

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 156, February 26, 1919 eBook

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 156, February 26, 1919

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Page 1

CHARIVARIA.

"Germany," says Count RANTZAU, "cannot be treated as a second-rate nation." Not while it is represented by tenth-rate noblemen.

People are now asking who the General is who has threatened not to write a book about the War?

On Sunday week, at Tallaght, Co. Dublin, seven men attacked a policeman. The campaign for a brighter Sunday is evidently not wanted in Ireland.

The United States Government is sending a Commission to investigate industrial conditions in the British Isles. Mr. *Lloyd George*, we understand, has courteously offered to try to keep one or two industries going until the Commission arrives.

"Everything that happened more than a fortnight ago," says Mr. *George Bernard Shaw* in *The Daily News*, "always is forgotten in this land of political trifling." We must draw what comfort we can from the reflection that Mr. *Shaw* himself happened more than a fortnight ago.

"Margarine," says an official notice, "can be bought anywhere after to-day." This is not the experience of the man who entered an ironmonger's shop and asked for a couple of feet of it.

A woman who threatened to murder a neighbour was fined one shilling at Chertsey. We shudder to think what it would have cost her if she had actually carried out her threat.

A contemporary refers to "those abominable face-masks" now being worn in London. Can this be a revival of the late Mr. RICHARDSON'S campaign against the wearing of whiskers?



“A Court of Justice is not a place of amusement,” said Mr. Justice *Roche* at Manchester Assizes. Mr. Justice *darling*’s rejoinder is eagerly awaited.

We are informed by “Hints for the Home,” that “Salsify may be lifted during the next few days.” So may Susan, if you don’t watch out.

So many safes have been stolen from business premises in London that one enterprising man has hit upon the novel idea of putting a notice on his safe, “Not to be Taken Away.”

A sapper of the Royal Engineers who climbed the steeple of a parish church and reached the clock told the local magistrates that he wanted to see the dial. That, of course, is no real excuse in these days of cheap wrist-watches.

By order of the Local Government Board influenza has been made a notifiable disease. We sincerely hope that this will be a lesson to it.

An evening paper suggests that the Albert Hall should be purchased by the nation. We understand, however, that our contemporary has been forestalled by a gentleman who has offered to take it on the condition that a bathroom (h. and c.) is added.



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A correspondent writes to a paper to ask if it is necessary to have a licence to play the cornet in the streets. All that is necessary, we understand, is a strong constitution and indomitable pluck.

We are asked to deny the foolish allegation that several M.P.s only went into Parliament because they couldn't get sleeping accommodation elsewhere.

In connection with the rush for trains on the Underground, an official is reported to have said that things would be much better if everybody undertook not to travel during the busiest hours.

An American journal advertises a lighthouse for sale. It is said to be just the thing for tall men in search of a seaside residence.

The policeman who told the Islington bus-driver to take off his influenza mask is going on as well as can be expected.

Pwllheli Town Council is reported to have refused the offer of a German gun as a trophy. The Council is apparently piqued because it was not asked in the first instance whether it wanted a war at all.

All Metropolitan police swords have been called in. We decline to credit the explanation that, in spite of constant practice, members of the force, kept cutting their mouths.

French politicians are advocating the giving of an additional vote for each child in the family. In France, it will be remembered, the clergy are celibate.



“We are looking for the ideal omnibus,” says an official of the L.G.O.C. We had no idea that they had lost it. Meanwhile their other omnibus continues to cause a good deal of excitement as it flashes by.

“Buildings occupied by the League of Nations,” says *The Daily Mail*, “are to enjoy the benefits of extraterritoriality.” It sounds a lot, but we were afraid it was going to be something much more expensive than that.

“In a month,” says a news item, “fourteen abandoned babies have been found in London.” Debauched, no doubt, by the movies.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *The morning after the burglary. “And he’s left the light on!”]*

* * * * *

A striking advertisement.

“Negib Fahmy, Assistant Goods Manager Egyptian State Railways, was attacked by a discharged railway poster a short time ago.”—*Egyptian Gazette*.

* * * * *

“On Sunday morning the engine of the Paris-Marseilles express on arriving at the Gare de Lyon mounted the platform and only came to a standstill in front of the buffet.”—*Times*.

Machinery nowadays exhibits almost human intelligence.



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* * * * *

“Bournemouth.—Delicate or Chronic Lady received in charming house.”—British Weekly.

In the new army a gentleman may be “temporary;” but once a lady always a lady.

* * * * *

The Hun as idealist.

A guileless nation, very soft of heart,
Keen to embrace the whole wide world as brothers,
Anxious to do our reasonable part
In reparation of the sins of others,
We note with pained surprise
How little we are loved by the Allies.

What if the Fatherland was led astray
From homely paths, the scene, of childlike gambols,
Lured to pursue Ambition’s naughty way
(And incidentally make earth a shambles),
All through a wicked Kaiser—
Are they, for that blind fault, to brutalize her?

Just when we hoped the past was clean forgot,
They want us to restore their goods and greenery!
They want us to replace upon the spot
The “theft” (oh, how unfair!) of that machinery;
By which our honest labours
Might have secured the markets of our neighbours!

Bearing the cross for other people’s, crime,
Eager to purge the wrong by true repentance,
When to a purer air we fain would climb,
How can we do it under such a sentence?
Is this the law of Love,
Supposed to animate the Blessed Dove?

Oh, not for mere material loss alone,
Not for our trade, reduced to pulp, we whimper,
But for our dashed illusions we make moan,
Our spiritual aims grown limp and limper,



Our glorious aspirations
Touching a really noble League of Nations.

So, like a phantom dawn, it fades to dark,
This vision of a world made new and better;
And he whose heavenly notes recalled the lark
Soaring, in air without an earthly fetter—
Wilson is gone, the mystic,
Whose views, like ours, were so idealistic!

O.S.

* * * * *

Good-Bye to the auxiliary patrol.

I.—*The ship.*

When it was announced that we were to be paid off and that the gulls and porpoises that help to make the Dogger Bank the really jolly place it is would know us no more, there was, I admit, a certain amount of subdued jubilation on board. It is true that the Mate and the Second Engineer fox-trotted twice round the deck and into the galley, where they upset a ship's tin of gravy; and the story that the Trimmer, his complexion liberally enriched with oil and coaldust, embraced the Lieutenant and excitedly hailed the Skipper by his privy pseudonym of "Plum-face," cannot be lightly discredited; but at the same time I think each one of us felt a certain twinge of regret. Life in the future apart from our trawler seemed impossible, almost absurd. Pacificists must have known a similar feeling on Armistice day.

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Although to the outsider one trawler may look very like another, to us who know them personally they differ in character and have their little idiosyncrasies no less than other people. Some are quite surly and obstinate, others good-humoured and light-hearted; where one exhibits all the stately dignity of a College head-porter another may be as skittish and full of fun as a magistrate on the Bench. There was one trawler at our base so vain that they could never get her to enter the lockpits until her decks had been scrubbed and a string of bunting hoisted at the foremast. It is surprising.

Taking her all in all our trawler was a good sort, one of the best. When steaming head to wind in a heavy sea she certainly shipped an amazing quantity of water, and even in a comparative calm she would occasionally fling an odd bucketful or so of North Sea down the neck or into the sea-boots of the unwary; but it was only her sense of fun. She took particular delight in playing it on a new member of the crew; it made him feel at home.

She was not what you would call a really clean ship—as the Skipper said, if you washed your hands one day they were just as bad again the next—but anyone who makes a fuss over a trifle like that is no true-born sailorman. We all loved her and were proud of her speed, for she could make nine knots at a push. Even the Second Engineer, who had been a fireman in the Wilson line, was moved to admit in a moment of admiration that she didn't do so badly for a floating pig-trough, which was no meagre praise from a man with such a past.

She was a touchy ship, quick to resent and avenge a slight on her good name. We had a strange Lieutenant one trip who came from a depot ship at Southampton and wore a monocle. He was rather sore at having to exchange a responsible harbour billet for the command of a mere sea-going trawler, and expressed the opinion that there might be more disgustingly dirty ships afloat than ours, but if so they were not allowed out during official daylight; We felt her quiver from stem to stern with rage. She took her revenge that evening as the Lieutenant was coming aft for tea. It was a floppy sea and he unwisely ventured along the windward side of the casing, and she seized her opportunity. The Mate picked him up out of the scuppers and we dried his clothes over the boilers, but the monocle was never seen again. The crew were not so sympathetic as they might have been; they felt that he had asked for it.

