

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 153, December 12, 1917 eBook

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CHARIVARIA.

A "Company for Oversea Enterprises" has been formed in Hamburg. It has no connection with the German High Sea Fleet.

A guinea a dozen is being offered for rabbits in the Isle of Wight. Most of them, however, are holding back for a War bonus.

A Newcastle man who has been missing for eleven months has just turned up at his home. He excused himself on the grounds that the tea queue was rather a long one.

There are reports current of an impending strike of brewery workers in the North. Several employees have threatened to "Down Beer."

Confirmation is still awaited of the rumour that several food ships have recently torpedoed themselves rather than fall into the hands of the profiteers.

The statement that Viscount *Northcliffe* has refused the post of Minister of Health is without foundation. It is no secret, however, that he would decline the position even if he should offer it to himself.

Double-headed matches are impracticable, according to the Tobacco and Matches Control Board. The sorts with detachable heads, however, will continue to be manufactured.

A Norfolk fisherman with twenty-six children has been fined five shillings for neglecting seven of them. His offence is thought to have been due to oversight.

According to the Lord Mayor of *Dublin* there is plenty of food in Ireland. In the best Sinn Fein circles it is thought that this condition of things points to an attempt on the part of the Government to bring discredit on the sacrificial devotion of the Separatists.

So realistic has the stage become of late that in *The Boy* at the Adelphi, Mr. W.H. *Berry* (we give the rumour for what it is worth) sits down to a meal of wood cutlets.

In order that no confusion may be caused among guests the Government has been requested to have a "take over" whistle blown in the corridors before they commandeer the next hotel.

It seems that TROTZKY is to have no nonsense. He has even threatened to make lynching illegal.

The *Neue Freie Presse* describes *Lenin* as the revolutionary with kings at his feet. He also seems to have several knaves up his sleeve.

A Brixton lady has left the sum of four hundred pounds to her dog. It would be interesting to hear the family solicitor asking him whether he would take it in War Bonds or bones.

The Timber Commission reports a grave shortage of birch, and a number of earnest ushers are asking, "What is the use of the censorship?"

It is now declared that the high explosive found on Countess MARKIEVICZ'S "green scouts" was not intended for destructive purposes. Mr. *De Valera*, M.P., was merely going to eat it.

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Many grocers and publicans, it is stated, have already been combed out of the Welsh coal mines. Efforts to comb the others out of their gold mines are meeting with only indifferent success.

British grit will win, declares Sir *William Robertson*. If some of our elderly statesmen will refrain from dropping theirs into the machinery.

The London Fire Brigade has been given permission to form a band. The lack of some method of keeping the crowd amused at the more protracted fires has often proved an embarrassment to the force.

The big elephant at the Zoo has been destroyed, says a news item. A maximum price for potted game is already being considered by the Food Ministry.

Charged with selling bacon that was bad, a firm of grocers pleaded that the stuff had been released by the Government. At first sight it looked as if it had merely escaped from custody.

The man who was last week charged at a London police court with posing as a Government official has been put back for the state of his mind to be inquired into.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Scandalised Voice from Gallery*. “‘Ere, WOT’S the paper controller DOIN’?”]

* * * * *

“The late Mr. Merryweather, who was in his 78th year, was responsible for great developments in fire-lighting appliances.”—*Scotsman*.

A good scheme—light it first and fight it afterwards.

* * * * *

“Supposing a wolf were to attack you and your family, what would you do?—Mr. Hedderwick.

“I would point out that season tickets are issued by railway companies only as an act of grace.—Sir William Forbes.”—*The Star*.

Our contemporary heads this “Words Winged To-day.”

* * * * *

From “A Word to the Churches,” by Miss *Marie Corelli*:—

“‘A word’ of solemn warning was uttered by the Angel of the Seven Spirits to the Church in Sardis....

“And this ‘word’ was fulfilled to the letter, for, as Herodotus tells us, ‘Sardis was taken and utterly sacked.’”—*Daily Graphic*.

We fancy the passage must occur in Book X., in which we also find the famous account of the capture of Timbuctoo by the Roman Emperor Montezuma in the fourth Punic War—or was it the fifth Crusade?

* * * * *

To the German people.

Each to his taste: if you prefer
The KAISER’S whip across your flanks;
If you enjoy the bloody spur
That rips your cannon-fodder’s ranks;
If to his boots you still adhere,
Kissing ’em as you’ve always kissed ’em,
Why, who are we to interfere
With your internal Teuton system?

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If from your bonds you know quite well
You might, this moment, find release,
Changing, at will, your present hell
For Liberty's heaven of lasting peace;
If yet, for habit's sake, you choose
This reign of steel, this rule of terror,
It's not for us to push our views
And point you out your silly error.

Herein I speak as I am taught—
That your affairs are yours alone,
Though, for myself, I should have thought
They had a bearing on my own;
Have I no right to interpose,
Urging on you a free autonomy,
Just as your U-boats shove their nose
In my interior economy?

