

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 153, September 5, 1917 eBook

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 153, September 5, 1917

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CHARIVARIA.

The Kaiser has again visited the High Seas Fleet in security at Wilhelmshaven. Enthusiastic applause greeted the brief speech in which he urged them "to stick to it."

There is no truth in the rumour that one of the recently escaped Huns got away disguised as Mr. *Ramsay* MACDONALD.

Some commotion was caused in the Strand last week when a policeman accused a man of whistling for a taxi-cab. Later, however, the policeman accepted the gentleman's plea that he was not whistling, but that was his natural face.

From the latest reports from Dover we gather that this year the Channel has decided to swim Great Britain.

As a result of the excessive rain a nigger troupe at Margate were seen to pale visibly.

Fortunately for the Americans there is one man who will stand by them in their hour of trouble. According to a Spanish news message Mr. *Jack Johnson* has decided not to return to America.

Owing to the scarcity of matches we understand that many smokers now adopt the plan of waiting for the fire-engine to turn out and then proceed to the conflagration to get a light.

A catfish has been caught at Hastings. It died worth a lady's gold bracelet and a small pocket-knife.

The Norwegian explorer, ROALD *Amundsen*, is preparing for a trip to the North Pole in 1918. Additional interest now attaches to this spot as being the only territory whose neutrality the Germans have omitted to violate.

Russian tea is being sold in London at 12s. 7d. a pound. It is remarkable that, with the country in its present disorganised condition, the Russian merchants can still hold their own without the assistance of a Food Controller.

A room for quick luncheons, not to cost more than 1s. 3d., has been opened in Northumberland Avenue for busy Government officials. It is hoped eventually to provide room to enable a few other people to join the *Geddes* family at their mid-day meal.

King Constantine, says a despatch, has rented an expensive villa overlooking Lake Zurich. Just the thing for an ex-pensive monarch.

We are requested to say that the man named Smith, charged at Bow Police Court the other day, is in no way connected with the other Mr. Smiths.

At a vegetable show at Godalming, 5,780 dead butterflies were exhibited by children. It is understood that the pacifists are protesting against this encouragement of the martial spirit among the young.

Considerable annoyance has been caused in Government circles by the announcement that "at last the War Office has been aroused." Officials there, however, deny the accusation.

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The *Chancellor of the exchequer* has received four hundred pounds from an anonymous donor towards the cost of the War. The donor, it appears, omitted to specify which part of the War he would like to pay for.

Germany has at last addressed a reply to the Argentine Republic, pointing out that strict orders have been issued to U-boat commanders that ships flying the Argentine flag must always be torpedoed by accident.

Mammoth marrows have been reported from several districts, and it is now rumoured that Sir *Douglas Haig* is busy developing a giant squash.

An official report states that there are three hundred and forty-three ice-cream shops in Wandsworth. Unfortunately this is not the only indication of an early winter.

A potato closely resembling the German *crown Prince* has been dug up at Reading. This is very good for a beginning, but our amateur potato-growers must produce a *Hindenburg* if we are to win the War.

A woman walked into a shop at Cuckfield and settled a bill sent to her twenty-four years ago, but it is not stated whether she was really able to obtain any sugar.

The R.S.P.C.A. grows more and more alert. A man who hid three and a half pounds of stolen margarine in his horse's nose-bag has just been fined five pounds.

"Dogs," says the Acton magistrate, "are not allowed to bite people they dislike." All the same there have been times when we have felt that it would have been an act of supererogation to explain to the postman that our dog was really attached to him.

A taxi-cab driver has been fined two pounds for using abusive language to a policeman. Only his explanation, that he thought he was addressing a fare, saved him from a heavier penalty.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Doctor. "Your throat is in A very bad state. Have you ever tried gargling with Salt water?"*

Skipper. "YUS, I've been torpedoed six times."]

* * * * *

A war bargain.

"Brighton.—A small General for Sale through old age. No reasonable offer refused."—West Sussex Gazette.

* * * * *

"An enormous burden of detail is thus taken off the shareholders of the Munitions Minister."—Liverpool Daily Post.

This will strengthen the belief that Mr. *Churchill* is not a man but a syndicate.

* * * * *

"From that successful German campaign sprang the United Terrific Peoples—the Modern German Empire."—Nigerian Pioneer.

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The author wrote “Teutonic Peoples,” but the native compositor thought he knew better—and perhaps he did.

* * * * *

One star.

Occasionally I receive letters from friends whom I have not seen lately addressed to Lieutenant M—— and apologising prettily inside in case I am by now a colonel; in drawing-rooms I am sometimes called “Captain-er”; and up at the Fort the other day a sentry of the Royal Defence Corps, wearing the Crecy medal, mistook me for a Major, and presented crossbows to me. This is all wrong. As Mr. *Garvin* well points out, it is important that we should not have a false perspective of the War. Let me, then, make it perfectly plain—I am a Second Lieutenant.

When I first became a Second Lieutenant I was rather proud. I was a Second Lieutenant “on probation.” On my right sleeve I wore a single star. So:

* (on probation, of course).

On my left sleeve I wore another star. So:

* (also on probation).

They were good stars, none better in the service; and as we didn’t like the sound of “on probation” Celia put a few stitches in them to make them more permanent. This proved effective. Six months later I had a very pleasant note from the *King* telling me that the days of probation were now over, and making it clear that he and I were friends.

I was now a real Second Lieutenant. On my right sleeve I had a single star. Thus:

* (not on probation).

On my left sleeve I also had a single star. In this manner:

*

This star also was now a fixed one.

From that time forward my thoughts dwelt naturally on promotion. There were exalted persons in the regiment called Lieutenants. They had two stars on each sleeve. So:

* *

I decided to become a Lieutenant.



Promotion in our regiment was difficult. After giving the matter every consideration I came to the conclusion that the only way to win my second star was to save the Colonel's life. I used to follow him about affectionately in the hope that he would fall into the sea. He was a big strong man and a powerful swimmer, but once in the water it would not be difficult to cling round his neck and give an impression that I was rescuing him. However, he refused to fall in. I fancy that he wore somebody's Military Soles which prevent slipping.

Years rolled on. I used to look at my stars sometimes, one on each sleeve; they seemed very lonely. At times they came close together; but at other times, as, for instance, when I was semaphoring, they were very far apart. To prevent these occasional separations Celia took them off my sleeves and put them on my shoulders. One on each shoulder. So:

*

And so:

*

There they stayed.

And more years rolled on.

One day Celia came to me in great excitement.

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"Have you seen this in the paper about promotion?" she said eagerly.

"No; what is it?" I asked. "Are they making more generals?"

"I don't know about generals; it's Second Lieutenants being Lieutenants."

"You're joking on a very grave subject," I said seriously. "You can't expect to win the War if you go on like that."

"Well, you read it," she said, handing me the paper. "It's a committee of Mr. *Winston CHURCHILL'S*."

I took the paper with a trembling hand, and read. She was right! If the paper was to be believed, all Second Lieutenants were to become Lieutenants after eighteen years' service. At last my chance had come.

"My dear, this is wonderful," I said. "In another fifteen years we shall be nearly there. You might buy two more stars this afternoon and practise sewing them on, in order to be ready. You mustn't be taken by surprise when the actual moment comes."

"But you're a Lieutenant *now*," she said, "if that's true. It says that 'after eighteen months—'"

I snatched up the paper again. Good Heavens! it was eighteen *months*—not years.

"Then I *am* a Lieutenant," I said.

We had a bottle of champagne for dinner that night, and Celia got the paper and read it aloud to my tunic. And just for practice she took the two stars off my other tunic and sewed them on this one—thus:

** **

And we had a very happy evening.

