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The Complete Works of
HILAIRE BELLOC



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Complete Works of Hilaire Belloc



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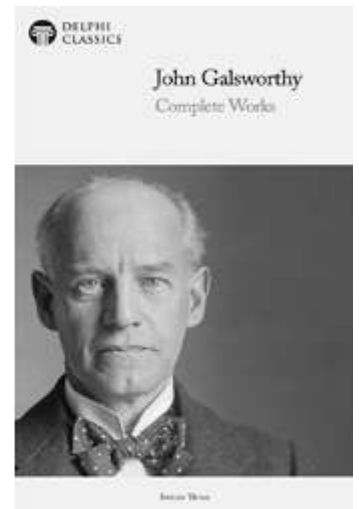
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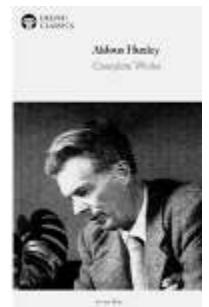
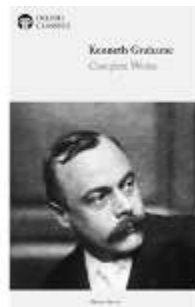
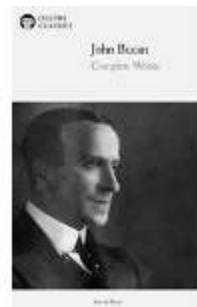
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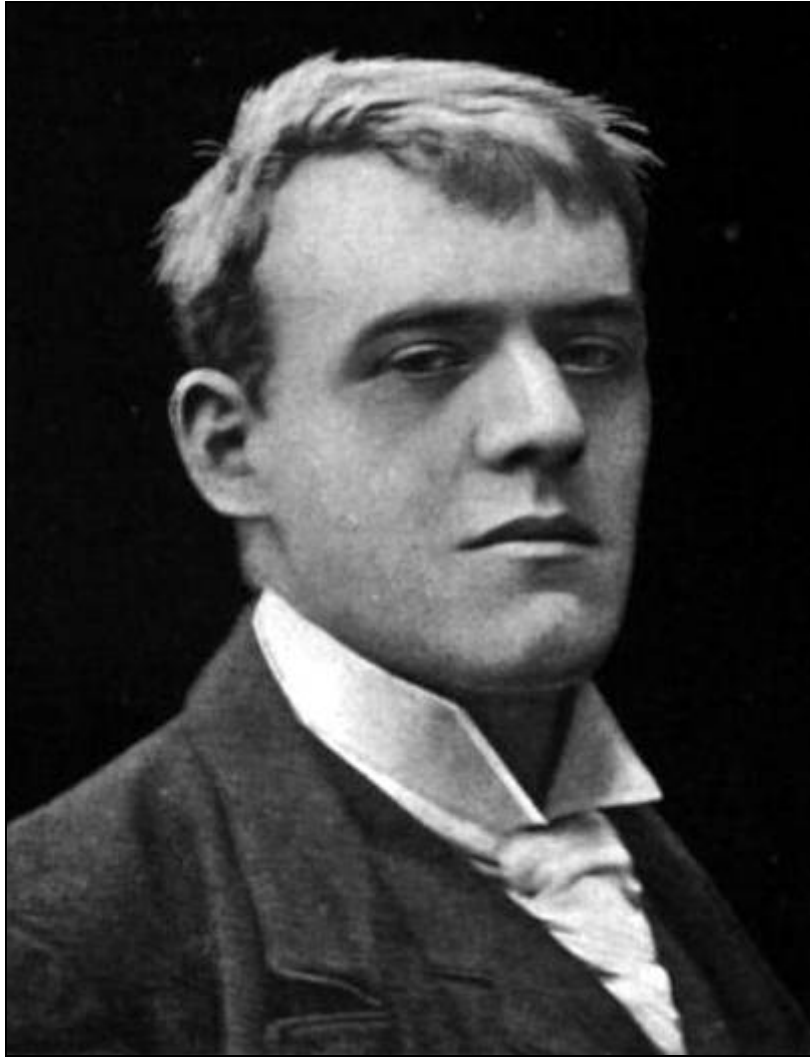
The Novels



La Celle-Saint-Cloud, Paris' western suburbs — Belloc's birthplace



Belloc's birthplace



Belloc as a young man, 1903



Belloc's sister, the novelist Marie Adelaide Belloc Lowndes, photographed in 1936

Emmanuel Burden, Merchant (1904)



First published in 1903, this novel is presented as the biography of the eponymous merchant. The book is actually a satire on the corruptions of an amoral international capitalism, which is contrasted unfavourably with the naïve values of the title character. Although Belloc's anti-Semitism (sadly not unusual at the time of publication) may prove upsetting to modern readers, his portrayal of an unscrupulous business sector, intent on creating economic wealth at the expense of all other concerns, ensures that the novel remains topical.

