

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 153, October 24, 1917 eBook

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 153, October 24, 1917

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Contents

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 153, October 24, 1917 eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	4
Page 1.....	5
Page 2.....	7
Page 3.....	9
Page 4.....	11
Page 5.....	13
Page 6.....	15
Page 7.....	16
Page 8.....	18
Page 9.....	20
Page 10.....	23
Page 11.....	25
Page 12.....	27
Page 13.....	29
Page 14.....	31
Page 15.....	33
Page 16.....	34
Page 17.....	36
Page 18.....	38
Page 19.....	40
Page 20.....	42
Page 21.....	44
Page 22.....	46

[Page 23.....48](#)

[Page 24.....49](#)

[Page 25.....50](#)

Table of Contents

Section	Table of Contents	Page
Start of eBook		1
CHARIVARIA.		1
V.		9
II.		11

Page 1

CHARIVARIA.

Those who think that people in high positions live a life of ease and comfort received a rude shock last week. It is said that, while visiting the Royal Enfield Works canteen, the Duke of *connaught* drank two glasses of Government ale.

Britons have no monopoly of pluck, it seems. Last week a Basuto soldier attached to a labour battalion offered the *lord mayor's* coachman a cigarette.

Two German bankers, formerly of London, have been arrested in New York as dangerous aliens. Neither of them is a member of our Privy Council.

It is understood that the Spanish Government has addressed a note to the Allies explaining that all possible precautions will have been taken against the forthcoming escape of U23.

The *Premier* has received the magnificent gold casket containing the freedom of the City of London conferred on him last April. A momentary excitement was caused by the rumour that the Corporation had thrown off all restraint and filled it with tea.

A Brigadier-General has been fined for shooting game on Sunday in Hampshire. Sir *Douglas Haig*, we understand, has generously arranged to close down the War on the first Wednesday in every month, in order that the Higher Command may assist in supplying the hospitals with game.

Seven lunatics have escaped from a South Wales Asylum. It is assumed that they got away by disguising themselves as German prisoners.

It has been decided that Counsel may appear before the High Court dressed as Special Constables. It seems almost certain that this news was withheld from Sir *John Simon* until he had definitely consented to join Sir *Douglas HAIG'S* Staff.

Two million pounds of jam per week, “the greater part strawberry,” are being, it is stated, delivered to the Army. Only the fact that the Army Service Corps’ labels all happen to be “plum and apple” prevents the stuff being distributed to our brave troops.

Attempts to destroy livestock destined for the Allies are being investigated, says a New York paper. Only a few days ago, it will be remembered, a certain Legation discovered that its seals had been tampered with.

It is announced that the War Office has taken over “the greater part” of the new London County Hall. Our casualties were insignificant.

We are sorry to say that Mr. *Charles* HAWTREY’S latest success, *The Saving Grace*, is not dedicated to Sir *Arthur Yapp*.

There is no foundation for the report that the recent postponement of the production of *Cash on Delivery* at the Palace was due to the fact that a new joke was alleged to have been let loose in Mr. Justice *darling*’s court.

Page 2

Extravagant funerals have been condemned by Sir *John Paget* at the Law Society Appeal Tribunal, and undertakers are complaining that in consequence many of their best customers have decided to postpone their interment till better times.

"Cats should be brought inside the house during air-raids," says the Feline Defence League. When left on the roof they are liable to be mistaken for aerial torpedoes.

According to the *Cologne Gazette* German soldiers on the Western Front have formed "Wilhelm Clubs," the members of which are compelled on oath to undertake the work of gaining information about the British lines. We understand that the terms for life-membership are most moderate.

A German prisoner named *Boldt* has escaped from Leigh internment camp. It is stated that he would have experienced no additional difficulty in escaping if he had been called by any other name.

"We want no patched-up peace," says Mr. *Ramsay MACDONALD*. But if the assaults upon pacifist meetings continue we feel sure there will be some patched-up peacemongers.

Twopenny dinners are the speciality at a Northern munition works' canteen. We have long been used to twopenny meals, but of course much more was charged for them.

There appears to be no truth in the report that a burglar has been fined for infringing the Defence of the Realm Regulations by using an unshaded lantern.

An application is to be made to the *lord Chancellor* for a County Court for the Hendon district, though a contemporary remarks that it is doubtful whether there is sufficient



work to be done there. But surely this is just the sort of case that could be met by a little judicious advertising.

Parliament is to be asked to pass a vote of thanks to the Naval and Military Forces of the Crown. And it is thought that the latter will reciprocate by thanking Parliament for giving them such a jolly little war.

Much concern has been caused by the announcement that bees are entirely without winter stocks. We have pleasure in recording a gallant but unavailing attempt to remedy the situation on the part of two dear old ladies, who thought the paper said "socks."

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Sympathetic Passer-by*. "What's the matter with your little brother?"

The Sister. "Please, miss, 'e's WORRYIN' about Russia."]

* * * * *

Punch's Roll of honour.

We regret to hear that Captain E.G.V. *Knox*, Lincolnshire Regiment, has been wounded. The many friends of "Evøe" will wish him a speedy and complete recovery.

Page 3

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“Batches of one of its regiments were in such a hurry to get out of the Ypres front when relieved by the 92nd Regiment that they left without giving the newcomers information about the line or state of their flanks.”—*Scots Paper*.

The line seems to have been seriously disorganised in consequence.

* * * * *

Pratt's Tours of the front.

The last word in sensation.

By special arrangement Pratt's are able to offer their patrons unique opportunities of witnessing the stirring events of the Great Struggle.

Don't miss it; you may never see another War.

Come and see Tommy at work and play.

Come and be *shelled*—a genuine thrill! Same as during London's Air-raids, but less danger.

At the conclusion of the Tour patrons will be presented with a Handsome Medal as a souvenir of their exploits.

* * * * *

The following is a list of Tours that Pratt's offer *you*:—

Pratt's Tours of the back.

(One week.)

Very cheap. Very safe. Headquarters at the historic town of Amiens.

Itinerary includes: Battlefields of the Somme and Ancre, Bapaume, Arras, Vimy Ridge, Ypres, etc. Guides will take parties round the old British Front lines. The German Defence System will be explained by harmless Huns actually taken at those places.

SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS.

Lantern Lecture by Captain Crump at Thiepval Chateau. Recherche Suppers at Serre Sucrierie.

* * * * *

Pratt's Tours of trenches.

(Four days.)

See the real thing. Live it yourself. Dine in a dugout. Drink rum as the Tommy drinks it. See Staff Officers at work (if it can be arranged).

RESTRICTIONS.

- I. Loud laughing and talking is discouraged.
- II. Sunshades and umbrellas must not be put up when in the front line.
- III. Don't talk to the man at the periscope.

GAS WARNING.

In case of gas put on the respirator; otherwise breathe out continuously.

SPECIAL ATTRACTION.

Official Photographers in attendance during Christmas week.

If possible visitors will be given the opportunity of witnessing a practice barrage on the Enemy's front line.

Back seats (in ammunition dumps), two guineas. Front seats (firing line), sixpence.

Terms inclusive for the four days, twenty guineas. Good food. Sugar *ad lib*. All reasonable precautions taken. Casualties amongst visitors up to the present, one sick (sugar saturation).

Page 4

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PRATT'S BRIEF TOURS FOR BUSY PEOPLE.

(SATURDAY TO MONDAY.)

Very short. Very moderate terms. Five guineas each tour or three for twelve and a-half. Bring the boy.

SPECIAL ATTRACTION.

Magnificent Switchback Railway up and down the Messines Mine Craters. Spot where Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL lost his little Homburg hat under fire will be shown.

* * * * *

THE YPRES CARNIVAL.