"I suppose it will be a few days before it's officially announced," I said.

"Bother, I suppose it will," said Celia, and very reluctantly she took one star off each shoulder, leaving the matter—so:

* *

And the months rolled on.

And I am still a Second Lieutenant ...

I do not complain; indeed I am even rather proud of it. If I am not gaining on my original one star, at least I am keeping pace with it. I might so easily have been a corporal by now.

But I should like to have seen a little more notice taken of me in the *Gazette*. I scan it every day, hoping for some such announcement as this:

“Second Lieutenant M—— to remain a Second Lieutenant.”

Or this:

“Second Lieutenant M—— to be seconded and to retain his present rank of Second Lieutenant.”

Or even this:

“Second Lieutenant M—— relinquishes the rank of Acting Second Lieutenant on ceasing to command a Battalion, and reverts to the rank of Second Lieutenant.”

Failing this, I have thought sometimes of making an announcement in the Personal Column of *The Times*:

“Second Lieutenant M—— regrets that his duties as a Second Lieutenant prevent him from replying personally to the many kind inquiries he has received, and begs to take this opportunity of announcing that he still retains a star on each shoulder. Both doing well.”

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But perhaps that is unnecessary now. I think that by this time I have made it clear just how many stars I possess.

One on the right shoulder. So:

*

And one on the left shoulder. So:

*

That is all.

A.A.M.

* * * * *

THE FOUNTAIN.

Upon the terrace where I play
A little fountain sings all day
 A tiny tune:
It leaps and prances in the air—
I saw a little fairy there
 This afternoon.

The jumping fountain never stops—
He sat upon the highest drops
 And bobbed about.
His legs were waving in the sun,
He seemed to think it splendid fun,
 I heard him shout.

The sparrows watched him from a tree,
A robin bustled up to see
 Along the path:
I thought my wishing-bone would break,
I wished so much that I could take
 A fairy bath.

R.F.

* * * * *

“LIBRARY NOTES.

“Mr. Buttling Sees It Thru, H.G. Wells.”
—*Citronelle Call (Alabama, U.S.A.)*.

Rumours that Mr. WELLS is a convert to the “nu speling” may now be safely contradicted.

* * * * *

[Illustration: “KEEP THE HOME FIRES BURNING.”

SOLO BY OUR OPTIMISTIC PREMIER.]

* * * * *

THE MUD LARKS.

I am living at present in one of those villages in which the retreating Hun has left no stone unturned. With characteristic thoroughness he fired it first, then blew it up, and has been shelling it ever since. What with one thing and another, it is in an advanced state of dilapidation; in fact, if it were not that one has the map's word for it, and a notice perched on a heap of brick-dust saying that the Town Major may be found within, the casual wayfarer might imagine himself in the Sahara, Kalahari, or the south end of Kingsway.

Some of these French towns are very difficult to recognise as such; only the trained detective can do it. A certain Irish Regiment was presented with the job of capturing one. The scheme was roughly this. They were to climb the parapet at 5.25 A.M. and rush a quarry some one hundred yards distant. After half-an-hour's breather they were to go on to some machine-gun emplacements, dispose of these, wait a further twenty minutes, and then take the town. Distance barely one thousand yards in all. Promptly at zero the whole field spilled over the bags, as the field spills over the big double at Punchestown, paused at the quarry only long enough to change feet on the top, and charged yelling at the machine guns. Then being still full of fun and *joie de vivre*, and having no officers left to hamper their fine flowing style, they ducked through their own barrage and raced all out for the final objective. Twenty minutes later, two miles further on, one perspiring private turned to his panting chum, “For the love of God, Mike, aren't we getting in the near of this damn town yet?”

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I have a vast respect for HINDENBURG (a man who can drink the mixtures he does, and still sit up and smile sunnily into the jaws of a camera ten times a day, is worthy of anybody's veneration) but if he thought that by blowing these poor little French villages into small smithereens he would deprive the B.E.F. of headcover and cause it to catch cold and trot home to mother, he will have to sit up late and do some more thinking. For Atkins of to-day is a knowing bird; he can make a little go the whole distance and conjure plenty out of nothingness. As for cover, two bricks and his shrapnel hat make a very passable pavilion. Goodness knows it would puzzle a guinea-pig to render itself inconspicuous in our village, yet I have watched battalion after battalion march into it and be halted and dismissed. Half an hour later there is not a soul to be seen. They have all gone to ground. My groom and countryman went in search of wherewithal to build a shelter for the horses. He saw a respectable plank sticking out of a heap of debris, laid hold on it and pulled. Then—to quote him *verbatim*—"there came a great roarin' from in undernath of it, Sor, an' a black divil of an infantryman shoved his head up through the bricks an' drew down sivin curses on me for pullin' the roof off his house. Then he's afther throwin' a bomb at me, Sor, so I came away. Ye wouldn't be knowin' where to put your fut down in this place, Sor, for the dhread of treadin' in the belly of an officer an' him aslape."

Some people have the bungalow mania and build them *bijoux maisonettes* out of biscuit tins, sacking and what-not, but the majority go to ground. I am one of the majority; I go to ground like a badger, for experience has taught me that a dug-out—cramped, damp, dark though it maybe—cannot be stolen from you while you sleep; that is to say, thieves cannot come along in the middle of the night, dig it up bodily by the roots and cart it away in a G.S. waggon without you, the occupant, being aware that some irregularity is occurring to the home. On the other hand, in this country, where the warrior, when he falls on sleep suffers a sort of temporary death, bungalows can be easily purloined from round about him without his knowledge; and what is more, frequently are.

For instance, a certain bungalow in our village was stolen as frequently as three times in one night. This was the way of it. One Todd, a foot-slogging Lieutenant, foot-slogged into our midst one day, borrowed a hole from a local rabbit, and took up his residence therein. Now this mud-pushing Todd had a cousin in the same division, one of those highly trained specialists who trickles about the country shedding coils of barbed wire and calling them "dumps"—a sapper, in short. One afternoon the sapping Todd, finding some old sheets of corrugated iron that he had neglected to dump, sent them over to his gravel-grinding cousin with his love and the request of a loan of a

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dozen of soda. The earth-pounding Todd came out of his hole, gazed on the corrugated iron and saw visions, dreamed dreams. He handed the hole back to the rabbit and set to work to evolve a bungalow. By evening it was complete. He crawled within and went to sleep, slept like a drugged dormouse. At 10 P.M. a squadron of the Shetland Ponies (for the purpose of deceiving the enemy all names in this article are entirely fictitious) made our village. It was drizzling at the time, and the Field Officer in charge was getting most of it in the neck. He howled for his batman, and told the varlet that if there wasn't a drizzle-proof bivouac ready to enfold him by the time he had put the ponies to bye-byes there would be no leave for ten years. The batman scratched his head, then slid softly away into the night. By the time the ponies were tilting the last drops out of their nosebags the faithful servant had scratched together a few sheets of corrugated, and piled them into a rough shelter. The Major wriggled beneath it and was presently putting up a barrage of snores terrible to hear. At midnight a battalion of the Loamshire Light Infantry trudged into the village. It was raining in solid chunks, and the Colonel Commanding looked like Victoria Falls and felt like a submarine. He gave expression to his sentiments in a series of spluttering bellows. His batman trembled and faded into the darkness *a pas de loup*. By the time the old gentleman had halted his command and cursed them "good night" his resourceful retainer had found a sheet or two of corrugated iron somewhere and assembled them into some sort of bivouac for the reception of his lord. His lord fell inside, kicked off his boots and slept instantly, slept like a wintering bear.

