

## CHAPTER IV

### MOTHERS OF MEN

Kindred spirits—Reticent people—Chatterboxes—A small child's news—A lady's windfall—A publisher wants a partner—A furious lady—Men and mothers of empire—Lord Kitchener and his mother—Lord Roberts and his mother—Lord Dufferin and his mother—Lord Allenby and his mother—Lord Allenby's entry into Jerusalem—The German Emperor's entry in 1898—A present for Jerusalem—Jerusalem's vicissitudes—Lord Allenby's favourite companions—His joy in life—His camouflage—Lord Kitchener's praise of Sir John Cowans—A remarkable telegram—Working hours from 9 a.m. to 3 a.m.—A saving of £400,000—Daily expenditure £2,500,000—Arrested on parade—An inquiry that cost the country £60,000—A chivalrous gentleman—Compromising letters—Lady Cowans and the ethics of life—Sir John Cowans turns Roman Catholic—Lord Northcliffe's kindness—Mr. Lloyd George's offer to Lady Cowans—General Grierson—A tragedy—Sir Percy Scott—His shirt sleeves.

ONE of the greatest pleasures in life is in associating with kindred spirits; one of its greatest trials, loneliness, not of space, but spirit.

Some folk have a way of establishing intimate relationship after a comparatively short acquaintance, but a real friendship lasting over years is priceless.

It is not easy to understand very reticent people, who cannot speak of what is in them; their joys have to pass unshared, also their sufferings. We who know them may see them quiver, as do poor frightened blind-fold horses; waiting to be shot, knowing from instinct some awful fate awaits them, they also suffer in silence—and die in horrible silence.

Chatterboxes generally seem to be happy and pleased with themselves, and they love to surprise those they are talking to. Even little childrer have

this characteristic. I remember quite a baby girl belonging to one of our laundrymaids who lived in a cottage on the property, toddling all by herself across several fields to come and see my sister, who, owing to the earliness of the hour, was still in bed; but on hearing the child was asking for her, had her brought up to her room.

Full of importance, the little one toddled in, her big blue eyes wide open and excited. Putting her hands behind her back, she walked up to the bed, made a curtsey, and in a staccato voice said abruptly, "Mover's dead" (Mother's dead).

Travelling through life and often in strange countries, we meet all sorts of queer and interesting people, but I think in my own country I have met some of the queerest. The early Victorian era provided some amusing people who regarded all the etiquettes and customs of the time. Their education seems to have been that they must never think for themselves, but live by rule, in accordance with their often antiquated instructors' views.

A certain lady that I knew, who had been brought up in that atmosphere, who thought everything wrong that she did not understand, was middle-aged, and had the blank expression of a Cabinet Minister, suddenly had a small fortune left to her.

For some time she turned over in her mind how she could best enjoy it, and was bold enough to decide to take the money out of Consols and re-invest it to greater advantage. Having somewhere heard that it was not wise to have all her eggs in one basket, she studied the newspapers, and could not make head or tail of the financial announcements; but among the advertisements she read that a publisher wanted a partner who would put some money into his business, and invited inquiries.

Here was the very thing she would like; she would go into partnership with him and so invest some of her money. It would be grand, for then she would be able to read all the newest books for nothing, and save her library subscription. She loved reading; and, of course, she would see that all the books published were "nice and good."

The advertisement was answered; a solicitor replied saying that his client would be pleased to see the lady at his office on a certain day and hour if that would be convenient?

Feeling very businesslike and excited, she journeyed up to Town, and stayed the night in an out-of-the-way hotel that had once been famous, and where her people had stayed in days gone by

On making inquiries as to how she was to reach the appointed place for the meeting between herself and the publisher, she was told that a Liverpool Street omnibus would take her close to the desired spot.

Carefully following all her instructions, and having armed herself with a packet of sandwiches and a bottle of smelling-salts, she stepped out into the wicked world to seek further fortune, but feeling very nervous, remembering her old parents had said, "London is a sink of iniquity, full of pitfalls and snares."

Seeing Liverpool Street written on an omnibus, she hailed it and entered, feeling very frightened, being told by the conductor to "Hurry up." However, so far so good. Presently she was asked for her fare.