(THREE DAYS.)

All the fun of the fair. Souvenirs supplied while you wait.

SPLENDID SIDE-SHOW FEATURES.

I. How our lads keep fit. Regimental sports. Rivet your sides and see the Bread and Jam Race.

II. Obstacle Race. Lorry *versus* Staff Car (with French carts, traffic control and G.S. wagons as obstacles). Very amusing. Language real.

FOR THE YOUNGSTERS.

Pick-a-back rides on the Highland Light Elephantry.

ACCOMMODATION.

Bedrooms (*en pension*)—

Ground floor..... One guinea.

First floor (below) Three guineas.

Second floor (very safe).. Ten guineas.

* * * * *

PRATT'S "BATTLE" TOUR.

Extraordinary offer. Thrills guaranteed.

By special arrangement Pratt's are enabled to offer their patrons a first-class view of the *British Weekly Push* "Somewhere in France (or Flanders)."

Attention is called to the following specially attractive items (there may be others):—

1. *View of Preliminary Bombardment* from an absolutely proof 12-inch O.P. The surrounding country and the objectives of the next attack will be explained by a specially trained Staff Officer.

2. *The Battle.*

Visitors are earnestly requested to be in time, as space in the Observation Post is limited and late arrivals cause a great deal of discomfort to all. Ladies are respectfully requested to remove their hats.

3. *The Aftermath.*

(a) Special Shelters are erected at cross-roads for visitors to witness the getting-up of guns, ammunition, *etc.*, after the attack. Please don't feed the men as they go by or ask the Gunners questions.

(b) Breakfast in Boschland. Lunch in a Listening Post. Supper in a Saphead.

(c) A Special Narrow-gauge Railway will take Visitors to the newly-acquired forward area (not obligatory). This part of the programme is liable to variation.

Terms, fifty guineas. An Insurance Agent is always in attendance. Casualties up to the present, one Conscientious Objector missing, believed joined up.

* * * * *

Bombardments arranged at the shortest notice. For five pounds you can fire a 15-inch. Write for Free Booklet and apply for all particulars to Pratt's Agency, London, Paris, *etc.*, *etc.*

Page 5

* * * * *

VISITORS.

When I was very ill in bed
The fairies came to visit me;
They danced and played around my head,
Though other people couldn't see.

Across the end a railing goes
With bars and balls and twisted rings,
And there they jiggled on their toes
And did the wonderfulest things.

They balanced on the golden balls,
They jumped about from bar to bar,
And then they fluttered to the walls
Where coloured birds and roses are.

I watched them darting in and out,
I watched them gaily climb and cling,
While all the roses moved about
And all the birds began to sing.

And when it was no longer light
I felt them up my pillows creep,
And there they sat and sang all night—
I heard them singing in my sleep.

R.F.

* * * * *

ANOTHER SEX PROBLEM.

“From Lord Rosebery's herd at Mentmore, Mr. Ross got a show cow of the Lady Dorothy family, giving every appearance of being a great milker and a tip-top bull calf.”—*Aberdeen Free Press*.

* * * * *

From a German *communiqué*:—

“Our naval forces had encounters with Russian destroyers and gungoats north of Oesel.”—*Westminster Gazette*.

The Russian reply to the ewe-boats, we suppose.

* * * * *

“Kugelmann, Ludwig, of Canterbury Road, Canterbury, grocer, has adopted the name of Love Wisdom Power.”—*Australian Paper*.

Who said the Germans had no sense of humour?

* * * * *

[Illustration: BURGLAR BILL.

THE POTSDAM PINCHER. “SURELY YOU AIN’T ASKIN’ ME TO GIVE UP MY SWAG ARTER ALL THE TROUBLE I’VE HAD GETTIN’ IT, AN’ ALL THE VALIBLE BLOOD I’VE SPILT.”]

* * * * *

THE MUD LARKS.

The Babe went to England on leave. Not that this was any new experience for him; he usually pulled it off about once a quarter—influence, and that sort of thing, you know. He went down to the coast in a carriage containing seventeen other men, but he got a fat sleepy youth to sit on, and was passably comfortable. He crossed over in a wobbly boat packed from cellar to attic with Red Tabs invalided with shell shock, Blue Tabs with trench fever, and Green Tabs with brain-fag; Mechanical Transporters in spurs and stocks, jam merchants in revolvers and bowie-knives, Military Police festooned with *pickelhaubes*, and here and there a furtive fighting man who had got away by mistake, and would be recalled as soon as he landed.

Page 6

The leave train rolled into Victoria late in the afternoon. Cab touts buzzed about the Babe, but he would have none of them; he would go afoot the better to see the sights of the village—a leisurely sentimental pilgrimage. He had not covered one hundred yards when a ducky little thing pranced up to him, squeaking, “Where are your gloves, Sir?” “I always put ’em in cold storage during summer along with my muff and boa, dear,” the Babe replied pleasantly. “Moreover, my mother doesn’t like me to talk to strangers in the streets, so ta-ta.” The little creature blushed like a tea-rose and stamped its little hoof. “Insolence!” it squeaked. “You—you go back to France by the next boat!” and the Babe perceived to his horror that he had been witty to an Assistant Provost-Marshal! He flung himself down on his knees, licking the A.P.M.’s boots and crying in a loud voice that he would be good and never do it again.

The A.P.M. pardoned the Babe (he wanted to save the polish on his boots) on condition that he immediately purchased a pair of gloves of the official cut and hue. The Babe did so forthwith and continued on his way. He had not continued ten yards when another A.P.M. tripped him up. “That cap is a disgrace, Sir!” he barked. “I know it, Sir,” the Babe admitted, “and I’m awfully sorry about it; but that hole in it only arrived last night—shrapnel, you know—and I haven’t had time to buy another yet. I don’t care for the style they sell in those little French shops—do you?”

The A.P.M. didn’t know anything about France or its little shops, and didn’t intend to investigate; at any rate not while there was a war on there. “You will return to the Front to-morrow,” said he. The Babe grasped his hand from him and shook it warmly. “Thank you—thank you, Sir,” he gushed; “I didn’t want to come, but they made me. I’m from Fiji; have no friends here, and London is somehow so different from Suva it makes my head ache. I am broke and couldn’t afford leave, anyway. Thank you, Sir—thank you.”

“Ahem—in that case I will revoke my decision,” said the A.P.M. “Buy yourself an officially-sanctioned cap and carry on.”

The Babe bought one with alacrity; then, having tasted enough of the dangers of the streets for one afternoon, took a taxi, and, lying in the bottom well out of sight, sped to his old hotel. When he reached his old hotel he found it had changed during his absence, and was now headquarters of the Director of Bones and Dripping. He abused the taxi-driver, who said he was sorry, but there was no telling these days; a hotel was a hotel one moment, and the next it was something entirely different. Motion pictures weren’t in it, he said.

Finally they discovered a hotel which was still behaving as such, and the Babe got a room. He remained in that room all the evening, beneath the bed, having his meals pushed in to him under the door. A prowling A.P.M. sniffed at the keyhole but did not investigate further, which was fortunate for the Babe, who had no regulation pyjamas.

Page 7

Next morning, crouched on the bottom boards of another taxi, he was taken to his tailor, poured himself into the faithful fellow's hands, and only departed when guaranteed to be absolutely A.P.M.-proof. He went to the "Bolero" for lunch, ordered some oysters for a start, polished them off and bade the waiter trot up the *consomme*. The waiter shook his head, "Can't be done, Sir. Subaltern gents are only allowed three and sixpenceworth of food and you've already had that, Sir. If we was to serve you with a crumb more, we'd be persecuted under the Trading with the Enemy Act, Sir. There's an A.P.M. sitting in the corner this very moment, Sir, his eyeglass fixed on your every mouthful very suspicious-like—"

"Good Lord!" said the Babe, and bolted. He bolted as far as the next restaurant, had a three-and-sixpenny *entree* there, went on to another for sweets, and yet another for coffee and trimmings. These short bursts between courses kept his appetite wonderfully alive.