At 2 A.M. three Canadian privates blundered against our village and tripped over it. They had lost their way, were mud from hoofs to horns, dead beat, soaked to the skin, chilled to the bone, fed up to the back teeth. They were not going any further, neither were they going to be deluged to death if there was any cover to be had anywhere. They nosed about, and soon discovered a few sheets of corrugated iron, bore them privily hence and weathered the night out under some logs further down the valley. My batman trod me underfoot at seven next morning, "Goin' to be blinkin' murder done in this camp presently, Sir," he announced cheerfully. "Three officers went to sleep in bivvies larst night, but somebody's souvenired 'em since an' they're all lyin' hout in the hopen now, Sir. Their blokes daresent wake 'em an' break the noos. All very 'asty-tempered gents, so I'm told. The Colonel is pertickler mustard. There'll be some fresh faces on the Roll of Honour when 'e comes to."

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I turned out and took a look at the scene of impending tragedy. The three unconscious officers on three camp-beds were lying out in the middle of a sea of mud like three lone islets. Their shuddering subordinates were taking cover at long range, whispering among themselves and crouching in attitudes of dreadful expectancy like men awaiting the explosion of a mine or the cracking of Doom. As explosions of those dimensions are liable to be impartial in their attentions I took horse and rode afield. But according to my batman, who braved it out, the Lieutenant woke up first, exploded noisily and detonated the Field Officer who in turn detonated the Colonel. In the words of my batman—"They went orf one, two, three, Sir, for orl the world like a machine gun, a neighteen-pounder and an How-Pop-pop! Whizz-bang! Boom!—very 'eavy cas-u-alities, Sir." PATLANDER.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *First unhappy Passenger*. "OH, I SAY, CAN'T WE GO BACK NOW?"

Boatman. "NOT YET, SIR. THE GENTLEMAN IN THE BOWS INSISTS ON 'AVING 'IS SIXPENNORTH."]

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Sergeant (in charge of the raw material)*. "NOW, NUMBER TWO, WE'LL HAVE THAT MOVEMENT ONCE AGAIN. DON'T FORGET THIS TIME—NECK LIKE A SWAN, FEET LIKE A FAIRY."]

* * * * *

"A man who was looking at some sheep under the wire saw the flash pass close to him with simultaneous thunder, the sheep being unharmed. Still one or two complained of their legs feeling numb." —*Parochial Magazine*.

Who said Baalamb?

* * * * *

"There is no saying how Kinglake's history might have otherwise read had not a round shot put a premature end to Korniloff's career at the Malakoff whence M'Mahon was to send his famous message, 'J'y, j'reste.'" —*Manchester Evening Chronicle*.

There is no saying how anybody's history will read if time-honoured sayings may be treated like this.

* * * * *

“We are inclined to attribute the form as well as the substance of the Note to the aloofness from the practical affairs of the outside world which seems to exist in the Vatican.”—*Times*.

The POPE may or may not be behind the times, but as our contemporary signed the Papal Peace Note, “BENEDICTUS XVI.” it is plain that *The Times* is ahead of the POPE.

* * * * *

Extract from a letter recently received by a manufacturing firm:—

“We are pleased to be able to inform you that we have seen the Munitions Area delusion officer at —, and he has informed us that he would not hesitate to grant Protection Certificates for these men.”

We sympathise too much with Labour to care to see it labouring under a delusion officer.

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* * * * *

HEART-TO-HEART TALKS.

(Herr MICHAELIS: Marshal VON HINDENBURG.)

Herr M. Good morning, my dear Marshal. I am glad we have been able to arrange a meeting, for there are certain points I wish to settle with you.

Von H. I am, as always, at your Excellency's service; only I beg that the interview may not be prolonged beyond what is strictly needful. Time presses, and much remains to be done everywhere.

Herr M. But I have the commands of the ALL-HIGHEST to speak with you on some weighty matters. He himself, as you know, has several speeches to make to-day.

Von H. Oh, those speeches! How well I know them. I could almost make them myself if I wanted to make speeches, which, God be thanked, I do not need to do.

Herr M. No, indeed. Your reputation rests on foundations firmer than speeches.

Von H. You yourself, Excellency, have lately discovered how fallacious a thing is a speech, even where the speaker honestly tries to do his best to please everybody.

Herr M. You are very kind, my dear Marshal, to speak thus of my humble effort. The result of it has certainly disappointed me.

Von H. What was it that LEDEBOUR said of it? Did he not describe it as "a political hocus-pocus"? Such men ought to be at once taken out and shot. But we Prussians have always been too gentle in our methods.

Herr M. We have. It is perhaps our only fault; but this time we must see that we correct it. In any case, to be so misunderstood is most painful, especially when one has employed all one's tact.

Von H. Ah, tact. That is what you are celebrated for, is it not?

Herr M. HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY has more than once been graciously pleased to compliment me upon it. And he, if anyone, is a judge of tact, is he not?

Von H. I have not myself any knowledge of it, so I cannot say for certain. Does it perhaps mean what you do when you entirely forget in one speech what you have said or omitted to say in a previous speech?

Herr M. (aside). The old fellow is not, after all, so thick-skulled as I thought him. (*Aloud*) I will not ask you to discuss this subject any more, but will proceed to lay before you the commands of HIS MAJESTY.

Von H. I shall be glad to hear them.

Herr M. Well, then, to cut the matter as short as possible, HIS MAJESTY insists that there shall be a victory on the Western Front.

Von H. A victory?

Herr M. Yes, a victory. A real one, mind, not a made-up affair like the capture of Langemarck, which, though it was certainly captured, was not captured by us, but by the accursed English. May Heaven destroy them!

Von H. But it was by HIS MAJESTY'S orders that we announced the capture of Langemarck.

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Herr M. I know; but he is graciously pleased to forget that, and to desire a genuine victory now.

Von H. Tell him I cannot promise. We have done our best at Verdun, at Lens and at Ypres, but we have had to retreat everywhere. Our turn may come another time, but, as I say, I cannot promise.

Herr M. Please go on doing your best. It is so annoying and temper-spoiling for HIS MAJESTY to make so many speeches of a fiery kind, and never to have a victory—at least not a real one for which Berlin can hang out flags. Besides, if we don't get a victory how shall we ever get a good German peace? And peace we *must* have, and that very soon.

Von H. Don't talk to me of peace. War is my business, not peace; and if I am to carry on war there must be no interference. If the ALL-HIGHEST does not like that, let him take the chief command himself.

Herr M. God forbid!

* * * * *

LINES TO A HUN AIRMAN,

WHO AROUSED THE DETACHMENT ON A CHILLY MORNING, AT 2.30 A.M.

Oh, come again, but at another time;
Choose some more fitting moment to appear,
For even in fair Gallia's sunny clime
The dawns are chilly at this time of year.

I did not go to bed till one last night,
I was on guard, and, pacing up and down,
Gazed often on the sky where every light
Flamed like a gem in Night's imperial crown;

And when the clamant rattle's hideous sound
Roused me from sleep, in a far distant land
My spirit moved and trod familiar ground,
Where a Young Hopeful sat at my right hand.

There was a spotless cloth upon the board,
Thin bread-and-butter was upon me pressed,
And China tea in a frail cup was poured—
Then I rushed forth inadequately dressed.

Lo! the poor Sergeant in a shrunken shirt,
His manly limbs exposed to morning's dew,
His massive feet all paddling in the dirt—
Such sights should move the heart of even you.

The worthy Corporal, sage in looks and speeches,
Holds up his trousers with a trembling hand;
Lucky for him he slumbered in his breeches—
The most clothed man of all our shivering band.

The wretched gunners cluster on the gun,
Clasping the clammy breech and slippery shells;
If 'tis a joke they do not see the fun
And damn you to the worst of DANTE'S hells.

