandparents, great uncles and aunts into the service of the mills. In 1886 the family Company became John Dickinson Ltd., with the brothers Barlow and their cousin Lewis Evans predominant Directors, and Resident Director Charles Hope Little, son of General Sir Archibald Little, K.C.B., became Croxley Mill Manager. He was a democratic aristocrat—popular with all classes and one of the new "foreign" rulers of Rickmansworth as a parish councillor. A fellow "foreign" ruler was Croxley Mill cashier James Coutts of Aberdeen.

In manufacturing businesses the order now was—finance, commerce, manufacture and with the great commercial expansion at home and overseas, and the concentration of the manufactures at home, the Barlow and the Evans sides of Dickinsons became more sharply divided. Dickinson bred, equally loyal, commercial servants were Barlow's, and manufacturing servants, Evans' men. A Croxley Mill clerk—a Barlow man, Joseph Timberlake, "planted and grew" Dickinson trade in South Africa. The writer was an Evans' man; in July, 1889, Lewis Evans was his immediate chief (till Charles Little became Manager of Croxley) and kept him in personal touch till 1918; his brother Norman—Dickinson's consulting chemist tutored him in 1889/90 and incidentally the writer assisted the retired Evans once before and once after he was knighted.

Dickinson bred London commercial servants were appointed mill managers—R. H. Ling to the Hemel Hempstead Mills and Charles Barton Smith to Croxley Mill. Charles Barton Smith followed Charles Little as a "foreign" ruler of Rickmansworth, heading the poll at the first Urban Council Election of '98.

The Dickinson dynasty in John Dickinson and Co. Ltd. ended in December 1918. The European revolution—bloody in Russia—spectacular in Germany was, as usual, bloodless with we English but old regimes were ended. Servants became masters, in January 1919, R. H. Ling succeeded Lewis Evans as Dickinson's Managing Director. He was the first servant to break the barrier, and enter the Directorate, and with more authority in Dickinsons than any other man before him except John Dickinson. The traditional blood

succession of masters and servants ceased, but Dickinson-bred Ling men of the Hemel Hempstead Mills, Albert Butler, D. Morgan Skeins, Albert E. Bone, became Croxley Mill Managers, and F. G. Hawdon, W. Ellens, D. M. Skeins and J. W. Randall followed R. H. Ling into the Directorate. Mr. D. M. Skeins, Managing Director, is the second Dickinson Director to live in Rickmansworth. The Dickinson family spirit continued and "Our Company," "Our Firm" became "Our House," now presided over by Sir Reginald Bonsor Bart. II.

NOTES.

- *Rickmansworth, *Watford, *Hemel Hempstead = Towns and Townships, throughout the Memoirs. See Memoir I. "Towns and Township."
- *Tate—At a revival of Tate in the Stationers Hall in February 1928, some Tate made papers looked good enough to last another 500 years. The writer was requested to demonstrate how Tate made paper—he made some in a match box—and a London Journal described it as "Heckford's Matchless Match Box Brand."
- *"Batcher"—native for Batchworth.

MEMOIR V.—(Continued).

In 1887-88 Dickinsons built a great new mill round the founder's creation and, always excepting Great Britain's dependence on imported vegetable material, Croxley Mill was the most comprehensive self-contained pulp-papermaking mill in the world, with gelatine, caustic soda making, soda reclamation, water filtration, softening, purification plants, maintenance shops, Laboratories, two artesian wells, and in advance of cities and town—lit throughout by electricity. British and foreign globe trotting mill authorities described it as "The Finest in the World," "The Model Mill of Europe." Nearly 500 additional workers were engaged. Among them natives of Bucks, Cornwall, Devon, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Kent, Northumberland, Northampton, Somerset, Wilts, Highlands, Lowlands, Ireland, Wales, transferred Hemel Hempstead Natives, and temporarily engaged Dane, German, Russian, Swede. 'Cinderella' was closed; her servants transferred to Croxley Mill. The great majority with their dependents settled in Croxley Green and the society of many dialects was predominantly "Dickinson Shirt Sleeve."