G. K. Chesterton, a close friend of Belloc's, provided the illustrations for the first edition.

EMMANUEL BURDEN

MERCHANT

OF THAMES ST., IN THE CITY OF
LONDON, EXPORTER OF HARDWARE

A RECORD OF
HIS LINEAGE, SPECULATIONS
LAST DAYS AND DEATH

BY

HILAIRE BELLOC

WITH THIRTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS
BY G. K. CHESTERTON

METHUEN & CO.
36 ESSEX STREET W.C.
LONDON

Title page of the first edition

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A SKETCH OF MR BURDEN—FROM MEMORY

The original frontispiece: A sketch of Emmanuel Burden, by G. K. Chesterton

TO
HERBERT A. L. FISHER

INTRODUCTION



THOUGH NO PROMINENT citizen is now-a-days permitted to pass “beyond the veil” without an account of him being drawn up for posterity, yet books of this sort have recently grown so common that some warrant for the publication of a new biography may well be demanded.

Mr Burden’s public position, combined with his sterling piety and considerable wealth, would alone merit such recognition: to these must be added the fact that he was a Justice of the Peace for the County of Surrey. His connection, moreover, with Imperial Finance has, through the medium of the Press, lent a very general interest to his name even in those parts of London with which he was personally unfamiliar.

I am well aware that the task of writing this history could have fallen into abler hands, but it could have been achieved by no one more devoted to his subject, or more familiar with the final catastrophe of this singularly beautiful and modest life. That I possessed the qualifications necessary for a work of this kind, was so evident to writers like Charles Egton, T. T. Batworthy, George K. Morrel, and Mrs Hooke as to cause them to withdraw voluntarily from a field in which they had already — I regret to say — laboured with some assiduity.

If, in the face of such a testimony, Mr and Mrs O’Rourke persist in issuing their ill-informed and prejudiced version of the last sad months, I fear I am powerless to dissuade them.

I had at first intended my notes for the perusal of friendly eyes alone: to my astonishment, I find them praised almost enthusiastically by two powerful critics (— journalists; valued friends; men whose fingers are ever upon the pulse of the nation), and a little later I learnt that the Directors of the M’Korio Delta Development Company would not be displeased to see printed such a vindication of their methods as my pen had produced. I was assured by Lord Benthorpe, in person, that no salaried agent upon the daily press, nor any professional author they had employed — not even “Ultor” — had given them the full satisfaction they had received from my manuscript. I, therefore, reluctantly consented to rewrite and publish the whole, with such added embellishments of style and fancy, as a wider public deserves.

It has eagerly been enquired by many clergymen and others whether I had before me a moral purpose in the compilation of this work.

I cannot pretend that I had intended it at the outset to convey any great religious or political lesson to the world, but I will confess that long before my monograph was perfected a conscious meaning inspired my pen. Rather let me put it more humbly, and say that I became vividly sensitive to a Guiding Power of which I was but the Instrument. Each succeeding phrase, though intended for nothing but a statement of fact, pointed more and more to the Presence of some Mysterious Design, and I arose from the Accomplished Volume with the certitude that more than a mere record had been achieved. The very soul of Empire rose before me as I re-read my simple chronicle. I was convinced of the Destiny of a People; I was convinced that every man who forwarded this Destiny was directly a minister of Providence. I was convinced that the Intrepid Financier, the Ardent Peer — nay, the Soldier of Fortune, whom twenty surrenders cannot daunt — had in them something greater than England had yet known.

To such convictions the reader owes those snatches of hymns, those citations from the sermons of eminent divines, and those occasional ethical digressions which diversify and enliven the pages now before him.

Of the form of the book I have little to say. Type, paper, and binding I left to the choice of specialists, as did I also the impagination, the size of the margin, the debate as to whether the leaves should be uncut, and the proportion of public advertisement requisite to a merited fame.

The proofs I read myself.