That afternoon he ran across a lady friend in Bond Street, "a War Toiler enormously interested in the War" (see the current number of *Social Snaps*). She had been at Yvonne's trying on her gauze for the Boccaccio Tableaux in aid of the Armenians and needed some relaxation. So she engaged the Babe for the play, to be followed by supper with herself and her civilian husband. The play (a War-drama) gave the Babe a fine hunger, but the Commissionaire (apparently a Major-General) who does odd jobs outside the Blitz took exception to him. "Can't go in, Sir." "Why not?" the Babe inquired; "my friends have gone in." "Yessir, but no hofficers are allowed to obtain nourishment after 10 p.m. under Defence of the Realm Act, footnote (a) to para. 14004." He leaned forward and whispered behind his glove, "There's a Hay Pee Hem under the portico watching your movements, Sir." The Babe needed no further warning; he dived into his friends' Limousine and burrowed under the rug.

* * * * *

Sometime later the door of the car was opened cautiously and the moon-face of the Major-General inserted itself through the crack. "Hall clear for the moment, Sir; the Hay Pee Hem 'as gorn orf dahn the street, chasin' a young hofficer in low shoes. 'Ere, tyke this; I'm a hold soldier meself." He thrust a damp banana in the Babe's hand and closed the door softly.

Next morning the Babe dug up an old suit of 1914 "civies" and put them on. A woman in the Tube called him "Cuthbert" and informed him gratuitously that her husband, twice the Babe's age, had volunteered the moment Conscription was declared and had been fighting bravely in the Army Clothing Department ever since. Further she supposed the Babe's father was in Parliament and that he was a Conscientious Objector. In Hyde Park one urchin addressed him as "Daddy" and asked him what he was doing in the Great War; another gambolled round and round him making noises like a rabbit. In

Knightsbridge a Military Policeman wanted to arrest him as a deserter. The Babe hailed a taxi and, cowering on the floor, fled back to his hotel and changed into uniform again.

Page 8

That night, strolling homewards in the dark immersed in thought, he inadvertently took a pipe out of his pocket and lit it. An A.P.M. who had been sleuthing him for half-a-mile leapt upon him, snatched the pipe and two or three teeth out of his mouth and returned him to France by the next boat.

* * * * *

His groom, beaming welcome, met him at the railhead with the horses.

“Hello, old thing, cheerio and all the rest of it,” Huntsman whinnied lovingly.

Miss Muffet rubbed her velvet muzzle against his pocket. “Brought a lump of sugar for a little girl?” she rumbled.

He mounted her and headed across country, Miss Muffet pig-jumping and capering to show what excellent spirits she enjoyed.

Two brigades of infantry were under canvas in Mud Gully, their cook fires winking like red eyes. The guards clicked to attention and slapped their butts as the Babe went by. A subaltern bobbed out of a tent and shouted to him to stop to tea. “We’ve got cake,” he lured, but the Babe went on.

A red-hat cantered across the stubble before him waving a friendly crop, “Pip” Vibart the A.P.M. homing to H.Q. “Evening, boy!” he holloaed; “come up and Bridge to-morrow night,” and swept on over the hillside. A flight of aeroplanes, like flies in the amber of sunset, droned overhead *en route* for Hunland. The Babe waved his official cap at them: “Good hunting, old dears.”

They had just started feeding up in the regimental lines when he arrived; the excited neighing of five hundred horses was music to his ears. His brother subalterns hailed his return with loud and exuberant noises, made disparaging remarks about the smartness of his clothes, sat on him all over the floor and rumbled him. On sighting the Babe, The O’Murphy went mad and careered round the table wriggling like an Oriental dancer, uttering shrill yelps of delight; presently he bounced out of the window, to enter some minutes later by the same route, and lay the offering of a freshly slain rat at his best beloved’s feet.

At this moment the skipper came in plastered thick with the mud of the line, nodded cheerfully to his junior sub and instantaneously fell upon the buttered toast.

“Have a good time, Son?” he mumbled. “How’s merrie England?”

“Oh, England’s all right, Sir,” said the Babe, tickling The O’Murphy’s upturned tummy—“quite all right; but it’s jolly to be home again among one’s ain folk.”

PATLANDER.

* * * * *

[Illustration: OUT OF REACH.

“Just ask Dr. Jones to run round to my place right away. Our cook’s fallen downstairs, broke her leg; the housemaid’s got chicken-pox; and my two boys have been knocked down by a taxi.”

“I’m sorry, sir, but the doctor was blown up in yesterday’s air-raid and he won’t be down for a week.”]

* * * * *

Page 9

[Illustration: AT BRIGHTON.

Tommy (to alien Visitor about to run up to Town for the day). "THIS IS THE VICTORIA PORTION, OLD SPORTSKI. HIGHER UP FOR LONDON BRIDGEOVITCH."]

* * * * *

BEASTS ROYAL.

V.

KING LOUIS' PEACOCK. A.D. 1678.

The paven terrace of Versailles
With tub and orange-tree,
And Dian's fountain tossed awry,
Were planned and made for me;
Since no one half so well as I
Could grace their symmetry,
Nor teach admiring man
The genuine pavane.

I know that when King Louis wears
A Roman kilt and casque
His smile hides many secret tears
In ballet and in masque,
Since to outshine my pomp appears
So desperate a task,
And royal robes look pale
Beside my noble tail.

With turquoise and with malachite,
With bronze and purple pied,
I march before him like the night
In all its starry pride;
LULLI may twang and MOLIERE write
His pastime to provide,
But seldom laughs the KING
So much as when I sing.

His fiddles brown and pipes of brass
May LULLI now forsake,
While I make music on the grass
Before the storm-clouds break;



He stops his ears and cries "Alas!"
Because *he* cannot make
With all his fiddlers fine
A melody like mine.

LE BRUN is watching me, I know,
His palette on his thumb,
To catch the glory and the glow
That dazzle as I come;
So be it—but let MOLIERE go,
And LULLI crack his drum;
They do but waste their time;
Minstrel I am, and mime.

Men say the KING is like the sun,
And from his wig they spin
The golden webs that, one by one,
Draw Spain and Flanders in;
He will grow proud ere they have done,
A most egregious sin,
And one to which my mind
Has never yet declined.

* * * * *

QUEER CATTLE.

"Of the 217 sheep sold at the Sunderland Mart, yesterday, there
was a very large percentage of heifers and bullocks."—*Newcastle
Daily Journal*.

* * * * *

News from the Russian Front: Pop goes the Oesel.

* * * * *

"Chauffeur Gardener wanted, titled gentleman."—*Glasgow Herald*.

We have often mistaken a taxi-driver for a lord.

* * * * *

PRESENCE OF MIND.

The train came to one of those sudden stops in which the hush caused by the contrast
between the rattle of the wheels and their silence is almost painful. During these

pauses one is conscious of conversation in neighbouring compartments, without however hearing any distinct words.

Page 10

There were several of us, strangers to each other, who hitherto had been minding our own business, but under the stress of this untoward thing became companionable.

A man at each window craned his body out, but withdrew it without information.

"I hope," said another, "there's not an accident."

"I have always heard," said a fourth, "that in a railway accident presence of mind is not so valuable as absence of body"—getting off this ancient pleasantry as though it were his own.