"How much?" she asked.

"Where to?"

"What do you mean—where to?"

Conductor impatiently: "Where do you want to get out?"

"At — Street, somewhere on the way to Liverpool Street."

“Well, you are coming away from it all the time; we’ve just come from there.”

“Oh dear! oh dear! Stop, stop, and let me out! But where am I? What can I do? I shall be late to keep my appointment.”

“Can’t help that, madam, not my fault; if you do not know your way, better take a cab.”

She proceeded to follow this sound advice and hailed several cabs that already had fares, and took no notice of her flourished umbrella. At last, having succeeded in finding a cab willing to take her, she now discovered that in the flurry of getting out of the omnibus she had lost, or mislaid, the paper on which she had written the address of the publisher. So when the cabman said, “Where to?” she replied tremulously, “I don’t know. Oh, wait a minute; I have lost the address.”

She then bundled out of the cab so that she might have better light for her search in bag and pocket. A number of errand-boys soon gathered round, and she imperiously told them to “Go away.” They laughed, and took no notice of the command. The cabman picked up her keys, which had fallen with a clatter on the pavement, followed by the sandwiches, and held them while the search was continued. At last the missing paper was found crumpled up in her pocket-handkerchief, her valuables were returned to her, and the cabman, thinking he had found a queer fish, drove her off to keep her appointment.

Thinking the lady looked as if up from the country and innocent, the cabby, of course, asked double his proper fare, but his patience and help during the search perhaps entitled him to it.

At last the harassed lady found herself before the publisher requiring a partner. He had to listen to a long story of how the money came to be left to her,



and what was his advice as to the investing of it; adding, she would like to join him and be able to read all the new books as they came out, and she would decide as to what were proper and what were not. She wished to keep the public pure!

The publisher, all smiles and blandishments, listened patiently, seeing a chance of a moneyed partner which at the moment would be of considerable assistance to him. His words of admiration and encouragement were soothing after the morning's experiences.

Presently he said, "I did not think it necessary in my advertisement to say it is a sleeping partner that I am looking for." There was a considerable pause while this was sinking in; then, very red in the face, the would-be partner jumped up, dropped umbrella and bag, saying, "Oh, you wicked man, you monster, you snake, you ought to be ashamed of yourself! I will expose you; I will tell my solicitor how I have been insulted, and I will tell my uncle, who is a Barrister." With this awful threat she gathered up her fallen belongings and ran out of the room before the scared publisher had time to explain the situation to her. He told me that he laughed on and off to himself all the rest of the afternoon.

The lady, while making her exit, had to pass through a room full of girls and men typing, and attending to the business in other ways. They were somewhat surprised when the lady, while passing through the room, talked volubly to herself, and then said she supposed they were "All a bad lot and in the conspiracy."

Publishers as well as authors have strange experiences. Still, meeting interesting people holds a big place in the joys of life. Men who have fought to make—and hold—the Empire, mothers who have

made men what they are—I have had the honour and privilege of knowing a good many of them.

I do not think women have yet realised their own importance: I do not mean socially, or as regards dress or fashion, but the part played by women in regard to mankind. The unwritten laws of motherhood are greater than any written in the statute-book.

As we are all born with great capacities, none of us can escape from the capacity of loving. I have noticed in many great men who have helped to build, and hold, the Empire their capacity for love—of home and mother. There is something eternal in the mothers of men—they are the guardians of the species.

Long before I had a bairn of my own, which was before I was twenty-one, I thought that to be the mother of men was a great, almost alarming responsibility; but not until I had seen, and experienced, some of the horrors of war did I realise what a big place mother and home holds in the hearts of men. It is what makes them brave. War unmasks the souls of men, as it closes their eyes in death.

A good mother is man's sheet-anchor throughout his life. Some of our greatest Empire-makers have, in the emotional moments of success, said from their hearts, "I owe it all to my mother." Others, who have fought and struggled less successfully, have died with the word "Mother" on their lips. This I know from personal experience.