The question of illustration was discussed at some length. An excellent photograph of Mr Burden was unfortunately discovered to be the property of a firm who had flattered him by making it a complimentary portrait during the last short period of his public fame. They demand for its reproduction a sum I have certainly no intention of paying. No other picture of him exists save a faded daguerreotype taken many years ago on the occasion of a fancy dress ball. It represents Mr Burden in the character of Charles I., and seemed to me wholly unsuitable.

The principal characters connected with the M'Korio have, however, consented to sit to a mutual friend, and his sharp if rapid impressions of their strong features coupled with a few sketches of Mr Burden, drawn from memory, will aid my readers to a fuller comprehension of my work.

My thanks are due to Messrs Marian, solicitors, who procured for me the best advice of counsel upon passages since omitted; to Mr Banks, Lord Benthorpe's butler, who has provided me with much of my material. To the anonymous author of "A History of Upper Norwood"; to Mr English, sometime editor of *The Patriot*, now manager of "The Feathers" Tavern, Greenwich; to the Master of St Barnabas College, Oxford; to the chaplain and especially to the porter of the same college; to Mr Carey employed at St Catherine's College, long a servant of Mr Cosmo Burden's; to Lord Garry, to Mr Tammin, to Mrs Gough, to Charles Parker, Henry Grimm, Peter Cowdrey, C. T. Knowles, T. Cummins, Loring, Gibbs, Hepton, Rubble and Tuke, and to many others of lesser note who will, I trust, accept this general recognition in place of a more personal expression of gratitude.

The MSS. and correspondence which have reached me from all parts of the world have been of the utmost service. I cannot congratulate myself too warmly on the receipt of Mr Barnett's blotting-pad which his office-keeper had the courtesy to retain for me. The autograph letters from Prince Albert and Baron Grant to the first Lord Benthorpe have proved most useful material; his grandson, the present peer, who figures so prominently in these pages, was good enough to sell them at an astonishingly cheap rate to a gentleman who was my agent.

Such notes, memoranda of obligations and short agreements as have reached Mr Cosmo Burden through me, he is indeed happy to have received, and he begs me to render thanks for him most heartily in this place. I am further to assure all who read these lines that any further scraps in his handwriting that may be received — especially any letters addressed to Miss Capes — will be warmly and substantially acknowledged.

It will be noticed that I have alluded throughout these pages to Lord Lambeth under his original name as Mr Barnett. The public are more familiar with him in this form, for Barnett is and remains the name he has rendered famous; and, moreover, his acceptance of the Peerage was not announced till half this edition had been struck off. I have his permission for the retention of his simple English surname. Similarly I speak throughout my work of the Right Rev. the Right Honourable,¹ the Lord

Mauclerc, Bishop of Shoreham, as “the Rev. the Honourable Peregrine Mauclerc.” The death of his lordship’s brother, and his own induction to the See of Shoreham, occurred too late for me to make the requisite alteration.

One word more.

I trust I have nowhere forgotten that delicacy in mentioning the private affairs of others which is the mark of the gentleman.

If I have spoken strongly of Mr Abbott, it must be remembered that a patriotic duty has claims superior to those of convention: moreover, Mr Abbott has himself made a verbal declaration of the strongest kind, accompanied with an oath, that he is indifferent to my opinions.

It may be mentioned in this connection that the unhappy difficulties of the Benthorpe family, on which I was compelled (however reluctantly) to touch, are of no further moment, since young Mr Benthorpe has wooed and won Antigua, the only daughter of the Count Brahms de la Torre de Traicion y Crapular, a Spanish nobleman of immense resources.

For the rest, I have throughout striven earnestly — and I believe successfully — to avoid giving the slightest pain to any sentient being.

“He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the great God who loveth us,
He made and loves them all.”
— Coleridge

Or words to that effect.
Chelsea, 1904

ENDNOTES.

¹ The phrase used by “Asterisk” in the *Daily American* of April 9th has no meaning. *Very Rev.*, *Very Honourable*, are titles that cannot exist in combination. As to the “*Most*”: “*Most Honourable*, *Most Rev.*,” of “Clara,” in the *Evenudg German*, it is not impossible, but is here inaccurate. His Lordship is not a marquis, nor has he any intention of ascending the steps of the Archiepiscopal throne.

CHAPTER I



IT IS REMARKABLE, and a little saddening, to find how few people have heard of Mr Burden, who recently died at his residence, Avonmore, 37 Alexandrovna Road, Upper Norwood. He was, all his life, a man whose influence, though indirect, was considerable; a man certainly not without weight in the foreign policy of this country, and one that affected still more profoundly its social structure.

The assiduity and the regularity of his demeanour forbade him, perhaps, the notoriety that is so prized by many lesser men. His ambitions, where they were not domestic, regarded his business and the preservation of the fortune he had honestly acquired. His judgment, which was excellent, he exercised upon problems connected with the commercial interests into which he had been born, and from which he had never, during a useful life of sixty-four years, desired to dissociate himself.

To the administration of the suburb in which his villa was situated he was far from indifferent; but he had never attempted to enter the House of Commons, though his station, means, and connections would have afforded him ample opportunities in middle age for a career which Englishmen justly regard as among the most honourable, lucrative and eminent.

Such men, happily, exercise, under the orderly conditions of modern England, a far deeper influence upon the fortunes of our great empire than their lack of public fame might argue in less favoured communities. It would be an impertinence to insist upon the many friendships which bound Mr Burden by the closest ties to men who direct no small part of our national fortunes. To those who knew him well it would appear redundant, and, to those who had not heard of him, beside the mark, were an account of all his financial, philanthropic, or religious activity to occupy any part of the following pages. Those pages were called forth under the strong and painful impression of his recent death, and it is their only object to trace a rapid sketch of his family and social position, to make some mention of the last few days of his life, and at the same time to leave some permanent record, lest the memory of such a character and of its trials should perish.

The name of Burden is first seen in the beginning of the seventeenth century, when a Henry Burden appears in the court rolls of Beccles, in Suffolk, in connection with sundry sales of wool to Ghent.

It is not certain whether this Henry was an ancestor or no; but within ten years the name twice reoccurs, once in the form of Burdyn, and once in that of Bird.

A receipt presented at Bungay, dated in the year 1616, when our Shakespeare died, and acknowledging payment for wood used in burning a witch, bears the signature Barton: and a deed of 1638 conveys and devises 47 hogsheads of mild ale to Zachary Pyorden, who is later known for a zealous defender of the public liberties.

It is interesting to note that a Master Barreden sailed for Holland from Yarmouth, in company with some fifteen or twenty of "God's servants," shortly afterwards, with a large and very valuable cargo of wool. He was presumably a nephew of the foregoing. There is a family of Bourdons in Bradford, Mass., who, though claiming a Canadian origin, are very possibly descended from this early champion of religious liberty.

No mention of the Burdens during the Civil Wars remains. We may imagine them, if we will, following the Parliamentary cause; whether passively — as did so many of

the sturdy East-Anglian stock — or actively; accepting the wage, and loyally fighting the battles of the great Protector. However that may be, the name reappears with another John Burden in 1672, a religious enthusiast who preached the Word to the people of Saxmundham during the hot summer of that year.

He seems to have been an honest God-fearing man, devoted to the cause of true religion in the first period of his ministry.

A government which could permit the entry of the Dutch into the Medway, and produce the infamous shorthand notes of a Pepys, did not tolerate the mystical zeal of Bunyan's contemporary. He was thrown into Ipswich gaol, on his release from which place he proceeded to Aldeburgh, and declared himself the Messiah — at some time between April and June 1684.

Few believed him, but he suffered nothing further from the authorities, and died peacefully in the occupation of cobbling, at Orford, on the 5th or 6th of January 1701/1700.

The race of Burden is then lost sight of for nearly a century. There is almost certainly some connection between Mr Burden's ancestry and that of Sir Algernon Burden, of Pelham Thorpe, near Norwich, for Mr Cosmo Burden (Mr Burden's surviving son) has recently borne the same crest as the baronet.

The College of Heralds, who, under the able direction of Lion d'Or, have accumulated these details at a considerable expense, trace continuous filiation from John Burden, whose mother may have boasted gentle birth, and who established himself as a corn chandler at Colchester in the year 1785. John Burden, confining himself strictly to the wheat market, drove a prosperous business in Colchester during the Napoleonic wars. His subscriptions to the charities which were so necessary in those times of high prices and public famine appear no less than six times between 1801 and 1815. He was an Alderman of his town, and died in 1833, leaving a son, George Burden, whom he had established as a large ironmonger at 106 Thames Street, in the City of London, and who was the father of the remarkable Englishman this memoir commemorates.