I'm told we have no quarrel, none,
With you as Germans. That's absurd.
Myself, I hate all sorts of Hun,
Yet will I say one kindly word:
If, still refusing Freedom's part,
You keep the old Potsdam connection,
With all my sympathetic heart
I wish you joy of that selection.

O.S.

* * * * *

An order of the day.

In my opinion the value of the stock letter has distinct limitations. What I mean to say is that if there is in a Government office a series of half a dozen standard epistles, one or other of which can be used as a reply to the majority of the conundrums that daily serve to bulge the post-bag of the "controller" or "director," the selection of the appropriate missive should not be left purely to chance.

Last month I wrote to the Methylated Spirit Controller:—

"*Dear sir,*—Referring to the recent Methylated Spirit (Motor Fuel) Restriction Order, No. 2, 1917, I wish to know whether I am at liberty to use my car as a means of conveyance

to a farm about ten miles away where the rabbits are eating the young blades of wheat. A friend has invited me to help him shoot them—the rabbits, I mean.”

Well, that was lucid enough, wasn't it? But the reply was not so helpful as I could have wished. It opened intelligibly with the words “Dear Sir,” but continued:—

“I am directed by the Methyated Spirit Controller to inform you that the employment of a hackney motor vehicle, not licensed to ply for hire, as a conveyance to divine service constitutes a breach of Regulation 8 ZZ of the Defence of the Realm Regulations.”

Not a word about the rabbits, you see.

I was so fascinated by the unexpected results of my first effort that I tried again, this time breaking new ground.

“*Dear sir,*” I wrote,—“Referring to Methyated Spirit (Motor Fuel) Restriction Order, No. 2, 1917, am I at liberty to use my car daily to take my children to their school, which is five miles from my residence? The only alternative form of conveyance available is a donkey and cart, the employment of which means that my offspring would have to start overnight.”

I received a quite polite but rather chilly answer:—

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"I am directed by the Methylated Spirit Controller to inform you that the class of necessary household affairs for which methylated spirit may be employed as a motor fuel comprises the conveyance from the nearest convenient source of supply of foodstuffs, fuel and medical requisites, provided that they cannot be obtained without undue delay by any means of conveyance other than a motor car."

My interest thoroughly stimulated by this time, I made yet one more attempt. I wrote:—

"*Dear sir*,—Referring to Methylated Spirit (Motor Fuel) Restriction Order, No. 2, 1917, I wish to sell my car"—which was true—"but how, as I am now practically debarred from driving it on the road, am I to give an intending purchaser a trial run?"

This was evidently a shrewd thrust, which required consideration, and I heard nothing for a fortnight, during which I disposed of the car to the proprietor of the local garage. At last the well-known O.H.M.S. envelope gladdened my eyes. The letter within it, apologetic but dignified in tone, is, I fancy, the most popular in stock. It said:—

"I am directed by the Methylated Spirit Controller to express regret that there is no trace of the correspondence to which you refer."

I left it at that.

* * * * *

Sugar cards and Wills.

TO THE MANAGER OF THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT, "PUNCH."

Sir,—I am one of the executors and trustees of the will of a relation who cannot, I fear, live for many weeks. Included in his property will be a sugar card; and to you, Sir, I turn for advice and guidance in the responsibilities which I am shortly to assume.

1. Will the Government accept a sugar card (as they do War Stock) in payment of Estate Duty?
2. What is the correct method of valuation? Does one calculate the market price by so many years' purchase based on one's estimate of the duration? Or will quotations be obtainable on the Stock Exchange?
3. My relative has left it in the discretion of his Trustees to distribute a part of his estate for charitable purposes. Could the Trustees, under their discretionary power, hand the card to the Trafalgar Square authorities in reduction of the National Debt? Or ought they first to obtain the consent of the residuary legatees?

4. There is a tenancy for life of part of the residue. If the card is comprised in such part, and the tenant for life became bankrupt, would the card vest in his Trustee in Bankruptcy? If so, what becomes of the remaindermen's rights? Perhaps the best plan would be to put on a *distringas* with the deceased's grocer.
5. Have the Trustees power on their own initiative to lease the card for a term of years? Or should the approval of the transaction by the Court, under the Settled Estates Act, be first obtained?

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6. With whom do the Executors register the Probate, so as to perfect their title? Lord RHONDDA, Sir A. Yapp, or the grocer?

7. On the true construction of the Finance Acts, 1894-1916, do you consider that a sugar card is “Free Personal Property,” or “Settled Property,” or “An Estate by itself,” or “Property in which the deceased’s interest was less than an absolute interest.” The card is apparently “aggregable” with something or other for the purposes of duty. Would this be the testator’s furniture?

Yours, *etc.*, A constant Reader.

* * * * *

[Illustration: [struck through: *German*] *East Africa*.]

* * * * *

[Illustration: *First Tommy (in lorry)*. “YOU’VE STOOD THERE WATCHING US LONG ENOUGH. I SUPPOSE YOU FIND US INTERESTING?”