Lord Kitchener, though his mother died when he was very young, said more than once to me, when speaking of certain episodes in his life, "I did it because I felt it was what my mother would have wished." Another time, before people began to tear him to pieces, when I was speaking of his success, he said, "I wish my mother had lived to see it," and he spoke feelingly.

Lord Roberts was another who spoke tenderly of his mother, and of her religious teaching, which lived with him all his life. He said he never went into any action in his life without a prayer that God would protect her and give her happiness, and later, when she was gone, that He would grant her soul repose.

Lord Dufferin and Ava, the first Marquess, loved to talk of his mother, whom he considered the cleverest and most beautiful woman in the world.

Then, again, there is Lord Allenby of Armageddon, whose human qualities make him beloved. He adored his mother, and is a deeply religious man. Therefore his feelings when he entered Jerusalem can be imagined. So many historic processions had entered that Holy City during her four thousand years of history. Many had been the heroes who had led their warriors across the plains of Sharon and Armageddon, and the banners of Rameses, Sennacherib, Alexander the Great, and Richard Cœur de Lion, had been unfurled around her walls.

Was there ever so modest yet dramatic an entry as that of the tall Englishman in khaki, who entered on foot, and delivered the Holy Land from the Turks?

As he cast his eyes over the city he must have thought of the Man who had entered it "riding on an ass."

Verily, a different entry to that of the German Emperor in 1898, who had a special gateway cut through the historic walls on purpose for his spectacular entry, clad in a helmet and white Crusaders' costume, and mounted on a white horse. In this get-up he liked himself so well that he had a picture painted on that occasion, and presented it to Jerusalem! I wonder where it is now?

General Allenby, as already stated, entered on foot, and through the Jaffa Gate by Mount Zion, up to the

steps of the ancient Tower of David, upon which Christ had gazed. There in four languages the General read the Proclamation, promising the city peace and religious liberty. He refused to allow any flags to be flown, except that of the Red Cross; even the United States representatives, with their hospital, were asked not to allow their flags to be seen in the open. The wisdom and good feeling of this requires no emphasis.

Poor Jerusalem! for 1,070 years it has suffered many vicissitudes at the hands of the Jews, 117 in the hands of Christians, 225 under Roman rule, and 1,147 under Moslem sway.

Lord Allenby's love of the Bible, his tenderness and thought for his men, and his love for birds and flowers, were often remarked upon by the troops under his command. During the Palestine campaign his closest companions were his Bible, a Bible Dictionary, and George Adam Smith's "Geography of the Holy Land." Over these, he filled those in close communication with him with thrills of romance, as in the silence of the plains he would read aloud chapters of the Bible dealing with that unhappy land, whose city had been so repeatedly sacked and its desolation so complete.

In General Allenby we see a man with the capacity for appreciating the joys of life. Birds and flowers are a joy to him, and not as things to be shot at or gathered. Few people have a better knowledge of the flora and fauna of the Holy Land.

There is a story told that he posted a sergeant at the chief watering-place of the migratory birds for the purpose of reporting to him any strange species that might be seen. Personally, I have my doubts as to that being the sole object of the man so stationed.

Another joy to him was seeing his men happy and



LORD ALLENBY WITH HIS MOTHER AND WIFE.





amused, and he did everything possible to help in their amusements. Once, when writing home to his mother, he told her, "They [his men] put on the best musical comedy I have ever seen, when at Beersheba."

The reason for my writing so much more about the achievements and life of General Allenby than of others I have mentioned is because his work is more recent and therefore less well known, and the rising generation may be interested.

Before the General entered Jerusalem he had secured 12,000 prisoners and quantities of stores. His own report on his achievements and activities was as terse as Cæsar's "I came, I saw, I conquered." Allenby's was more modest, and ran thus: "At noon on the 11th I made my official entry into Jerusalem." Those few words, however, covered a good deal of ground, for it meant he had saved Egypt from a Turkish invasion aimed at the control of the Suez Canal; but alas! he entered the city too late to save the shrine at the site of the tomb of Christ from being looted, to add to the ex-Kaiser's art collection.

