

Hall. The management of the Hall during the coming twelve months will rest with the Village Council, but I will leave to Mr. Seebohm to explain the details of the proposed arrangements.

Now we are starting upon this new experiment fully conscious that mistakes may be made, and that we shall have to gain wisdom by experience. It was said of a great General that he made more use of his defeats than some Generals made of their victories. If we move steadily forward, unselfishly seeking the common good of all, I do not think any mistakes we shall make need interfere with our ultimate success.

I have now great pleasure in declaring this Folk Hall to be open, and in placing it at the service of the Village.

AN ADDRESS

BY

JOS. ROWNTREE

on the occasion of the opening of

THE FOLK HALL,

EARSWICK,

5th Oct., 1907.

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ing on at Earswick are watched by many throughout the country. In connection with this there is one point which I want to bring before you. We want at Earswick to do something towards the Housing Problem, and the value of our experiment will very much depend upon whether we are able to make it pay. If we can say to Manufacturers or to Town or County Councils that a Village such as ours can pay something like 3 per cent. upon the money expended, it is probable that we shall have many imitators, but if, on the other hand, the experiment, is commercially a failure, the number of imitators will be few. It is, however, only by the utmost vigilance and economy that as much as 3 per cent. interest upon our expenditure can be made, and you will therefore understand why, in connection with the houses, we find it necessary to decline many requests that are made to us.

The Hall will be a free gift to the Village, and, consequently, the finance of the Village will not be burdened with any interest payments upon the cost of the Folk

terests. Whether this ideal is one which we shall be able to realize, time only will show. We have sought, however, to make provision under which the Folk Hall shall be a common centre for Religious services. I do not know why a good Adult School should not be established here.

Then there is the great question of recreation. It is often said that Village life is dull, and so I fear it generally is, but there is no occasion for its being so. In the Village Hall there will be facilities for recreation in its simpler forms—Billiards, etc.; and we hope that during the Winter months there may be popular Lectures with the Magic Lantern. Some of you will recollect the great interest that was taken in York, a few years ago, in the Lectures given by the Gilchrist Trust. We may not be able to get Lecturers of equal ability, but I believe it would be quite practicable to have during the Winter months a valuable and thoroughly interesting course. Then I expect there will be Musical gatherings; probably Debating or Literary Societies, and Photographic Exhibitions. The beauty

of the gardens throughout the Village shows the interest already taken in Horticulture. One would not be surprised if a Horticultural Society was formed, with its exhibitions once or twice a year. The Hall would be open also for Political meetings, let of course to all parties on the same terms. In addition to this, the Hall will be the Village Club. They manage this kind of thing better on the Continent than we do in England. In the Tea gardens and public resorts of Germany, the man and his wife, and often the children too, will spend the evening together listening to the music. In this country, it seems to be thought that women do not need recreation.

The illustrations I have given may serve to show how varied are the uses to which a building of this kind may be put. I expect this Earswick Village will have many interests and activities which will naturally centre round this building; but, if the Village life is to be rich and full, there will have to be a good deal of unselfish effort given to it. May I make the appeal to you to help on this work? And do not let any

of us despise it because our numbers are comparatively small. Villages like ours, in which an effort is being made to realize more wholesome conditions of life, are watched with great interest by Social workers throughout the country, and if we can make this Village, not only in its houses and gardens, but also in its public life, something worthy of imitation, the influence may spread much further than we should expect.

There is one danger which you will pardon my mentioning. Man is a somewhat quarrelsome animal, and it requires some thought and wisdom for companies of persons to work harmoniously together. Most of us have to learn how to give and take, and to know how far it is right and wise to press our own views. If a meeting or a committee comes to a pretty united decision which we think to be mistaken, it may yet often be the right course for us to accept such decision and to do our best to make it work smoothly.

I spoke just now of the interest with which experiments such as we are carry-

Friends.

The Folk Hall, which we have seen in the process of building for many weeks, is now finished, and we are met this evening to celebrate its opening.

You will perhaps expect me to say a few words as to the uses to which we think it can be put.

If a Village is to have a united life and a common interest in things affecting its welfare, it is almost necessary that it should have a place for meeting.

Let me indicate a few of the interests which we think may gather round this Folk Hall. Firstly, as you know, with the growth of the Village, the question of accommodation for Religious services has become pressing. In the Folk Hall there will be accommodation for the services of different Religious bodies. It may be asked why we do not look to the establishment of a number of different places of Worship throughout the Village. Our action has been determined by the wish to create as far as possible a united Village life, and to banish from it everything that tends to the creation of separate in-