The early behaviour of the new Mill was not a model for any Mill to copy. It issued dense black smoke, sulphuretted and nitrogenous gases, and Calcium Hypochlorite powder, in Mill vernacular "Bleach." Moon, of Cassiobridge, commenced legal action for smoke nuisance, Bevan of the Bury was to brief the case. Mill workers feared closure of the Mill and Moon and Bevan were two best hated men, until we abated the smoke without litigation.

The Gade continued to be the sewer for Nitrogenous refuse from the old Mill, but with the great increase in Mill population the great bulk had to be dumped, bleached and fired, and with South Easterly winds Croxley Green received the noxious gases mixed with even more nauseous ones from the sulphate process, and the sickly sweet aroma of boiling alfa grass. Non-Dickinson residents within range protested openly and strongly. In the chemical works the gaseous sulphides permeated our clothing, and clung to our hair and skin. The stench defied chlorine. We carried it into our homes and were a public nuisance as we walked about, so a sweeter method of making our caustic soda was substituted. In one week the consumption of Calcium hypochlorite rose from pounds to tons.

The Bleach house was open to all the winds—powder flew and everybody and everything in the mill and the Foreman's house was automatically oxidised or chlorinised or both. Double iron doors were installed to isolate the Bleach House, but with moist westerly winds the rest of the mill still worked, ate and drank in a misty chlorinating atmosphere. Colour mixer Richard Coxhill suffered the distinction of being doubly gassed with chlorine and strong ammonia—youthful laboratory gassings begat sympathy and Richard was supplied with some neutralising gas-masks.

As against our gassings we were immune from infectious disease. When smallpox visited Rickmansworth—from which three people died—none of the mill servants or their families were affected and Mr. Little suggested to Medical Officer Sharman that all the local people should be made to walk or be carried through the Bleach House once a day.

Chlorine was always a best friend to Croxley Mill and the district except for one spectacular display in April 1891 when

a reservoir burst; its bleach contents went directly into the Gade. The Gade—The Colne by Lot Mead—The Canal beyond Batchworth, ran white. Their beds and banks were purified as never before, but another result was disastrous, a large number of big and little fish were fatally "gassed." Their dead and dying bodies floated London-wards. Bargees and boatees reported them well into Middlesex, fishermen with their traditional love of the truth spoke of thousands and thousands and demanded the closure of the Mill—at once.

With our black record for creating local disturbances this white catastrophe of 'poisoned waters' caused more apprehension concerning our future. The daily stunt paper had not arrived in England or we should have been big news—"Hertfordshire Greatest Ever Fish Tragedy," "Feared Closing of Famous Mill." The fish belonged chiefly to the Watford piscators who sued Dickinsons for loss.

They engaged Professor Tidy and Dickinson's Doctor Dupré to respectively prove cause of death. The writer watched Tidy and waited on Dupré.

Of course in due course Dickinsons compensated the angry anglers and the writer was made personally responsible that the Gade and, ergo, Colne and Canal should not again be over-chlorinated by Croxley Mill. Fortunately, for him, there were no more accidents and, having minimised the smoke and the stench, our pioneering troubles were all inside until 1894 when there came greater responsibility and more subtle dangers.

The Thames Conservancy Board commenced its inspection and analysis of all waters directly and indirectly connected with the Thames. The Board allowed only a very small quantity of Nitrogenous matter in waste waters, and we had anxious times until all the old sewers had been closed or diverted, but we were never mentally comfortable until the bacteria system had been installed.

Other than that, there was always sufficient chlorine in our main waste entering the Gade to neutralise the evil combination of its fellow elements, as we never had a 'Too Bad Report' from the Conservancy Board.

MEMOIR VI. SOME DICKINSON INSTITUTIONS.

The Negro Minstrel Troupe.

William Pettitt of Frogmore and Nash Mills was one of the most versatile and popular of Dickinson stage and platform amateur entertainers, actor, vocalist, comedian, step, clog and horn-pipe dancer. He got "Over the Footlights" in every role with stalls and pit alike.

Transferred to Croxley Mill with others he formed the Croxley Green negro minstrel troupe. He was the complete negro interlocutor, cornerman, bones, stump orator; all one had to do was to imitate him in one's particular role. The vogue was passing. Even Moore and Burgess could not keep it long alive as a whole time performance.

Thanks to the inimitable Pettitt we gave one stormingly successful public performance in Croxley Green's principal theatre and concert hall—The Church of England School in Garden Road.* Then we passed out.

*Now Yorke Road.

MEMOIR VII. THE DICKINSON AMATEUR ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL TEAM.

Apsley versus Croxley at outdoor and indoor competitions was always regarded as Dickinson versus Dickinson, particularly at football which reached its climax in '94-95 season.

The Nursery of the Croxley team had been the Croxley junior football club, founded in Croxley Mill by William Thomas, Walter Sanders and the writer. The team was nursed with encouraging reports in the Watford Leader, the Herts Leader, advice and Laboratory made embrocration. In the order below the team won every game played. They took the St. Mary's Cup by defeating Apsley, Watford, Melrose and in the final, the Old Fullerians, by seven goals to three. The Watford team included the brilliant, afterwards famous, Ivan Sharpe—who was responsible for two of his side's goals.

The team at this stage was in a class by itself—so balanced, powerful and clever that in our opinion it would have beaten

any other Hertfordshire team and won the County Cup. The Team:—

A. Payne (Goal); *A. Eccleston and *G. Kerr (Backs); *T. Holloman, *E. Rookes and *F. Pitkin (Halves); *F. Thomas, T. Galley, F. Green, *L. Peake, *W. Peake (Forwards).

* Dickinson servants.

Payne was safe. Eccleston disliked the charge for and against. Holloman revelled in both phases and the defended Eccleston positioned himself and kicked superbly. He was the classic back. Kerr was the fearless, swiftest back. Rookes the strongest player and best shot in the team. Pitkin, versatile with his head, he flicked the ball at will to centre or wing, and did the same with either foot and, in boxing technology, won on points in every match. Green was clever—his back heels to Rookes, potential goals. W. Peake was quick and a champion misser who never failed to score. In the Cup semi-final he missed three open goals—then scored. Galley was the ideal inside, at opportunity he fed either Green or Thomas.

The feature of the team in action commenced with glorious wing to wing passes between Thomas and Len Peake; when these players began their parallel run the other forwards, halves, backs all moved forward in unison. This is, or was, the prettiest spectacle in Association football, and one was reminded of the team's perfected exhibition at the Watford versus Newcastle English Cup Tie match, when the latter's forwards moved similarly and Thomas like a shot put Watford out of the Cup.

Like many other first class teams its balance was such that any alteration and substitution effectively unbalanced it. This was strikingly demonstrated in a series of Dickinson versus Dickinson matches.

1. Croxley defeated Apsley.
2. Croxley, without Rookes, Green and Eccleston, centre-forward, defeated by Apsley.
3. Croxley—the team defeated Apsley 5—0.

This was the last appearance of this Dickinson all-conquering first class amateur association football team of 1894-5.

MEMOIR VIII.

I. DICKINSON PAPERMAKERS' CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY.

II. THE CROXLEY CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY.

The above was founded in Croxley Mills in 1887. Its first store was the inner* cellar of the old Croxley Mill House in which was the Mill's current barrel of beer, and the Co-op's meat, tea and dried fish sold in the Mill by Charles Sear to the Co-op founders and others.

In 1888 it was registered under the Friendly Societies Act as the Croxley Co-operative Society and Dickinsons converted their number 5 Milestone* Field cottage into its shop and store. Our Co-op had no class for politics.

Employer and employee, Blue and Red alike, were members, shareholders and customers. In 1892 the writer became Co-op Secretary—salary five pounds per year. The Secretary then was Co-op Bookkeeper, balance sheet builder, Board of Trade Returns Officer, Stock-taker, stock pricer with the president, wholesale buyer and more or less keyman of the Co-op's Financial and Commercial Transactions. The writer ordered its goods and did other clerical work in the Laboratory. Every three months left the mill with Manager Robert Lindsey (Croxy Green's ex-haberdasher) and boy assistant George Kingham took stock of the goods.

The Society's printed address was Croxley Mill, Watford; until at 1897 when at the request of the Mill Manager the writer resigned in order to devote more time to Dickinson's Recreative, Educational Institution, and Croxley Mill ledger clerk George Taylor, the Co-op's Honorary Co-auditor and an ex-Secretary, again took the Secretaryship, at an increased salary. The writer took Taylor's place as the Co-op's Honorary Co-auditor with James Coutts, Co-op Father, for the next 15 consecutive years.

Boy assistant George Kingham grew up with the Society; we made him its manager. He made it a financial success.

George Kingham and the Croxley Co-operative Society are as synonymous as Henry Brown and the Rickmansworth Penny readings, and Charles Barton Smith and the Dickinson Institute.

The writer had an interesting connection with the Railwaymen's Co-op in Callow Land, Watford. His friend and foe in Dameh,* Arthur Taylor, sought his advice on Co-op matters and procedure, became the Watford Society's Secretary; both were then the Secretary of the Co-op, and the draughts club in their respective townships. Co-operation between Master and Servant in founding Co-operative Societies in masters' premises and time was evidently common in the last Century. Similarly to the papermakers the railwaymen's was probably talked into being in Euston Station and on the line, and the Gunners in the Arsenal, if not the War Office!

NOTES.

*Inner Cellar—The outer cellar was No. 2 Laboratory which the writer also used, and shared with Ernest Jackson (afterwards Salle Foreman—present Croxley Green Church warden) as a Dining saloon.

*Milestone Field—afterwards Dickinson Square.

*Dameh—The ancient and royal name for British draughts and American checkers.
See Memoir XII. Chess and Dameh.

MEMOIR IX.

DICKINSONS SOCIO-RECREATIVE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION.

1. VILLAGE CLUB AND READING ROOM.
2. THE DICKINSON INSTITUTE.
3. CROXLEY GUILDHOUSE.

From its foundation meeting for 20 consecutive years the Institution, its affairs and people, formed part of the writer's

Croxley Green news published under the Editorial "WE"
—in one or other of—

The Watford Leader

The Herts Leader

The West Herts Post

The Rickmansworth News

The Watford Observer.

His press puffs in the 20 years' newspaper history of the Institution were of others. Any personal and family eulogy was that of visiting journalists but this memoir contains some previously written associations with the Institution.

November 15th, 1895, at a meeting in the old Croxley Mill dining room—Manager, Charles Barton Smith—herein afterwards C.B.S., introduced the subject of a club and reading room for Croxley Green. The Directors were in favour of it and we voted for it unanimously. The writer acted as Secretary and his notes are the minutes of this foundation meeting. His press notice was headed "Village Club" and ended with the flowery passage "This Meeting which had thus decided to inaugurate a new era in 'Darkest Croxley' dispersed." To fellow servants he was suspect author of all Croxley Green news in all the Watford papers, and patriotic Richard Sanders, founder father of the local united patriots Benefit Society, vociferously censured him for his slander of the village.

32 Milestone Field Cottage was converted into the Institution and on December 2nd 1895 Resident Director Charles Little named it "The Dickinson Institute" and declared it open. C.B.S. appointed its officers. He took that of Chairman of Committee and Treasurer and appointed the writer Secretary of the Entertainment Committee and General Committeeman.

The writer again acted as secretary and his notes are the first minutes of the Dickinson Institute. Our Government was an autocracy of all male Dickinson servants under C.B.S. We voted a women's club part of the Institution and made a display of women's right to equality with men, by giving them an equal number of seats on the General Committee.

In 1887 we voted a set of rules that allowed non-Dickinson members by a majority vote at a General Election to elect themselves to all the offices, except that of President and Vice-presidents, and thus automatically turn C.B.S. and the rest of us out of the management. However, the result of each yearly election found C.B.S. and the writer in his original appointment but altruistic ultra socialistic piece of legislation stood intact for 38 years when the Resident Director Mr. Skeins had the rules altered to ensure a majority of Dickinsons in the management.