But, though her personal beauty would not have been unrivalled at a Cowes Regatta and her somewhat erratic motions were not calculated to bring balm to the soul of an unseasoned mariner, she was a faithful ship, and no one could ever question her courage. At the sight of a hostile periscope she used positively to see red, and she once steamed across a mine-field without turning a hatch-cover. Throughout her naval career she was a credit to the White Ensign and bravely upheld the proud traditions of her ancestors.



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She is to be handed back to her owners and will presumably return to the more peaceful occupation of deep-sea fishing. It will be strange to think of her still labouring away out there on the Nor'-East Rough whilst we who have shared her trials so long are following once more the less arduous ways of the land. If she prove as eager in the pursuit of her undersea quarry as she was on the trail of the U-Boat I would not change places with the cod and haddocks of the North Sea for the prize-money of an Admiral. Good luck to her!

* * * * *

“[Printed upside-down: Pilot] fully qualified, wishes to obtain appointment, with Flying School or Aircraft Firm.”—*Technical Paper*.

Judging by his advertisement he is an expert in looping.

* * * * *

“Station Officer R.D. Coleman, who has been for ten years in charge of the Lewisham station of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade (in which he has served 282 years), retired on Tuesday last. Sub-officer Seadden was recently the medium of presenting to him a marble-cased timepiece and ornaments from the officers and men of the brigade.”—*Local Paper*.

But what use will the clock be to a man for whom time obviously stands still?

* * * * *

[Illustration: *The dawn of intelligence in Berlin*.

First Teuton. “After all it seems that our ever-victorious army was beaten in the field. Are we down-hearted?”

Second Teuton. “Ja!”]

* * * * *

The Mud larks.

Only a few months ago our William and his trusty troop swooped upon a couple of Bosch field batteries floundering in a soft patch on the far side of Tournai. William afflicted their gun teams with his little Hotchkiss gadget, then prepared to gallop them. He had unshipped his knife and was offering his sergeant long odds on scoring first “pink,” when our two squadron trumpeters trotted out from a near-by coppice and



solemnly puffed “Cease Fire”—for all the world as if it was the end of a field-day on the Plain and time to trot home to tea. William was furious.

“There y’are,” he snorted. “Just because I happened to have a full troop out for once, all my horses fit, no wire or trenches in the way, the burst of the season ahead and the only chance I’ve had in four and a-half years of doing a really artistic bit of carving they must go and stop the ruddy War. Poo! ain’t that the bally Army all over? Bah! I’ve done with it.”

So he filled in the bare patches in every Demobilisation Form Z 15 he could lay pen to.

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Taking the proud motto of the MOND dynasty—"Make yourself necessary"—for guide, he became something different every day in his quest after an "Essential Trade." He was in turn a one-man-business, a railway-porter, a coal-miner, a farmer, a *Northcliffe* leader-writer, a taxi-baron, a jazz-professor and a non-union barber. At one moment he was single, an orphan alone and unloved; at another he had a drunken wife, ten consumptive young children and several paralytic old parents to support. All to no avail; nobody would believe him.

Then one day he heard from a friend who by the simple expedient of posing as a schoolmaster for a few minutes was now in "civvies" and getting three days' hunting and four days' golf a week.

William grabbed up yet another A.F. Z 15, and dedicated his life to the intellectual uplift of the young.

This time he drew a reply and by return.

Corps H.Q. held the view that he, William, was the very fellow they had been looking for, longing for, praying for. They had him appointed Regimental Educational Officer (without increase of rank, pay or allowances) on the spot, and would he get on with it, please, and indent through them for any materials required in the furtherance of the good work?

William was furious. Confound the Staff! What did the blighted red-tape-worms take him for? A blithering pedagogue in cap, gown and horn spectacles? He kicked the only sound chair in the Mess to splinters, cursed for two hours and sulked for twenty-four. After which childish display he pulled himself together and indented on Corps Educational Branch for four hundred treatises on elementary Arabic, Arabic being the sole respectable subject in which he was even remotely competent to instruct.

Corps H.Q. tore up his indent. It was absurd, they said, to suppose that the entire regiment intended emigrating to Arabia on demobilisation. William must get in touch with the men and find out what practical everyday trades they were anxious to take up.

William was furious. "Isn't that the rotten Staff all over?" he fumed. "Make an earnest and conscientious effort to give the poor soldiers a leg-up with a vital, throbbing, commercial and classical *patois* and the brass-bound perishers choke you off! Poo-bah! Na poo!"

Then he pulled himself together again and indented on Corps Educational Branch once more, this time for "Lions; menagerie; one." Corps came down on William like St. Paul's Cathedral falling down Ludgate Hill. What the thunder did he mean by it? Trying to be funny with them, was he? He must explain himself instantly—Grrrr!



William was very calm. Couldn't understand what all this unseemly, uproar was about, he wrote. Everything was in order. Obeying their esteemed instructions to the letter he had made inquiries among the men as to what practical everyday trades they were wishful to learn, and, finding one stout fellow who was very anxious to enter public life as a lion-tamer, he had indented for a lion for the chap to practise on. What could be more natural? Furthermore, while on the subject, when they forwarded the lion, would they be so good as to include a muzzle in the parcel, as he thought it would be as well to have some check on the creature during the preliminary lessons.



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Corps H.Q.'s reply to this was brief and witty. They instructed the Adjutant to cast William under arrest.

William was furious. PATLANDER.

* * * * *

From a speech at a St. Andrew's Day dinner:—

“The Navy have but recently had a partial reward in the unparralleled spectacle of the surrender of the bulk of the German fleet which run lies swigly in Scottish waters, which now lies snugly, as is meet and fittinf, in Scottish for ever. Loud cheers.”—*South American Paper*.

It is inferred that the printer was at the dinner.

* * * * *

Princess charming.

Once upon a time there was a Royal christening.

It was a very grand christening and the highest in the land were among the assembled guests. There was more than one Royal Personage present, and many lords and ladies and ambassadors and plenipotentiaries and all manner of dignified and imposing people.

For it was a real Princess that was being christened, which is a thing that does not occur every day in the year.

Quite a number of fairies were there too. Fairies are very fond of christenings, and there are always a good many of them about on these occasions.

They were very lavish in their gifts.

One gave the baby beauty; another gave her a sweet and gentle disposition; another, charm of manner; a fourth, a quick and intelligent mind. She really was a very fortunate baby, so many and so varied were the gifts bestowed upon her by the fairy folk.

Last of all came the Fairy Queen.

She arrived late, having come on from a coster's wedding in the East End of London, a good many miles away.



She was rather breathless and her crown was a little on one side, indeed her whole appearance was a trifle dishevelled.

“Oh, my dear,” she murmured to her chief lady-in-waiting as she bustled lightly up the aisle, “I’ve had such a time. It was a charming wedding. The tinned-salmon was delicious, and there were winkles—and gin. I only just tasted the gin, of course, for luck, you know, but really it was very good. I had no idea—And there was a real barrel-organ, and we danced in the street. The bride had the most lovely ostrich feathers. The bridegroom was a perfect dear. I kissed him: I kissed everyone, I think. We all did ... Now what about this baby?” For by this time they had reached that part of the church where the ceremony was taking place. “I suppose you’ve already given her most of the nice things?”

The lady-in-waiting rapidly enumerated the fairy-gifts which the fairies had bestowed upon the child.

The Queen looked at the baby.

“What a darling!” she said; “I must give her something very nice.” She hovered a moment over the child’s head, “She shall marry the man of her choice,” she said, “and live happily ever after.”



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There was a little stir among the fairies. The lady-in-waiting laid her hand on the Queen's arm.

"I'm afraid Your Majesty has forgotten," she said; "this is a Royal Baby."

"Well," said the Queen, "what of that?"

"You know we rather make it a rule not to interfere in these matters in the case of Royalty," said the lady-in-waiting. "We generally leave it to the family. You see they usually prefer to make their own arrangements. There are reasons. We can give a great deal, but we can't do *everything*. Besides, it would hardly be fair. They have so many advantages—"

The Fairy Queen looked round at all the people who were assembled in the church; she had indeed forgotten for the moment what a very important occasion this was. Then she looked at the baby.

"I don't care," she said, "I don't care. She's a darling, and she *shall* marry the man of her heart. I'm sure it will be someone nice. You'll see, it'll be all right."

She kissed the baby's forehead, and the little Princess opened wide her blue eyes and smiled. Several people; noticed it.

"Did you see the baby smile at the Bishop?" they said to one another afterwards. But then, you see, nobody but the baby could see the Fairy Queen.

The other fairies were still a little perturbed. They shook their heads doubtfully and whispered to one another as they floated out of the church. It wasn't done.

"If only she had made it a King's son," the chief lady-in-waiting muttered to herself. "That would have made it so much better. But 'the man of her choice'—so very vague."

The Fairy Queen, however, was quite happy. She laughed at the solemn faces of her retinue.

"You'll see," she repeated, "it will be quite all right." And she flew gaily off to Fairyland.

* * * * *

This isn't a fairy story at all. That's the nicest part about it. It all really happened. And the real name of the Princess—Oh, but I needn't tell you that. *Everybody* knows who Princess Charming is. R.F.

* * * * *



[Illustration: *Lieut. X. (in Paris for the Peace Conference)*. "VOUS FEREZ LE POLISSON AVEC UN PEU DE LINGERIE."]

* * * * *

Letter received at a Demobilisation office:—

"I have Certified that I Pte. — as got Urgent on the LNWR Curzan St goods as also taken a Weeks Notice from Feburary 2nd to 9th to Leave Colours on His Magesties forces and allso beg to Resign. Signed Pte. —."

Private — was evidently taking no chances.

* * * * *

THE 1930 FLYING SCANDAL.

To the Editor of "The Wireless News." 1st June, 1930.

Dear Sir,—I wish to protest through your columns against the outrageous behaviour of the drivers of public air conveyances on the Brighton Front.



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Yesterday I and other passengers boarded a ramshackle aero-a-banc (the floor of which was covered with musty straw) with the intention of having a “joy-trip” to Rottingdean. The fare was two shillings and sixpence. We had not mounted five hundred feet into the air before the driver yelled to us, “Nah then, another ‘arf-a-chrahn all rahnd or I’ll loop the loop.” We were forced to comply with the demand of this highwayman of the atmospheric thoroughfares; but on alighting I took the first opportunity of giving his number to a policeman.

One sighs for the old-fashioned courtesy of the taxi-cab driver of another decade.

Yours, *etc.*, CONSTANT READER.

* * * * *

COMMERCIAL ALTRUISM.

“Why not give your jaded palate a new pleasure? ‘Impossible!’ you say. This is so, if you smoke Our Tobacco, otherwise not nearly so impossible as you think.”—*Port Elizabeth Paper*.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Farmer (contemplating new hand)*. “WELL, AT ALL EVENTS HE DON’T SEEM TO BE INFECTED WITH THIS HERE LABOUR UNREST.”]

* * * * *

THE ARK.

[The Dean of LINCOLN is reported to have informed the Lower House of Convocation that he “simply did not believe” in the Biblical episode of the Ark.]

The dangerous voyage at length is o’er
 And she has crossed the oilcloth floor
 And grounded on the woolly mat,
 The wooded slopes of Ararat.
 Upon this lately flooded land
 It’s very difficult to stand
 The animals in double row,
 When some have lost a leg or so;
 A book is best to carry those
 Who still feel sea-sick in their toes.
 For NOAH and his sons and wives
 This is the moment of their lives;



They walk together up and down
In stiff wide hat and dressing-gown,
Well pleased to greet the dove once more,
Who landed safe the day before.

You recollect that day of rain,
Of drumming roof, of streaming pane,
How, just before the hour of tea,
A great light bathed the nursery;
And you those tiresome tresses shook
Back from your eyes and whispered, "Look!"
The day-lost sun was sinking low,
Filling the world with after-glow;
We saw together, you and I,
A rainbow right across the sky.

* * * * *

Though years divide us, old and grey,
From childhood's distant yesterday;
In spite of unbelieving Deans
We still know what a rainbow means.

* * * * *

MUSICAL GOSSIP FROM THE GERMAN FRONT.

"For the last twenty years," writes M. JEAN-AUBRY, a distinguished French musical critic, "the temple of German music has been no longer at Bonn, or Weimar, or Munich, or Bayreuth, but at Essen. The modern German orchestra, with Strauss and Mahler, was concerned more with the preoccupations of artillery and the siege-train than with those of real music. It desired to become a rival of Krupp."

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These remarks are borne out in a remarkable way by the latest news of STRAUSS. It has always been very difficult to obtain precise intelligence about his works, owing to his notorious aversion from publicity, and we accordingly give this information with all reserve, simply for what it is worth. It is to the effect that, while retaining the parts for three *Minenwerfen* in his new *Battle Symphony*, he has been obliged to re-score one movement in which four "Big Berthas" were prominently engaged, owing to the impossibility of securing any of these instruments since the Armistice. He has, however, with admirable resource substituted parts for four influenza microbes. There are no French horns in the score, but by way of showing a conciliatory spirit to the British army of occupation he has introduced in the *Finale* an adaptation of a well-known patriotic song, which is marked on the margin, "*Die W.A.A.C. am Rhein.*"

* * * * *

"HIGH LIFE BELOW STAIRS."

"Tablemaid (upper), elderly Countess; Scotland, England; good wage."—*Scotsman*.

* * * * *

"ANGLING.

"LOCH TAY.—KILLIN.—Mr. C.B. —, London, had on Beans and pease quiet and unchanged. Feeding offals 17th one salmon, 27 lb."—*Scotsman*.

But are these lures quite sportsmanlike?

* * * * *

From a "table of contents":—

"SPECIAL ARTICLES.

"The German 'Soul'—To Rise Like a Phoenix ... 10
Rats 10"

Glasgow Herald.

Agreed; or, as they say in the House of Lords, "the Contents have it."

* * * * *



KISMET.

Those old comrades, Sergeant Kippy and Gunner Toady, stood on the steps of the Convalescent Home and regarded the peaceful country-side which, in South Devon, is a sedative even in February.

Gunner Toady had come over for the day, and Kippy, as an inhabitant of the Home, had been exercising his prerogative of showing a guest over the estate. During the great advance which proved to be the expiring effort of the Hun, the Gunner had acquired a shortened leg, which still caused him to revolt against sustained physical exertion.

He leant upon his stick and listened while Kippy the indefatigable drew up a programme of a further tour to some outlying buildings.

“And you ’aven’t seen the melin-’ouse,” concluded that worthy, enthusiastically waving his remaining arm in the direction of a far shrubbery.

“Melin-’ouses in Febuary is lugoobrious,” said the Gunner; “we’ll remain at the chatoo.”

Kippy sat down on the top step.

“Curious,” he said, “to think there ain’t no war on. Makes you feel idle. Remember that day at Coolomeers (Coulommiers), when we first got interdooced?” The Gunner nodded. “’Bout a thousand years ago that was, an’ not ’alf a beano—’orse, foot and guns; no stinks, no blinkin’ fireworks and old VON KLUCK gettin’ ’ome pronto.”



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“Yes,” his companion said slowly, as he lowered himself to sit beside Kippy, “that was September ‘14. I took my first knockout there, an’ then clicked with you again in Southmead ‘Ospital at Bristol.”

“An’,” Kippy took up the tale, “we come together agen at the end o’ ‘15 in the old salient at Wipers, an’ in ‘16 we was foregathered on the Somme. That’s where I got my first dose of Fritz’s gas. Put me in Blighty three months, that did; an’ I won the ten-stone clock-golf putting championship of ‘Ereford.”

“Yes,” said the Gunner ruminatively, “we’ve had to handle all sorts in this show; wy, I’ve played a game called Badminton with a real princess a-jumpin’ about t’other side of the net. O’ course it ain’t discipline.”

“Well,” said Kippy, “I got two years’ service before the War. That makes six an’ a bit; and next month I shall ‘ave my Mark 1919 patent arm complete with all the latest developments and get into civvies. Then what-o for a job o’ paper-‘anging.”

Gunner Toady gave a slight start, but at once passed into a state of deep reflection. After a protracted pause he delivered his mature judgment. “Course,” he said slowly, “I believe in wot them Mahomets call Kismet. No gettin’ away from it—”

“Oo’s Kismet?” interrupted Kippy.

“It’s me and you gettin’ mixed up so intimate over ‘arf o’ France and the ‘ole o’ Flanders. Like two needles in a blinkin’ ‘aystack clickin’ every time—an’ ‘taint as if the Gunners dossed down reglar with the Line either. An’ now you talks about paper-‘anging.”

Gunner Toady paused impressively and continued, “Now you’d ‘ardly believe it, but before I joined the reg’ment in ‘09 I was a master-plasterer workin’ in Fulham.”

“Lumme!” exclaimed Kippy, “wy, I was at Putney then, and I only ‘eard the other day that there’s a nice little *apray-lar-gur* connection to be worked up at Walham Green. ‘Ow about callin’ ourselves ‘Messrs. Toady and Kippy, Decorators?’”

“That’s what it means,” said the senior partner. “It’s Kismet right enough, and there ain’t no gettin’ away from it.”

“And we might add,” said Kippy, with a touch of inspiration—“we might add, ‘Late Contractors to His Majesty’s Government.’”

* * * * *

[Illustration: “HOW WAS IT YOU NEVER LET YOUR MOTHER KNOW YOU’D WON THE V.C.?”



“IT WASNA MA TURRN TAE WRITE.”]

* * * * *

“Wanted, by middle-aged Lady, position of trust, Housekeeper,
Companion, widower, lady, priest.”—*Irish Paper*.

We suppose it is all right, but a hasty reader might well take it for another sex problem.

* * * * *

THE TWO VISITS, 1888, 1919.

(“DISPERSAL AREAS, 10A, 10B, 10C—CRYSTAL PALACE.”)

It was, I think, in '88
That Luck or Providence or Fate
Assumed the more material state
Of Aunt (or Great-Aunt) Alice,
And took (the weather being fine
And Bill, the eldest, only nine)
Three of us by the Brighton line
To see the Crystal Palace.



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Observe us, then, an eager four
Advancing on the Western Door
Or possibly the Northern, or—
Well, anyhow, advancing;
Aunt Alice bending from the hips,
And Bill in little runs and trips,
And John with frequent hops and skips,
While I was fairly dancing.

Aunt Alice pays; the turnstile clicks,
And with the happy crowds we mix
To gaze upon—well, I was six,
Say, getting on for seven;
And, looking back on it to-day,
The memories have passed away—
I find that I can only say
(Roughly) to gaze on heaven.

Heaven it was which came to pass
Within those magic walls of glass
(Though William, like a silly ass,
Had lost my bag of bull's-eyes).
The wonders of that wonder-hall!
The—all the things I can't recall,
And, dominating over all,
The statues, more than full-size.

Adam and Niobe were there,
DISRAELI much the worse for wear,
Samson before he'd cut his hair,
Lord BYRON and Apollo;
A female group surrounded by
A camel (though I don't know why)—
And all of them were ten feet high
And all, I think, were hollow.

These gods looked down on us and smiled
To see how utterly a child
By simple things may be beguiled
To happiness and laughter;
It warmed their kindly hearts to see
The joy of Bill and John and me
From ten to lunch, from lunch to tea,
From tea to six or after.



That evening, when the day was dead,
They tucked a babe of six in bed,
Arranged the pillows for his head,
And saw the lights were shaded;
Too sleepy for the Good-night kiss
His only conscious thought was this:
“No man shall ever taste the bliss
That I this blessed day did.”

When one is six one cannot tell;
And John, who at the Palace fell
A victim to the Blondin Belle,
Is wedded to another;
And I, my intimates allow,
Have lost the taste for bull’s-eyes now,
And baldness decorates the brow
Of Bill, our elder brother.

Well, more than thirty years have passed....
But all the same on Thursday last
My heart was beating just as fast
Within that Hall of Wonder;
My bliss was every bit as great
As what it was in '88—
Impossible to look sedate
Or keep my feelings under.

The gods of old still gazed upon
The scene where, thirty years ago,
The lines of Bill and me and John
Were cast in pleasant places;
And “Friends,” I murmured, “what’s the odds
If you are rather battered gods?
This is no time for Ichabods
And *eheu—er—fugaces.*”

Ah, no; I did not mourn the years’
Fell work upon those poor old-dears,
Nor PITT nor Venus drew my tears
And set me slowly sobbing;
I hailed them with a happy laugh
And slapped old Samson on the calf,
And asked a member of the staff
For “Officers Demobbing.”



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That evening, being then dispersed,
I swear (as I had sworn it first
When three of us went on the burst
With Aunt, or Great-Aunt, Alice),
“Although one finds, as man or boy,
A thousand pleasures to enjoy,
For happiness without alloy
Give me the Crystal Palace!”
A.A.M.

* * * * *

COAL-DUST.

“Had a good day?” said Frederic cheerily, stamping the snow off his boots as I met him at the front-door.

“That depends,” I said, “on what you call a good day.”

“You haven’t been dull?” said Frederic.

“Oh, no,” I said, indicating the comforting blaze as I pushed Frederic’s chair to the fire; “behold the result of my day’s labours in your behalf. Your hot bath and hot breakfast, dear, were just camouflage to keep from you, the centre of gravity, our desperate straits. When I went to give Cook her orders this morning I found her as black as a sweep and in a mood to correspond. She pointed to a few lumps of coal in the kitchen scuttle and said, ‘I’ve sifted all that dust in the cellar, Ma’am, and these are the only lumps I could find. There’s only enough to cook one more dinner.’”

“My dear girl,” said Frederic, “why wait till there is no coal before ordering more?”

“Hear me,” I cried. “A fortnight ago I ordered some. The man asked, ‘Have you *any* coal?’ I said I had a little. He said, ‘You are lucky to have *any*. Dozens of people have no coal at all. I can promise nothing.’

“A week ago I went again. ‘Have you *any* coal?’ he asked. ‘Still a very little,’ I said faintly. ‘Hundreds of people,’ he said, ‘have no coal at all, I can promise you *nothing*.’

“Well, after I had spent an hour this morning distributing whiffy oil-lamps all over the house, I went again to the coal merchant. He froze me with a look. ‘When can you send in my coal?’ I tried to say it jauntily, but my teeth chattered. ‘Have you *no* coal?’ he said, and his frigid eye pierced me. ‘O-o-only a little dust, which, has been at the bottom of the cellar for two years—drawing-room coal dust,’ I added eagerly, ‘which cannot be used on the kitchen fire.’ ‘You are lucky,’ he said, ‘to have that. There are thousands of people in this town with no coal at all. We can promise you nothing.’



“I came home, and after luncheon, donning my Red Cross uniform, I told Mary that if people called she could show them into the coal-cellar, where I should be; and, armed with a garden-fork, I proceeded thither and dug diligently for a whole hour. I know now exactly why a hen clucks when she has laid an egg. Every time I found a lump—and I found as many as six—I simply had to call Cook and Mary to come and see.”

“What fun!” murmured Frederic comfortably.



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"I venture to suggest, dear, that the thing is beyond a joke. When I next go to the coal-monger's I shall say in reply to the inevitable question, 'A little coal-dust in the cellar and a good deal on the chairs and tables and on my hands and face;' and I know he will say: 'You are lucky to have even that. There are millions in this town who, *etc., etc.*' And so the thing will go on until one day he asks, 'Have you no fuel at all?' when I can hear myself replying, 'Only two chairs and one wardrobe,' and he will reply icily, 'You are lucky to have that. Everybody else is dead because they had not even that.'

"And Frederic," I added abruptly, "as a coal-miner I demand the minimum wage for my day—your hot bath to-morrow morning."

* * * * *

[Illustration: A MORNING IN THE HOME LIFE OF AN EMOTIONAL ACTRESS.]

* * * * *

[Illustration: "MY DEAR, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO THE LINKS TO-DAY?"

"OH, YES, AUNTIE. I SHALL TRY AND PUT IN A ROUND."

"BUT IT'S *POURING!* WHY, I WOULDN'T SEND A DOG OUT TO GOLF IN SUCH WEATHER.]"

* * * * *

DEMOBILISATION.

THE SITUATION MADE CLEAR.

"It is quite clear," said the Adjutant, "that Second-Lieut. X must stay."

"Of course," said the G.O.C. Demobs, or, as he is more often called, "Mobbles." "He stays because he doesn't go."

"Yes," said the Adjutant's child full, like the elephant's child, of insatiable curiosity, "X stays because he is retained for selection until he is selected for retention, or, to put it more clearly, he belongs to a class which could go if it had any reason for going and if it wanted to go and wasn't retained as eligible or wasn't eligible for retention. In other words he is in one of the two classes—those who are available to go and those who are eligible to stay."

"Or, conversely," said Mobbles, "those who are available to stay and those who are eligible to go."



“Exactly,” said the Adjutant; “but which?”

“The other,” said the Adjutant’s child. “Now, if he was only in the same boat as Y, the position would be different. Y is here because, though eligible for release, he is available for retention.”

“The problem appeared quite simple at first,” said the Adjutant, “but now you’ve made it all muddy.”

“It is simply this,” said Mobbles; “is he eligible for retention or merely available for release? If the former, is he available for demobilisation, and if the latter, is he eligible for retention? No; what I mean is just this—Is he here or is he—No; I’ll start again. Is he retained, and if not why not?”

“Exactly,” said the Adjutant’s child. “Is he under’ thirty-seven, and if so why was he born in 1874, or, to put it quite clearly—”

“Shut up,” said the Adjutant. “I want to get it clear before you confuse me again. We’ll start afresh. X is eligible to go because he joined the Army before 1916. On the other hand, being under thirty-seven, he must stay.”



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“That must, I think, be wrong,” said Mobbles.

“Quite,” said the Adjutant’s child.

“Well, then, put it in another way,” said the Adjutant. “X can’t be demobilised because there is no reason for his going, and he can’t stay because there is no authority for retaining him. In other words, to put it quite clearly, as he is being retained he can’t go, and as he is being demobilised he isn’t to be retained. Do I make myself clear?”

“Quite,” said the Adjutant’s child.

Mobbles was beyond speech and busily engaged in working it out on paper in decimals.

There was, a knock at the door; a signaller brought a wire, “Report immediately position of Second-Lieut. X.”

There was a moment’s silence as the Adjutant grasped a message-pad and thought deeply what to say. He wrote a few lines and then looked up. “This is what I have said: ‘Second-Lieut. X staying if retained, but available to go if eligible; also eligible for retention if available.’ Am I clear?”

“Quite,” said the Adjutant’s child.

* * * * *

[Illustration: ENGLAND EXPECTS.

{WITH MR. PUNCH’S BEST HOPES FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCE.}

BOTH LIONS (*together*). “UNACCUSTOMED AS I AM TO LIE DOWN WITH ANYTHING BUT A LAMB, STILL, FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD....”]

* * * * *

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

Monday, February 17th.—On the motion for the rejection of the Bill to relieve Ministers from the necessity of re-election, Mr. PEMBERTON-BILLING incidentally revealed the horrifying fact that he has compiled another Black Book, containing a full list of the PRIME MINISTER’S election pledges. They do not quite come up to the notorious figure of 47,000; but they total 1,211, which seems enough to go on with, and they are all “cross-referenced.”



More serious, from the Government's point of view, was the criticism of some of their regular supporters. Lord WINTERTON, speaking as an old Member of the House—though he still looks youthful enough to be its “baby,” as he was fifteen years ago—affirmed the value of by-elections as a gauge for public opinion; Major GRAEME, one of the new Coalitionists, thought it would be a mistake to part with a means of testing the record of a Ministry which the War has “swollen to the size of a Sanhedrim.”

As the soft answers of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL—whom the late Mr. ROOSEVELT would have probably termed “pussy-footed”—failed to quell the rising storm, the LEADER OF THE HOUSE bowed before it and offered to agree to the insertion in the Bill of a time-limit.

[Illustration: Portrait of Winston by MR. MOSELY, a promising young artist.]

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Something had evidently annoyed Mr. DEVLIN. Whether it was the intimation that the new Housing Bill was not to apply to Ireland (which has had similar legislation for years past), or that in future the out-of-work donation in that country would be confined to persons possessing more or less right to it, or (most probably) that an interfering Saxon had announced his intention of moving a “Call of the House” in order to get the recalcitrant Sinn Feiners to take up their Parliamentary duties, I do not know. At any rate the Nationalist seized the opportunity of delivering a general attack upon the Government of such overwhelming irrelevance that Mr. WHITLEY, the least sarcastic of men, was driven to remark, “I think the honourable Member is under the impression that this is last week.”

[Illustration: GOVERNMENT PROMISES. MR. PEMBERTON BILLING compiles another Black Book.]

I trust that Mr. CHURCHILL, who is conducting the business of the War Office in Paris, will not read the Official Report of the debate on the Aerial Navigation Bill. For I am sure it would be as great a shock to him as it was to me to learn that Mr. MOSLEY (*aetat* twenty-two) considered him, in aviation affairs, as lacking in imagination. The idea of anyone regarding our WINSTON as a doddering old fossil!

Tuesday, February 18th.—As is usual at this period of the Session the Lords find themselves with nothing to do, and being ineligible for the out-of-work donation they naturally grumble. Foreman CURZON endeavoured to pacify them with the promise of one or two little jobs in the near future; and Lord BUCKMASTER kindly furnished them with something to go on with by raising the topic of industrial unrest in a speech composed in about equal measure of admirable platitudes and highly disputable propositions. Its principal merit was to furnish the new LORD CHANCELLOR with an occasion for delivering his maiden speech. This he did with proper solemnity, though once he slipped into his after-dinner style and addressed his august audience as “My Lords and Gentlemen.” His nearest approach to an epigram was the remark that “the nation had been living on its capital and liking it.” On the whole he took a hopeful view of the situation—more so than Lord LANSDOWNE, who expressed “the profoundest dismay” at our increasing indebtedness. Fortunately His Lordship’s gloomy prophecies have not invariably proved correct.

[Illustration: “JUMPING” A MEMBER’S CLAIM.]

After Question-time in the Commons Mr. BOTTOMLEY made bitter complaint to the SPEAKER that he had been evicted from his favourite corner-seat by the Member for South-East St. Pancras. Mr. LOWTHER administered chilly consolation. Those little *contretemps* were apt to occur at the beginning of every new Parliament; and he was not going to lay down a hard-and-fast rule on the subject before it was necessary.



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Old Parliamentarians will remember the long-continued struggle between Mr. GIBSON BOWLES and a colleague who was always endeavouring to insert “the thick end of the GEDGE” into “Tommy’s” favourite seat. Mr. HOPKINS is the Member who has jumped Mr. BOTTOMLEY’S claim on the present occasion—a fact which will recall THEODORE HOOK’S remark that the game of leap-frog always reminded him of those famous psalmodists, STERNHOLD and HOPKINS.

Wednesday, February 19th.—According to Lord STRATHSPEY there are thousands of men in the Army longing to take Orders in the Church Militant, but there are no funds available for training them, and no prospect of a living wage for them if ordained. The LORD CHANCELLOR’S sympathetic references to the painful plight of men whose duty it was to preach content here and hereafter will no doubt be reflected in the administration of his not inconsiderable patronage. Fortunately or unfortunately the clergy cannot or will not “down surplices” to improve their condition.

The unrest in other sections of the working-classes was further examined from various angles. Lord RIBBLESDALE would like them to take a greater share in the profits, and also in the “responsibilities and vicissitudes” of industry. But this suggestion will hardly appeal to them if, as Lord LEVERHULME declared, Labour would have made a poor bargain if it had swapped its increased wages for all the excess profits made during the War. Lord HALDANE’S view, as perhaps you would expect, was that neither Capital nor Labour, but the “organised mind,” was the principal agent in producing wealth. Altogether it was an informing debate, which the Government might do worse than reproduce in pamphlet form for the instruction of the public.

On the news of the attack on M. CLEMENCEAU reaching the Commons there was a general desire that the House should pass a resolution of sympathy. But Mr. BONAR LAW deprecated the proposal as being, in his opinion, “against all precedent”—not a little to the surprise of some of the new Members, who thought that in a case like this the *conseil du precedent* might bow to the *President du Conseil*.

In the procedure debate a strong demand was made that a full official report of the speeches delivered in the six Grand Committees should be issued. But the ATTORNEY-GENERAL pointed out that everything was already reported “except the talk,” and found a powerful supporter in Sir EDWARD CARSON, who believed that no official reports would have any effect in keeping Ministers to their pledges. *Hansard* is as *Hansard* does, is his motto.

Thursday, Feb. 20th.—Every question put down costs the tax-payer, it is calculated, a guinea. This afternoon there were no fewer than two hundred and eighty-two of them on the Order-Paper. It would be interesting to see what effect upon this cascade of curiosity would be produced if every Member putting down a question were obliged to contribute, say, ten shillings to the cost of answering it; the amount to be deducted from

his official salary. If such a rule had been enforced in the last Parliament Mr. JOSEPH KINO, for one, would have had no salary to draw.



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The shortage of whisky and brandy for medicinal purposes was the subject of many indignant questions. Mr. MCCURDY, for the FOOD-CONTROLLER, stated that it had been found impracticable to allot supplies of spirits for this purpose, but, perhaps wisely, did not give any reasons. Can it be that the Government, contemplating the extension of the "all-dry" principle to this country, are anxious to give no encouragement to the "drug-store habit"?

* * * * *

THE LIMIT.

(THE JAZZ IS REPORTED TO HAVE ABOUT SEVENTY DIFFERENT STEPS.)

I have waltzed for half a day
In Milwaukee (U.S.A.),
I have danced at village "hops" in Transylvania;
I have can-canned all alone
In a fever-stricken zone,
And I've done the kitchen-lancers in Albania.

I've performed the "tickle-toe"
With its forty steps or so,
I have learnt a native dance in Costa Rica;
I've fox-trotted in Stranraer,
Irish-jiggered in Mullingar,
And I've danced the Dance of Death at Tanganyika.

I have "bostoned" with the best
At a ball in Bukharest,
I've reversed with Congo pigmies, dark and hairy;
I have one-stepped in Sing-Sing
And performed the Highland Fling,
I have razzled in the reel at Inveraray.

I have tangoed in Koran,
Danced quadrilles in Ispahan
(Though I haven't done the polka in Shiraz yet);
But I've followed in the train
Of Terpsichore in vain,
For I haven't mastered *one* step of the Jazz yet.

* * * * *

"THE LEXICOGRAPHER'S EASY CHAIR.



“In this column, to decide questions concerning the current use of words, ——’s Dictionary is consulted as arbiter.

“‘N.H.R.,’ Starkville, Miss.—‘What is the meaning of the word *Eothen*, and what is its derivation?’

“*Eothen* is Greek for ‘it is used’ or ‘accustomed,’ and is the title of a celebrated work by Alexander Kinglake.”—*American Magazine*.

We fear that the lexicographer found his easy chair so easy that he did not take the trouble to get out of it to consult the dictionary.

* * * * *

THE MIDGET.

As a result of the competition in cheap miniature two-seater cars we anticipate several interesting developments and take the liberty of extracting the following items from the newspapers of the future:—

FOR SALE.—Small two-seater car, fit gentleman five feet eleven inches in height. Forty-two inches round the chest. Only been worn a few times.

Why pay a thousand pounds for a large car when you can get the same result with one of our hundred-pound Midget Cars? Our Midgets are trained to make a noise like a six-seater touring car. We undertake that you shall get the Park Lane feeling at suburban rates. Write for a free sample, enclosing six penny stamps for postage.



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One great attraction in the Midget Car is that you need not use a rug to throw over its bonnet in cold weather. A tea-cosy will do.

WHAT OFFERS?—Advertiser, breaking up his collection, will sell his stud of tame mice, two goldfish and several obsolete silkworms, or would exchange for two-seater Midget with spanner.

DEAR SIR.—I have a small two-seater car. It is quite a young one. At what age can I start feeding it on greenstuff? SMITH, MINOR.

PERSONAL.—Will the individual who was driving a Midget Car which ran over old gentleman in the Strand be good enough to come forward and pay for the watch-glass which he cracked?

BE ECONOMICAL.—Our Midgets only smell the petrol. It costs no more to run a Midget than it does to run an automatic pipe-lighter.

To the Midget Motor Car Company.

GENTLEMEN,—With reference to the Midget Car you measured me for recently, I ought to have mentioned that I wanted patch pockets on the outside, in which to carry the tools. Yours, *etc.*

FOR SALE.—Owner whose two-seater car is a trifle tight under the arms wishes to dispose of his pair of white spats.

* * * * *

“Prince Eitel Fritz has been telling the Germans that his father, the ex-Kaiser, is now ‘legally’ dead. We must get rid of that adjective without delay.”—*John Bull*.

“If you see it in *John Bull* ...” Grammarians please note.

* * * * *

“CHRIST CHURCH, —.—Wanted at once, for definitely Protestant Evangelical Church, light-minded colleague to share ministry.”—*Record*.

A chance for our demobilised humorists.

* * * * *



[Illustration: THE TRAFFIC PROBLEM. TEACHING THE YOUNG IDEA HOW TO TUBE.]

* * * * *

THE MILKY MOLAR.

["Last week one of my back teeth dropped out in the middle Greek."—*Schoolboy's letter.*]

Last week at the preparatory school
Where Frederick learns how not to be a fool,
Where he disports at ease with Greek and Latin,
And mathematics too is fairly pat in—
On Tuesday morn, the subject being Greek
(It always is on that day in the week),
Our Frederick, biting hard, as youngsters do,
Bit a Greek root and cleft it clean in two.
This was a merely metaphoric bite;
The next was fact, and gave the boy a fright:

For lo! there came a crumbling
At the back of his mouth and a rumbling,
And a sort of sound like a grumbling,
And out there popped, as pert as you please,
A milky back tooth that had taken its ease
For too many weeks and months and years.
An object, when loose, of anxious fears,
It had now debouched and lost its place
At the back of a startled schoolboy's face.
Oh, out it popped,
And down it dropped
In the middle of Greek
Last Tuesday week.



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Yet be not afraid, my lively lad,
For you shall renew the tooth you had;
The vacant place shall be filled, you'll find,
With another back tooth of a larger kind.
But a time will come when, if you lose
A tooth, as indeed you can't but choose,
 You must go about
 For ever without;
And, front or back, it returns to you never;
You have lost that tooth for ever and ever.
So stick to your teeth and accept my apology
For this easy lesson in odontology.

* * * * *

PUNCH'S ROLL OF HONOUR.

CAPTAIN A.W. LLOYD, 25th Royal Fusiliers, has been awarded the Military Cross for Distinguished Service in the East African Campaign. Before the War, for which he volunteered at once, joining the Public Schools Battalion, Captain LLOYD illustrated the Essence of Parliament in these pages. Mr. Punch offers him his most sincere congratulations upon the high distinction he has won, and is delighted to know that he is completely recovered from the severe head-wound which he received last year.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Mother (to little girl who had been sent to the hen-house for eggs).* "WELL, DEAR, WERE THERE NO EGGS?"

Little Girl. "NO, MUMMIE, ONLY THE ONE THE HENS USE FOR A PATTERN."]

* * * * *

THE BEAUTIFUL WORDS.

I have to tell an unvarnished tale of real and recent life in London. When the absence of impulsive benevolence and public virtue is so often insisted upon it is my duty to put the following facts on record.

It was, as it now always is, a wet day. The humidity not only descended from a pitiless sky, but ascended from the cruel pavements which cover the stony heart of that inexorable stepmother, London. Need I say that under these conditions no cabs were obtainable? In other words it was one of those days, so common of late, when other people engage the cabs first. They were plentiful enough, full. One could have been run over and killed by them twenty times between Trafalgar Square and Piccadilly



Circus, but all teemed with selfish life. Men of ferocious concentration and women detestable in their purposefulness were to be seen through the passing windows. It was a day on which no one ever got out of a cab at all, except to tell it to wait. No flag was ever up. Since the blessing of peace began to be ours these days have been the rule.

Not only were the cabs all taken and reserved till to-morrow, but the 'buses were overcrowded too. A line of swaying men, steaming from the deluge, intervened in every 'bus between two rows of seated women, also steaming. It was a day on which the conductors and conductresses were always ringing the bell three times.

There was also (for we are very thorough in England) a strike on the Tube and the Underground.

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Having to get to Harley Street, I walked up Regent Street, doing my best to shelter beneath an umbrella, and (being a believer in miracles) turning my head back at every other step in the hope that a cab with its flag up might suddenly materialise; but hoping against hope. It was miserable, it was depressing, and it was really rather shameful: by the year 1919 A.D. (I thought) more should have been achieved by boastful mankind in the direction of weather control.

And then the strange thing happened which it is my purpose and pride to relate. A taxi drew up beside me and I was hailed by its occupant. In a novel the hailing voice would be that of a lady or a Caliph *incog.*, and it would lure me to adventure or romance. But this was desperately real damp beastly normal life, and the speaker was merely a man like myself.

“Hullo!” he said, calling me by name, and following the salutation by the most grateful and comforting words that the human tongue could at that moment utter.

Every one has seen the Confession Albums, where complacent or polite visitors are asked to state what in their opinion is the most beautiful this and that and the other, always including “the most beautiful form of words.” Serious people quote from DANTE or KEATS or SHAKSPEARE; flippant persons write “Not guilty” or “Will you have it in notes or cash?” or “This way to the exit.” Henceforth I shall be in no doubt as to my own reply. I shall set down the words used by this amazing god in the machine, this prince among all princely bolts from the blue. “Hullo,” he said, “let me give you a lift.”

I could have sobbed with joy as I entered the cab—perhaps I did sob with joy—and heard him telling the driver the number in Harley Street for which I was bound.

That is the story—true and rare. How could I refrain from telling it when impulsive benevolence and public virtue are so rare? It was my duty.

* * * * *

[Illustration: MODERN INVENTION APPLIED TO THE CLASSICS. *Damacles (under the hanging sword, to his host)*. “DELIGHTFUL WEATHER WE’RE HAVING FOR THE TIME OF YEAR—WHAT?”]

* * * * *

BOOK-BOOMING.

(WITH GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS TO THE LEADING MASTERS OF THIS DELECTABLE ART.)

Messrs. Puffington and Co. beg to announce the immediate issue of *Charity Blueblood*, by Faith Redfern. Speaking *ex cathedra*, with a full consciousness of their



responsibilities, they have no hesitation in pronouncing their assured conviction that this novel will take its place above all the classics of fiction.

Here is not only a Thing of Beauty, but a Joy for Ever, wrought by elfin fingers, fashioned of gossamer threads at once fine and prehensile. Yet so Gargantuan and Goliardic that the reader holds his breath, lest the whole beatific caboodle should vanish into thin air and leave him lamenting like a Peri shut out from Paradise.

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But this is more than a Paradise. It is a Pandemonium, a Pantosocratic Pantechnicon and a Pantheon as well. For here, within the narrow compass of 750 pages (price 7s. 113/4d.), we find all the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome; the Olympian serenity of HOMER, the pity and terror of AESCHYLUS, the poignancy of CATULLUS, the saucy mirth of ARISTOPHANES, the sanity of SHAKSPEARE, the *macabre* gruesomeness of BAUDELAIRE, the sardonic *rictus* of HEINE and the geniality of TROLLOPE. All this and much more.

Here, as we turn every page, we expect to meet *Rosalind* and *Jeanie Deans*, *Tom Jones* and *Aramis*, *Mr. Micawber* and *Madame Bovary*, *Eugenie Grandet* and *Colonel Newcome*, *Casanova* and *Casablanca*, *Consuelo* and “CAGLIOSTRO,” and, if we do not meet them, we encounter new and more radiant figures, compared with whom the others are as water to wine.

Here, with its bliss and agony, its cacophony and cachinnation, is Life, such as you and I know it, not life in absolute *deshabille*, but enveloped in the iridescent upholstery of genius, sublimated by the wizardry of a transcendental polyphony.

Here, soaring high above the cenotaph in which the roses and rapture of our youth lie entombed in one red burial blent, we see the shimmering strands of St. Martin's Summer drawn athwart the happenless days of Autumn, with the dewdrops of cosmic unction sparkling in the rays of a sunshine never yet seen on land or sea, but reflecting as in a magic mirror that far off El Dorado, that land where Summer always is “i-cumen in,” for which each and all of us feel a perpetual nostalgia.

Here, in fine, gentle reader, is a work of such colossal force that to render justice to its abysmal greatness we have ransacked the vocabulary of superlative laudation in vain. SWINBURNE, compared to the needs of the situation, is as a shape of quivering jelly alongside of the Rock of Gibraltar. And here, O captious critic, is a Wonderwork which not only disarms but staggers, paralyses and annihilates all possibilities of animadversion, unless you wish to share the fate of Marsyas, by pitting your puny strength against the overwhelming panoply of divine and immortal genius.

* * * * *

“A bricklayer's labourer was remanded yesterday on a charge of stealing, as bailee, two matches, value L3, the property of the Vicar of ——.”—*Provincial Paper*.

We fear there has been bad profiteering somewhere; even in London they have not touched that price.

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“Howells’ new violin conato (E flat), which followed, is sincere music ... whatever there is it is possible to bear.”—*Times*.

The fololwing of a conata, like the bombination of a chimaera, apparently puts some strain upon the attention of an audience.



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LE FRANCAIS TEL QUE L'ON LE PARLE.

It was on my journey to Paris that I ran across little Prior in the train. He too was going, he said, on Peace Conference work. His is a communicative disposition and before we had fairly started on our journey he had unfolded his plans. He said the Conference was bound to last a long time, and as a resident in a foreign country he had a splendid opportunity to learn the language. He meant, he said, to get to know it thoroughly later on. He then produced his French Pronouncing Handbook.

I thought I knew French pretty well until I saw that book. It gave Prior expressions to use in the most casual conversation that I have never heard of in my life. It had a wonderful choice of words. Only an experienced philologist could have told you their exact origin.

The handbook had foreseen every situation likely to arise abroad; and I think it overrated one's ordinary experiences. I have known people who have resided in France for years and never once had occasion to ask a billiard-marker if he would "*Envoyer-nous des crachoirs.*" Most people can rub along on a holiday quite cheerfully without a spittoon; but then the handbook never meant you to be deprived of home comforts for the want of asking.

Nor did it intend, with all its oily phraseology, that you should be imposed on. There is a scene in a "print-shop" over the authenticity of an engraving which gets to an exceedingly painful climax.

A good deal of reliance is placed on the innate courtesy of the French. For it appears that, after an entire morning spent at the stationer's, when the shop-keeper has discussed every article he has for sale, you wind up by saying, "*Je prendrai une petite bouteille d'encre noire,*" and all that long-suffering man retorts is, "*J'voo zangvairay ler pah-kay,*" which is not nearly so bolshevistic as it looks.

Prior said he was going to start to speak French directly he got on board the steamer—he had learnt that part off by heart already. The first remark he must make was, "Send the Captain to me at once." There is no indication of riot or uproar at this. Evidently the Captain is brought without the slightest difficulty, for in the very next line we find Prior saying, "*Etes-vous le Capitaine?*" and he goes on to inquire about his berth.

The Captain tells him everything there is to know about berths and then apparently offers to take down his luggage, for Prior is commanding, "Take care of my carpet-bag, if you please."



They then begin to discuss the weather. “In what quarter is the wind?” asks the indefatigable Prior.

“The wind,” says the Captain, “is in the north, in the south, in the east, in the southwest. It will be a rough passage. It will be very calm.”

Prior does not seem to observe that the Captain appears to be hedging. This wealth of information even pleases him, and then quite abruptly he demands, “*Donnez-moi une couverture,*” because, as he goes on to explain, he “feels very sick.” This gives the “Capitaine” an opportunity to escape. He says, “I will send the munitionnaire.”



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Undoubtedly that Captain has a sense of the ridiculous. I like the man. Anyone who could, on the spur of the moment, describe the steward as the munitionnaire deserves to rank as one of the world's humourists. But Prior is apparently in no condition to see a joke. He says he will have the munitionnaire instantly bringing in his hand "*un verre d'eau de vie.*"

I was really sorry that in the bustle of embarking I lost sight of Prior and therefore could not witness the meeting between him and the Captain. It would have made me happy for the whole day.

The crossing was prolonged, for we took a zig-zag course to avoid any little remembrances Fritz might have left us in the form of mines. When we were nearing land I saw Prior again. He was stretched out on a deck-chair and looked up with a ghastly smile as he caught sight of me.

"Hullo, you're alone!" I said rather cruelly. "Is this the stage where the Captain goes to find the munitionnaire?"

Then he spoke, but it was not in the words of the phrase-book. It was in clear, concise, unmistakable English.

"Can you tell me," he asked, and behind his words lay a suggestion of quiet force of despair, "about what hour of the day or night this cursed boat is likely to get to Boolong?"

* * * * *

"Evens are moving rapidly in connection with the plan by the Government, announced only yesterday, to call a national industrial conference."—*Daily Paper.*

We are glad the odds are not against it.

* * * * *

Notice in a German shop-window (British zone):—

"Jon con have jour SAFETY RAZOR BLADES reset, throug hare experient workman any System."

The Germans seem to be getting over their dislike to British steel.

* * * * *

COMMERCIAL COMFORT.



["Mines are spottily good. Oils maintain a healthy undertone."—*Stock Exchange Report.*]

O welcome message of the tape!
O words of comfortable cheer!
You bring us promise of escape
Into a balmier atmosphere;
Though Ireland with sedition boils
And shrieks aloud, "Ourselves Alone";
Still mines are good in spots, and oils
Maintain a healthy undertone.

Though dismal Jeremiahs wail
Of Bolshevists within our gates,
And, though the Master of *The M**I*
In sad seclusion vegetates,
The rising tide of gloom recoils
Once the inspiring news is known
That mines are good in spots, and oils
Maintain a healthy undertone.

An over-sanguine mood is wrong
And ought to be severely banned;
Yet spots, if good, cannot belong
To the pernicious leopard brand;
But no such reservation spoils
The sequel; doubt is overthrown
By the explicit statement, "Oils
Maintain a healthy undertone."



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Not, you'll remark, the savage growl
Of the exasperated bear,
Nor the profound blood-curdling howl
Of the gorilla in its lair;
Nor yet the roar in civic broils
That surges round a tyrant's throne—
Oh, no, the organ voice of oils
Is healthy in its undertone.

O blessed jargon of the mart!
Though your commercial meaning's hid
From me, a layman, to my heart
You bring a soothing *nescio quid*;
Amid the flux of strikes and plots
Two things at present stand like stone:
In mines the goodness of their spots,
In oils their healthy undertone.

* * * * *

Extract from a recent story:—

“Noiselessly we crept from the tent. The sands, the sea, the cliffs, were bathed in silver white by a glorious tropical moon. Noiselessly we levelled it to the ground, rolled it up, and carried it to the boat.”

And that night the Gothas were foiled.

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“The subject of a war memorial was considered at a St. Sidwell's, Exeter, parish meeting. Many suggestions were offered, among them one that the present seating in the parish church should be replaced by plush-covered tip-up seats, such as are in use at kinemas and other places of entertainment.”—*Western Morning News*.

If the suggestion is adopted it is presumed that the name of the church will be altered to St. Sitwell.

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[Illustration: *Father Murphy*. “MIKE, COME HERE AND HOLD THE MULE FOR A FEW MINUTES.”



Mike (not stirring). "IT'S SORRY I AM, FATHER, BUT I DO BE DRAWIN' THE OUT-OF-WORK MONEY, AND I DARE NOT HOULD HER. BUT I'LL SAY 'STAND' TO HER FOR YOU, FATHER, IF I SEE HER ANYWAYS UNAISY.]"

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OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

In *Forty Days in 1914* (CONSTABLE), Major-General Sir F. MAURICE does more than revive our fading recollections of the retreat from Mons and the marvellous recovery on the Marne. A careful study of the German documents relating to VON KLUCK'S dash for Paris has led the author to form a new theory to account for the German defeat. Hitherto we have been asked to believe that VON KLUCK'S fatal change of direction, just when he seemed to have Paris at his mercy, was due to an urgent call for assistance from the CROWN PRINCE. General MAURICE holds, on the contrary, that it was deliberately adopted, at a moment when the CROWN PRINCE'S army was undefeated, in the belief that the French Fifth Army could be enveloped and destroyed, in which event "the whole French line would be rolled up and Paris entered after a victory such as history had never yet recorded." Thus, not for the first time, a too rigid adherence



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to MOLTKE'S theory of envelopment proved disastrous to the Germans' chances of success. It had first caused them to invade Belgium, and so brought Britain into the War at the very outset; it had next caused VON KLUCK to continue his westward sweep after Mons at a juncture when a vigorous pursuit by his cavalry might have turned the British retreat into a rout; and finally it caused him to execute the notoriously dangerous manoeuvre of changing front before an unbeaten foe, and to give JOFFRE the opportunity for which he had been patiently waiting. The fact was that VON KLUCK did not think the British were unbeaten. He could not conceive that men who had just endured such a harassing experience as the seven days' continuous retreat could possibly be in a condition to turn and fight. Not for the first or last time in the War German psychology was woefully at fault. Whether General MAURICE'S theory is correct or not, it is most attractively set forth, and, thanks to the excellent maps with which the volume is provided, can be easily followed even by the non-military reader.

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There was at first a little danger of my being put off *Fruit of Earth* (METHUEN) by the uneasy manner of its opening chapters and a style that it is permissible to call distinctly "fruity." Thus on page 5 J. MILLS WHITHAM is found writing about "an astonishment that nearly smudged the last spark of vitality from a hunger-bitten author," and a good deal more in the same style. But I am glad to say that the tale subsequently pulls itself together, and, despite some occasional high-falutin, becomes an interesting and human affair. It is a story of country life, the main theme of which is a twofold jealousy, that of the chronic invalid, *Mrs. Linsell*, towards the girl *Mary*, whom she rightly suspects of displacing her in the thoughts of *Inglebury*; and that of *Amos*, who marries *Mary*, towards *Inglebury*, whom he rightly suspects of occupying too much room in the reflections of his wife. In other words, the simple life at its most suspicious, with the rude forefathers of the hamlet supplying a scandalous chorus. The strongest part of the story is the tragedy, suggested with a poignancy almost too vivid, of the wretched elder woman, tortured in mind and body, morbidly aware of the contrast between her own decay and the vitality of her rival. As to *Inglebury* and *Mary*, the causes of all the pother, they struck me as conspicuously unworth so much fussing over; and, when their final flight together landed them—well, where it did, I could only feel that the neighbourhood was to be congratulated. But, as you see, I had by this time become unwillingly interested. So there you have it; an unequal book, about people unattractive but alive.

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When the literary Roll of Honour of all the belligerents comes to be considered quietly, in the steady light of Peace, not many names will stand higher in any country than that of our English writer, HECTOR HUGH MUNRO, whose subtle and witty satires, stories and fantasies were put forth under the pseudonym "SAKI." I have but to name *The Chronicles of Clovis* for discriminating readers to know what their loss was when MUNRO (who, although over age, had enlisted as a private and refused a commission) fell fighting in the Beaumont-Hamel action in November 1916. Mr. JOHN LANE has brought out, under the title *The Toys of Peace*, a last collection of "SAKI'S" fugitive works, with a sympathetic but all too brief memoir by Mr. ROTHAY REYNOLDS. Although "SAKI" is only occasionally at his very best in this volume—on the grim side, in "The Interlopers," and in his more familiar irresponsible and high-spirited way in "A Bread-and-Butter Miss" and "The Seven Cream Jugs;" although there may be no masterpiece of fun or raillery to put beside, say, "Esme;" there is in every story a phrase or fancy marked by his own inimitable felicity, audacity or humour. It is good news that a complete uniform edition of his books is in preparation.

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I can't help feeling that ISABEL ECCLESTONE MACKAY'S chief aim in *Up the Hill and Over* (HURST AND BLAOKETT) was to write a convincing tract for the times on a subject which is achieving unhappy prominence in America as in our own police-courts. A worthy aim, I doubt not. One of the chief characters is a drug-taker; and as if that were not enough another is "out of her head," while a third, *Dr. Callandar*, the Montreal specialist, is in the throes of a nervous breakdown. This seems to me to be distinctly overdoing it. It is the doctor's love-story (a story so complicated that I cannot attempt a *precis*) which is the designedly central but actually subordinate theme. I have the absurd idea that this might really have begun life as a pathological thesis and suffered conversion into a novel. The author has no conscience in the matter of the employment of the much-abused device of coincidence. And I don't think the story would cure anyone of drug-taking. On the contrary.

* * * * *

The Three Black Pennys (HEINEMANN) is a story that began by perplexing and ended by making a complete conquest of me. Its author, Mr. JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER, is, I think, new to this side of the Atlantic; the publishers tell me (and, to prevent any natural misapprehension, I pass on the information at once) that he belongs to "a Pennsylvania Dutch family, settled for many generations in Philadelphia." Which being so, one can enjoy his work with a free conscience. It certainly seems to me very unusual in quality. The theme of the tale is the history of the *Penny* family, or rather of the periodical outcrop in it

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of a certain strain that produces *Pennys* dark of countenance and incalculable of conduct. This recurrence is shown in three examples: the first, *Howart Penny*, in the days when men wore powder and the *Penny* forge had just been started in what was then a British colony; the next, *Jasper*, involved in a murder trial in the sixties; and; last of the black *Pennys*, another *Howart*, in whom the family energy has thinned to a dilettante appreciation of the arts, dying alone amongst his collections. You can see from this outline that the book is incidentally liable to confound the skipper, who may find himself confronted with (apparently) the same character tying a periwig on one page and hiring a taxi on another. I am mistaken though if you will feel inclined to skip a single page of a novel at once so original and well-told. As a detail of criticism I had the feeling that the “blackness” of the *Penny* exceptions would have shown up better had we seen more of the family in its ordinary rule; but of the power behind Mr. HERGESHEIMER’S work there can be no question. He is, I am sure, an artist upon a quite unusual scale, from whom great things may be anticipated.

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If neither book of short stories before me is what Americans call “the goods,” I can, at any rate, say that *Ancient Mariners* (MILLS AND BOON) does infinite credit to Mr. MORLEY ROBERTS’S imagination. These yarns of seafaring men are salt with the savour of the sea and with the language thereof. Of the seven my favourite is “Potter’s Plan,” which not only contains the qualities to be found in the other half-dozen, but also has an ingenuity all its own. But perhaps you will prefer “A Bay Dog-Watch,” as coming home to the general bosom, for it deals with a ferocious hunt after matches which recalls the deadly days of the shortage. Of the five stories in Mr. WARWICK DEEPING’S *Countess Glikka* (CASSELL) the best is “Bitter Silence.” Here the author deals with essentials, and gives us a tale entirely free from artificiality. The remaining stories are marred by their lack of naturalness; but Mr. DEEPING is never at a loss for incident, and he can write dialogue which is often gay and sometimes witty.

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[Illustration: THE PASSING OF THE COUPON. *Our Grocer* (gone dotty with joy). “SHE LOVES ME—SHE LOVES ME NOT—SHE LOVES ME!”]