And Sub-Lieutenant Blank, that martial man,
Shows his pyjamas to a startled world,
And shivers in the foremost of our van
The while our H.E. shells are upwards hurled.

You vanish, not ten centimes worth the worse
For all our noise, so far as we can tell;
The blest "Stand easy" comes; with many a curse
We hurry to the tents named after Bell.[1]

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In two brief hours we must arise and shine!
O willow-waly! Would I were at home
Where leisurely I breakfasted at nine
And warm and fed went officeward to roam!

So come again, but at another time,
Say after breakfast or some hour like that,
Or I will strafe you with a viler rhyme—
I will, by Jove! or eat my shell-proof hat.

[Footnote 1: On second thoughts I don't believe they are named after anyone, but "Bell" rhymes comfortably with "tell," so it may stand.]

* * * * *

"The Rev. T.F. — officiated in the church yesterday for the first time since his return from a four months' spell of work in connection with the Y.M.C.A. Huns in France."—*Provincial Paper*.

We congratulate him upon his discovery of this hitherto unknown tribe.

* * * * *

[Illustration: GLIMPSES OF THE FUTURE.

Maid. "MR. JONES, SIR—HIM WOT KILLED SEVENTEEN GERMANS IN ONE TRENCH WITH HIS OWN 'ANDS—'AS CALLED FOR THE GAS ACCOUNT, SIR."]

* * * * *

THE LITTLE MATCH-GIRL.

(*With apologies to the shade of HANS ANDERSEN.*)

It was late on a bitterly cold showery evening of Autumn. A poor little girl was wandering in the cold wet streets. She wore a hat on her head and on her feet she wore boots. ANDERSEN sent her out without a hat and in boots five sizes too large for her. But as a member of the Children's Welfare League I do not consider that right. She carried a quantity of matches (ten boxes to be exact) in her old apron. Nobody had bought any of her matches during the whole long day. And since the Summer-Time Act was still in force it was even longer than it would have been in ANDERSEN's time.

The streets through which she passed were deserted. No sounds, not even the reassuring shrieks of taxi-whistles, were to be heard, for it costs you forty shillings now (or is it five pounds?) to engage a taxi by whistle, and people simply can't afford it.

Clearly she would do no business in the byways, so she struck into a main thoroughfare. At once she was besieged by buyers. They guessed she was the little match-girl because she struck a match from time to time just to show that they worked. Also, she liked to see the blaze. She would not have selected this branch of war-work had she not been naturally fond of matches.

They crowded round her, asking eagerly, "How much a box?" Now her mother had told her to sell them at a shilling a box. But the little girl had heard much talk of war-profits, and since nobody had given her any she thought she might as well earn some. So she asked five shillings a box. And since these were the last matches seen in England it was not long before she had sold all the ten boxes (including the ones containing the burnt ends of the matches she had struck to attract custom).

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The little girl then went to the nearest post-office and purchased two pounds' worth of War Loan. The ten shillings which remained she took home to her mother, and since the good woman did not understand the principles of profiteering she was well pleased.

But alas for the little girl! one of her customers, doubting the honesty of her intentions, had informed the policeman. She was subsequently taken into custody, and the magistrate is now faced with the problem as to whether she is a good little girl in that she put money into War Loan, or a bad little girl in that she followed the example of the profiteers.

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OUR HELPFUL PRESS.

From a recipe for jam:—

“Add the fruit and boil 40 minutes. Glucose and sugar in equal parts can be used if sugar is unobtainable.”—*Daily Sketch*.

* * * * *

“To lease or rent a fine family residence, healthy locality, one mile from Mandeville fully furnished with good accommodation for a large family standing on ten acres of good grazing land with many fruit trees has two large tanks, recently occupied by judge Reece.”—*Daily Gleaner (Jamaica)*.

Anything for coolness.

* * * * *

Extract from a speech by Mr. BROMLEY on the eight-hours' day:—

“They had endeavoured after long weary waiting to bring to fruition in due time what had been the first plank in their programme for thirteen years.”—*Morning Paper*.

But the plank, as might be expected, has, as fruit-growers say, “run to wood.”

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Colonel (asked to review V.A.D. Corps, and not wishing to spring an order on them)*. “NOW, I'M GOING TO ASK YOU LADIES TO FORM FOURS.”]

* * * * *

THE PASSING OF THE COD'S HEAD.

(A Romance of Chiswick Mall.)

It was because the dustman did not come;
It was because our cat was overfed,
And, gorged with some superior pabulum,
Declined to touch the cod's disgusting head;
It was because the weather was too warm
To hide the horror in the refuse-bin,
And too intense the perfume of its form,
My wife commanded me to do the sin,
To take and cast it in the twinkling Thames—
A practice which the neighbourhood condemns.

So on the midnight, with a strong cigar
And scented handkerchief, I tiptoed near,
But felt the exotic fragrance from afar;
I thought of ARTHUR and Sir BEDIVERE:
And it seemed best to leave it on the plate,
So strode I back and told my curious spouse
"I heard the high tide lap along the Eyot,
And the wild water at the barge's bows."
She said, "O treacherous! O heart of clay!
Go back and throw the smelly thing away."

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Thereat I seized it, and with guilty shoon
Stole out indignant to the water's marge;
Its eyes like emeralds caught the affronted moon;
The stars conspired to make the thing look large;
Surely all Chiswick would perceive my shame!
I clutched the indecency and whirled it round
And flung it from me like a torch in flame,
And a great wailing swept across the sound,
As though the deep were calling back its kith.
I said, "It will go down to Hammersmith.

"It will go down beyond the Chelsea flats,
And hang with barges under Battersea,
Will press past Wapping with decaying cats,
And the dead dog shall bear it company;
Small bathing boys shall feel its clammy prod,
And think some jellyfish has fled the surge;
And so 'twill win to where the tribe of cod
In its own ooze intones a fitting dirge,
And after that some false and impious fish
Will likely have it for a breakfast dish."

The morning dawned. The tide had stripped the shore;
And that foul shape I fancied so remote
Lay stark below, just opposite next-door!
Who would have said a cod's head could not float?
No more my neighbour in his garden sits;
My callers now regard the view with groans;
For tides may roll and rot the fleshly bits,
But what shall mortify those ageless bones?
How shall I bear to hear my grandsons say,
"Look at the fish that grand-dad threw away"?

A.P.H.

* * * * *

From a South African produce-merchant's letter:—

"As so many of our clients were disappointed last year ... we are taking time by the fetlock and offering you this excellent quality seed now."

To be sure of stopping Father Time you must collar low.



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[Illustration: LIBERATORS.

VENIZELOS to KERENSKY. "DO NOT DESPAIR. I TOO WENT THROUGH
SUFFERING
BEFORE ACHIEVING UNITY."]

* * * * *

WAR-TIME WALKS.

*(With apologies to a contemporary for cutting the ground
from under its feet, and to our readers for omitting certain
names—in deference to the Censor.)*

Owing to the War one must save money and spend as little as possible on fares when
rambling for pleasure. The following itinerary will be found quite an inexpensive one,
though offering plenty of interest. Take the train to ——. Leave the station by the exit
on the south side, and turn to the right under the railway bridge, taking the path by the
stream till you come to a bridge which crosses it.

Do not cross the stream, however, but turn sharply to the right (opposite a rather
pretentious-looking house) for two hundred yards or so, when you will come to a park.
A little before entering the park you will see, lying not far from the road on the left, a
remarkable old monastery church, much restored. This contains some fine old painted
glass, some tombs and monumental inscriptions which are worth a visit if time will allow.