The motionlessness of the train was so absolute as to be disconcerting; also a scandal. The business of trains, between stations, is to get on. We had paid our money, not for undue stoppages, but for movement in the direction of our various goals; and it was infamous.

Somebody said something of the kind.

"Better be held up now," said a sententious man, "than be killed for want of prudence."

No one was prepared to deny this, but we resented its truth and availed ourselves of a true-born free Briton's right to doubt the wisdom of those in authority. We all, in short, looked as though we knew better than engine-driver, signaller or guard. That is our *metier*.

Some moments, which, as in all delays on the line, seemed like hours, passed and nothing happened. Looking out I saw heads and shoulders protruding from every window, with curiosity stamped on all their curves.

"They should tell us what's the matter," said an impatient man. "That's one of the stupid things in England—no one ever tells you what's wrong. No tact in this country—no imagination."

We all agreed. No imagination. It was the national curse.

"And yet," said another man with a smile, "we get there."

"Ah! that's our luck," said the impatient man. "We have luck far beyond our deserts." He was very cross about it.

Again the first man to speak hoped it was not an accident; and again the second man, fearing that someone might have missed it, repeated the old jest about presence of mind and absence of body.

“Talking of presence of mind,” said a man who had not yet spoken, emerging from his book, “an odd thing happened to me not so very long ago—since the War—and, as it chances, happened in a railway carriage too—as it might be in this. It is a story against a friend of mine, and I hope he’s wiser now, but I’ll tell it to you.”

We had not asked for his story but we made ourselves up to listen.

“It was during the early days of the War,” he said, “before some of us had learned better, and my friend and I were travelling to the North. He is a very good fellow, but a little hasty, and a little too much disposed to think everyone wrong but himself. Opposite us was a man hidden behind a newspaper, all that was visible of him being a huge pair of legs in knickerbockers, between which was a bag of golf-clubs.

Page 11

“My friend at that time was not only suspicious of everyone's patriotism but a deadly foe of golf. He even went so far as to call it Scotch croquet and other contemptuous names. I saw him watching the clubs and the paper and speculating on the age of the man, whose legs were, I admit, noticeably young, and he drew my attention to him too—by nudges and whispers. Obviously this was a shirker.

“For a while my friend contented himself with half-suppressed snorts and other signs of disapproval, but at last he could hold himself in no longer. Leaning forward he tapped the man smartly on the knee, with the question, ‘Why aren't you in khaki?’ It was an inquiry, you will remember, that was being much put at the time—before compulsion came in.

“We all—there were two or three other people in the compartment—felt that this was going too far; and I knew it only too well when the man lowered his paper to see what was happening and revealed an elderly face with a grey beard absolutely out of keeping with those vigorous legs.

“To my intense relief, however, he seemed to have been too much engrossed by his paper to have heard. At any rate he asked my friend to repeat his remark.

“Here, you will agree, was, if ever, an opening for what we call presence of mind.

“My friend, like myself, had been so taken aback by the apparition of more than middle age which confronted him when the paper was lowered that for the moment he could say nothing; the other passengers were in an ecstasy of anticipation; the man himself, a formidable antagonist if he became nasty, waited for the reply with a non-committal expression which might conceal pugnacity and might genuinely have resulted from not hearing and desiring to hear.

“And then occurred one of the most admirable instances of resourcefulness in history. With an effort of self-collection and a readiness for which I shall always honour him, my friend said, speaking with precise clearness, ‘I beg your pardon, Sir, but, mistaking you for a golfing friend of mine at Babbacombe, I asked you why you were not in Torquay. I offer my apologies.’

“At these words the golfer bowed and resumed his paper, the other passengers ceased for the moment to have the faintest interest in a life which was nothing but Dead Sea fruit, and my friend uttered a sigh of relief as he registered a vow never to be a meddlesome idiot again. But he looked years older.”

* * * * *

[Illustration: UNCENSORED NEWS FROM FRANCE.

Visitor. “And is your brother still in France?”

Little Girl. "Yes."

Visitor. "And what part of France is he in?"

Little Girl. "He says he's in the Pink."]

* * * * *

THE NEW MRS. MARKHAM.

II.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER IV.

Page 12

George. I must ask you, Mamma, before we talk of anything else, whether Withsak and Alldane were beheaded?

Mrs. M. No; you will be relieved to hear that, although ALFRED was greatly incensed against them and had resolved to proceed to the enforcement of the extreme penalty, they were rescued by the intervention of the Archbishop of Canterbury and afterwards granted a free pardon on condition of abstaining from all participation in public life. This magnanimity on the part of ALFRED is all the more praiseworthy as many people firmly believed that these two princes had attempted to poison him, and that they were responsible for all the calamities which had befallen England from the invasion of JULIUS CAESAR, and which were destined to befall her till the end of time. Indeed a writer in an old saga, known as the Blackblood Saga, went so far as to maintain that the English climate had been permanently ruined by the incantations of Prince Alldane. Undoubtedly his name was an unfortunate one at the time, but, to judge by the old portraits I showed you, neither of these princes looked capable of such atrocities, and Prince Alldane was described as being the essence of rotundity.

Richard. Did not ALFRED invent the quartern loaf?

Mrs. M. Yes; before his time the nobles lived exclusively on cake and venison, while the peasantry subsisted on herbs and a substance named woad, which was most injurious to their digestions. ALFRED, who among his many accomplishments was an expert baker, himself gave instructions to the wives of the poor, supplied them with flour, the grinding of which was carried out in mills of his own devising, and insisted that all loaves should be made of a certain quality and size, with results most beneficial to the physique of his subjects. The story of his quarrel with the woman who would insist on baking cakes illustrates the difficulties he encountered in effecting his reforms.

Mary. Was not ALFRED called "England's Darling"?

Mrs. M. Yes, my dear, and no wonder. Before his time there were no proper newspapers, the few issued being of high price and written in an elaborate style which only appealed to the highly educated. ALFRED changed all this, and insisted that they should be written in a "simple, sensuous and passionate style." This was one of the causes of his falling out with Withsak, who supported the old-fashioned methods, while ALFRED was in favour of simplicity and brevity. You will find all this related in the work of Leo Maximus, a learned writer, the friend and admirer of ALFRED and author of his Life.

George. How much I should like to read it.

Mrs. M. You would find in it some inspiring and interesting particulars of ALFRED's conversations and private life.

Mary. How many things ALFRED did! I cannot think how he found time for them all.

Mrs. M. He found time by never wasting it. One-third of his time he devoted to religious exercises and to study, another third to sleep and necessary refreshment, and the other to the affairs of his kingdom. The benefits he bestowed on his country were so great and various that even to this day we hardly comprehend them fully, and some ungrateful people refuse to regard them as benefits at all.

Page 13

Richard. How sad! But thanks to you, dear Mamma, we know better. When Papa comes in to tea I will ask him when he thinks I shall be old enough to read all the books that have ever been written about KING ALFRED. I want to know everything about him.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Mother (to curate).* “AND DO YOU REALLY PRAY FOR YOUR ENEMIES?”

Ethel (overhearing). “I DO, MUMMY.”

Curate. “AND WHAT DO YOU SAY IN YOUR PRAYER, MY CHILD?”

Ethel. “I PRAY THAT THEY MAY BE BEATEN.”]

* * * * *

IL FLAUTO MAGICO.

“The Lord Mayor formally declared the aerodrome opened, and turned on the flute diverting the waters of the Cardinal Wolsey river underground.”—*Evening News.*

* * * * *

From an interview with Lord ROBERT CECIL, as reported by *The Manchester Guardian*:—

“It is literally true of the British soldier that he is *tans peur et tans rapproche*.”