Mr George Burden, of Thames Street, married on March 8th, 1835, at his parish church of St Catherine's, Jane Elizabeth, the daughter of Ezechiel Cranby, a shipmaster of Wapping. The union was blessed with two still-born and eleven living children, of whom my own friend, the Mr Burden with whom these pages deal, was the third, born on January 19th, 1841, and baptised the next day under the scriptural name of Emmanuel.

As is so often mysteriously the case with even numerous families, the name of the Burdens survived in but a single member. Of the three other sons, James, Thomas, and Cranby, the first died while yet a child; the second was drowned at sea as first mate of one of his grandfather's vessels; and the third, whose intellect had always been deficient, did not long survive his thirtieth year, but passed away, unmarried, in Dr Milford's private home at Reading. Two of the sisters also perished in tender years. Of the five that survived, Charlotte and Victoria remained unmarried, Patience was early left a childless widow and retired to Bournemouth, while Esther, who wedded a wealthy Australian in June 1865, sailed with him to Melbourne some months later, and has never since been heard of by her family.



MR BURDEN'S NEPHEW, HILDEBRAND WORTHING, WHOSE INHERITANCE OF GENTLE BLOOD SADLY UNFITTED HIM FOR A COMMERCIAL LIFE

The youngest, however, who was christened Maria, but was known in the family as "Baby," made, when barely twenty-six, an alliance with the younger son of Mr Arthur Worthing, of Worthing Court, Bucks. This marriage, whatever social attractions it may have offered to the younger members of the household, proved unfortunate. Her husband was dissipated and improvident and encountered repeated difficulties in the society of Boulogne sur Mer, in France, where his father-in-law supported him on a small pension for some years. After the premature death of his young wife in 1873, he returned to England, led a random and useless life among his old associates, but had upon his deathbed the satisfaction of knowing that his brother-in-law (Emmanuel) had paid the greater part of his debts, and had renovated his wife's grave in the Protestant cemetery of the French seaport town where she lay at rest in God's acre. Hildebrand, the only fruit of this marriage, was placed as a clerk in the office of Bowler & Co., by Mr Burden — for he was ever solicitous of the honour of his blood.

At the suitable age of thirty-one, Emmanuel Burden, who was thus destined to centre in himself the greater part of his father's fortune, married a lady for whom he had felt an unvarying attachment, and to whom he had indeed been engaged for some eight years.

She was a person of modest but engaging demeanour, the fourth daughter of the Rev. Harward Sefton of Hagden Courtney, in the county of Huntingdon, and of Miriam Davis, his wife; from whom, perhaps, Mrs Burden inherited her power of rapid calculation and her acute judgment of human weakness. Mr Burden's father, while fully accepting his son's choice of Eliza (for such was the lady's name), was wisely opposed to an improvident marriage, and deemed it prudent to make the young people wait until his son had thoroughly learnt and taken on the business he was to inherit in Thames Street.

Their courtship, though protracted, was peaceable and happy. They learnt to know each other fully in the long walks which they would take together over Hampstead or Putney heaths. Their families even permitted sometimes a more intimate intercourse. Young Mr Burden (as he then was) would receive his affianced wife in the social evenings of his father's house (they then resided above the shop in Thames Street) or, in turn, would appear as an honoured guest from Saturday to Monday at the Rev. Mr Sefton's vicarage: taking the train from Liverpool Street at 1.15 on the former and returning to town by the 9.20 from Hagden Courtney upon the latter day.

They were married, as his father had been, at St Catherine's. Miss Sefton had accepted the hospitality of her aunt for the occasion. Rice was thrown; — and a shoe. Jests were exchanged. The honeymoon was spent in Wales.

Mr Burden, senior, judged it well that the newly-married couple should take, on their return, a house at some distance from London. His business had largely increased; the first floor had already been invaded for some years by the wares necessary to a show-room, and the whole premises should properly have long been given up to the storage of his goods and the accommodation of his offices. Mrs Burden, senior, had died during the engagement of her son, and so at last it was arranged that a new household should be formed on the heights to the south of London, where the fresh air and larger spaces of the country could be combined with the exigencies of a daily train to town.

Mr Burden's father decided therefore upon Norwood.

The suburb was indeed somewhat changed since the reign of George IV.; but nothing could obliterate the charms which still clung to it in the mind of the old man. In deference to the wishes of the bride, he consented to purchase a property in a somewhat new and outlying portion of the Ringwell estate. He settled upon a half acre of land, whereon a new house already stood awaiting a tenant. It was surrounded by gravel paths and newly transplanted shrubs, several of which had died. Though it still stood isolated in the midst of bare land and fields it already bore the number 37 in Alexandrovna Road, a circumstance which lent an additional pleasure to its acquirement. Some slight debate arose between the old father-in-law and young Mrs Burden as to what the name of the new domain should be; the former favouring the designation of "Chatsleigh," the latter that of "Avonmore," which last, in graceful deference to her wishes, was finally painted upon either gate in white letters picked out with green, upon a grey ground.

The house stood high, and commanded, upon fine days, a view of London to the north. Many familiar points in the landscape attached Mr Burden's father to the memories of his laborious and successful life: the shot tower, St Paul's, and the roof of Cannon Street Station were clearly visible; and he had but to turn his gaze to rest it upon the Crystal Palace, to which the memories of Prince Albert and Hyde Park, his natural patriotism, and a sense of the magnificent, made him incline with pleasure.

His father having thus installed them in a commodious and modern residence, took up his abode with Mr Burden and his young wife. Still maintaining his full proprietorship in the business in Thames Street, he would at first visit the premises from time to time, while he insisted that his son should leave punctually for town by the first train after breakfast, and at evening discuss with him the business of the day and whatever matters of general interest might have appeared in the morning paper.

Certain of the old man's habits would have jarred upon a man and woman of less regular habits, or possessed of less self-control than were Mr Burden and his wife. Thus he had taken, of a sudden, a considerable interest in gardening, a matter upon which neither of the young people felt any great concern; he became weather-wise, and he was forever fetching in an artizan whom he patronised, to rearrange those bells and hinges, wherewith his son and his daughter-in-law were already perfectly contented. A more serious difficulty was the attachment which Mr Burden, senior, unexpectedly conceived for the policy of Mr Disraeli; whereas young Mr Burden could not disguise his loyalty to Mr Gladstone, a sentiment in which his wife supported him with a zeal only tempered by her repeated references to the Irish Church.

Indeed, when Mr Gladstone's windows in Harley Street were broken by a mob, nothing but Mr Burden's filial piety restrained him from rebuking the excessive glee of his now aged father; and when Mr Disraeli was promoted to the peerage and offered a golden wreath by a co-religionist, Mr Burden went so far as to take Mrs Burden to the seaside for a week, until the storm should have blown over.

It would be unjust to insist upon these trivial inconveniences. The respect due to his father's years was soon enhanced by Mr Burden's anxiety for his health. In the January of 1880, Mrs Burden having by that time given birth to three children (their grandfather's delight and pride), her husband, who had long become the sole head of the great business in Thames Street, had the pain of seeing the old man take to his bed, whereon, some eight months later, he very peacefully expired.

It needs but little space to follow the existence led by Mr Burden after this revolution in his fortunes; for it is the purpose of these few pages rather to record the impression of his own much more recent demise, and to leave some record of his character, than to follow at any length the history of his life.



MRS BURDEN AT THE AGE OF FORTY-THREE FROM A MINIATURE

The three children, Ermyntrude, Cosmo, and Gwynnys, were trained in those excellent traditions which the family had inherited for now three generations of decent affluence; but Mr Burden and his wife justly considered that the steady increase of their fortunes (which they naturally ascribed to their considerable capacity, but which were perhaps, more due to the evolution of modern industry) permitted them to entertain some legitimate ambitions for the future of their offspring.

Certain developments in the structure of our English society made it increasingly difficult to continue the custom of taking high tea at half-past six. This meal had already been supplanted by a set dinner at the more fashionable hour of seven, when Mrs Burden introduced the change whereby her two daughters, aged respectively fourteen and twelve years, were withdrawn from Mrs Cathcart's seminary at Dulwich, and put under the care of a private governess, a Miss M'Kee, of whom Mrs Burden had heard from a friend who was intimate with the niece of Lady Bagshawe.

Thanks to the able guidance of this lady, Ermyntrude and Gwynnys very rapidly acquired an acquaintance with all that best suited the part they would be called upon to play in their social rank. A thorough knowledge of German, some elements of French, and a good grounding in psychology and practical nursing, left them at the ages of eighteen and twenty all that charming, simple English girls should be.

They came out together (for Ermyntrude looked, if anything, younger than her sister) at the Jubilee Ball given in the Town Hall of Sydenham in 1897.