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There is a right of way through the park up to the house, which belongs to the Earl of C——, but is not of great architectural interest. Bear to the right in front of the house, along a path which skirts the wall of the private grounds. At the end of the wall a gateway leads into the high road, and a walk of under two miles will bring you to the, at one time, pretty village of K——, which has, however, grown rapidly into a thriving town. Before reaching the parish church there is a hostelry on the right-hand side of the road where an excellent tea may be obtained (so far as the food regulations will allow).

On leaving the inn, turn through a gateway at the side of it, which gives on to a straight and rather uninteresting road, which has been considerably built upon and is more or less private, though a right of way has been preserved through it. A glimpse of a large mansion, chiefly of the 17th century, and now in the possession of the W——s, may be obtained through the trees on the right of the road.

When you come to the main road (at the far end of this semi-private road) turn to the right, and just where the gibbet used to stand, so it is said, in the good old days, there is a sharp left-angled turn which leads to the village of E——. Keep straight on, however, for a mile or two (notice the fine old timbered houses on the right of the footpath opposite the old boundary-post), and then turn to the right by the church, rebuilt in the 17th century on the site of an older and finer one, whose spire was at one time a noted landmark.

A walk through the churchyard to the church porch brings you to the brow of a hill. Descend this to the cross-roads at the bottom, but, instead of turning to either hand, keep to the narrow road in front till you come to a gateway on the left. This leads to a house which formerly belonged to the Knights Templars, but which passed into the hands of the L——s and is still in their possession. There is an interesting chapel in the grounds, containing the tombs of some of the former owners, whose deeds were more warlike, though probably less numerous, than those of the present occupants.

From here an easy walk up the Strand will bring you to the starting point, Charing Cross Embankment Station, where you can take the train again; but if you are fit and between the ages of forty-one and fifty, you can continue the walk till you reach the nearest Recruiting Office.

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“Happy Home offered slight Mental Youth or otherwise.”—*Times*.

A chance for one of our slim conscientious objectors.

* * * * *

LINES ON RE-READING “BLEAK HOUSE.”

There was a time when, posing as a purist,
I thought it fine to criticise and crab
CHARLES DICKENS as a crude caricaturist,
Who laid his colours on too thick and slab,
Who was a sort of sentimental tourist
And made life lurid when it should be drab;
In short I branded as a brilliant dauber
The man who gave us *Pecksniff* and *Micawber*.

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True, there are blots—like spots upon the sun—
And genius, lavish of imagination,
In sheer profusion always has outrun
The bounds of strict artistic concentration;
But when detraction's worst is said and done,
How much remains for fervent admiration,
How much that never palls or wounds or sickens
(Unlike some moderns) in great generous DICKENS!

And in *Bleak House*, the culminating story
That marks the zenith of his swift career,
All the great qualities that won him glory,
As writer and reformer too, appear:
Righteous resentment of abuses hoary,
Of pomp and cant, self-centred, insincere;
And burning sympathy that glows unchecked
For those who sit in darkness and neglect.

Who, if his heart be not of steel or stone,
Can read unmoved of *Charley* or of *Jo*;
Of dear *Miss Flite*, who, though her wits be flown,
Has kept a soul as pure as driven snow;
Of the fierce "man from Shropshire" overthrown
By Law's delays; of *Caddy's* inky woe;
Or of the alternating fits and fluster
That harass the unhappy slavey, *Guster*?

And there are scores of characters so vivid
They make us friends or enemies for life:
Hortense, half-tamed she-wolf, with envy livid;
The patient *Snagsby* and his shrewish wife;
The amorous *Guppy*, who poor *Esther* chivvied;
Tempestuous *Boythorn*, revelling in strife;
Skimpole, the honey-tongued artistic cadger;
And that tremendous woman, *Mrs. Badger*.

No wonder then that, when we seek awhile
Relief and respite from War's strident chorus,
Few books more swiftly charm us to a smile,
Few books more truly hearten and restore us
Than his, whose art was potent to beguile
Thousands of weary souls who came before us—
No wonder, when the Huns, who ban our fiction,
Were fain to free him from their malediction.

* * * * *

“WHAT PEOPLE SAY.

“One of the collectors for the —— Hospital Sunday fund seems to have got more than either he or the committee desired.

“On approaching a house he was received by a dog which persisted in leaving its compliments on one of his legs.

“Happily the injury, though treated by a chemist, was not serious.”
—*Provincial Paper*.

People ought not to say these things about chemists.

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“ESCAPED GERMAN FLYING MEN.

“One of the men is Lieut. Josef Flink. He has a gunshot wound in the palm of the left hand. The second is Orbum Alexander von Schutz, with side-whispers. Both speak very little English.” —*Southern Echo*.

But VON SCHUTZ's sotto-voce rendering of the “Hymn of Hate” is immense.

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* * * * *

AT THE PLAY.

“THE INVISIBLE FOE.”

MR. H.B. IRVING has elected to play villain in a new mystery play by Mr. WALTER HACKETT. Essential elements of the business as follows: Obstinate old millstone of a shipbuilder, *Bransby*, who simply will not give up shipbuilding for aeroplane making (and no wonder in these days!); nephew *Stephen*, with an unwholesome hankering after power and a complete inability to see the obvious; nephew *Hugh*, lieutenant lately gazetted, with much more wholesome and intelligent hankering after *Helen Bransby*; Clerk, mouldy, faithful, one who discovers deficit in the West African ledger to the extent of ten thousand pounds.

The false entries are in the hand of *Hugh*, but *Stephen's* sinister eye and shocking suit of solemn black promptly give him away to the audience, while with a gorgeous fatuity he gives himself away to his uncle by writing out his brother's resignation of the King's Commission (in itself an odd thing to do) in the very hand he had so adroitly practised in order to manipulate the ledger. Whereupon, at *Bransby's* dictation, *Stephen* writes a full confession, leaving the house in an acutely disgruntled frame of mind. The old man puts the confession quite naturally (the firm is like that) between the leaves of his *David Copperfield*, and dies of heart failure.

So *Stephen* is again up on *Hugh* at the turn. Indeed in the six months that have elapsed between Acts I. and II. many things have happened, and neglected to happen. *Stephen* has become by common report a great man, pillar of the house of Bransby, which now makes aeroplanes like anything. He has been too busy getting power even to look into his uncle's papers (though executor), or to have the West African ledger taken back to the office, or, queerest of all, to discover and destroy that damning confession. However, having got his power, he now proceeds to consolidate it by trying to find the missing document.

On the same day *Helen* arrives unexpectedly, urged thereto by a vague impression inspired by her dead father that *Hugh's* innocence will be established by something found in the fateful room; also *Hugh*, who had enlisted and now comes back from France a sergeant, with the same idea in his head and from the same source. As we had all seen the paper's hiding-place I found it a little difficult to be impressed by the elaborate efforts, unconscionably long drawn out, of the departed spirit to disclose the matter to *Helen* and *Hugh*; while the masterly inactivity of *Stephen*, who was trying to find his document by pure reason (mere looking for it would not occur to his Napoleonic brain), confirmed the opinion I had earlier formed of that solemn ass. However, his invisible foe does contrive to get his message through to the lovers and smash up *Stephen* and his bubble of power.

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I can't help being surprised that Mr. H.B. IRVING should have been satisfied with so impossible a character as *Stephen Pryde*, though I need not add that he made most effective play with the terror of an evil conscience haunted by the vengeful dead, throwing away his consonants rather recklessly in the process and receiving the plaudits of an enthusiastic audience.

I grant Mr. HACKETT freely his effects of eeriness and his sound judgment in manipulating his ghost without materialising him; and congratulate him particularly on the part of the vague American lady, most capably performed by Miss MARION LORNE.

