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Table Talk

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LADY STRADBROKE
BY DE LASZLO
GIVEN BY LADY STRADBROKE

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A de Laszlo portrait of Lady Stradbroke, which was recently hung in the National Gallery.



The Governor-General's picnic—a snapshot taken during his recent tour of the bush fire areas.

TABLE TALK OF THE WEEK

What People are Saying and Doing—The Latest Topics—People in the News

Wanted—A Home

THE Prime Minister, and Mrs. Bruce particularly, must sometimes regret that their beautiful home in Frankston is not nearer to town. They have spent so many months in furnished flats and houses belonging to other people since he has been in office. Latterly, they have been renting Mrs. Geoffrey Walker's delightful house in Tivoli-place. Before that, they were at Amesbury House in Domain-road. Now I hear that Mr. Bruce has taken Mr. Donald Mackinnon's house in Anderson-street. Evidently he likes South Yarra as a residential suburb! But so many moves must be disconcerting. Perhaps the Prime Minister views Canberra with a certain satisfaction, since it promises him a settled abode whilst he holds his present office. It really is extraordinary that Melbourne all these years has not boasted a "No. 10 Downing-street."

A Distinguished Writer

IT is not often that Australia receives such a distinguished literary visitor as Mr. Leonard Merrick, who recently arrived in Melbourne. Much of his work is caviare to the general reading public, but those who have read "Tricotrin," or "Conrad in Quest of His Youth," have some idea of the writer's literary calibre. Merrick, whose throat will not permit him to smoke, carries one of those French imitation cigarettes in an amber mouth-piece. Hidden inside is a tube holding a bit of cotton soaked in eucalyptus oil. "I like to hold it in my mouth, and pretend to puff at it," he says. "Nobody can tell then that I must be careful of my throat." Quite a touch of psychology about that cigarette!

Jack Ashore

THE Victorian branch of that old-established and world-renowned institution, the Missions to Seamen, is having its annual meeting on March 23, when the Governor will preside. There is scarcely a port in the world of any importance where there is not a branch of the Mission, and many a storm-tossed crew which has come safely into port has had cause to bless the bounteous hospitality of the members. Melbourne has a particularly strong branch, and the Ladies' Harbor Lights Guild forms a most enthusiastic auxiliary. "Jack Ashore" is indeed well looked after by these staunch friends. I see the Archbishop of Melbourne will speak at the meeting, and a crowded gathering is expected.

Women's Hospital

THAT indefatigable worker in the cause of good deeds, Mrs. Herbert Brookes, who incidentally is a daughter of the great Alfred Deakin, gave an At Home yesterday (March 16) at her beautiful house, Winwick, in Walsh-street, South Yarra. The primary object of the gathering was to discuss auxiliary work for the Women's Hospital, and some good spade work was done, many promises of help being received—but, I understand, the lists are not yet closed!

Where Is It?

MANY suffering ratepayers must sometimes long for one of those idyllic South Sea islands, where the wicked cease from troubling and the tax collector is at rest. But how many of our Best Informed know that within 40 miles of Melbourne there is such an island—an island where there are no taxes, no rate collectors, no motor cars, no "pubs" and no "pushes." Incidentally, there are no roads either, and, I believe, there is not even a wireless set. And yet the community is a thoroughly contented one, and there is a happy air of *douce far niente* about the island which makes it quite attractive. Finally, it is reported to be ten degrees cooler in summer and ten degrees warmer in winter than Melbourne. What is the name of the Paradise, you ask? French Island, in Western-port Bay.

League of Womanhood

WHILE the women of England are shortening their skirts to fight for Equal Franchise, the men of the land are to make an earnest final attempt to save them from the follies of their emancipation! Headed by Captain A. H. Henderson-Livesey, they have formed a League of Womanhood. In an enlightening circular, it is stated that the object of this society is "to voice the social aspirations of the normal womanhood of Great Britain, to diminish the influence of the feminist movement, and to educate public opinion to the acceptance of a scale of female values based on wifehood and maternity."

In short, Captain A. H. Henderson-Livesey and his followers are out to undermine all the work of the feminists, and to "put women in their place" according to the early eighty ideal. How long their utterances will remain undrowned by a wave of feminine wrath remains to be seen. So far women are treating them with complete silence.

"Gangin' Agley"

THE Pope's ban against the undress of the modern woman's costume is having effect in some of the Catholic countries, though in some cases the compromise is but a thin veiling! This is especially noticeable in "backless" evening gowns, which are really not "backless" at all. They have shoulders or backs of flesh-colored chiffon, the general effect of nudity, especially from a distance, being alarming, particularly in the backless-to-the-waist variety. So impressed are the dress designers with the fact that the scraggiest back looks well under a thin veil of pink chiffon, that many lace-backed evening frocks are lined with it. One Melbourne girl created quite a flutter the other night when she appeared in one of the fashionable dance halls with a pink chiffon back and shoulders to her scanty black frock.

Trips in Ships

APPARENTLY the tour of the millionaire ship, *Carinthia*, was a great success, and now the enterprising firm which caters for these world tours announces that the ship will sail on the second tour on the same date as last year, namely, October 10, and follow the same itinerary. So the second batch of American travellers will be in Melbourne early in the New Year. By the way, another steamship agency in New York announces "Honeymoon Trips" by land or sea. They have 57 different tours on their schedule, and in case the blushing couple desire to keep the "affair" secret, the firm is careful to advertise that all travel literature will be "mailed in plain envelope." Another seductive trip is that where the tourist is invited to "follow the trail of the Sheik by motor."

A.J.C.'s Gift

"CANONBURY," Darling Point, the Sydney Harbor Mansion, which, during the war, was purchased by the Australian Jockey Club for the use of invalid soldiers, has now happily outlived that sphere of usefulness, and it has been converted into a War Memorial Convalescent Home for Children by the generous A.J.C. The opening of the institution in its new role last week was a particularly happy function, and not the least satisfactory part of the proceedings was the introduction of the matron, Sister S. L. Colless, one of the most notable of Australian war nurses. When war broke out in 1914, Sister Colless left the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital to go on active service, and she remained at the post of duty on the other side of the world until the end of hostilities.