Second Tommy. “NOA. A WUR JUST THINKIN’ O’ WHEN T’ PUNCH AND JUDY SHOW USED TO COOM TO OORR VILLAGE.”]

* * * * *

THE WATCH DOGS.

LXVII.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—In the little village I’m thinking of it is a sight on no account to be missed to see the same old British Tommy shopping by telepathy. He doesn’t speak their language and they don’t speak his, and when the article required is not in the window or on the counter to be indicated by the thumb, a deadlock would appear to be inevitable. Our Master Thomas, however, never did realise what a deadlock is; he goes on till he gets what he wants. So you see them in pairs, taking up a stolid position at the counter, obstinately stating and re-stating their demands in a composite language of which the foreign element is almost negligible, until the merchant or his wife gives in and produces the article required. I know one simple soldier who managed to reconcile himself to the confirmed habit amongst the French people of addressing each other in the French language, but could never understand their addressing horses and dogs in such an unintelligible tongue. “If you want a dog to come ‘ere, why not say ‘Come ‘ere!’ and ‘ave done with it?” Men may learn strange lingoes to humour their fellow-men, but how can any dog be expected to understand “*Viens ici*”?

Three years and some odd months have not changed this point of view; and now for Thomas to find himself in Italy is only to discover another lot of unfortunate people who cannot understand or make themselves understood. A little thing like that, however, is not going to be allowed to stand between friends; already new words and phrases are being coined, mutually acceptable to both parties.

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The first sign I saw of our arrival in this country was a derelict mess-tin on a country station platform; at the next station I saw a derelict rifle; at the next a whole derelict kit, and lastly a complete-in-all-parts derelict soldier. He was surrounded by a small crowd of native men, women and children, anxious to show their appreciation of his nation by assisting himself. They were doing their utmost to ascertain his needs; they were trying him with slices of bread, a *fiasco* of chianti, words of intense admiration, flowers. It was none of these things he wanted; he had only missed his train and wanted to know what to do about it. But how were they to know that? When a Latin misses his train he doesn't sit down stolidly and think slowly.

I went to his aid. From the manner in which he rose to salute me they guessed that I was the Commander-in-Chief of all the English, and were for giving me an ovation. Thomas explained his trouble to me in half-a-dozen words; I solved it for him in even fewer. Thomas and I quite understood each other, and there was no want of sympathy and fellow-feeling between us. To the small crowd, however, this was the extreme of brutal curtness. They now thought I was of the English *carabinieri*, and that Thomas was being led off to his execution. They were visibly cowed.

But the situation is not so simple and clearly defined as it was in the first place. In the old days either we were English and they weren't, or they were French and we weren't. There was no *tertium quid*. Now things are more complicated. As Thomas and I stood on the platform, loving each other silently and unostentatiously, a cheery musical train of *poilus* laboured into the station. There was nothing silent or curt about them: they were all for bread and chianti and flowers and ovations or any other old thing the crowd cared to offer. Anything for a jest and to pass the time of day. Between the French troops and the Italian crowd the matter was clear enough. Next-door neighbours, molested by the same gang of roughs in the same brutal manner, quite understand each other and the general situation when they climb over each other's garden fences to put the matter to rights. It was the presence of Thomas and myself which put such an odd complexion on the whole affair.

Between ourselves and the crowd it was "Long live Italy!" and "Long live England!" Between the *poilus* and the crowd it was "Long live Italy!" and "Long live France!" But between the *poilus* and ourselves there were no signs of any desire that England or France might endure another day. And yet the crowd couldn't suppose that we didn't like each other, for the knowing looks which passed between the hilarious *poilu* and slowly smiling Thomas clearly indicated some strange and intimate relation. The crowd just didn't know what to make of it all and what exactly was between these odd strangers, who seemed

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to have everything in common but nothing to say to each other. For ourselves, I think it made us feel homesick, and the home which Thomas and I felt sick for (if you can believe it of us) was a certain estaminet we know of and a cup of caffy-o-lay. It was at this moment I first realised that, as between England and France, there are no longer such things as foreigners; either we've become French or they've become English, or else the two of us have combined into a new mixture which hasn't yet got a name to it.

I think, though one doesn't talk much out here about glorious alliances, some deep feelings were being felt all round. Diversion was ultimately provided by the arrival of an imposing figure in dark blue, with a lot of gilt about him. The *poilu* put him down as an Italian cavalry officer, and expressed the further hope that Italy would endure for ever. The Italian crowd took him for something English, but not being able to judge whether he was greater or less than myself, contented themselves with an attitude of non-committal reverence all round. Thomas informed me that he was a French Staff Officer and displayed no further interest. Though I cannot tell you what in the name of goodness he was doing in those parts, he was in fact an American Naval Officer,

In short, Charles, alliances are things as wonderful to see as they are magnificent to read about. I do, however, regard with something approaching alarm the new language which will be evolved to put the lot of us on complete speaking terms.

Yours ever, HENRY.

* * * * *

[Illustration: "EXCUSE ME, BUT IS THERE AN AIR-RAID ON?"

"YES, I THINK SO."