However, where Napoleon failed, Allenby succeeded. I know a number of men who served under this General, and many are the stories they have told me of him, both touching and amusing. Here is one:

While the British were in the Jordan Valley, in September, 1917, the scorching sun looked down on the soldiers toiling at building dummy huts, camps, and horses. Some German aeroplanes made a dash into the district, observed these army preparations and activities, and hastily flew back to report the situation at their headquarters.

Meanwhile the army proper was making its way in quite another direction during these camouflage operations, moving by night, hiding and sheltering in caves

by day; while the dummies in the Jordan Valley were becoming shapeless objects in the pitiless sun.

The enemy had plenty of artillery and big guns, using them freely. General Allenby had artillery also, but his men advanced with only bayonets to meet the Turks under German command. Many of our men laid down their lives so that the birthplace of Christ, the scene of His sufferings, and His tomb, should not be violated by British shells.

General Allenby is more a soldier than a politician, which no doubt is quite correct, soldiers not being supposed to have any political views. Personally, I always wished his policy in Egypt had been a firmer one; but then his views are Liberal, so the line he took was more or less to be expected.

His men used to call him "Bull Allenby" on account of his carrying voice, which they said could be heard from Dan to Beersheba.

A book appeared a short time ago entitled "Allenby of Armageddon"; some people said they thought this was a presumptuous title, being apparently unaware that Armageddon was one of the places he conquered; also unaware that the General did not know the book was being written, and certainly had nothing to do with the title.

When General Allenby was being patted on the back over his military successes, he said very simply, "I owe it all to my mother." She was a clever woman, and one of the old school, who did not pamper their children; she impressed on hers, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might." "Work hard and play hard."

All the time her son was abroad she wrote regularly to him, and her letters were received with joy. Being interested in people and politics, they were never dull. The General was lucky in his mother, and is lucky

in his gentle and capable wife. His country has acknowledged his work, and he merited it.

Others I have known have not been so well treated, and it is painful to see men who have done splendid work for their country praised one day and kicked the next. We had an example of this in Sir John Cowans' treatment, the man that Lord Kitchener, who was not given to overmuch praise, said was "the finest Quartermaster-General this country had ever seen." Unfortunately, neither Lord Kitchener nor Sir John Cowans was a favourite of Mr. Lloyd George. Both these Generals were aware of this, and told me many interesting things.

During the latter part of Sir John Cowans' life he came in for a good deal of trouble, chiefly owing to his trying to help lame dogs over stiles. He always thought, and said, that he considered the charges brought against him were the work of Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Arthur Markham, who wished to deprive him of his post as Quartermaster-General. How strongly Sir John felt this is proved by a telegram he sent to his wife one day, which I should like to quote, but as someone it refers to is no longer here, I must refrain.

It was a coveted post, as thousands and thousands of pounds had to pass daily through his hands.

It was in 1912 that Sir John was made Quartermaster-General, so when the Great War broke out in August, 1914, the State had a great military administrator at command for transport, supply, and equipment of land forces, a Member of Council throughout the war; and he was Q.M.G. for seven years. Before that, he was from 1910 to 1912 Director-General of the Territorial Forces, Lord Haldane having asked especially for his services.

As soon as war was declared, he set to work with

all his wonderful energy and organizing powers; soon camps grew up like mushrooms, 900,000 men were quickly more or less comfortably quartered, also hospitals, general and special, opened at home and abroad.