Miss FAY COMPTON made a pretty lover and plausible clairvoyante. Mr. SYDNEY VALENTINE'S portrait was (yes!) masterly; and Mr. TOM REYNOLDS is excellent as the confidential clerk. Mr. HOLMAN CLARK struck me (without surprise) as slightly bored with his part of a Doctor who lost his patient in the first Act and remained as a convenient peg for the plot. His adroit method ensures smooth playing and pulls a cast together. T.

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[Illustration: *Servant (on hearing air-raid warning)*. "I SHALL STAND HERE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE 'ALL, MUM, SO THAT IF A BOMB COMES IN AT THE FRONT-DOOR WE CAN GO OUT AT THE BACK."]

* * * * *

PLAYING THE GAME.

After we had finally arranged the cricket match—*Convalescents versus* the Village—for the benefit of the Serbian Relief Fund, we remembered that early in the year the cricket-field had been selected for the site of the village potato-patch, and my favourite end of the pitch—the one without the cross-furrow—was now in full blossom.

As the cricket-field is the only level piece of ground in the district, the cricket committee began to lose its grip upon the situation, and were only saved from ignominious failure by the enterprise of the British Army, in this case represented by Sergeant-Major Kippy, D.C.M., who was recovering in the best of spirits from his third blighty one.

"Ow about the Colonel's back gardin?" he suggested. "There's a lovely bit o' turf there."

We remembered the perfect and spacious lawn, scarcely less level than a billiard-table, and, even with the Colonel busy on the East Coast, the committee were unanimously adverse to the suggestion. But Kippy, born within hail of a Kentish cricket-field, was not to be denied, and, after all, one cannot haggle about a mere garden with someone who was with the first battalions over the Messines Ridge.

Thus the affair was taken out of our hands, and when the day arrived we pitched the stumps where Kippy, giving due consideration to the Colonel's foliage, thought the light was most advantageous.

The Village won the toss, and old Tom Pratt took guard and proceeded to dig himself in by making what he termed his "block-hole." I visualised the choleric blue eye of the Colonel and shuddered.

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For a time matters proceeded uneventfully. Then, at the fall of the fourth wicket, the game suddenly developed, Jim Butcher, batting at the pergola end, giving us an exhibition of his famous scoop shot, which landed full pitch through the drawing-room window. It was a catastrophe of such dimensions that even the boldest spirit quailed before it, and the Colonel's butler, batting at the other end, immediately dissociated himself from the proceedings and bolted from the field.

Kippy, as befitted a warrior of parts, was the first to recover.

"Ere," he exclaimed, "we can't 'ave this; wot do you think the Colonel will say?"

I do not suppose there was anyone who had not thought of it.

"We got to 'ave fresh rules," Kippy continued. "Anyone breaking a winder 'as to retire, mend the winder, and 'is side loses ten runs." Only a super mind could in the time have framed a punishment so convincingly deterrent.

The scoop shot from the pergola end was ruled out in a sentence, and we were treated to a masterly and Jessopian demonstration of how to get an off ball past square-leg.

But no completely efficient form of organisation can be encompassed in an hour, nor can man legislate for the unknown factor.

In this case Kippy was not aware that, on the far side of the shrubbery, against an ancient sun-bathed wall, stood the greenhouse which sheltered the Colonel's prize grapes. And so Jim Butcher, playing this time from the rockery end, brought off the double event and caused another new clause to be added to the local rules. With thirty-seven to his credit and still undefeated he was making history in the village, though it must be admitted that no one was ever less anxious to retain the post of honour, and when the gardener laid out the damaged fruit nothing short of Kippy's appeal would have persuaded him to continue his innings.

"Wot, retire jest when you're gettin' popler an' can't do no more 'arm an' I've sent off the 'ole brigade of scouts ter spread the noos, 'Jessop thirty, not out, an' 'arf the Colonel's winders napooed.' Wy, the 'ole blinkin' county will be 'ere as soon as they know wot's goin' on." Kippy leant forward confidentially, "An' them Serbian boxes 'as got ter be filled some'ow." It was an irresistible argument, and Jim Butcher continued his innings under slightly restricted conditions.

At 6.50, with ten minutes to play, the Convalescents, who had shown great form, required only twelve runs to win the match. Kippy and Gunner Toady shared the batting. A pretty glance to leg for two by the Gunner was all that could be taken out of the penultimate over, and Kippy at the pergola end faced Mark Styles, the postman, to take the first ball of the last over. Two singles were run, and then Kippy placed one

nicely into the herbaceous border for four. The next one nearly got him, and then, with the seven o'clock delivery, as it were, the postman tossed up a half-volley

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on the leg side. Forgotten were the rules, the windows and all else. Kippy jumped out and, with every muscle he could bring into action, hit it straight through the plate-glass panel of the billiard-room door. For five petrified seconds we gazed at the wreckage, and then the door opened and the Colonel walked briskly into the garden. Anything else—a bomb or an earthquake—might merely have created curiosity, but this was different.

Quite unostentatiously I vacated my position at fine leg and merged myself with the slips, who, together with point and cover, were bearing a course towards the labyrinthine ways of the kitchen-garden. After vainly searching for an imaginary ball and finding that we were not actually attacked from the rear, we ventured at length to return.

Kippy and the Colonel were conversing on the centre of the well-worn pitch. The Colonel was speaking.

“... Lose ten runs and the match! I never heard such infernal nonsense. That shot was worth six runs on any ground. I shall insist on revising the rules.”

At the same time I noticed that Kippy was holding a red-and-white box, and the Colonel was with difficulty thrusting something through the inadequate slit.

It looked like a piece of paper.

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[Illustration: *Bank Cashier (gazing at golden orb of day)*. “IT’S A REAL HOLIDAY TO WATCH THESE SUNSETS—AFTER ALL THE PAPER MONEY.”]

* * * * * The Huns at Home.

“In the final figure, all the dancers make bows and curtseys to the Emperor and Empress, who are either standing or sitting at this time on the throne.” —*Mr. GERARD’S description of a Court Ball*.

Two chiefs with but a single chair to stand on. And yet they call Germany undemocratic!

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“M. Painleve’s resemblance to M. Briand (the former Premier) is string.”—*Liverpool Daily Post*.

Whereas the tie between British Ministers is generally tape (red).

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PRESERVING THEIR PROSPECTS.

[Exemption has been granted by the Warwick Appeal Tribunal to a man who applied on the ground that if he lived long enough he would inherit L200,000.]

Extract from "The Mid-County Advertiser," July 30th.

Martin Slim, 25, single, categoried A 1, applied for exemption to the Bumpshire Tribunal on the ground that if he were required to do military service he would lose a substantial fortune. Applicant explained that he was engaged in an enterprise which involved the planting of 200 acres of young cork-trees. The trees would be ready for cutting in about 1945, by which time it was estimated the demand for cork legs would enable him to realise a handsome profit on the sale of the bark. Total exemption was granted, the chairman of the Tribunal congratulating the young man on his patriotic foresight.

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"The Snobington Mercury," August 7th.

Among the recent applicants to the Snobington Appeal Tribunal was the Hon. Geoffrey de Knute. Solicitor for the applicant stated that his client, who was already giving all his time to the organisation of hat-trimming competitions for wounded soldiers and other work of national importance, desired exemption for the reason that he expected shortly to succeed to the Earldom of Swankshire. There were, he explained, three brothers who stood between his client and the title, all over military age. It was expected, however, that the age limit would before long be substantially raised, in which case there was every reason to believe that his client, if exempted from military service, might outlive his relatives. After some consultation the chairman stated that ten years' exemption would be granted.

"The Morning News," August 14th.