The writer's new job was "Entertainment Producer and Platform Manager" to C.B.S. with no time to waste for, or waste on, Committee Meetings; so he collected some artistes and on December 27th 1895 the Dickinson Institute first entertainment was given in Croxley Mills' new Dining Room, ex-head office. Mrs. Heckford had inherited the paternal histrionic gift. We commenced this first programme with a humorous duet. Nine further Institute concerts were given in Croxley Mills. The writer had himself to fill vacancies at short notice and selected "Ora Pro Nobis" as a stock item. For five years it never let him down and invariably gained itself an encore.

Another was "Excelsior," singing this with his first bass partner, Alfred Kingham (ex-Hemel Hempstead) the writer accelerated the pace at the last refrain, Alfred was unprepared for this and the duet finished as an exultant tenor solo. For the notice of future bass partners, over the final "excelsiors" was written in red ink "Like Lightning," "Like greased Lightning." The Institution's first Socio-education Organisation, as mentioned, was the Draughts Club--transferred from the Red House to No. 32.

A new Institute was built with hall, stage, green and dressing rooms, kitchen, offices; men's club with dry canteen, and was opened on November 5th 1896 with a concert inside and incidental fireworks outside.

November 24th, 1896. In the Hall the writer organised and conducted the Institution's first games tournament. The first of the series of Dickinson versus Dickinson games tournaments, resulted Croxley 28, Apsley 10. In Croxley Green music on the march was provided by the Croxley Green Primi-

tive Methodist Drum and Fife Band. Conductor Fifer, Lewis Grace, Secretary Fifer, Heckford. We were proud bandsmen; we had taught ourselves to play by music as well as by ear when on the march.

In January 1897, we transmuted it into the Dickinson Institute drum and fife band—headquarters the tank building. This synchronised exactly with Dickinsons engagement of A. C. Strugnell, ex-bandmaster Yorkshire Regt., to form, train and conduct the Dickinson Institute Military Orchestral Band.

Other professionals were also engaged and formed the nucleus of the band and with some other amateurs the writer enlisted and played the D. Piccolo, E Flat Flute, Concert Flute. Used to band and choral conductors he more or less satisfied Strugnell with the Flutes.

The piccolo presented more difficulty and in the writer's humble opinion it requires more skill on the part of an amateur to sight read, execute and satisfy an Army bandmaster than any other instrument. Also as stage manager, actor, vocalist, his seat in the Orchestra was invariably vacant, and so ex-Indian Army champion piccoloist Kostrovitski was engaged to deal with the piccolo. The writer occasionally played the military flute and more often inflicting soulful concert flute solos on those at home.

October 6th 1897. The Institute was first used as a theatre, Lord Lytton, Neville Lytton, Lady Emily Lutyers produced and performed two comediettas.

January 19th 1898. Percy Barton Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Heckford produced and performed "Box and Cox" in the Institute, and again by request in the Town Hall.

The Barton Smith junior, Heckford Theatrical trio was joined by Alfred Green, Sam Hussey, Dave Southam, and we termed ourselves "The Dickinson Institute Dramatic Company." P.B.S. was scenic artist. The writer, the playwright. His first was a one act tragedy in three scenes, written to suit the cast, which included three juveniles; early rehearsals of the tragedy were so many burlesques.

Finally we billed it as a dramatic sketch and performed it

at a Band Recital and entertainment. This was in the Institute on November 30th, 1898. Admission twopence; no other price or reserved seats. P.B.S. was the hero. Heckford the villain, murderer, suicide. Green, the parson.

The villain shot the hero's bride-to-be. Young Arthur Green, looking a perfect little lady in her bridal dress as 'she' was about to be married by her father. He then "ha! ha! ha'ed he! he! he'ed," shot himself and the gods hissed him good and hearty as he lay dying 'neath the curtain to the strains of the Company's complete orchestra—May Barton Smith at the piano. The most important person on the stage was the prompter, Mrs. Heckford; she was the only adult actress in the Company, but had to remain in the wings to guide the rest of use safely through our parts.

