

The Chit-Chat Club—

Points from Papers Put "Over the Air."

(Set Down by "Telanother")

"Damme, sir," said the oldest member irascibly. "You don't like Shakespeare, don't you? I suppose you're one of those bright young birds who goes trotting out three nights a week to see cheap trashy American sob stuff pictures? You ought to be ashamed of yourself."

"So he should," agreed Blinks. "The miserable bachelor. Wait till some fair Flossie captures poor Wishie. He won't be game to voice his opinions regarding Shakespeare then."

The "wireless bugs" of the X Club were gathered round the fire in their own particular little corner, and Wishart, bachelor member of the circle, during a discussion on Shakespeare, had aroused the oldest member's ire by saying "he didn't like Shakespeare much, and couldn't see why people flocked to see his plays still."

"For myself," said Winton Thribs, who prided himself on giving a generous support to the arts, "I think that Shakespeare should be as much a part of the education of our children as the Bible. I saw a question asked in Parliament recently suggesting that Allan Wilkie should be given State assistance. He's doing a wonderful work and if there were some way of doing it, I think the Government might make him a grant."

"The trouble is that every show with any pretence towards the educational would then come forward, hat in hand," said Blinks.

"But Shakespeare stands apart—and so do Mr. Wilkie's interpretations. Even if the Government just made arrangements for all senior school children to see the plays, it would be something, and it must inevitably assist the kids to a better appreciation of the play themselves."

"Yes," agreed Blinks, "the trouble now is that kids have to read Shakespeare at school, and after getting 'the cuts' a few times for making mistakes, they take a genuine dislike to William. That's what's the trouble with poor old Wishie here. He isn't far enough away from childhood days to have forgotten those hidings."

"Talking of Shakespeare," said Harrison, who had just that moment arrived, "I heard a very fine address by Mr. Allan Wilkie recently. One

from Shakespeare than from our history books. I envy Mr. Wilkie, for you could almost say that he is living with Shakespeare. He is doing great work and giving us all a chance to enjoy Shakespeare in a way which would be impossible without his fine interpretations, and the excellent costumes he has secured. If Wishart would go to only one play, he'd come away with a very different idea of Shakespeare."

"Ah, well," said Wishart, in a resigned tone, "have it your own way, but since you've ousted me on the aesthetic, p'raps you'll join me in the more material?"

Over a convivial glass the conversation drifted on, the members showing by their conversation that they were taking a keen interest in the "fading" tests. Lieutenant Gordon Burt's lectures came in for a few words of praise, Wishart saying that he was certainly going to hear the whole series. Drexter said that he had been jolly interested in a tale put over the wireless by Col. Alan Bell, who told of an aeroplane trip he made to the winterless north of New Zealand. "A story well told," was how Drexter put it, "and he must have been game too," he added, "for he landed away up on the Awahui beach."

"Talking of the north..." said Brenton.

"More of that infernal physical culture I suppose," said the oldest member annoyed. "As soon as Brenton starts talking of Auckland it's time for me to go. You and your blessed health bug are a cursed nuisance, sir, so I'm off to the billiard room."

"He was right," said Brenton, "as the oldest member walked out. 'It was another physical culture address I heard—the best I've heard Norman Kerr give yet.'"

"Was that the one where he spoke about that Hamilton man's will?" said Blinks?

"Yes. Isn't it a funny thing? Mr. Herbert Smith, who died over a year ago, left \$10,000 for fostering healthy sports amongst children, but added that no scheme must have in any part of it conscious deep breathing."

"Why not?" asked Wishart. "That's what no one really knows," said Brenton. "Mr. Smith must have had some very definite idea as to why

Pertinent Points On—

"SHAKESPEARE'S INFLUENCE."

"AN UNUSUAL WILL."

"WHITE COAL."

"PALMS OF THE WORLD."



—S. P. Andrew, photo.

LIEUT. GORDON BURT,

whose lectures on Arctic Exploration are proving most interesting to listeners from 2YA. Lieut. Burt has most excellent matter, and delivers it vigorously and interestingly.

"I agree with him," said Blinks, "for I know chaps whose lungs are weak who have strengthened them through deep breathing and have warded off attacks of T.B."

"Holding the breath is not a wise practice," continued Brenton, "although there are some who can hold it for long periods without it doing them any harm. Niobi, a vaudeville artist, is one who can hold her breath for five minutes, while she does stunts under water. Mr. Kerr saw her during a visit to Auckland and she told him that she had attained her wonderful lung development through deep breathing exercises carried out ever since childhood."

"Pearl divers hold their breath for ages too," said Thribs, "and I haven't heard of them dying of T.B."

"The fact that singers are so healthy is largely due to their deep breathing too," said Brenton, "and for anyone who isn't strong, conscious deep breathing is the thing to put them on the road to better health."

"Talking of programmes," said Harrison, who thought it was about time to change the subject, "I heard a jolly good address on electricity recently. It was given by Mr. Barington from Christchurch."

"I wish I'd heard it," said Thribs. "It's done wonderful work in cheapening production costs..."

"And adding pershentages," said Blinks, with an expressive gesture, which indicated that he thought



COLONEL ALLEN BELL,

who has already given one interesting talk on "To the Winterless North by Aeroplane," and will later give a further treat. Although just recovering from an illness, the Colonel's first talk was very enjoyable, and his second will possibly be even more so.

Thribs must be "one of the chosen." "But it hasn't solved the problem of you useless middlemen yet," said Harrison.

"It will do that later," asserted Blinks. "The electric chair," he added expressively. "Just the tonic for Winton. Guaranteed to reduce his weight—and dividend!"

"To be serious though," said Harrison, "electricity is a wonderful thing, and its possibilities are immeasurable. Who knows that some day our houses will be lit with electricity directed from a central station by wireless waves—doing away with all the cables."

"Take him to a doctor, quick," said Wishart facetiously.

"You'd have said that if I'd mentioned wireless fifty years ago," said Harrison. "As the lecturer said, in olden days the miller had to take his mill to water, and use a wheel as the motive power, but now he brings his water power hundreds of miles to his factories in the cities. He gave a jolly good illustration of the difference between alternating and direct current and showed how the alternating current had really made possible our big hydro-electric schemes."

"One thing they haven't solved is how to stop leakages of the power," said Drexter.

"No, it isn't solved completely," agreed Harrison, "but the actual amount of leakage is small. You can tell that there's some leakage when you see the high power lines on a foggy night, for they look like faintly glowing ribbons. The loss is usually less than 10 per cent, though, so it isn't a very serious feature."

"Why don't they have underground cables here as they do at home," said Wishart. "That would do away with all the unsightly pole and wires."

"That was explained in the address," said Harrison. "The underground cables are very much more expensive, and they are more difficult to get at when fresh connections are required. Apparently they are only of use when the demand has reached the maximum."

"We've enough digging up of the roads now, what with the gas, sewerage and footpaths needing renewing," said Blinks. "Don't let us add elec-

tric light mains to our troubles." palm flourishes, this going into candles and soap, and coming out to swell the profits of the bloated middlemen like Winton here. The Africans use this oil with almost all their food, and even rub it on themselves to protect them from insect bites."

"The date palms must be wonderful from what he said," continued Larton. "The Arabs use them for food and feed their dogs, camels, and practically all their domestic animals with them. A single tree bears 2 cwt. of fruit, so the Arabs don't have to starve themselves. They use the wood and foliage in the building of the huts."

"I'd like to see a sago palm," said Larton.

"It isn't a palm," said Thribs, "it grows like rice."

"Poor old Winton," said Blinks. "That's the worst of these profiteers—hopelessly ignorant."

