

Extract from  
BRITISH WEEKLY.  
LONDON.

22 FEB 1929

Date.....

## Diary of the Week

912  
Thursday, February 21

The Bookman Circle was favoured last evening by a visit from one of the ablest of our literary critics, Mr. John Freeman. Another young critic, Mr. R. L. Mégroz, was in the chair. The subject of the lecture was "The Difference between Prose and Poetry." Mr. Freeman had prepared his address carefully, and he enriched it with many literary allusions. For nearly an hour he kept us interested. I liked especially some of his more fanciful analogies. "Prose," he said, "is like the infantry in the trenches; poetry is like the winged squadrons of the air. Prose is like those heavy coaling vessels which move cumbrously with goods from port to port; poetry is like the sailing ships with which continents have been discovered. Prose is like the slow caterpillars which a naturalist trained to move, a hundred at a time, in ceaseless procession round the rim of a bowl; poetry is like the dragonfly in its beauty."

Friday, February 22

I have read with much interest in the last two days every review I could find of Lord Haldane's "Autobiography." There were two passages that stood out for me among all the rest. In the *Times Literary Supplement* the reviewer points out that Haldane could have put himself right with the public in 1914 if he had only been willing to stand frankly for a moment in a white sheet. By a single speech in August or September, 1914, he would have won full forgiveness from his generous fellow-countrymen.

I liked, also, the closing passage in Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's review in the *Daily Herald*. Describing the sketch of Haldane by Laszlo, Mr. MacDonald says: "He looks with peaceful benignity past and beyond us, and awaits the merging into the eternal mind. 'Life will close before long,' he seems to say, as he has written in this book. And, leaning on his staff, he appears to be listening for the closing call." That fixed, far-away glance, the firm grip of the long, sensitive hands round the knob of the stick, remind me of the ancient words: "He worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff."