



CHAPTER IX



MR. CAMERON'S Inauguration in Curtiss Hall on October 2, 1933, was celebrated by a horrible din of raucous human voices, drums, bugles, and brass bands. But we members were innocent of evil intent; we had planned no such welcome. The racket came from Michigan Avenue, where the "Forty and Eight" Parade of the American Legion (in Chicago for its annual convention) had formed, and was wasting its energy in a peaceful but tumultuous riot of noise.

By crowding together after the dinner in the rear of the hall, we managed to hear fairly well ex-President Lemon's introduction of his successor, and the latter's address, *An Ancient Wonder Worker*. This was the first and only occasion in Club history, in so far as this recorder wot, when a Club president's reception was accorded the honor of a torch-light procession and the blare of trumpets. Mr. Cameron confessed that he was quite overcome by such a spontaneous political demonstration.

One week later George Halperin read his second paper on the great Russian writers, this one being *Dostoevsky*. This paper, and two read subsequently, on *Tolstoi* and *Turgenev* respectively, as we write are being printed by the Club under one cover as Number XLIX of our Club publications. As was said in the announcement of this brochure, "These studies are well written, comprehensive, sympathetic, informative."

Dr. Frederick C. Test's papers are always interesting. Very much so was his *Historic Halts*, read on November 6. In this paper the author "deceptively and artfully hung on the old Trip-to-Hades peg his presentation of famous and infamous historical characters with well known physical deformities."

Earle Shilton's first paper on November 13, *Old Timer*, was a real "western" thriller, a dramatic story of the author's experiences in his early days in the far West. Shilton's contributions—we have had six of them, and anticipate more of them with zest—always make us sit up and listen. His is virile writing, lively, shot through with humor. *Leaders and Wheelers*, another exciting tale of the West, followed in 1936. Most of us will not forget his three latest papers, *Blight* (1939), *God's Country* (1941), and *Gentleman Farmer* (1944). The first named was an expert realtor's tragic survey of the numerous areas in Chicago that have fallen into decay and disrepute; the second was the story, vividly related "with a sweep and a swing," of a farming experiment out on the Great Plains; the tale was rich in humor and racy incident. This was a Ladies' Night paper before a highly delighted audience. *Gentleman Farmer* (the tribulations of an absentee farmer) was the author's Presidential Address in October, 1944.

Two Book Nights and two so-called "Classics Nights" were special features of this 1933-1934 season. A "Classics Night" is an evening given over to the rereading of a paper written and read years before by a former resident member, now non-resident or deceased. On December 18, Frederic A. Delano's *Authority and Responsibility*, read by the author before the Club in January, 1910, was read again by Casper W. Ooms. And on January 29 Paul V. Bacon's essay on *Leonardo da Vinci*, read originally by the author just twenty-three years before, was read by Llewellyn Jones. Both authors are still living at this writing, one in Washington, D. C., the other in Boston. Paul Bacon's essay was memorable for the care and thoroughness with which he portrayed the great artist and engineer.

Other noteworthy papers of the year were the aged (87) George E. Dawson's *Reminiscences*, which commanded our profound respect. Mr. Dawson lived about a year and a half longer, just long enough to participate in Henry Wolf's distinguished *Octogenarian Dinner* on March 11, 1935. Mr.

Dawson died in the following August. Dr. Arthur J. Cramp gave us another of his "Pink Pill" papers. He was an expert on pseudo-medicine and patent remedies, and scored both with telling effect.

Dr. Reed's *Sieur de St. Denis, and Jallot His Valet de Chambre*, was one more of his historical treatises, that called for well-deserved applause. George Bowden's *Politics* was a keen comment on the current political situation; and George Marsh's *The Boswelling of Boswell*, like all his essays, was a delight to hear.