"I'M MUCH OBLIGED. MY FRIEND'S UP FROM THE COUNTRY AND HE'S NEVER SEEN ONE."]

* * * * *

A LIGHT REPAST.

"Under existing conditions, it is the duty of every citizen to confine his present consumption to an average of six matches a day, which with careful economy ought to suffice for all reasonable meals during the present emergency."—*Daily Mail*.

* * * * *

“At Leeds Assizes yesterday sentences were passed by Mr. Justice Boche ...”—*Times*.

Does not this almost amount to contempt of court?

* * * * *

From a speech by the Lord Mayor of DUBLIN:—

“That would be a crying evil, to leave the poor people in the city without milk. It would be a wise thing if the Corporation would take the bull by the horns and deal with the matter.”—*Dublin Evening Mail*.

It might be still wiser to tackle the cow at the udder end.

* * * * *

THE INCORRUPTIBLES.

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[Herr SCHAEFF, writing in the *Taegliche Rundschau* on the spiritual grandeur of Germany, declares that the degradation of her enemies will not prevent her doing honour to those dauntless men who in enemy and neutral countries have stood for truth and actualities. "The time will come when we shall mention their names and call them our friends. After the War we shall do homage to these men and to their incorruptible conduct. We shall erect monumental brasses in their honour. They are heroes, and their memories shall be consecrated."]

A literary spokesman of the Huns
Pays liberal homage to those "dauntless" sons
Of hostile nations, who have all along
Maintained their fellow-countrymen were wrong.
No guerdon for their courage is too great,
But, till the War is ended, they must wait;
Then shall Germania, with grateful soul,
Inscribe their names upon her golden roll;
And "monumental brasses" shall attest
The zeal wherewith they strove to foul their nest.

Such homage no one grudges them in lands
Where eulogy for deep damnation stands;
But in the Motherland they still infest
How shall we treat this matricidal pest?
No torture, not the worst their patrons use
On starving women or on shipwrecked crews,
No pain however bitter would requite
Their transcendental infamy aright.

Death in whatever form were all too mild
For those who at their country's anguish smiled.
Oblivion is by far the bitterest woe
England's professional revilers know,
Who joyously submit to be abhorred
But suffer grinding torments if ignored.
So let them live, renounced by their own sons,
And taste the amnesty that spares and shuns.

* * * * *

"Mrs. J.M. B—— (nee Nurse ——), a son."—*Scotsman*.

Nurses, like poets, are born, not made.

* * * * *

THE PLAY'S THE THING.

Just outside Mrs. Ropes' drive gates there lies a famous and exclusive golf course, and when she turned her house into a Convalescent Home the secretary wrote offering the hospitality of the club to all officers who might come under her care.

Nevertheless, when Haynes and I first arrived, we were both too languid and feeble for any more exacting form of athletics than spillikins and jigsaws, and it was some time before the M.O. gave us permission to go on the links.

"And remember," he added, "gently to begin with. Stop at the thirteenth hole."

* * * * *

"Of course," I said apologetically to Haynes as we neared the club-house, "I was pretty putrid before the War, so I shall be simply indescribable now."

"My dear chap, this isn't going to be a match. Keep your excuses till we play serious golf. To-day's just a gentle knock round. Here we are. I'll go and borrow some clubs; you get a couple of caddies."

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Five minutes later he rejoined me, carrying two sets of clubs.

“Hallo!” he remarked in surprise. “I didn’t know you’d brought your family. Introduce me.”

“Mabel,” I said, “and Lucy—our caddies.”

“Girls?”

“They have that appearance. Why not?”

“They’ll cramp my style horribly; I like to be free.”

“Can’t you be free in French for once?”

“Most unsatisfying. Why didn’t you get boys?”

“The caddy-master says (a) girls are better; (b) he has no boys; (c) all the boys he has are booked by plutocrats with season tickets.”

“Oh, all right. Here are your clubs—the pro. gave me the only two sets he had available. You’re a bit taller than I am, so I’ve given you the long ones.”

I looked at them critically.

“Doesn’t a pair of stilts go with them?” I asked.

“Well, mine are worse. Just a bundle of toothpicks. Here, catch hold, Lucy.”

Mabel teed up for me. I selected a driver about the length of a telegraph pole and swept my ball away. It stopped just short of the first bunker.

Haynes bent himself double to address his ball, but straightened up while swinging and missed it by a foot. At the second attempt he hooked it over square-leg’s head on to the fairway of the eighteenth hole.

“*Sacre bleu!*” he said with very fair freedom, “I’m not going all that way after it. Lucy, run and fetch it, there’s a dear.”

Lucy, highly scandalized at the idea of losing a hole so tamely, started off; Mabel and Haynes and I went after my ball.

I took the mashie, because I distrusted my ability to carry the bunker with another telegraph pole. That mashie would have been about the right length for me if I could have stood on a chair while making my stroke. As it was it entered the ground two feet behind the ball and emerged, with a superb divot, just in front.

"Aren't there *any* short clubs in the bag, Mabel?" I asked. She handed me a straight-faced putter ...