This perhaps explains some recent reflections on the linguistic accomplishments of our Foreign Office.

* * * * *

MARIANA IN WAR-TIME.

This tedious and important War
Has altered much that went before,
But did you hear about the change
At *Mariana's* Moated Grange?
You all of you will recollect
The gross condition of neglect
In which the place appeared to be,
And *Mariana's* apathy,



Her idleness, her want of tone,
Her—well, her absence of backbone.
Her relatives, no doubt, had tried
To single out the brighter side,
Had scolded her about the moss
And only made her extra cross.

But when the War had really come
At once the place began to hum,
And *Mariana's*, bless her heart!
She threw herself into the part
Of cooking for the V.A.D.
And wholly lost her lethargy.
She sent her gardeners off pell-mell
(They hadn't kept the gardens well),
And got a lady-gardener in
Who didn't cost her half the tin,
And who, before she'd been a day,
Had scraped the blackest moss away.
She put a jolly little boat
For wounded soldiers on the moat;
Her relatives were bound to own
How practical the girl had grown.
She often said, "I feel more cheery,
I doubt if I can stick this dreary
Old grange again when peace is rife;
You really couldn't call it life."

But something infinitely more
Than just a European War
Would have been requisite to part
Romance from *Mariana's* heart;
Once more she felt within her stir
The dawn of *une affaire de coeur*;
In other words, I must confess
She found her thoughts were centred less
On that young man who never came
And more on Captain What's-his-name,
Who'd left his other leg in France
And was a model of romance.

Page 14

* * * * *

The wedding was a pretty thing;
I sent the "Idylls of the King,"
Well bound. And *Mariana* wrote
A most appreciative note.
They live in London now, I'm told;
The Moated Grange is let (or sold);
I only hope they'll manage so
That TENNYSON need never know.

* * * * *

VERGILIANA.

For a certain German Admiral on being booted: "*Ite, Capellae.*"

* * * * *

[Illustration: HERE TO-DAY AND GONE TO-MORROW.

CHORUS OF KAISER WILHELM'S EX-CHANCELLORS (*from below*). "COMING
DOWN, MICHAELIS?"]

* * * * *

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

Tuesday, October 16th.—To Mr. Punch's blunt inquiry, "Why?" in last week's cartoon different answers would, I suppose, be returned by various Members. The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER would say that the reassembling of Parliament was necessary in order that he might obtain a further Vote of Credit from the representatives of the taxpayers. Brigadier-General PAGE CROFT, inventor and C.-in-C. of the new "National" party, who has already attached to himself a following not inferior numerically to the little band which, under Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL in the eighties, struck terror into the hearts of the Front Benches, longs to prove that, under his brilliant leadership, Lord DUNCANNON, Sir RICHARD COOPER and Major ROWLAND HUNT will emulate the early prowess of Sir JOHN GORST, Sir HENRY DRUMMOND-WOLFF and Mr. ARTHUR BALFOUR.

But a word to the gallant General: he will do little until he has secured a corner-seat. By hook or by crook Mr. HOUSTON, "the Pirate King," must be induced or compelled to surrender his coign of vantage to the new generalissimo, who will then be able alternately to pour a broadside into the Government or to enfilade the ex-Ministers who aid and abet them.

Then there are those humanized notes of interrogation like Mr. KING, Mr. HOGGE and Mr. PEMBERTON BILLING. They would like Parliament to be in permanent session in order that the world might have the daily benefit of their searching investigations. Mr. KING has not yet quite run into his best form. He had only six Questions on the Paper, and actually asked only five of them—a concession which so paralysed the MINISTER OF RECONSTRUCTION, to whom the missing Question was addressed, that, when asked where his department was located, he had to confess that he did not know the precise number, but it was somewhere in Queen Anne's Gate.

Eclipsed in Ireland by the more spectacular attractions of Sinn Fein, the Nationalists' only hope of recovering their lost popularity is to kick up the dust of St. Stephen's. Accordingly Mr. REDMOND gave notice of yet another Vote of Censure on the Irish Executive, but whether for its slackness or its brutality the terms of his motion do not make quite clear. Perhaps he has not yet made up his own mind on the subject.

Page 15

I feel sure that Mr. MONTAGU has a sense of humour, and I admired the way in which he concealed its existence when explaining the Indian Government's release of Mrs. BESANT. As he read the VICEROY'S reference to "the tranquillizing effect of Mr. MONTAGU'S approaching visit" the House rippled with laughter; and when he proceeded to say that Mrs. BESANT had undertaken to use her influence to secure "a calm atmosphere for my visit," the ripple became a wave. But with the stoicism of the unchanging East he read on unmoved.

Mr. KENNEDY JONES, taking up the *role* of the newsboy in a recent cartoon, invited the Government to give the Germans the monosyllabic equivalent for a very warm time. Mr. BONAR LAW declined to commit himself to the actual term, but announced the intention to set up a new Air Ministry, and to "employ our machines over German towns so far as military needs render us free to take such action."

To return to Mr. Punch's question, "Why?" I think the answer most Members would make would be, "Because we wanted to see what the Ladies' Gallery would look like without the grille." It must be confessed that those who cherished visions of a dull assembly made glorious by flashing eyes, white arms, and brilliant dresses were disappointed.

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage,"

wrote LOVELACE. Well, the iron bars have gone, but the stone walls remain, and make, if not a prison, something very like a *purdah*; and the "angels alone that soar above" are almost as much cut off from the inferior beings below them as they were before Sir ALFRED MOND came to the rescue of Beauty in thrall. He is rather disappointed at getting so little change out of his "fiver."

Wednesday, October 17th.—The latest recruit to what JOHN KNOX would have called the "monstrous regiment of Ministers" is Mr. WARDLE, lately Chairman of the Labour Party. He made a promising *debut*. Mr. HOGGE professed to be anxious as to the future of the North-Eastern Railway, which, according to him, had lent all its "genii" to the Admiralty. Mr. WARDLE, quick to note the classical accuracy of the plural, assured him that he need be under no apprehensions—"there are still some genii left."

Ireland is to have the extended franchise conferred by the Representation of the People Bill, but not the accompanying redistribution of seats. The Chairman suggested that Sir JOHN LONSDALE, who wanted to do away with the anomaly, should move a supplementary schedule embodying his own ideas of how Ireland should be redistributed. Unfortunately—for one would have liked to see how much was left for the other three provinces after he had designed an Ulster commensurate with his notion of its relative importance—the hon. Baronet demurred to this tempting proposal, and thought it was a matter for the Government.

Page 16

Some very pleasant badinage between Lord HUGH CECIL and the HOME SECRETARY as to the relative merits of the words “dwell” and “reside” for the purpose of defining a voter’s qualification was followed by an exhaustive and exhausting lecture by Major CHAPPLE on how to tabulate the alternative votes in a three-cornered election. His object was to demonstrate that under the Government scheme the man whom the majority of the voters might desire would infallibly be rejected, while by a plan of his own, which he had tried successfully on a couple of wounded soldiers, the best man invariably won.

Thursday, October 18th.—The most obliging of men, Sir ALFRED MOND nevertheless draws the line when he is asked to look a gift horse in the mouth. His predecessor at the Office of Works having offered a site for a statue of President LINCOLN, it is not for him to challenge the artistic merit of the sculpture, which has been picturesquely described as “a tramp with the colic.” It is thought that the American donors, after an exhaustive study of our outdoor monuments, have been anxious to conform to British standards of taste.