Came the second of April, 1934, and our Celebration of the *Sixtieth Anniversary* of the Founding of our Club. We gave a dinner to ourselves at the Woman's Club on East Eleventh Street, and eighty-seven of us were there. We call upon the written record for further details:

"President Cameron presided and opened the post-prandial exercises with appropriate remarks. He then called upon Mr. Frederick W. Gookin, Secretary and Treasurer of the Club from 1880 to 1920, who told us something about events and members of former years. The President then asked Mr. Casper W. Ooms of the Program Committee to read an address delivered before the Club by the First President of the Club, Dr. Robert Collyer, at the First Club Dinner held in June, 1874. This address, an important historical document, was greatly enjoyed and much appreciated for its still timely significance after sixty years of change and growth. This reading concluded the exercises. It had been planned to have present as Guest of Honor, Hon. Franklin MacVeagh, the Club's oldest member (97), and the only surviving Charter member; but at the last moment he was obliged to remain at home, detained by the infirmities of age. At the speaker's table besides the President, were five of our older members: George Dawson, George Packard, Frederick Gookin, Frank J. Loesch, and Irving Pond. A telegram of regret was received from Cyrus H. McCormick."

Franklin MacVeagh lived only three months after this sixtieth anniversary. He was quite active during the early days of the Club. The record states that he read nine papers, his latest and last being his Inaugural Address as President in October, 1906, when we began holding our meetings in the

Orchestra Hall Building on Michigan Avenue. MacVeagh was U. S. Secretary of the Treasury during President Taft's administration, 1909-1913. The Club saw very little of him thereafter.

Godfrey Eyer's *Waldemar* papers, rich in spontaneous humor, and vastly entertaining, autobiographical and intimate, have been marked additions to our Club Library of Wit and Humor. The first of these papers we heard in 1927, the second in 1934, and two more were to follow in three and six years respectively. It is to be hoped that *Waldemar* has not drained his recollections dry.

Ambassador William E. Dodd, at home on a brief vacation from Berlin, honored us with a visit at the meeting on April 23rd, 1934, and listened to a paper by one of his former colleagues, James Westfall Thompson, now also a non-resident member, on *The Libraries and Book Trade of Ancient Rome*. Book-making and Libraries, ancient and modern, were among Thompson's special subjects of research. This paper was to be his ultimate contribution to our Club programs, for, as previously stated, he died in California in 1941. A week later Howard Eldridge read a paper, *A Glance at Spengler*, which was far more than a mere *Glance*; it was in reality a condensed, thoughtful, and philosophic review of Spengler's *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*. Eldridge had the mathematical mind to understand and interpret this extremely difficult book.

Two men of very strong character, but differing widely in temperament and education, were lost to us during this season of 1933-1934. They were, Arthur John Mason, a naturalized Englishman, and Paul Shorey. We have already paid tribute to the latter in these pages. Arthur Mason joined us in 1911, and was a faithful member for twenty-two years. His papers were not many, but were written and delivered with spirit and enthusiasm. An engineer, inventor, philanthropist, he will be remembered by those who knew him well as a man of the strictest integrity, of eagerness to accomplish

whatever scheme or purpose was in his mind, of forceful leadership, of wide interest in human and humane affairs, of keen and active intellect, full of the zest of living, a man whose friendship was a valuable asset to those fortunate enough to possess it. We ended this season with 156 resident members.

The awarding of the *High-Cockalorum-Kudos* medals for perfect, unadulterated, individual attendance came as a surprise of the first magnitude. Two weeks before the end of the season it was evident to the Secretary that the same two men who had won the honor twice before were set to win it a third time. So the Secretary had applied to the august Finance Committee for an appropriation to purchase two gold (Mex.) medals for these triple winners. Somewhat grudgingly the Finance Committee (as is its wont in the matter of extraordinary expense) granted the appropriation. But —*ehéu, nos miseros!*—it was discovered at the final meeting that there were *four* others who had also won the honor! This was an anticlimax of the first water. Two medals certainly could not suffice for six winners; accordingly, the six had to be content with having their names read, and a *summa cum laude* conferred upon them collectively. During the time when it was customary to report the number of meetings attended by individual members, this was the only occasion when there were more than one or two one-hundred-percenters. The six winners were, including the two who had already won twice, namely, Irving Pond and Harry S. Hyman:

“Our ever-faithful and efficient President, John M. Cameron; Mrs. Mary Green, who feeds us so richly from week to week, restores our lost hats and umbrellas, and removes the ashes and other debris of our orgies; our President-elect, Henry M. Wolf, whose future herculean job he is already entering upon with enthusiasm; and the Secretary.”