Mr Burden had never disguised his intention of portioning his daughters. The elder was soon married to a young doctor of considerable ability, who emigrated with his wife to Winnipeg, in which distant capital he still pursues a prosperous career. Long a president of the Orange Lodge² in that city, he was recently returned to the Dominion Parliament on the Manitoba Catholic schools question; his career will doubtless be familiar to many who may read these lines.



SPIRITUAL ANXIETY OF MR LEGROS AN IMPRESSION FROM THE PENCIL OF A FRIEND AND PASTOR, WHOSE HOUSE HE WOULD FREQUENT FOR THE SOLUTION OF DOCTRINAL DOUBTS

Gwynnys, on the contrary, during a visit to her sister in Canada, married, somewhat abruptly, Karl P. Legros, a dark young officer in the local army. The captain (for such was his rank) was unfortunate in his business of butter-brokering. He became involved, through no fault of his own, in the collapse and subsequent trial of the Milwaukee Butter-King. Driven by the mysterious instinct resident in all scions of our race beyond the seas, Karl P. Legros sought England in the hour of his need; nor did England fail him. After a short period of hesitation, and, it must be confessed, of some spiritual anxiety, he took Holy Orders, and was soon installed, by the efforts of his father-in-law, as rector of the small living of Benthanger, in Kent. He has continued, for many years, to fulfil the duties of his sacred calling in this place, and has been supported unwaveringly throughout a life of arduous and unremitting labour

by his noble and devoted wife; a true Christian matron, to whom her father made, till his death, a small yearly allowance.

Mrs Burden was laid to rest less than a year after Gwynnys Legros' return to England. She had the satisfaction, before dying, of hearing that Ermytrude's husband had been elected to the Parliament of his colony, while her visit to the vicarage of Benthanger had at once consoled her with the vision of her daughter's content, and permitted her to breathe the atmosphere of her early years: the sober comfort of a country parsonage to which, for all her wealth, she had so long been a stranger.

This excellent woman sleeps in the Cemetery Park of Norwood, in a dry, roomy, and well-built vault which, with the exception of a yearly rental of five guineas, is the unencumbered property of her husband's family.

Having thus described the fortunes of the two daughters, it is my duty to indicate, however briefly, the youth of their brother, Cosmo. His participation in the last efforts of his father's life, and the fact that he became, after the mother's death, his father's sole companion, make it necessary to follow the young man's training, if we are to comprehend the failing spirit of which he was so long the unique support and comrade.



MRS BURDEN

AN INTERPRETATION BY MISS M'KEE, LONG A GOVERNESS IN THE FAMILY

Cosmo had never enjoyed such health as had his sisters. The first months of his life had been marred by the use of an artificial food improper to the sustenance of infants, but honestly recommended by the old family doctor, who had so firm a faith in its virtues as to have accepted an interest in its sale. One effect of this nutriment was to make the child large and heavy beyond his years, a physical characteristic which he preserved throughout his life. It had also, however, the result of weakening his heart, and permanently impairing his digestion. From these causes he developed as a boy a nervous and irritable temper, which his parents thought it imprudent to correct. When he had passed through the excellent discipline of an English Public School, these faults disappeared in his general demeanour, and were observable only in the occasional friction that inevitably accompanies the incidents of home-life; abroad they were replaced by a certain indolence and indecision of manner, far preferable to the peevishness which had formerly given his family so much anxiety and pain.

As a boy of ten, when his sisters were barely out of the schoolroom, he was placed in the preparatory school of Dr Stanton at Henley.

Many as are the applications for admission to this fashionable establishment, and difficult as it was to find room for the boy, Dr Stanton had far too much sense to hesitate upon his reception, or to consider for one moment the slight difference of social position between Cosmo's family and those of the bulk of his pupils. The excellent divine was of that new and vigorous school in English Pedagogy, which rightly regards the great commercial activities of the country as co-equal with its territorial interests. The name of Burden was already familiar to him, not only from the enamelled advertisements in blue and white which frequently met his eyes as he paced the platforms of the Great Western Railway, but also from the part taken by Mr Burden in the Mansion House reception of the Sadar of Nak', when that potentate was visiting England during his late embroilment with the Russians.

The schoolmaster was, therefore, delighted to receive Cosmo, and permitted the delicate boy certain extras which the parents of the more robust of his pupils saw no occasion to command. These included a plate of cold meat at breakfast, and a weekly visit from Dr Byle, an old and valued friend of the schoolmaster's, and the medical attendant of Lord Bannerling of Marlsford Park.