The “Nationals” are beginning to move. Their General elicited from the Government a promise to introduce a Vote of Thanks to His Majesty’s Forces; though it is possible that this would have been done without his intervention. His lieutenants were less successful. Sir RICHARD COOPER could not persuade Mr. BONAR LAW to publish the official report on the loss of the *Hampshire*, and is now more than ever convinced that K. OF K. is languishing in a German prison-camp; while the HOME SECRETARY intimated that he required no instruction from Major ROWLAND HUNT in the business of suppressing seditious literature.

After all, Ireland is to be redistributed. Unless the success of the Convention renders the task superfluous, the Government will appoint a Boundary Commission as an act of simple justice. Needless to say the announcement was received with frenzied abuse by all the Nationalist factions. Abstract justice, it seems, is the very last thing that Ireland wants.

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[Illustration: IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE RE-OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN ON OCTOBER 16TH A CERTAIN LIVELINESS WAS OBSERVED ON THE HIBERNIAN FRONT.]

* * * * *

[Illustration: “TURN AGAIN.”

Instructor (to recruit, who on the command, “Left turn,” has made a mess of it). “NOW THEN, WHITTINGTON, ’AVE ANOTHER SHOT.”]

* * * * *

GADGETS AND STUNTS.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—Aware as you must be of a deplorable confusion now prevailing in the public mind as to the true inwardness of the expressions “gadget” and “stunt,” you will agree, I am sure, that the moment has come for a clear and authoritative ruling on this vexed point. At a time when the pundits of the Oxford Dictionary are coldly aloof, like GALLIO, and the Army Council, though often approached, studiously reserve their decision, it rests with you Mr. Punch, as Arbiter of National Opinion, to give judgment.

Page 17

What notion, then, of “gadget” and “stunt” is gained by the young subaltern of today as he joins his regiment and shakes down to the fundamental facts of life and death? He finds himself harassed by no end of devilish enemy stunts, to stultify which a fatherly all-wise War Office has given him an infinity of gadgets. For every stunt an appropriate countering gadget. Does the foe strafe him with a gas-bombing stunt? “Ha, ha!” laughs he, and dons that unlovely but priceless gadget, his box-respirator. But by no means all gadgets have just one peculiar stunt to counter; such a definition would exclude, for instance, the height-gauge on a plane, which is emphatically, wholly and eternally a gadget of gadgets. Moreover, gadgets are small things. The airman’s “joystick” is a gadget; the tank is not. Now are these views sound, Sir, or is it permissible, as one authority does, to describe persons as “gadgets”?

One final word. A nervous subaltern recently appeared before his Adjutant and called the Wurzel-Flummery Electro-Dynamical Apparatus, Mark II., “this sky-plotter stunt.” “Great Heavens!” gasped the Adjutant, “what is the Service coming to? Stunt? Gadget, man, gadget!” Three days later the hapless boy found himself desired to resign on the grounds of “gross ignorance of military terminology.”

I am, dear Mr. Punch,

Yours solemnly,

ARCHIBALD.

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[Illustration: TRIALS OF A CAMOUFLAGE OFFICER.

HAVING CAMOUFLAGED SOME COAST DEFENCES HE GOES TO SEA TO
OBSERVE THE
EFFECT.]

* * * * *

HEART-TO-HEART TALKS.

(*THE GERMAN KAISER, THE TSAR OF BULGARIA, AND THE SULTAN OF TURKEY.*)

The Tsar. You must admit that Sofia is a most agreeable place. Where else could you find such genuine and overwhelming enthusiasm for the War and our alliance?

The Kaiser. I don’t know. It didn’t seem to me exactly violent; but then, of course, you know your people better than I do, and it may be—

The Sultan. Umph.

The Tsar. I know just what you are going to say, MEHMED. You feel, as we do, that the voice of the People is the true guide for a ruler. You feel that too, don't you, WILHELM?

The Kaiser. I have never hesitated to say so. It is on such sentiments that the greatness of our Imperial House is based.

The Sultan. Umph.

The Tsar. There—I knew you would agree with us. You heard, WILHELM? MEHMED agrees with us.

The Kaiser. That is, of course, immensely gratifying.

The Tsar. We will at once publish an announcement in all our newspapers. It will declare that the three Sovereigns, after a perfectly frank interchange of views, found no subject on which there was even the shadow of a disagreement between them, and are resolved in the closest alliance to continue the War against the aggressive designs of the Entente Powers until a satisfactory peace is secured. How does that suit you, WILHELM?

Page 18

The Kaiser. Very well. Only you must put in that bit about my being actuated by the highest and most disinterested motives.

The Tsar. That applies to all of us.

The Sultan. Umph.

The Tsar. Again he agrees. Isn't it wonderful? I've never met a more accommodating ally. It's a real pleasure to work with him. Now then, we're all quite sure, aren't we, that we really want to go on with the War, and that we utterly reject all peace-talk?

The Kaiser. Utterly—but if they come and sue to us for peace we might graciously consider their offer.

The Tsar. That means nothing, of course, so there's no harm in putting it in. At any rate it will please the POPE. We're quite sure, then, that we want to go on with the War? Of course I'm heart and soul for going on with it to the last gasp, but I cannot help pointing out that at present Bulgaria has got all she wants, and my people are very fond of peace.

The Sultan. Umph.

The Tsar. He knows that is so. He's very fond of peace himself. You see he hasn't had much luck in the War, have you, MEHMED?

The Sultan. The English—

The Tsar. Quite true; the English are an accursed race.

The Sultan. The English have a lot of—

The Kaiser. A lot of vices? I should think they have.

The Sultan (persisting). The English have a lot of men and guns.

The Tsar. Well done, old friend; you've got it off your chest at last. I hope you're happy now. But, as to this peace of ours, can't something be done? I always say it's a great thing to know when to stop. So it might be as well to talk about peace, even if your talk means nothing. In any case, I tell you frankly, I want peace.

The Kaiser. FERDINAND!

The Tsar. Oh, it's no use to glare at me like that. If it comes to glaring I can do a bit in that line myself.

The Sultan. The Americans—

The Kaiser \ (together). The Tsar / Oh, curse the Americans!

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Postlethwaite* (*keenly appreciative of hum of Gotha overhead*). “LISTEN, AGATHA! EXACTLY B FLAT.” { _ Strikes note to establish accuracy of his ear. _}]

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STANZAS ON TEA SHORTAGE.

[Mr. M. GRIEVE, writing from “The Whins,” Chalfont St. Peter, in *The Daily Mail* of the 12th inst., suggests herb-teas to meet the shortage, as being far the most healthful substitutes. “They can also,” he says, “be blended and arranged to suit the gastric idiosyncrasies of the individual consumer. A few of them are agrimony, comfrey, dandelion, camomile, woodruff, marjoram, hyssop, sage, horehound, tansy, thyme, rosemary, stinging-nettle and raspberry.”]

Page 19

Although, when luxuries must be resigned,
Such as cigars or even breakfast bacon,
My hitherto “unconquerable mind”
Its philosophic pose has not forsaken,
By one impending sacrifice I find
My stock of fortitude severely shaken—
I mean the dismal prospect of our losing
The genial cup that cheers without bemusing.

Blest liquor! dear to literary men,
Which Georgian writers used to drink like fishes,
When cocoa had not swum into their ken
And coffee failed to satisfy all wishes;
When tea was served to monarchs of the pen,
Like JOHNSON and his coterie, in “dishes,”
And came exclusively from far Cathay—
See “China’s fragrant herb” in WORDSWORTH’S lay.

Beer prompted CALVERLEY’S immortal rhymes,
Extolling it as utterly eupeptic;
But on that point, in these exacting times,
The weight of evidence supports the sceptic;
Beer is not suitable for torrid climes
Or if your tendency is cataleptic;
But tea in moderation, freshly brewed,
Was never by Sir ANDREW CLARK tabooed.