Sol. Strunski, 18, single, passed for General Service, applied for exemption yesterday before the Birdcage Walk Tribunal. Applicant's mother, who was observed to be wearing several large diamond rings and a sable jacket, informed the Tribunal that applicant was her sole support; that he had been engaged until recently upon a contract for supplying the Army Ordnance Department with antimacassars, but that, as the result of false charges made against him by persons connected with the police force, the War Office had removed his name from its list of eligible contractors, with the result that he was now out of work. He had, however, been offered the secretaryship of the Russian branch of the No-Conscription Fellowship. It was a great chance for him, she explained, but he would lose it if he were called up. The Tribunal expressed its sympathy with Mrs. Strunski, and stated that the War, important as it might be, could not be allowed to mar the future of such an able youth. Total exemption.

"The Purrsweet Record," August 21st.

At the Purrsweet Tribunal, Messrs. Prongingham and Co., proprietors of the popular multiple grocery establishments, applied for exemption for their local branch manager, William Dudd (28, B 1). The chairman of the Tribunal, Sir George Prongingham, stated that he had had some doubts as to whether his position as president of Prongingham's, Ltd., did not require him to leave the disposition of this case to his colleagues. They had persuaded him to a contrary view, and certainly his patriotism could not be questioned. His son Reginald had been serving gallantly in the Army Pay Department since the outbreak of war, and he himself had been consulted by the Government on several occasions. In deciding the case of the applicant, William Dudd, he felt no bias of any kind, and the Tribunal's decision to grant total exemption was made wholly out of regard to the young man's prospects, and not in the interest of Prongingham's, Ltd. (Cheers.) ALGOL.

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[Illustration: *Farmer*. "YOU'LL NOT BE FEELING GIDDY, SURR?"

R.F.C. Officer (on leave). "NOT TILL WE REACH TEN THOUSAND FEET."]

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THE CONVERT.

There were three of us—a soldier, a *flaneur* and myself, who am neither but would like to be either. We were talking about the strange appearance—a phenomenon of the day—of French wine in German bottles, and this led to the re-expression of my life-long surprise that bottles should exist in such numbers as they do—bottles everywhere, all over the world, with wine and beer in them, and no one under any obligation to save and return them.

"Well," said the soldier (who may or may not have known that I was one of those writing fellows), "that has never struck me as odd. Of course there are lots of bottles. Bottles are necessary. But what beats me is the number of books. New books and old books, books in shops and books on stalls, and books in houses; and on top of all that—libraries. That's rum, if you like. I most cordially hope," he added, "that there are more bottles than books in the world."

"I don't care how many there are of either," said the *flaneur*; "but I know this—another book's badly wanted."

"Oh, come off it," said the enemy of authorship. "How can another book be needed? Have you ever seen the British Museum Reading Room? It's simply awful. It's a kind of disease. I was taken there once by an aunt when I was a boy, and it has haunted me ever since. Books by the million all round the room, and the desks crowded with people writing new ones. Men *and* women. Mixed writing, you know. Terrible!"

"All that may be true," said the *flaneur*, "but the fact remains that another book is still needed."

"Impossible," said the soldier, "unless it's a cheque-book. There I'm with you."

"No, a book—a real book. Small, I admit, but real. And I believe I can make you agree with me. I'm full of it, because I discovered the need of it only this last week-end."

"Well, what is it to be called?" the sceptic asked.

"I think a good title would be, *Have I Put Everything in?*"

"Sounds like a manual of bayonet exercise," said the soldier, and he made imaginary lunges at imaginary Huns.

“Very well then, to prevent ambiguity call it *Have I Left Anything Out?* The sub-title would be ‘A Guide to Packing,’ or ‘The Week-Enders’ Friend.’”

“Ah!” said the other, beginning to be interested.

“With such a book,” the *flaneur* continued, “you could never, as I did on Saturday, arrive at a house without any pyjamas, because you would find pyjamas in the list, and directly you came to them you would shove them in. That would be the special merit of the book—that you would get, out of wardrobes and drawers and off the dressing-table, the things it mentioned as you read them and shove them in.”

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"You would hold the book in the left hand," said the soldier, with almost as much excitement as though he were the author, "and pack with the right. That's the way."

"Yes, that's the way. It would be only a little book—like a vest-pocket diary—but it would be priceless. It would be divided into sections covering the different kinds of visit to be paid—week-end, week, fortnight, and so on. Then the kind of place—seaside, river, shooting, hunting, and so on. Foreign travel might come in as well."

"Yes," said the soldier, "lists of things for Egypt, India, Nairobi."

"That's it," said the *flaneur*. "And there would be some unexpected things too. I guess you could help me there with all your wide experience."

"A corkscrew, of course," said the soldier.

"I said unexpected things," said the *flaneur* reprovingly, "such as—well, such as a screw-driver for eye-glasses—most useful. And a carriage key. And—"

His pause was my opportunity. "I'll tell you another thing," I said, "something for which I'd have given a sovereign in that gale last week when I was at the seaside—window-wedges. Never again shall I travel without window-wedges."

"By Jove!" said the soldier, "that's an idea. Put down window-wedges at once. It's a great book this," he went on. "And needed—I should jolly well say so. You ought to compile it at once—before any of us has time to go away again. Personally I don't know how I've lived without it. Why, just talking about it makes me feel quite a literary character."

"Let me see," I said sweetly, "what do you call this monumental work? Oh yes, I remember—*Are There Any Important Omissions from my Saturday-to-Monday Equipment?*"

"Rubbish!" said the soldier. "The title is—*Have I Put Everything in?*"

* * * * *

BY THE CANAL IN FLANDERS.

By the canal in Flanders I watched a barge's prow
Creep slowly past the poplar-trees; and there I made a vow
That when these wars are over and I am home at last
However much I travel I shall not travel fast.

Horses and cars and yachts and planes: I've no more use for such;
For in three years of war's alarms I've hurried far too much;

And now I dream of something sure, silent and slow and large;
So when the War is over—why, I mean to buy a barge.

A gilded barge I'll surely have, the same as Egypt's Queen,
And it will be the finest barge that ever you have seen;
With polished mast of stout pitch pine, tipped with a ball of gold,
And two green trees in two white tubs placed just abaft the hold.

So when past Pangbourne's verdant meads, by Clieveden's mossy stems,
You see a barge all white-and-gold come gliding down the Thames,
With tow-rope spun from coloured silks and snow-white horses three,
Which stop beside your river house—you'll know the bargee's me.

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I'll moor my craft beside your lawn; so up and make good cheer!
Pluck me your greenest salads! Draw me your coolest beer!
For I intend to lunch with you and talk an hour or more
Of how we used to hustle in the good old days of war.

* * * * *

The Vicar of a country parish was letting his house to a *locum tenens*, and sent him a telegram, "Servants will be left if desired." Promptly came back the reply, "Am bringing my own sermons." And now each is wondering what sort of man the other is.

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"Young Man to help weigh and clean widows at chemist's shop."
—*Sheffield Daily Telegraph*.

To any young man who should be inclined to apply we commend the advice of *Mr. Weller, senior*, "Sammy, beware of the vidders."

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[Illustration: AN ADAMLESS EDEN.

The Seated Lady. "THE GREAT CHARM OF THIS PLACE IS ITS ABSOLUTE LONELINESS. DAY AFTER DAY ONE HAS THESE LOVELY SANDS AND SEA AND ROCKS AND SKY ALL TO ONESELF."

The Other. "REALLY. AND HAVE YOU BEEN HERE LONG?"

Seated Lady. "SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE WEEK."

The Other. "AND ARE YOU GOING TO STAY IN THIS DELIGHTFUL PLACE MUCH LONGER?"