Careful as was the training which the boy received at this excellent academy, his life was not happy; he recovered somewhat in the refined atmosphere of Radley, but it was not till his entry into the University, towards the age of twenty, that his life began to assume a normal aspect.

The wealth which he would inherit, his reserved and self-centred temperament, his readiness to meet men of all kinds, and his detestation of friction and quarrel, save with those nearest to him, deservedly secured him a number of friends of that sort which is most prominent in our national life. He was a member of the Club, he could ride without discomfort, and though not himself attracted to any games save golf and hockey, he was the associate of men who were distinguished in whatever the University has to teach.

He possessed, to a remarkable degree, that art of compromise upon which the characters, not only of our statesmen, but of our commonwealth itself are based. He had an instinct for the feeling of his peers; and, if a certain lack of energy forbade him to attempt to mould his contemporaries, he was at least able to receive with remarkable fidelity the general impress of the forces around him.

Though not proficient in the pastime, he was yet able, upon occasion, to write verse; and his style in prose, which, as a Freshman, had been somewhat inchoate and abrupt, very soon developed that "viscosity which is more potent than fluency" (I

quote the Bishop of Shoreham), and that “power of condensing truth into metaphor” (I quote the same authority) which distinguishes our modern English from the less plastic manner of the earlier century.

Indeed, there is little doubt that, had he turned his attention towards politics, or (what would perhaps have suited his nature better) the Church, he would have found, after a little experience of the outer world, every opportunity, as he had every qualification for success.

In the School of Modern Languages he carried off, after four years’ study, a Second, which was very near to being a First Class. His father, my friend Mr Burden, already sufficiently gratified by his son’s success, was assured by his tutor in a private letter I have myself seen, that Cosmo only failed to obtain the highest distinction from a curious inaccuracy in the spelling of Latin quotations, “a subject,” as this careful and popular young Don³ very properly remarked, “alien to the spirit of the School.”

At this period of life Cosmo had grown to the manhood which his youth had promised. His frame was soft from that fault in his early nutrition to which I have already alluded, but his careful grooming, his constant and regular shaving, and his close curling hair, gave an impression of alacrity. He stood over six feet in height. This stature was of little advantage to him, save with first acquaintances; it very probably developed a weakness of the heart, and a persistent supineness of demeanour which, with an intellect less trained, might have gravely affected his life. His features were somewhat devoid of meaning, the mouth especially: indeed he found it difficult to control a looseness of lip and expression, which marred what would otherwise have been a well-set face; but he boasted a healthy colour, red, white, and, in our colder seasons, blue. The contour of his nose was not accentuated. His eyes, which were of a pale grey, were restless, and seemed always to betray a certain anxiety. These, added to his cleanliness and heavy gait, must complete a picture which should be framed by the judgment of the Master of his College: “Whatever else he is, he is a gentleman.”

Those whose interest in Mr Burden has proved sufficient to carry them thus far in my relation will excuse, I hope, the insistence I have laid upon Cosmo’s character and early life. It was through his son that my friend Mr Burden came into touch with those forces of the modern world, which might have been of such value to him, but which proved so fatal. It was Cosmo’s facility and social character which had made him the intimate friend of Charles Benthorpe, for example, of the Master of his own College (a man most marvellously able to estimate social influence of every kind),⁴ and especially of Mr Harbury, whose considerable public reputation, though he is not directly connected with the University, is in itself the best recommendation that can be given to his University friends.

For Mr Harbury had not only known Cosmo, he had sought to know him; and in the multitude of Cosmo’s acquaintance there was no one, except perhaps himself, who did not understand what an honour and what a passport such a friendship would become.



COSMO BURDEN
FROM THE ONLY PHOTOGRAPH WHICH ADEQUATELY RENDERS THE
RESTRAINED BUT PERMANENT SADNESS OF HIS FEATURES

ENDNOTES.

² Also a P.M. of the A.O.B., V. of the T. S. and Third Illuminate.

³ Mr, now the Rev. S — Fafner.

⁴ The Master of St Katherine's is nowhere more vividly portrayed than in a phrase of the late Duchess of Buckingham's, in her book of reminiscences, 'The Life Serene' (Bischoffheim & Co., 31s nett, 3 vols., cr. 8vo, uncut, with 8 photogravures), vol. iii., p. 127, "He was what I call a *good* man." There is a charming description of her grace's visit to the University town. She passed the night at the Magpie.

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