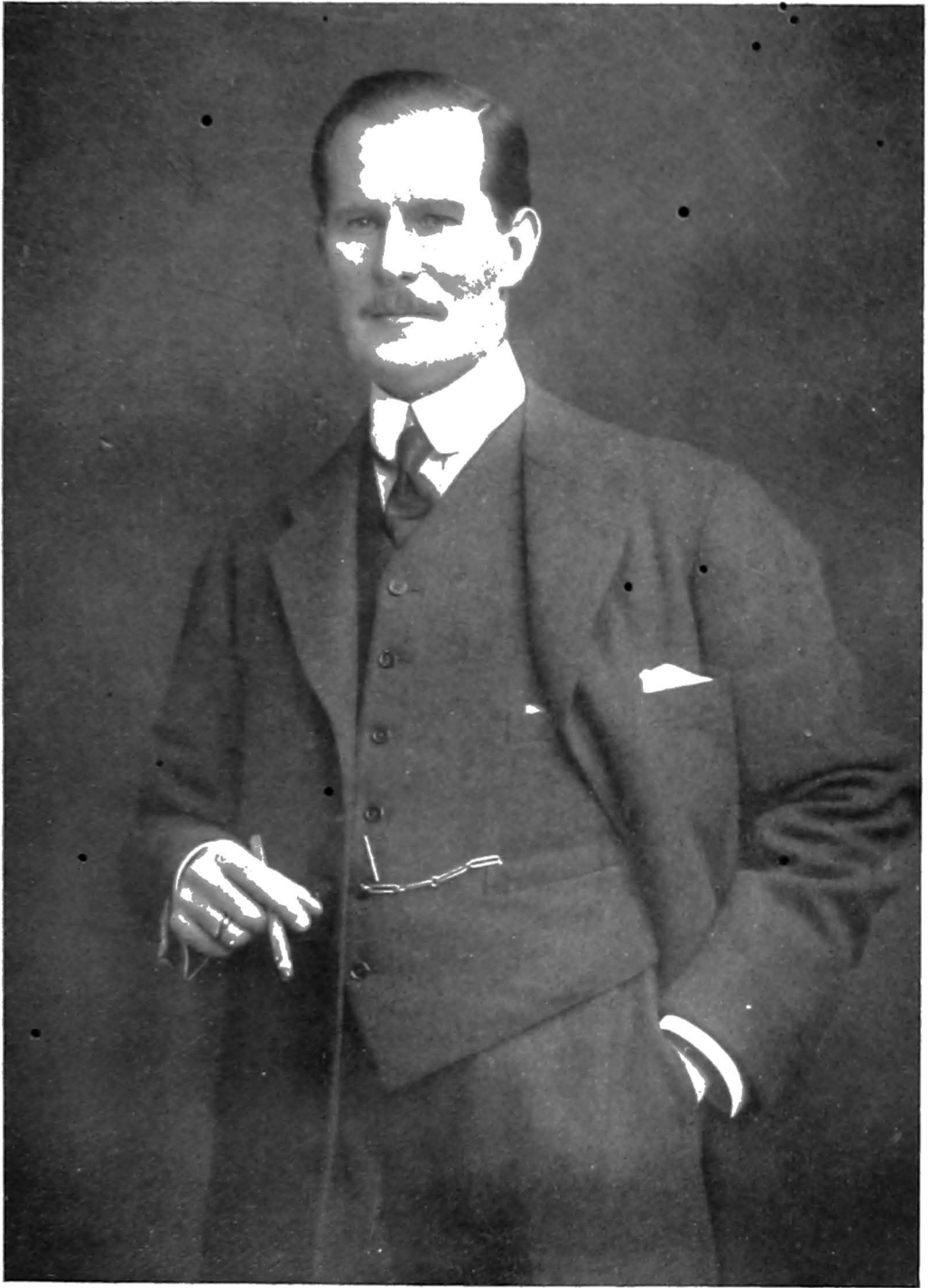
The problem before him of clothing this army, new and old, was staggering—82,000,000 pairs of socks being only one little item to be provided, as against 1,000,000 in pre-war days.

Yet this was nothing compared with the feeding of an army of 5,000,000 men. The fact that our armies were the best-fed forces that ever went into battle was due to the energy and genius of Sir John Cowans, and let nobody ever forget that. There is also no disputing the fact that in consequence of his work in all its branches he saved thousands of lives, and at the same time saved the country a mint of money.

It was owing to his brain that the Salvage Department came into being, turning to profitable use the tons and tons of grease and odds and ends, otherwise being wasted. Owing to this measure of his, in 1916, £400,000 was saved, and later this sum was greatly increased.

He had the control over the expenditure of £2,500,000 a day, and the fact that he died leaving only about £8,000 speaks volumes for this man's honesty of purpose. There were a good many who during the years of the war became rich men—not so Sir John Cowans. His great aim all the time was to reduce expenditure. He used to say that probably he would be hanged for spending so much money, but that he would rather be hanged than think the troops had not all they wanted, or that it was in his power to give them.