Seated Lady. "ANOTHER TEN DAYS—UNLESS MY LANDLADY WILL LET ME OFF THE LAST WEEK."]

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OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By *Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks*.)

In *The Irish on the Somme* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON) Mr. MICHAEL MACDONAGH continues the story which he began in *The Irish at the Front*. He gives

us more accounts of the heroism of his fellow-countrymen in the titanic battles that have thrilled the minds of men all the world over. He writes with a justifiable enthusiasm of the deeds of these gallant Irishmen. The book stirs the blood like the sound of a trumpet. In a war which has produced so many glorious actions the Irish are second to none. Even those who do not agree in every point with Mr. JOHN REDMOND will admit ungrudgingly that he makes good the claims he puts forward in his introduction to Mr. MACDONAGH'S book. He tells us that from Ireland 173,772 Irishmen are serving in the Army and Navy, and that in addition at least 150,000 of the Irish race have joined the colours in Great Britain—no mean record. Mr. MACDONAGH is as proud of the glory of the Ulstermen as of that of Nationalist Ireland. He dedicates his book to the *carum caput* of Major WILLIE REDMOND.

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Mr. E.B. OSBORN, who has written *The Maid with Wings, and other Fantasies Grave to Gay* (LANE), will perhaps not altogether thank me for saving that among the *Other Fantasies* I throughout preferred the grave to the gay. *The Maid with Wings* itself is a beautiful little piece of imagination—the vision of the Maid of France comforting an English boy during his last moments out in No Man’s Land. The thing is well and delicately done, with a reserve that may encourage the judicious to hope for good work in the future from a pen that is (I fancy) as yet somewhat new. On the other hand, I must confess that the Gaiety left me (though this, of course, may be an isolated experience) with sides unshaken. “Callisthenes at Cambridge,” for example, is but little removed from the article that, to my certain knowledge, has padded school and ‘Varsity magazines since such began to be. Still, I liked the plea for Protection against foreign imports in literature and art by way of helping the native producer, though even here some condensation would, I thought, have sharpened the point. But, after all, reviewers are dull dogs to move to laughter (as no doubt Mr. OSBORN will now agree), so I hope he will rest content with my genuine appreciation of his graver passages, and will be encouraged to give us something more ambitious and less open to the suspicion of book-making.

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The *Letters of a Soldier: 1914-1915* (CONSTABLE) are letters to a mother; letters also of an artist, and full of an exquisite sensibility, a fine candour. I can best give you an impression of the charming personality of this young French soldier (who survived his first great battle, to be reported missing after the counter-attack, since when no news of him has reached his friends), by quoting little sentences of his, and if you don’t want to know more of him after reading them then nothing I can say will be of any use: “The true death would be to live in a conquered country, above all for me, whose art would perish.... If you could only see the confidence of the little forest animals, such as the field-mice! They were as pretty as a Japanese print, with the inside of their ears like a rosy shell.... How is it possible to think of Schumann as a barbarian?... I am happy to have felt myself responsive to all these blows, and my hope lies in the thought that they will have forged my soul.... Spinoza is a most valuable aid in the trenches.... We are in billets after the great battle, and this time I saw it all. I did my duty; I knew that by the feeling of my men for me. But the best are dead. We gained our object ... I send you my whole love. Whatever comes to pass, life has had its beauty.” And then no more.

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If Mr. HAROLD LAKE'S account of the British forces in Macedonia is supposed to supply an answer to a not unnatural query as to what they are doing there, I am afraid one must take it that in fact they are doing nothing in particular. An intelligent British public believes that at least they are immobilising important enemy forces and perhaps accomplishing several other useful things as well, but the writer, who has actually been *In Salonica with Our Army* (MELROSE), frankly lays aside high considerations of policy and, seeing it all in desperately foreshortened perspective, knows only that he and his fellows, having volunteered to fight, are being called on instead to endure a purgatorial routine of dust and dulness, mosquitoes, malaria and night marches, and the grilling away of useless days in the society of flies and lizards, with only, as a very occasional treat, the smallest glimpse of anything resembling a Front. And all this is in a country so desolated by centuries of war that in spite of obvious natural fertility it is a sullen treeless desert—a desert of blight and thistles, as profitless to our men as their periodically deferred anticipations of a grand advance. A book that sets out to record vacuity can hardly be crammed with thrilling literature, and I am not going to pretend that Mr. LAKE has achieved the impossible. All the same one found points—for instance, his desire that someone (apparently England for choice!) should colonise Macedonia; and his most right and appropriate plea for fairer recognition of those who have sacrificed their health in the national service. A man, he holds, who is to suffer all his life from malarial fever has done his bit no less than plenty who bear the honourable insignia of the wounded in battle and the snout of a mosquito may be as valorously encountered as the bayonet of a Hun. And so say all of us.

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I can read Miss MARY WEBB'S studies of the peasant mind with great pleasure, but at the same time I am doubtful whether she is as successful in *Gone to Earth* (CONSTABLE) as she was in her first novel, *The Golden Arrow*. My difficulty—and I hope it will not be yours—was to believe in the power of *Hazel Woodus* to make very dissimilar men lose their hearts and heads. That *Jack Reddin*, a dare-devil farmer with love for any sort of a chase in his blood, should pursue her to the bitter end is intelligible enough, but why *Edward Marston*, a rather anaemic minister, married her and then forgave her escapades with *Reddin* has me bothered. I can admire Edward's forgiving spirit, but cannot altogether pity him when his methodical congregation said straight and disagreeable things. In fact my total inability to see *Hazel* as *Edward* saw her somewhat detracted from my enjoyment of her history. That being said the rest is, thank goodness, praise. Miss WEBB is a careful and sincere workman, who, whether you believe or disbelieve in her characters, writes with such real compassion for suffering that she cannot fail to enlist your sympathy. Additionally her vein is original, and she only needs a little more experience to make a great success of it.

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Presumably the eleven stories in *The Loosing of the Lion's Whelps* (MILLS AND BOON) are published for the first time, as we are not given any notice to the contrary, and I can imagine that Mr. JOHN OXENHAM'S many admirers will derive considerable pleasure from them. Mr. OXENHAM'S weak points are that sometimes he fails to distinguish between real pathos and sticky sentimentality, and that when he tries his hand at telling a practical joke he does not know when to stop. There are, however, stories in this volume which deserve unqualified praise. The shortest, "How Half a Man Died," is the best; indeed, it is a real gem. But "The Missing K.C.'s" has a genuine thrill in it; and, in a very different manner, "A By-Product" is proof enough that the author can get his effects all the more readily when he keeps his own feelings under the strictest control. Mr. OXENHAM'S XI. has weak points in it, but on the whole it is a good side.

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[Illustration: *The Farmer*. "DON'T YOU KNOW, YOU LITTLE THIEF, I COULD GET YOU TEN YEARS IN JAIL FUR STEALIN' MY APPLES?"

The Boy. "EXCUSE ME, SIR, BUT YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY MISINFORMED. I SHOULD COME UNDER THE FIRST OFFENDERS ACT."]

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Another Impending Apology.

"John Kelly, Aughanduff, while going to Dernaseer was attacked on the road by a bull belonging to Thomas Kelly, and knocked down and had three ribs broken. He was attended by Dr. —, and we think such dangerous animals should not be allowed to wander at large."—*Irish Paper*.

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"J.A.M. required for St. Mark's Girls' School, Dublin."—*Irish Times*.

A case for the FOOD CONTROLLER.

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From a letter on "How we are to be Governed":—

"Are we in future to see the party whips put on to decide whether a 16 in. gun is to be 50 or 60 calibres? The think is unthinkable."—*The Times*.



We don't think.