The playwright wrote two further less blood-thirsty plays, performed in 1899 and 1900. Our Company's performances were more variety than legitimate drama, but other Institute theatrical pioneers, Pyne, Hawkins, Barnes, formed the Golden Cross Dramatic Company—produced and performed "East Lynne" and other popular melodrama to crowded audiences; in 1900 P.B.S. went to Australia. He left behind him more enduring evidence of his craft than did his collaborator who with his male partner in farce, tragedy and drama rested from play writing and acting, but there was no other rest during the winter seasons as the Institutes's preparations and operations kept him busy from the Septembers to the Junes.

In 1900, its theatricals, varieties, concerts, balls, dances, military, boxing, games, tournaments, musical, literary evenings, Industrial exhibitions and outdoor pageantries had made Croxley Green the most conspicuous village in Hertfordshire.

The writer believes no other mill and factory working class community carried out a more comprehensive programme of activities more successfully or obtained a higher standard of excellence. Our Industrial Exhibitions lasted a week. They were unique, for their commercial manufactures and latest scientific inventions, in actual operation. Among these the Model Airship, Rontzen Rays and in 1902 Wireless telegraphy. Temporary Science rooms were the green and right hand dressing rooms—therein the writer, and per press puff

“The Genial Science Master,” occasionally dispensed popular science.

Throughout the 1901-2 Season he instructed gratis a class of fellow servants in pulp, paper and auxiliary manufactures and commenced a quarter of a Century's career as teacher of fellow servants, some prospective directors, and later, lecturer in English printing centres.

One's next male partner in entertainment production was David Hume (of Linlithgow who shared the philosophy of his famous namesake).

March 1st 1901. We gave the first of a series of grand evening concerts. Our professional stars were Elliston Webb—principal Tenor Brompton Oratory—Henry Prenton—Crystal Palace Bass. They sang solos, duets and unaccompanied quartettes with *Hanes and Heckford. Elliston Webb was the sweetest of the master tenors and was the magnet that drew audiences to further Heckford and Hume's “Grands.” His ballads, accompanied by himself at the piano, were unforgettable gems of harmony. He was the master singer.

In 1906 Mr. and Mrs. Heckford commenced a series of children's theatricals, performed by children at the Children's Annual New Year Entertainment. In the Institute they adapted versions of well known tales—taught and trained their own children (who had inherited their maternal grandfather's stage talent) and other children to perform in 1907 “Beauty and the Beast,” 1908 “Snow White.” Repeated by request on February 5th and again by request in June to a matinee of Croxley Green mothers.

No other play performed by children, however well acted, staged and dressed, has the same scope for popularity. Properly handled the dwarfs are irresistible. Snow White is an evergreen example of the truth of the maxim “The Play is the Thing.” Walt Disney found it so thirty years later.

1908 Cinderella twice. 1909 Robin Hood twice.

Our maturing young performers continued to give more finished exhibitions and in 1913 we produced and gave a private rehearsal of Stanley Houghton's “Independent Means.” The little gem is a test for any amateurs, but after

Dickens' "Sydney Carton," it proved to be a "far better thing" than we had ever done.

Madge Heckford's "Mary Forsyth" stamped her a class actress and elocutionist. Post-war she became amateur producer, actress in a London suburb and her younger sister a popular amateur "Life below Stairs" character actress on the Croxley Green V.A.D. Hospital and Institute stages. 1912-13 the Dickinson Institute Orchestra, conductor John Walsh and the writer, conducted a weekly dancing class; with Mrs. Heckford originated and conducted the Institute's first Costume Ball—it was a colourful success. Repeated in 1914. The total proceeds were given to the Croxley Green Nursing Fund.

May 1916-19. The Dickinson Institute was a V.A.D. Hospital. Throughout its duration we continued our service, assisting C.B.S. to provide and personally entertain our convalescing airmen, sailors and soldiers with a mid-week entertainment; a week-end whist drive; a Sunday evening musical service.

S. G. Templeman—Croxcley Green pianoforte tuner—twice an inmate, records: "We thoroughly appreciated all you did for us and we loved your entertainments."

March 19th 1920. The Heckford-Walsh trio originated and conducted the Institute's first carnival. This was the peak of the Institution's indoor gaieties and became an annual.

In February 1929 Charles Barton Smith passed away. The Institution had always been to him the child of his creation and his name is perpetuated as its founder.