All this may be old history to his contemporaries, but the present rising generation, who know little of



SIR JOHN COWANS, THE COUNTRY'S FINEST  
QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL.





the tragedies of that time, may be interested; and it is well they should know what was done then that they might live in peace.

It is curious that General Cowans should be one of the rare instances of an officer having risen to the rank of Lieutenant-General without having seen a shot fired "in anger," as the phrase goes. And this not from choice, but owing to a combination of circumstances, chiefly to his work being wanted at headquarters, and that he could not be spared away from it.

He received his commission in the Rifle Brigade from Sandhurst in 1881, and was promoted Captain in 1890. Shortly afterwards he spent two years at the Staff College. It was in 1893 that his long record of service on the Staff began, by taking up the appointment of Staff Captain at the War Office. In 1898 he was a Major and Deputy-Assistant Quartermaster-General, his work being the control of transport and movement of troops.

His powers of organization were quickly recognized and in 1899 bore fruit, when it became his business to despatch troops, animals, and material, to the Cape during that protracted conflict. He was at once acknowledged as a Staff Officer of exceptional ability. He it was who worked out the whole of the details for the transport of the 250,000 men sent to South Africa.

In 1900 he became full Colonel at the age of forty-one. Lord Kitchener, at that time Commander-in-Chief in India, then made him Director-General of Military Education. He had the gift of making rapid decisions and sticking to them, not being one of those people who swear one day that they will not do a thing, and on the next do it.

The joy of life was strong in him, and showed itself early, when on his first parade at Sandhurst he was placed under arrest for laughing at his Adjutant!

Sir John had absolutely no side, was utterly devoid of it, and few men had so many friends. When the commissariat arrangements in Mesopotamia broke down, he came to the rescue, with results that were quickly seen. He often worked at the War Office, not eight hours a day, but from 9 a.m. to 3 a.m. the following morning, encouraging the willing and stimulating the laggards. But the long hours and the mental strain told on his vitality, and when he resigned his health had been completely undermined.

He was a lovable man, and I doubt if any official during the Great War had larger crowds of both men and women who visited or wrote to him seeking his help for someone in France. No matter how busy he was, no one was turned away without sympathetic kindness shown to them. One of the most charming traits in the General's character was the amount of trouble he would take to help any poor person who sought his help or advice. Letters of this nature he insisted on answering himself in his own handwriting.

And this was the man whose great work was so soon forgotten and his failings so well remembered. No one can deny, or wishes to deny, that he had a weakness for the fair sex, which often led him into indiscretions and tight corners. One case got up against him cost the country £60,000, if what I have been told on good authority is correct.

It has always seemed to me that it is an impertinence, when a man has carried out well and faithfully the work he is engaged to do, and for which he is paid, that his private life should be criticized and interfered with, and still more reprehensible that a perfectly blameless wife should be made to suffer for any mistakes her husband may have made. Certainly some of those who passed judgment on Sir John should have

remembered the old slogan concerning those who live in glass houses and throwing stones.

I always admired the way that Sir John met the charges brought against him, for never a word would he say that would throw blame on some of those he had helped, and who were less loyal than himself.

He was a great favourite with the ladies; many of them pursued him in a shameless manner—indeed, he had little peace from them; telephone messages came to his house at all hours of the day and night from them. At last he asked his wife and household to answer the telephone and say to all and sundry that he was away from home.

Once, now long ago, Sir John spoke to me about a certain social upheaval in which his name appeared. With a view to helping him, I had to see certain letters that had been written to him, very important letters, that would have put quite another complexion on the situation if he had cared to produce or publish them; but what he would not give away, I must not. Some of the letters which were written to him by one of the highest-born ladies in the land were a disgrace for any woman to have written. I thought then, and I think now, that he was more sinned against than sinning.

No doubt his head was somewhat turned by the way some of the big-wig women flattered and pursued him, and he was susceptible to female charms, but in this he was not different from some of those who bore witness against him.