Five strokes later I picked my ball up out of the bunker.

"I'm over-exerting myself," I said. "We'll call that hole a half."

Neither of us was satisfied with his tee shot at the next hole. I picked my ball out of a gorse-bush, and Haynes rescued his from a drain. Then we strolled amicably towards the third tee. Our caddies, unused to such methods, followed reluctantly.

"Was that 'ole 'alved, too, Sir?" piped Mabel with anxious interest.

"It's a nice point. I hardly know. Why?"

She hung her head and blushed. A sudden suspicion struck me.

"Mabel," I said sternly, "are you—*can* you be—*betting* on this game?"

"Yes, Sir," she answered with a touch of defiance. "Boys always does."

I told Haynes, who appeared profoundly shocked.

"Good G——! I mean, *Mon dieu!*" he exclaimed. "What are we doing?"

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"Surely you can't hold us responsible? The child's parents ..."

"I don't mean *that*, you ass. Here we have the innocent public putting its money on our play, and we're treating the whole thing as a joke. This has got to be a match, after all. A woman's fortune hangs upon the issue—doesn't it, Lucy?"

"Yes, Sir," she answered without comprehension.

From this point the game became a grim struggle. I won the third hole in seventeen, but Haynes took the fourth in nineteen to my twenty-two.

At the fifth I noticed a pond guarding the green. I carefully circumvented this with my faithful putter and holed out in my smallest score of the round so far.

"Hi!" shouted Haynes. "How many?" He had been having a little hockey practice by himself in the rough, and was now preparing to play an approach shot across the pond.

"Twelve!"

"Then I've this for the hole," he yelled, and topped his ball gently into the water ...

So it went on—what the papers call a ding-dong struggle. Suffice it to say that at the twelfth I was dromy one and in a state of partial collapse.

The thirteenth is a short hole. You drive from a kind of pulpit, and the green is below you, protected by large stiff-backed bunkers like pews.

"Last hole, thank Heaven," panted Haynes. "I couldn't bear much more. I'm all of a dither as it is."

Mabel, twittering with excitement, teed up. I looked at the green lying invitingly below and took that gigantic putter. The ball, struck with all my little remaining strength, flew straight towards the biggest bunker, scored a direct hit on the top of it, bounced high in the air—and trickled on to the green.

Haynes invoked the Deity (even at that stressful moment, to his eternal credit, in French) and took his miniature driver. His ball, hit much too hard, pitched in the same bunker, crossed it, climbed up the face of it, and joined mine on the green. Utterly unnerved, we toddled down and took our putts. Haynes, through sheer luck (as he admits), laid his ball stone dead; I had a brain-storm and over-ran the hole, leaving myself a thirty-foot putt for the match. I took long and careful aim, but my hands were shaking pitifully. The ball started on a grotesquely wrong line, turned on a rise in the ground, cannoned off a worm-cast and plopped into the tin. Mabel gave a shriek of joy, and Lucy—well, I regret to say that Lucy made use of a terse expression the French

equivalent of which her employer had been at great pains to remember. Haynes and I lay flat on the ground, overcome as much by emotion as by our physical weakness.

At last I struggled to a sitting posture.

“Mabel,” I croaked, “I shall want at least ten per cent. commission for that. How much have you won?”

“Please, Sir,” she cooed happily, “a ’a’p’ny, Sir.”

* * * * *

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THE MERRY WIDOW (GRASS).

“Mother’s help, to assist lady; husband away; happy home.”—*Birmingham Daily Post*.

* * * * *

“A St. Cleather man, who had planted a wastrel, is to be invited to attend the next meeting.”—*Western Morning News*.

Surely they don’t want the wastrel dug up again.

* * * * *

[Illustration: FRATERNISING AT THE FRONT.

Nervous Tommy (on outpost duty for the first time). “OO GOES THERE?”

Bosch Scout. “FRIEND.”

Tommy. “ADVANCE AN’ BE RECONCILED.”]

* * * * *

A NEW USE FOR LATIN.

BY OUR CLASSICAL EXPERT.

“Greek is in the last ditch,” writes Sir HENRY NEWBOLT in his *New Study of English Poetry*; “Latin is trembling at sight of the thin edge of the wedge.” Still a hope of saving Latin—within limits—yet remains, if the appeal of “Kismet” in *The Spectator* meets with a sympathetic response. He asks the readers of that journal “to render into Latin in two or three words the old cricket adjuration, ‘Play the game.’” He has already had some suggestions, including “*Lude ludum*,” from “an eminent scholar,” but, like the late Mr. TOOLE in one of his most famous songs, still he is not happy.

In rendering colloquial phrases into the lapidary style of ancient Rome, I confess it is often hard to improve on the brevity of the vernacular, though the admonition “to keep your end up” can be condensed from four words to two in “*sursum cauda*.” Again the familiar eulogy, “Stout fellow,” can be rendered in a single word by the Virgilian epithet “*bellipotens*.” A distinguished Latinist recalls in this context the sentiment of the writer, Pomponius Caninus:—

*Rebus in adversis comitem sors prospera pinguem
Det mihi.*

And to the same authority I am indebted for the following version of “Don’t speak to the man at the wheel:”—

O silete, circumstantes
Nautas rotam operantes.