We know for certain that the GRAND OLD MAN
Drank tea at midnight with complete impunity,
At least he long outlived the Psalmist’s span
And from ill-health enjoyed a fine immunity;
Besides, robust Antipodeans can
And do drink tea at every opportunity;
While only Stoics nowadays contrive
To shun the cup that gilds the hour of five.

But war is war, and when we have to face
Shortage in tea as well as bread and boots
’Tis well to teach us how we may replace
The foreign brew by native substitutes,
Extracted from a vegetable base
In various wholesome plants and herbs and fruits,
“Arranged and blended,” very much like teas,
To suit our “gastric idiosyncrasies.”



It is a list for future use to file,
Including woodruff, marjoram and sage,
Thyme, agrimony, hyssop, camomile
(A name writ painfully on childhood's page),
Tansy, the jaded palate to beguile,
Horehound, laryngeal troubles to assuage,
And, for a cup ere mounting to the stirrup,
The stinging-nettle's stimulating syrup.

And yet I cannot, though I gladly would,
Forget the Babylonian monarch's cry,
"It may be wholesome, but it is not good,"
When grass became his only food supply;
Such weakness ought, of course, to be withstood,
But oh, it wrings the teardrop from my eye
To think of Polly putting on the kettle
To brew my daily dose of stinging-nettle!

* * * * *

AT THE PLAY.

"DEAR BRUTUS."

There are great ways of borrowing, as EMERSON said, and in his new Fantasy Sir JAMES BARRIE has given us a very charming variation on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (with echoes of *Peter Pan* and *The Admirable Crichton*). Certainly I got far more fun out of his deluded lovers in the Magic Wood than I ever extracted from the comedy of errors which occurred between the ladies and gentlemen of the Court of *Theseus*.

Page 20

In *Dear Brutus* the contrast between real life and the life of Magicland is sharply accentuated by the fact that there is not a separate set of characters for each; the same men and women figure in both, making abrupt transitions from one to the other and back again. We have a house party of actual humans (not too obtrusively actual), most of whom, including the butler, imagine that if they could have a Second Chance in life they would not make such a mess of it as they did with the First. One of them thinks he would never have taken to drink and lost his self-respect and his wife's love if he had only had a child; one that he would not have become a pilferer if he had stuck to the City; others that they would have done better to have married Somebody Else. Well, they are all whisked off into the Magic Wood, and there they get their Second Chance. The pilferer becomes a successful tradesman in a large and questionable way; the tippler finds himself sober and attended by the daughter of his heart's desire; various married folk get re-sorted; and so forth.

The moral purpose (if any) of the author, as conveyed to us through the mouth of the leading humourist of the party, is to show that a man's nature would remain the same even if he got a Second Chance. Unfortunately—but what can you expect in the realm of Magic?—the scheme does not work out with any logical consistency. It is true that the philanderer and the pilfering butler show little promise of making anything out of their Second Chance; but, on the other hand, the childless tippler seems to have gone reformation and recovered his wife's regard; and if I rightly interpret certain delicate indications, they propose to have a pearl of a daughter later on. Also the dainty and supercilious *Lady Caroline*, who in the wood becomes enamoured of the butler-turned-plutocrat (*cf. Titania and Bottom*) and subsequently returns to her sniffiness, cannot be said to have lost much by failing to utilise her Second Chance.

However, one might never have troubled about Sir JAMES'S logic if he had not declared his moral purpose in set terms. I suppose he had to explain his title, which was sufficiently obscure. It comes, as Mr. SOTHERN kindly informed us, from the lines:—

“The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves.”

Brutus, in fact, is the famous general to whom certain things were caviare. He is the typical man in the audience, to whom Sir JAMES says: “You, too, Brutus; I'm talking at you.”

[Illustration: IN AND OUT OF THE WOOD.

<i>Mr. Purdie</i>	MR. SAM SOTHERN.
<i>Mr. Coade</i>	MR. NORMAN FORBES.
<i>Mr. Dearth</i>	MR. GERALD DU MAURIER.]



Happily (for my taste, anyhow) the humour of the play dominates its sentiment. And where the sentiment of the child *Margaret* threatens to overstrain itself we had always the healthy antidote of Mr. DU

Page 21

MAURIER'S practical methods to correct its tendency to cloy. He was extraordinarily good both as himself and, for a rare change, as somebody quite different. Miss FAITH CELLI as his daughter—a sort of *Peter Pan* girl who does grow up, far too tall—was delightful in the true BARRIE manner. It was a pity—but that was not her fault—that she had to end her long and difficult scene on rather a false note. I am almost certain that no child (outside a BARRIE play), who is left alone in a Magic Wood, scared out of her life, would cry aloud, “Daddy, daddy, I don’t want to be a Might-have-been.” The sentiment of the words was, of course, part of the scheme, but it was not for her to say them.

Mr. NORMAN FORBES, in the Wood, was an elderly piping faun and performed with astonishing agility a sword-dance over a stick crossed with his whistle. Elsewhere as *Mr. Coade* he played very engagingly the part of the only character who had made such good use of his First Chance that he really didn’t need a Second. Both in name and nature he brought to mind the late Mr. CHOATE, who gallantly declared that if he had not been what he was he would have liked to be his wife’s second husband. And no wonder that *Mr. Coade* wanted nothing better than to remain attached to so adorable a creature as his wife, played with a delightful homeliness by Miss MAUDE MILLETT, who has lost nothing of that charm to which, with *Mr. Coade*, we retain the most faithful devotion.

Mr. WILL WEST was admirable as a *Crichton* gone wrong; and Mr. SOTHERN, as the philanderer *Purdie*, took all his Chances of humour, and they were many, with the greatest aplomb. They included some very pleasant satire on stage manners. I have only to mention the names of Miss HILDA MOORE, Miss JESSIE BATEMAN, Miss DORIS LYTTON and Miss LYDIA BILBROOKE for you to understand how excellent a cast it was, both for wit and grace.

Finally, Mr. ARTHUR HATHERTON, as *Lob*, the host of the party, a kind of hoary old *Puck* who had a *penchant* for filling his house every Midsummer Eve with people who wanted a Second Chance, interpreted Sir JAMES’S whimsical fancy to the very top of freakishness.

I hope, but doubtfully, that there are enough Dear Brutuses in London (so many aliens have lately fled) to do justice to BARRIE at his best.

O.S.

* * * * *

LE MOT JUSTE.

“Tea is very scarce and that to Irish folks, who like it black and strong, with always ‘one more for the pot,’ is a source of damentation.”—*Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury*.

* * * * *

“Another Army Order provides that an officer while undergoing instruction in flying shall receive continuous flying pay at the rate of 4s. a day in addition from the public-houses of the town.”—*Provincial Paper*.

Very generous of them; but what will the Board of Liquor Control say?

Page 22

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Vicar*. "AND WHAT WERE YOUR SENSATIONS WHEN YOU WERE STRUCK?"

Wounded Tommy. "WELL, IT WAS LIKE WHEN THE MISSIS COPS YEH BEHIND THE EAR WITH A FLAT-IRON—YOU KNOW."]

* * * * *

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(BY MR. PUNCH'S STAFF OF LEARNED CLERKS.)