At the end of this most interesting year we applied a figurative stethoscope to ourselves, found that we were sound in wind and limb, and acknowledged with satisfaction the

removal of legal restrictions on potent beverages. Now those who so desired were able to look upon *spiritus frumenti* when it was amber—or white (mule)—with a conscience void of offence and with unfeigning interest.

The “reign” of Henry IV (Wolf) began *de facto* on October 8, 1934. (He had been Ruler *de jure* since the previous May.) Before going farther we may as well state who the antecedent Henry’s were: Henry I (Huntington), 1883–1884; Henry II (Freeman), 1898–1899; and Henri Troisième (David), 1929–1930. (We have also a goodly list of Charleses, Edwards, Jameses, Georges, and Johns on our list of King-Presidents, but as this is not a history of royalty, we are concerned for the present only with our kindly and efficient “Henry IV.”)

We met for the usual Reunion and Dinner at the Woman’s Club on Eleventh Street. (At that time the Woman’s Club was observing its strict rule of total aridity. Later on, as will be duly related, we held our Reunions and Ladies’ Nights where our palates and thirsts could be appealed to and quenched, respectively, more in accordance with the desires of the majority.) At the close of the dinner President Wolf issued his first “edict” in the form of certain *Suggestions*, which were read and received with applause. They were:

1) The names of newly elected members shall be printed on the postcard notice of the first meeting following their election.

2) Each newly elected member shall be generally introduced by one of his sponsors at the first meeting he may attend following his election.

3) Because of the care that is exercised in the selection of new members, each member of the Club shall be deemed to have been introduced to each other member of the Club. Accordingly, it shall be regarded as good Club practice for everyone attending a meeting to speak to any other person attending the meeting, regardless of whether there has been a formal introduction or not; and the same custom shall apply to guests of members.

The spirit of these suggestions has been followed, if not the letter. President Wolf’s Inaugural Address bore the title, *And Who Was Townsend Harris?* In his twenty-nine years of

membership Henry Wolf contributed only two papers (this Inaugural was his second and last), but his interest in the Club was always so intense, and his nature so generous, that his connection with us was of inestimable value. In October, 1935, just a year after the date of Mr. Wolf's Inaugural, the then President of the Club, George Utley, read an "Appreciation" by William E. Dodd, a sort of *Oratio Funebris*, of Henry Wolf, which we shall record in these pages farther on. This season of 1934-1935 developed a number of literary high points reached by several readers. All the papers were excellent, but we mention only those that particularly impressed us and elicited more than perfunctory applause. There was Irving Pond's *Just One Thing after Another*; George Packard's *Jean Nicolet and His Discovery of Lake Michigan*; Bernadotte Schmitt's *The War—Twenty Years After*, for printing which there were many requests; Harry F. Robinson's paper on William Lloyd Garrison, entitled *I Will Be Heard*; Edward S. Ames' *A Critical Constructive View of Religion*; *A Spiritual Autobiography*, requests for printing which were numerous; *Marcel Proust*, by Henri David, published by the Club one year later; *More Summers in a Garden* by Dr. Herrick (enthusiastically received); Charles Megan's *To Have and to Hold*; Professor Arthur Todd's *A Bundle of Myrrh* (like all his papers a gem of thought and of composition); Dr. Test's *Hedgeway Rambles* (illustrated with pictures); George Powers' *The Daring Dane*; *Through a Glass Darkly* by Anan Raymond; George Halperin's *Tolstoi*; and Walter Llewellyn Bullock's *The Poetry of Gabriele D'Annunzio*. This was Professor Bullock's final paper and appearance before the Club, for thereafter he was leaving the Chair of Italian Language and Literature at the University of Chicago to accept a similar professorship in the autumn at the University of Manchester, England. Bullock, English born but educated in the United States, taught large classes successfully at the University of Manchester both before World War II and for four years of it. During the War he was

called upon for special war work, one of his tasks being to act as a sort of liaison interpreter between groups of "G.I.'s" and English "Tommies," explaining to one group the linguistic peculiarities and manners of the other. He died in February, 1944, from overwork and exposure, while fulfilling some special mission.