Lady Cowans is a loyal woman and has not a word to say against her late husband, nor will she allow a word to be said against him in her presence. Not long ago she said to me, "I am the only woman Jack ever *really* loved, and the only woman who ever *really* understood him." She is wise, inasmuch as that she has studied the ethics of life, and does not expect too

much from God or man. Would that there were more like her, for she fully appreciates that men cannot be judged by the same standard of ethics as women.

Lady Cowans says that her husband was always goodness and liberality itself towards her, charming and thoughtful in his home life. We can forgive our men a good deal if they are tender and loving to us when in it. It is the little things in home life that make it either heaven or hell.

At one time, when Lady Cowans was away from home and her favourite little dog was ill, her husband sent her a telegram every day reporting the condition, for better or worse, of the dog. When Sir John and Lady Cowans were apart from one another, even for a few days, and he did not receive a letter from her every day, he was anxious, and wanted to know why a post had been missed, as he looked forward to her letters.

The General was fond of animals, especially horses and dogs. In a book that appeared some little time ago dealing with his life, we are told that Sir John once remarked that "The horse is the natural enemy of mankind." This is not correct; the story should have been told of General Ewart, who, when going to stay with the Cowans to review some troops, begged Sir John to provide him with "A very tame mount, as I look upon the horse as the natural enemy of man."

Whenever leave could be obtained, the Cowans hunted with the Badsworth during the mastership of the ever-popular Charles Wright, and their social engagements were many.

When stationed at the Rifle Brigade Depot at Winchester, Sir John left all these matters for his wife to attend to, and she used to tell him when the day



LADY COWANS.





arrived what functions he was booked for, be it ball, luncheon, or any such engagement. One day she reminded him that he was going to a ball with her and a party that night. He replied, "All right," but did not ask whose party it was, so when they arrived at the house of the giver of the ball and they were being received by the hostess, an old brother officer of Sir John's came forward expressing pleasure at seeing him again. General Cowans exclaimed, "Hullo, old chap! what are you doing here? Not much in your line, is it? I don't mean to stop long."

The look on Lady Cowans' face gave him to understand that he had made a *faux pas* of some sort. He had been addressing his host!

In the years before the war the German Emperor was much attached to Sir John, and often asked him to come and stay to shoot with him in Germany. The Kaiser was very anxious when General Grierson was leaving Berlin that Sir John should replace him as Military Attaché; but knowing the ways of German Royalties, how they invited themselves to breakfast, luncheon, tea, or dinner, when it so pleased them, Sir John declined the post on the grounds that he could not afford to accept it.

In 1919 the General vacated the post of Quartermaster-General, but remained on the active list. By this time he had received many decorations from the Allies; among them, he was nominated Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour of the Belgian Order of the Crown, also the Italian Order of the Crown or Cross—I forget which.

His business aptitude having become known in the city, Sir John was now invited to join the Board of the Shell Transport and Trading Company, and he remained with them up to the time of his death.

As "Jack Cowans" he was known to everybody.

It was in 1894 that he married Miss Eva Coulson, daughter of the Vicar of Long Preston, in Yorkshire.

I have several times heard it said that when Sir John Cowans learned that he had only a few weeks to live, he was terrified and unnerved, dreading the crossing: but his wife and faithful servant, Kipps, both of whom were with him at that time, tell a different story; that, on the contrary, he was perfectly resigned and collected—indeed, the very day before he died he said to Kipps, “You had better settle up with the barber; I may not want him to-morrow.”

When the morrow came no barber was needed. Sir John had left for ever the Valley of Regrets.

For some time before his death he had been thinking seriously of embracing the Roman Catholic Faith, and when asked in the nursing home in Mentone, where he eventually died, if he would like to see a Church of England clergyman, he replied, “No”; he would rather see a Father Morgan who had been Chaplain with the Forces.

With this priest he held long conversations, over which he meditated, and decided that he would be received into the Church of Rome, but not until his wife had given her consent. Of course, she raised no objection, being only too glad to agree to anything that brought him peace and comfort.