Though Latin is tottering at our schools it occasionally pops up in unexpected places. For example, not very long ago I heard a popular comedian introduce his family motto and translate it for the benefit of a music-hall audience. Latin quotations, even from HORACE, have gone out of fashion in the Houses of Parliament. Perhaps they will revive on the stage. The unfair preference for Greek shown by doctors in the nomenclature of disease is perhaps to be explained by the value of unintelligibility. Did not DAN O’CONNELL, in his famous vituperative contest with a Dublin washer-woman, triumph in the long-run by calling her an unprincipled parallelopiped?

Meanwhile I appeal to the Editor of *The Westminster Gazette*, who, in his Saturday edition, has done so much to maintain the practice of classical composition, to offer a prize in one of his periodical competitions for the best Latin version, of “to buck up,” “to stick it out,” “a bit thick,” “talking through one’s hat,” “I don’t think,” “blighter,” “rotter,” and “not ‘arf.”

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ECCLESIASTICAL INTELLIGENCE.

“Mr. Zangwill (the Chief Rabbi) also spoke.”—*Daily News*.

Following the appointment (recently announced by Mr. Punch) of Mr. H.G. WELLS as Chaplain to the Forces.

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From a cattle-auction advertisement:—

“NOTE.—Pigs and Calves are requested to be forward by 11 o'clock.”—*Kirkendbrightshire Advertiser*.

Vive la politesse!

* * * * *

“The hereditary privilege of remaining covered in the presence of the Monarch was granted by Henry VIII. to John Forester of Watling Street, in 1570.”—*Observer*.

We wonder what GOOD QUEEN BESS thought about this posthumous interference on the part of her papa.

* * * * *

From Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL'S latest novel:—

“It was, indeed, something of an achievement to get on terms of confidence with those alien children ... many of whom had acquired a precocious suspicion of Greeks bearing gifts. That sense of *caveat donor* was perhaps their most pathetic characteristic.”

Timeo Danaos et dona accipientes! Which may be roughly rendered: “I suspect TINO, even when he's in receipt of a subsidy.”

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[Illustration: “WELL. IT'S TIME WE WERE OFF. BUT—PARDON ME, MRS. GOLDBERG—DO YOU THINK YOU OUGHT TO WEAR SO MANY PEARLS AT AN ECONOMY MEETING?”



"ALL RIGHT. I WON'T IF YOU THINK NOT. BUT AS A MATTER OF FACT THEY ARE AN ECONOMY. YOU SEE, MY HUSBAND IS PUTTIN' HIS MONEY IN PEARLS TO SAVE INCOME-TAX."]

* * * * *

LAVENDER.

I'm tickled by a pansy, wot's called an 'Appy Thought;
I'm gone on yaller "Glories" of the proper smelly sort;
And once I 'eld gerani-ums was grander than the rest,
But now I likes the lavender, the simple-lookin' lavender,
A little bit o' lavender the best.

My mate 'e'd been a gardener; 'is roses wasn't beat;
'Is marrers was a marvel and 'is storberries a treat;
But w'en 'e leave 'is corliflow'rs an' lettuce to enlist,
'E said it was the lavender, 'is blinkin' bit o' lavender,
A silly patch o' lavender 'e missed.

In France I used to foller 'im to gather up the bits;
'E "'adn't 'eard" o' snipers and 'e "wasn't 'eedin'" Fritz;
Till in a slip o' garden by the Convent 'e was copped,
And dahn among the lavender, the trodden sodden lavender,
The bloody muddy lavender 'e dropped.

A job it was to fix 'im up and do a double bunk,
But 'e was chattin' casual while I was oozin' funk;
'E yarned abaht the bits o' things 'e used to see at Kew,
An' told me of the lavender, the tidy lot of lavender,
The leagues an' leagues o' lavender 'e grew.

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They book 'im through to Blighty and 'e drop a line from 'ome,
Comparin' clay in Flanders with the proper British loam;
"An' w'en you gets yer seven days, you come along an' see
The roses an' the lavender, the lavender, the lavender ...
You oughter see the lavender!" says 'e.

My mate 'e 'ad a sister, w'ich I didn't even guess
Till I was at the wicker-gate an' see 'er cotton dress;
'Er face was sweet as summer-time an' pretty as a tune;
'Er eyes was like the lavender, the blue bewitchin' lavender,
As lovely as the lavender in June.

She bid me welcome kindly, an' as quiet as you please,
An' fust we talk o' battlefields an' then we talk o' bees;
But, though the 'olly'ocks was aht an' all the roses red,
I only see the lavender, the patch o' purple lavender;
"I'm pleased you likes the lavender," she said.