There were three unique meetings during the season under review, for the uniqueness of which three causes were responsible, namely, meteorological conditions, a different environment, and coincidence. Our Booknight fell on December 10, 1934. That afternoon between four and seven a highly localized and violent blizzard swept down on the city, contrary to weather predictions. Coming as it did during the closing hours of business, it naturally created an intense desire to reach home on the part of all who were not already there, and once there to remain. As a result the attendance at this meeting was the smallest on record, only a brave *sixteen* being present, which included the three reviewers, the President and Secretary. Only seven of these sixteen are resident members today; four are non-residents, and four are dead. We might add that Mrs. Green, anticipating the usual large attendance on Booknight, had prepared her "snack" accordingly. Most of it went begging, and had to be given away to the needy. The second unique meeting was held in Room 133, Eckhart Hall, University of Chicago, on March 25, 1935. Room 133 was the Physics Laboratory and Lecture Room of the University. We listened first to a short lecture by Professor Hermann I. Schlesinger on *The Production and Use of Scientific Talking Pictures*. This was followed by *Talking Movies* illustrating a) *Molecular Theory*, b) *Sound*, c) *Acoustics*, d) *Energy and its Transformation*, and e) *Electricity*. This sort of thing was quite new in the annals of the Club, and the fifty-five members and guests who were there were fully alive to its importance.

April 29, 1935, was the third unique meeting. The year 1935 celebrated the two thousandth anniversary of the birth

of the Roman poet Quintus Horatius Flaccus. By an unusual coincidence the reading of a paper on Horace (*How Old is Horace?*) by the Club Secretary on this Ladies' Night happened to fall on the occasion of the two thousandth consecutive meeting of the Chicago Literary Club. This meeting was held in the Zeisler Room of the Chicago Woman's Club at 72 East Eleventh Street.

The "most unique" (if we may be allowed in this one instance that exuberantly redundant and impossible phrase) meeting of this season, and perhaps of many seasons, was the *Complimentary Dinner*, on March eleventh, 1935, at the Woman's Club, given to the members of the Literary Club by President Henry M. Wolf, in honor of the Club's six *Octogenarian* members, who were seated (with one exception, namely, Mr. Joseph Adams, who was in Florida) at the head table with the President. These six were:

Mr. John J. Glessner	Born 1843
Mr. George E. Dawson	Born 1847
Mr. Joseph Adams	Born 1851
Mr. Frank J. Loesch	Born 1852
Mr. Frederick W. Gookin	Born 1853
Hon. Charles S. Cutting	Born 1854

All five seemed to be in fairly good health except Mr. Glessner, aged ninety-two, who was quite feeble, but had made a supreme effort to attend this meeting despite his infirmity. Three of these six died within a year; a fourth survived for thirteen months, and two lived eight and nine years longer respectively, Joseph Adams and Frank Loesch. All six were long-time members and constituted a group of ancient and honorables, the like of which the Club had never seen before. At the close of the dinner President Wolf eulogized the Octogenarians (humorously alluded to later by Judge Cutting as the "Octoroons") and introduced them individually. Appropriate responses, interspersed with flashes of wit, were made by the five, all still mentally alert. The Secretary read a letter of regret from Joseph Adams, the

missing Octogenarian; also a letter of regret that he could not be present from Lessing Rosenthal, and a telegram of congratulation from James Westfall Thompson of Berkeley, California. The regular paper scheduled for the evening was then read by Professor Marcus W. Jernigan on *New Dealers and Social Planning During the American Revolution*. Seventy-eight members responded to Mr. Wolf's invitation to attend this exceptional occasion. President Wolf attended only three more meetings after this. Early in April he was taken ill, never recovered, and died June 4, 1935.