

# A MAGAZINE FOR THE FAMOUS BY THE FAMOUS

From GUY RAMSEY

ABINGER COMMON (Near Dorking), Wednesday.

**A** GROUP of middle-aged writers and musicians living at or near the tiny, remote Surrey hamlet of Abinger Common have produced a new literary magazine called "The Abinger Chronicle."

It is something of a family paper, save for the fact that it serves people who are akin in spirit rather than in blood. It is designed to be read by the circle itself, and their friends, and the friends of their friends.

The leading figures of the group include E. M. Forster, who has already produced a little body of work about Abinger; Sir Max Beerbohm, the satirist and caricaturist, who is a comparative newcomer to the locality; Ralph Vaughan Williams, the composer; Oliver W. F. Lodge, son of Sir Oliver Lodge; and Robert Trevelyan, the poet.

Spearhead of this new enterprise is Mrs. Sylvia Sprigge, young, dark-haired, ethereal, enthusiastic, who carries her personal shyness so far that her name does not appear as the Editor, and her own contributions—in verse—are signed only with her initials.

## NEVER INTERVIEWED

I found Mrs. Sprigge spending the afternoon with the Beerbohms: Sir Max, still an elegant figure in an Edwardian tweed suit and spats; Lady Beerbohm, gracious and willowy.

Said Sir Max: "I am never interviewed. I always find I talk such rot! I haven't been interviewed on principle for five and twenty years."

But one of the leading contributors to the magazine, who is also its sub-editor, and who is never interviewed, revealed to me that the enterprise had been brewing for some time and the advent of the war had merely given something of a fillip to it.

"Mr. Chamberlain said he was preparing for a three-year war," said this contributor, "but Mrs. Sprigge is preparing for a ten-year editorship."

## "RATHER NICE TO DO"

Mrs. Sprigge herself said: "Really, this magazine can be of no interest except to our own circle, you know. It is not commercial. It is not asking for publicity. It does not carry any advertisements. It is just something rather nice to do."

She seemed really more interested in the pleasant fount of italic type employed than in Editorial policy.

The first number is dated "Christmas." It consists of eleven small pages. Its contents comprise:

An article by Vaughan Williams in praise of village choirs who give performances of such works as Bach's Matthew Passion, of which choirs that of Abinger is a prototype;

An essay in the inimitable style of the contributor who is never interviewed—delicately derisive and self-derisive, on the name of Thomas;

An article by Mr. Lodge on the nineteenth-century literary quarrel between Edmund Gosse and Professor Churton Collins, of whom Tennyson remarked: "He's a Louse upon the Locks of Literature";

One quatrain and one eight-stanza poem by "S. S."—things of gossamer, irregularly spun, with a sudden, unexpected and tremulous strength.

*I have all this magazine - it only  
went for 25 issues, if you would  
like to see them.*

*NB v1 (3) 1940 is missing*