I'm tickled by a pansy, wot's called an 'Appy Thought;
I'm gone on yaller "Glories" of the proper smelly sort;
An' once I 'eld gerani-ums was gayer than the rest,
But now I likes the lavender, a little sprig o' lavender,
I likes a bit o' lavender the best.

* * * * *

AN INFANT PRODIGY.

"Sir Frederick Smith, the Attorney-General, is 5, but does not look it for he keeps a full thatch and a fresh complexion, and has features so softly contoured that as a baby he must have been the pride of the family."—*Yorkshire Evening Post*.

* * * * *

ASIA IN EUROPE.

"Serbia has been crushed, and, with the exception of Salonika and the regions temporarily held by the British in Palestine and Mesopotamia, Germany holds command of Middle Europe.

"That becomes quite obvious when one looks at the map."

Mr. ROBERT BLATCHFORD in "*The Sunday Chronicle*."

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[Illustration: BETRAYED.

THE PANDER. "COME ON; COME AND BE KISSED BY HIM."]

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ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

Monday, December 3rd.—No further publicity is to be given to Lord LANSDOWNE'S letter if the Government can help it. But the author is not to be prosecuted and the rumour that Lansdowne House has been raided by the police and its noble owner's type writer confiscated lacks confirmation.

[Illustration: A STORY LACKING CONFIRMATION.]

A long and complicated answer by Mr. CLYNES, describing and defending the new sugar-cards, was not altogether satisfying. Sir F. BANBURY'S inquiry, "Does the hon. gentleman think that anybody will get any sugar after this?" was prompted, no doubt, by anxiety for the future of his famous cakes; but it expressed the general doubt.

Lord ROBERT CECIL, who has hitherto stoutly denied that the Allies have given ex-KING CONSTANTINE a retiring allowance, admitted that the Greek Government might make him some payment, and that the Allies furnished Greece with money. In other words, Greece has given TINO a penny to play in the next street, and the Allies have lent her the penny.

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Asked by Mr. GEORGE LAMBERT whether the labour expended on fitting gas-bags to motor cars could not be more usefully employed, the MINISTER OF NATIONAL SERVICE replied as follows: "The questions involved in the use of gas-bags, *including that raised by the hon. Member*, are being considered." And Mr. LAMBERT is now wondering whether Sir AUCKLAND GEDDES intended to be personal.

Tuesday, December 4th.—In answer to a question as to what steps the Board of Agriculture was taking to replant districts denuded of trees, Sir RICHARD WINFREY replied that "surplus nursery stock" would be transplanted by "gangs of women." Evidently surprised by the laughter which followed, he whispered to his neighbour, "Have I said anything very funny?"

At the end of a long catechism by Mr. KING regarding the literature issued by the War Aims Committee, Mr. OUTHWAITE inquired if it could be sent to Members of the House. Major GUEST was quite ready to oblige. In his opinion some Members, including Mr. OUTHWAITE himself, would be much the better for its perusal.

Mr. PRATT is about the last Minister whom I should have suspected of cynicism, but I have my doubts about him now. By his admission the British Pharmacopoeia (war edition) contains "Glycerins devoid of glycerin and syrups free from sugar." "But," he added, "it does not materially lessen their value as medicines."

Upon the House being asked to recommit the Representation of the People's Bill in respect of the provisions dealing with conscientious objectors and redistribution in Ireland, Mr. REDMOND, naturally anxious lest the House should imagine that Ireland's objection to military service was conscientious, requested the SPEAKER to divide the debate into water-tight compartments. No artificial restraints, however, could keep Mr. HEALY within bounds. He ranged at large over Irish history, and declared that the decision to impose on Ireland a (more or less) equitable system of representation was an outrage only to be compared with the breach of the Treaty of Limerick.

As a humourist on this occasion Mr. HEALY had to yield the palm to a colleague. The CHIEF SECRETARY incidentally referred to the arrangement that no contentious business should be taken during the War. "Except by agreement," interjected Mr. NUGENT.

[Illustration: SUGARLESS BANBURY CAKES.]

Wednesday, December 5th.—Not long ago Lord ROBERT CECIL referred to a rumour that the German Government intended to encourage polygamy. Mr. KING, shocked to discover that this charge rested upon a statement in a neutral newspaper, protested against the practice of making speeches "on such miserable foundations." As the bulk of the hon. Member's own utterances have a similar basis the retort was almost too obvious; and Mr. BALFOUR in making it must have felt as if he had shot his bird sitting.

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The courage of the hero who took up the challenge: "Whoever shall these boots displace, must meet Bombastes face to face," was comparatively nothing to that of Mr. H.W. FORSTER, who in the interests of economy has promised to limit the height of women's boots. There will be much stamping of lofty heels at this ukase. Sir JOHN REES thought another order lengthening skirts was the logical corollary, and so it is if the Government really want "to make both ends meet." But Mr. FORSTER showed no disposition to embark upon petticoat government.

Irish Nationalists worked themselves into seven different kinds of fury over the decision of the Government to apply the rules of arithmetic to the redistribution of seats in their beloved country. Mr. DILLON threatened the House with the possibility that at the next General Election he and his colleagues might be wiped out of existence. Scared by this awful prospect so many Liberals voted against the closure that the Government only escaped defeat by 29.