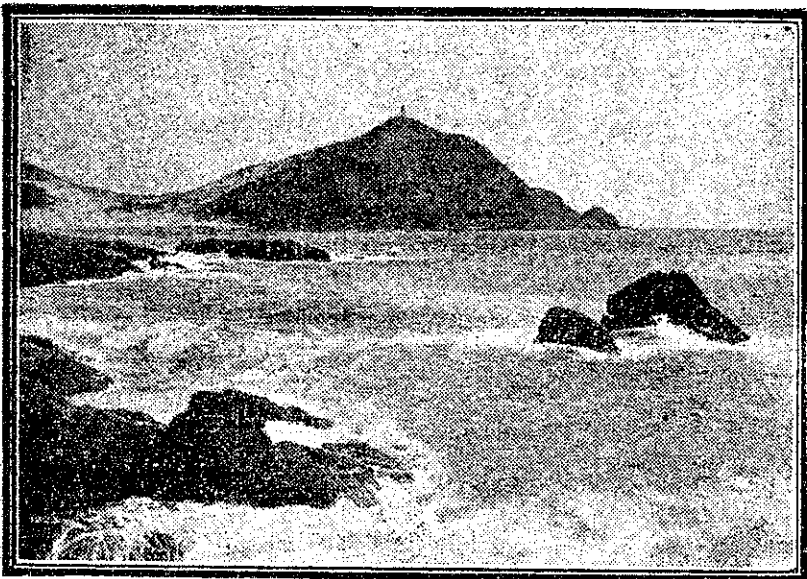
"Of course it's a palm," said Wishart. "And one of the most important ones grown too. The sago is the pith of the stem and the tree has to be cut down to get it. The pith is washed in cold water and the starchy granules dried and got ready for human consumption."

"Then there's the coco-palm," added Larton, again taking up the tale. "Few understand its real value for every portion of the tree is turned to use. The leaves are used for thatching the native huts, and for basket making, while the coco-nut is an article of food from which a most valuable oil is extracted. Its timber, under the name of porcupine wood, is largely used for the making of chairs and couches."

"What a pity we haven't some of those palms in New Zealand," said Thribs.

"We have at least one very beautiful palm," said Larton. "That's the nikau, which is one of the Kentia family. Most of the better known species are natives of Lord Howe Island, but they are found in every country now. The nikau is a very beautiful palm, even if it can't be turned into commercial use."

"We don't want everything on a commercial basis anyway," said Blinks, who prided himself on a proper appreciation of the aesthetic.



NORTH CAPE, THE FURTHEST NORTH OF NEW ZEALAND.
—Publicity Dept, photo.

little phrase in particular struck home. Mr. Wilkie said: 'Of all the countless millions of British people who have been born, and lived and died during the last 350 years, there is not one who has escaped his influence.' That's almost inconceivable when you think of it."

"By Jove, it is," said Blinks, "but he's quite right."

"No writer has had such a profound influence on our daily speech, and his vocabulary is more wide and varied than that of any other master of English. Mr. Wilkie said that an actor who had forgotten a word in most plays could substitute one almost as good, but with Shakespeare they tried to be absolutely word perfect, because they realised that the smallest word omitted or misplaced must weaken the significance and detract from the beauty of the phrase."

"I'll throw it in that he had a happy choice of words," said Wishart, "but after all he is 350 years out of date."

"Nonsense, sir," said the oldest member fiercely. "A Deadwood Dick is probably more in your line, but don't forget that Shakespeare will live for ever."

"And in any case," added Harrison, "you are always using expressions cribbed from Shakespeare. Our whole language is now so thoroughly permeated with Shakespearean quotations that we use them quite unconsciously. 'Second to none,' 'truth will out,' 'a burning shame,' 'every mother's son,' and 'the retort courteous,' are but a few of those we are using every day. No matter what your argument, you can always reinforce it from Shakespeare."

"As a matter of fact," said Blinks, "we remember more of our history

he didn't favour conscious deep breathing, but he didn't say what it was. The result is that a year has gone by, and there's no scheme in sight."

"Surely conscious deep breathing is a good thing," said Thribs, who had become a physical culture enthusiast mainly for the purpose of reducing a corpulence which had come rather early in life.

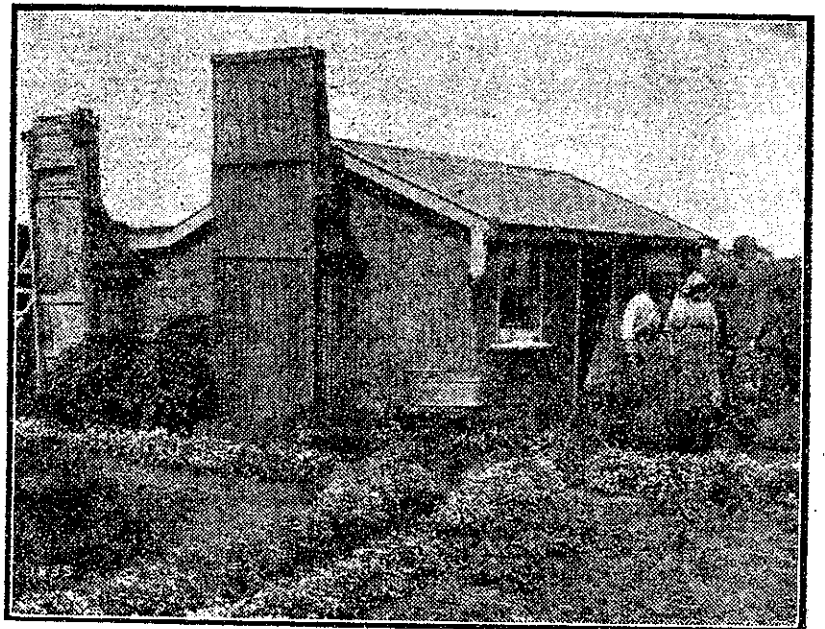
"That's a point that has often been in dispute," said Brenton, warming to the subject that was very near to his heart. "There have been two schools of thought, one contending that conscious deep breathing led to T.B., and the other asserting equally positively that deep breathing was an excellent preventive. For myself I believe with Mr. Kerr, that conscious deep breathing is a fine thing, and wants to be encouraged."

"It gives you a nice warm feeling," said Blinks.

"So does a whisky," said Wishart, "but that isn't to say its good for you."

"I notice you don't mind taking a few risks anyway," replied Blinks.

"Lionel Strongfort is the great advocate of the school which says deep breathing is harmful," said Brenton, ignoring the little pleasantries, "and his idea is that it's unnatural to develop the lungs abnormally. Von Boeckman is the leader of the other school which holds that only robust children can rely on physical exercise developing the respiratory organs. The average child, man or woman, has not sufficient physical or nervous strength to exercise vigorously enough to give the lungs the exercise they need. Because of that he contends that conscious deep breathing is needed."



The home of Jimmy Mason, the sole survivor of the wreck of H.M.S. Orpheus, wrecked on the Onehunga Bar in 1863. In the "winterless North" Mr. Mason now lives.
—Publicity Dept, photo.

"Did any of you fellows hear that address on tropical palms," said Larton, who had just arrived. "By Mr. Griffiths, from 1YA"

"Yes, I did," said Wishart. "A jolly good one too. It was an eye opener to me."

"The date palm was the only one I knew anything about," said Larton.

"What others are there anyway," said Thribs.

"Half a dozen, and each of them helps to swell our divvy at the end of the year" retorted Larton. "Over £2,000,000 worth of palm oil comes from Western Africa, where the oil

"We are too jolly commercialised as it is, and it would be ever so much better for us if we could get out and appreciate nature more than we do."

"Bravo," said Thribs. "You make me feel almost as much of a profiteer as you allege I am. What about helping me sink a little of the ill-gotten gains?"

"Right-O," said Blinks—"just to show there's no ill-feeling, and then for home."

Five minutes later the fireside was deserted, and members were hurrying home to delayed dinners, thinking on their way of some excuse to make to the ruler of their respective homes.



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