During the latter part of his illness he had a great longing to get well enough to return home to England. His ever-kind friend and admirer, Lord Northcliffe, who towards the end spent part of every day with his old friend, made plans for the journey, so that everything should be in readiness for the happy moment when the invalid might be well enough to be moved. A special train, with invalid carriage attached, and every possible comfort, was ready, and all at Lord North-

cliffe's personal expense; but, alas! none of it was wanted.

Lady Cowans speaks with gratitude and affection of Lord Northcliffe's kindness during those dread weeks of pain, before the release came.

Another story that has been freely circulated about General Cowans is that he took drugs. This is not correct; he had a horror of them in any form, would not even allow the doctors to give him morphia to deaden the pain.

Does it not seem pitiful that the wife of "the best Quartermaster-General this country has ever seen" should have been unprovided for by the State, while we have to pay doles to those who think an eight-hour day is hard work, Sir John Cowans having worked willingly, and unasked, for nineteen hours at a stretch?

No breath of scandal has ever touched Lady Cowans, but the poor little lady found herself on her husband's death with nothing, as what little her husband had to leave was swallowed up by outstanding obligations. So everything had to be sold. The trustees said that even his medals and decorations must go. But it was not Lady Cowans that sold them; parting with them nearly broke her heart. However, a kind friend bought them and sent them back to the unhappy widow. She has no idea who the friend was, but I think that I know. These treasures have now been lent to the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Mr. Lloyd George wrote to Lady Cowans offering her £100 a year, paid quarterly; she declined this with thanks. The Ministry of Pensions finally came to her assistance.

Another old friend, now gone, who had done good work, did not entirely escape evil tongues, though fortunately in a less marked degree than his old friend

Cowans. This was General Sir James Grierson, known among his many friends as "Jimmy," a brilliant linguist and loyal friend.

I cut his sandwiches for him in Shepherds Hotel in Cairo when he was hurrying off with Sir George Greaves to scenes of battle—I think it was in 1882, or it may have been in 1885. My memory is becoming so crowded that some of the long agoes have fallen out and been lost. I performed the same small service for General Jimmy when he was starting on his last journey to France during the Armageddon.

He was one of those who had foreseen the war, and spoke of it years before it was openly discussed. He had a great desire to command a British force in a European campaign; then, when the long-desired cup was at his lips, he died suddenly from heart trouble, within a few hours of landing in France. Many mourned him.

It is pleasant to remember that Sir Percy Scott, who did prodigies with his guns in South Africa, escaped without much moral mutilation at the hands of the public or the authorities.

He was an amusing, plucky little man with a very red face, the result, presumably, of a tropical sun. Being rather deaf, he made the most of the opportunities this affliction offered: he only heard what he wished to hear. Nevertheless, he was a great asset when making up a party. He came to help me once when I was giving a large garden-party. Remembering how in my youthful crinoline days I had detested these often dull, but useful, functions, I consulted Sir Percy Scott as to how I could make my party bright and amusing. He suggested a merry-go-round, and said he would take all the old ladies rides on it. I thought it an excellent idea, and told him to set to work to find one for me, which he did,

and it was a great success. He insisted in his most persuasive manner on stately grandmammās and maiden aunts of uncertain age riding on some of the beautiful yellow horses with blue tails. His joy was great when these ladies shrieked, "Stop! stop! . I shall fall off; I shall be sick," etc. He shouted to them that nobody could stop until the music did, as it was all wound up together.

I think the dear old ladies really enjoyed it, in spite of their hats and bonnets hanging off the back of their heads and a certain display of ankle, etc.!

To add to the fun, Sir Percy took off his coat and did acrobatic feats on, and off, the horses, to the tune of "Linger Longer Lucy." When I saw him taking off his coat, I feared some of the old ladies would be shocked, and told him so. He laughingly replied, "Oh, they have seen plenty of men in their shirt-sleeves before to-day, but never a shirt like mine: you observe my sleeves are made of a different pattern to the rest of the shirt. I always have them made like that, because then nobody pinches them. When the laundry sends them to the wrong address they are at once repudiated and returned to the rightful owner, and it would be beneath a valet's dignity to wear them."

It was delightful to see some of the prim old men and women who had had joy-rides unbending, and saying they felt years younger—in fact, quite "d-o-r-g-s."