I have often pitied the lot of the costume novelist, faced with the increasing difficulty of providing fresh and unworn trappings for his characters. Therefore with all the more warmth do I congratulate those seasoned adventurers, AGNES and EGERTON CASTLE, on their acumen in discovering such a setting as that of *Wolf-lure* (CASSELL). The name alone should be worth many editions. Nor do the contents in any sort belie it. This remote country of Guyenne, a hundred years ago, with its forests and caves and subterranean lakes, with, moreover, its rival wolf-masters, Royal and Imperial, and its wild band of coiners, is the very stage for any hazardous and romantic exploit. It should be added at once that the authors have taken full advantage of these possibilities. From the moment when the wandering English youth who tells the tale wakes on the hillside to find himself contemplated by a lovely maiden and a gigantic wolf-hound, the adventure dashes from thrill to thrill unpausing. One protest however I must utter. The conduct of the young and lovely heroine (as above) and her single-minded devotion to her lover may be true to nature, but somewhat alienated my own sympathies, already given to the first-person-singular English lad who also adored her, and whom both she and her chosen mate treated abominably. To my thinking, unrequited devotion has no business in a tale of this sort. Realistic pathos may have its *Dobbin* or *Tom Pinch*, but the wild and whirling episodes of tushery demand the satisfactory finish hallowed by custom. With this reservation only I can call *Wolf-lure* about the best adventure-novel that the present season has produced.

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Since the opening pages of *Calvary Alley* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON) are concerned with choir-boys and a cathedral and a rose-window, things to which one gives, without sufficient reason, an association exclusively of the Old World, I was a little startled, as the action proceeded, by the mention of cops and dimes and trolly-cars. Of course this only meant that I had forgotten, ungratefully, the country in which any story by ALICE HEGAN RICE might be expected to be laid. Anyhow, *Calvary Alley* proves an admirable entertainment, a tale of a girl's expanding fortunes, from the grim slum that

gives its name to the book, through many varied experiences of reform schools, a bottling factory and membership of the ballet, up to the haven of matrimony. Through them all, *Nance*, the heroine, carries a very human and engaging personality, so that one

Page 23

is made to see the young woman who is clasped to the heroic breast on the last page as the logical development of the ragged urchin stamping her bare foot into the soft cement of *Calvary Alley* on the first. Moreover—wonder of wonders for transatlantic fiction!—the author is able to write about children, and the contrasted lives of rich and poor city dwellers, without lapsing into sentimentality, *O si sic omnes!* But either American bishops are strangely different from the English variety, or Mrs. RICE, following Mr. WELLS'S example, has permitted herself an episcopal burlesque. In either case the resulting portrait is hardly worthy of an otherwise admirably-drawn collection of original characters.

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Christine (MACMILLAN) contains a very illuminating picture of Germany in the months immediately preceding the War; but I am perplexed—and a little provoked—by the way in which it is presented. The book opens with a pathetic foreword, signed by Miss ALICE CHOLMONDELEY, in which we read: “My daughter Christine, who wrote me these letters, died at a hospital in Stuttgart on the morning of August 8th, 1914, of acute double pneumonia.... I am publishing the letters just as they came to me, leaving out nothing.... The war killed Christine, just as surely as if she had been a soldier in the trenches.... I never saw her again. I had a telegram saying she was dead. I tried to go to Stuttgart, but was turned back at the frontier.” Then follows a Publishers’ note to the effect that some personal names have been altered. After this one is naturally surprised to find the book advertised as a “new novel.” All I can say is that, if Miss CHOLMONDELEY’S preface is true, her book is not a novel, and that, if it is untrue, I do not think the foreword is fair or in good taste. My opinion, for what it is worth, is that Miss CHOLMONDELEY was herself in Germany during the summer of 1914, and has chosen this way of telling us what she saw and heard. Anyhow the letters are undoubtedly the work of someone who knows Germany and the inhabitants thereof. And for this excellent reason *Christine* should not be missed by anyone who wants to know in what a state of militant anticipation the Germans were living. The strongest searchlight has been thrown over the Hun, from the habitues of a middle-class boarding-house to members of the Junker breed. Whether these letters ought to be classed as fiction or not they contain facts, and as they are written in a style at once vivid and engaging my advice to you is to read them and not worry too much about the foreword.

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Page 24

The Four Corners of the World (HODDER AND STOUGHTON) is emphatically what I should call a fireside book. On these chill Autumn evenings, with the rain or the dead leaves or the shrapnel whirling by outside, you could have few more agreeable companions than Mr. A.E.W. MASON, when he is, as here, in communicative mood. He has a baker's dozen of excellent tales to tell, most of them with a fine thrill, out of which he gets the greatest possible effect, largely by the use of a crisp and unemotional style that lets the sensational happenings go their own way to the nerves of the reader. As an example of how to make the most of a good theme, I commend to you the story pleasantly, if not very originally, named "The House of Terror." Before now I have been ensnared to disappointment by precisely this title. But Mr. MASON'S House holds no deception; it genuinely does terrify; and when at the climax of its history the two persons concerned see the door swing slowly inwards, and "the white fog billowed into the room," while "Glyn felt the hair stir and move upon his scalp," I doubt not that you will almost certainly partake of some measure of his emotion. Naturally, in a mixed bag such as this, one can't complain if the quality of the contents varies. Not all the tales reach the level of "The House of Terror"; but in every one there is enough artistry to occupy any spare half-hour you may have for such purposes, without letting you feel afterwards that it was wasted. And as a hospital present the collection could hardly be beaten.

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Miss MARJORIE BOWEN'S historical romances usually have the merit of swift movement, and that is precisely the quality I miss in *The Third Estate* (METHUEN). It does not march—at least not quick enough. You will not need to be told that Miss BOWEN has saturated herself conscientiously in her period—an intensely interesting period too—and has contrived her atmosphere most competently and plausibly. But for all that I couldn't make myself greatly interested in the bold bad Marquis DE SARCEY in those anxious two years before "the Terror," with his insufferable pride, his incredible elegance, his fantastic ideas of love and his idiotic marriage, the negotiations for which, with the resulting complications, take up so large a space in a lengthy book. It gives one the impression of being written not "according to plan" but out of a random fancy, with so hurried a pen that not merely have irrelevant incidents, absurdities of diction, and indubitable *longueurs* escaped excision, but such lapses from the King's fair English as "save you and I" and "I shoot with my own hand he who refuses." Even a popular author—indeed, especially a popular author—owes us more consideration than that.

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Page 25

The Fortunes of Richard Mahony (HEINEMANN) is one of those pleasant books in which the hero prospers. True, the process as here shown is very gradual; so much so that the four hundred odd pages of the present volume only take us as far as "End of Book One." Clearly, therefore, Mr. H.H. RICHARDSON has more to follow; and, as one should call no hero fortunate till his author has ceased writing, it is as yet too early for a final pronouncement upon *Richard Mahony*. My own honest impression at this stage would be that he is in some danger of outgrowing his strength. This pathological phrase comes the more aptly since *Richard's* fortune, though begun in the goldfields, was not derived from digging, but from the practice of medicine, and from a lucky speculation in mining stock (I liked especially the description of the day when the shares sold at fifty-three, and *Richard* "went about feeling a little more than human"). The end of the whole matter, at least the end for the present, is that, with his wife, and what he can get together from the remains of the mining *coup*, and the sale of a somewhat damaged practice, *Richard* sets forth for England. Obviously more turns of fortune are in store there for him and *Mary* and that queer character, his one-time inseparable, *Purdy*. That I anticipate their future with much interest is a genuine tribute to the humanity in which Mr. RICHARDSON has clothed his cast. *Richard Mahony*, in short, is a real man, whose fortunes take a genuine hold upon one's attention; though I repeat that I could wish his author had told them less wordily, and—in one glaring instance—with a greater respect for the decencies of medical reticence.

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[Illustration: USING PETROL FOR PLEASURE.

JOY-RIDERS CAUGHT RED-HANDED.]

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LONG-DISTANCE MEDICAL TREATMENT.

"A telephone message was received last night by the Scotland Yard authorities."—*Bristol Times and Mirror*.