1929 July. The writer surreptitiously formed a parliament in the men's club. Regular members with the writer were Hume, Philosopher, Hussey, Naturalist. Among occasional members a chemist, an agriculturalist, an Army man (W. Wilson). With one exception, none knew till afterwards of the writer's intrigue, and that it was by design subjects of the sciences and problems of the Universe were discussed and debated, with freedom of speech to our mutual pleasure for three years at morning sessions in front of the open bar.

In 1935, the writer and his wife together retired from the General Committee, she after serving on it 30 consecutive years, he throughout the 40 years of this thrice named Institution's existence.

The Institution was served by its members in a voluntary honorary capacity, the only paid office that of caretaker steward. The fifth and sixth stewardship has been virtually a family one of 23 years; efficient and faithful service having been given by Mr. and Mrs. Albert Wingfield (Sarratt) followed by Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Parsons; the stewardesses being sisters.

NOTES.

*Hanes, Alfred H., of Kings Lynn.

Croxley Green's first schoolmaster and eighth church choir-master organist.

See Memoir XV. "60 years singing in the village Quire."

Quire = place.

Choir = personnel.

EXTRACTS FROM MEMOIR II.

ENGLAND'S GREATEST SCHOOL.

SLUM KID AND VILLAGE URCHIN.

"SHIRT SLEEVE AND BLACK COAT."

AN EIGHT HOUR DAY.

One was five times a 'shirt sleeve' and twice a 'Black coat' for his living.

To society, both wage earning and salaried servants in the cotton, wool, paper and other textiles were one grade, i.e., "Mill and Factory," on a par with farm, mining and fisher folk, and below domestics and the trades, but in the Industries themselves they have always been two classes. The shirt sleeve wage earner—the lower; the black coat salaried servant—the higher; the autocracy or ruling class.

Every office boy is a potential chief of shirt sleeves. "From office boy to manager"—a modern time director chairman—is a common place. "From labourer to likewise" by comparison, a miracle.

Humorously and however meek and humble when promoted, a shirt sleeve automatically becomes an autocrat. His

new position makes him that, and to his former mates the higher he gets the more he goes over to the management, and directorate and capitalism.

Not all movements to better the conditions of shirt sleeves comes from political parties or are the exclusive suggestions of Trade Unions.

The century old firm of Dickinson invariably preceded parliamentary legislation and municipal enterprise, and in 1913 they put into effect an eight hour day for all their shift workers, engaged 50% more workers to fill the working time gap and paid all of them the twelve hours wages for eight hours work.

It was a genuine act to better the working conditions of their employees and it was hoped that fresh, less tired bodies and minds, would increase output, improve quality, lessen waste and so balance the extra cost incurred. But all the new skilled adults had to be orientated, the youth were new to the Mill and the work and, naturally, at the end of six months, output and quality had slumped and the waste far greater than the average.

The black coats in charge of the workers, and those responsible for output, quality and economy, had a hopeless task. The time factor, for the new system to bring about the hoped for result, was an unknown equation, and no other firm followed Dickinson's example. They stood alone.

Their Croxley and Nash Mills were in unequal competition with every other similar papermaking and board making mill in the British Isles and at the end of nine months the financial and commercial state of things compelled the firm to discontinue the system until parliament made it a law of the land.

Before regimentation was introduced in the Nineties, ' shirt sleeve ' life in mills and factories was domestic. The sexes mixed freely and sought one another at meal times; as an instance, in Croxley Mill one family of father, mother, son and daughter worked in the department, and every morning mother left her work to cook the family breakfast over an oil stove at one end of the room.

The tea can was an Institution in non-stop work depart-

ments; on steam-pipes, in richly tanned cans, tea literally brewed all the week.

The male black coat in Industry appears to be over 100 years old. He entered it as the outside trained adult clerk; then came the office boy who grew up into the junior clerk and the class was established in Industry. Like her male co-worker, SHE of the shirt sleeve has always been, but SHE of the black coat is comparatively modern—Edison is responsible for her debut as—

The telephone girl, then,

The typist

The clerk

The Secretary—now the male black coat chief's business helpmate in almost every public and private undertaking.