Thursday, December 6th.—The prospect of an all-night sitting rendered the House unusually irritable. Mr. HEALY fulminated at Sir E. CARSON (who was not present) in language that reminded Colonel SHARMAN-CRAWFORD of "a low police-court." Mr. DILLON'S high top note was ceaselessly employed in emitting adjectives more remarkable, as Mr. BONAR LAW icily observed, for their strength than for their novelty. At one time it looked as if there was to be a first-class Irish row. But wiser counsels ultimately prevailed. The House as a whole was in no mood for protracted discussion in which non-Irish moonlighters might participate.

At last there is hope that the instructions of the FOOD-CONTROLLER will have some practical result. To-day in reply to a question Mr. CLYNES said, "The order about to be issued will contain provisions ..." Ah! if it only will.

* * * * *

[Illustration: EVIDENCE.

Officer. "NOW, SERGEANT-MAJOR, WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THIS MAN WAS DRUNK?"

Sergeant-Major. "SIR, ON THE NIGHT OF THE 25TH, WHEN I MET THE ACCUSED, 'E RAISED 'IS 'AT, ACCOMPANYING THE MOTION WITH THE WORDS, 'GOOD EVENIN', BLUE BEARD!'"

* * * * *

THE LOST LEADER.

The Hillsbury Company of the 2nd Battalion of the Lastshire Volunteers were being inspected for efficiency by a Captain of the Grenadier Guards, who had graciously come

down and devoted his Sunday afternoon to this purpose. Forty “A” men had obeyed their country’s call and turned up on parade, and among the officers was Alfred Herbert, who was a second-lieutenant of the mature age of fifty. He was enthusiastic, but a slow learner, always confusing himself and his men. Still, he was obviously doing his best, and the men forgave him and did *their* best to cover up his faults.

“Mr. Herbert,” said the inspecting officer sharply, “be good enough to take the company out and move them about for a few minutes.”

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Herbert's heart began to beat at the double. He had known that this ordeal might come, but he had hoped against hope that, if he made himself small and meek, he would be overlooked. All was in vain; his time had come. "Drill them as a company of two platoons," said the stern Guardsman.

"Yes, Sir," said Herbert. "Shall I—"

"Take them out at once, Sir. We have no time to waste."

It was at this moment that Herbert's first dream, or I should rather say the first phase of his treble dream, began. He dreamt that he called the company to attention, caused them to slope arms, and moved them to the right in fours.

So far so good.

Now they were in columns of fours and marching gaily.

"This is a good dream," thought Herbert. "I will get them into line. On the right, form company!" he shouted at the top of his voice.

He had done it. He had got the rear rank in front, and this is a terrible state of affairs, leading to the most frightful complications—at any rate in the Lastshire Volunteers.

"Move to the right in fours!" he commanded; and then the trouble began.

In less than half a minute, forty deserving men, including N.C.O.'s, were tied up into a series of terrifically complicated knots, in the midst of which the Company Sergeant-Major bobbed about, an angry cork on a stormy ocean of desperate men.

"Very good, Mr. Herbert, oh, very good indeed," said the Inspecting Officer.

At this point Herbert passed into his second phase and dreamed that it was all a dream.

But the question remained: what was he to do?

"Double!" he shouted, and himself gave the example. And as he ran he passed into his third phase and dreamed it was all true; and he woke up with a start at the orderly room, and found that it was true.

That very evening he resigned his commission, "owing," as he wrote, "to an incurable habit of getting the rear rank in front."

What happened to the men I cannot say with certainty. I think they are still struggling.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Physical Exercise Instructor*. “ERE, YOU! WHAT THE DEUCE ARE YOU LARFING AT?”

Recruit. “OH, SERGEANT, I—I WAS THINKING WHAT PRICELESS BALLY ASSES WE MUST LOOK!”]

* * * * *

MEDITATIONS OF MARCUS O'REILLY.

ON THE DANGER OF POPULARITY.

The Ballybun Binnacle has ceased publication—I hope temporarily, for I have had to fall back on *The Times*. The latter is the better paper for wrapping things in, and they seem to use a good kind of ink which does not come off on the butter, but it's a bit weak on its advertising side. It was O'Mullins across the road who pointed this out to me first. He had, he says, an advertisement a whole week in *The Times* for a total abstainer to make himself otherwise useful and to mend his stable door; but no apparent notice was taken of it. The same advertisement had not been a couple of hours in *The Binnacle* before three tinkers tried to steal his horse.

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I have heard people speak well of the editorials in our chief London rival, but they are not thought much of in Ballybun; they haven't the flavour. Our paper used to be strongly political, but the increase in the number of subscribers did not pay for the libel actions, and so of late we have been cultivating an open mind and advertisements. It is true that even so it was impossible for Casey, our editor, to steer wholly clear of vexed political questions, but his latest manner was admirably statesmanlike. He would summarise the opposing views of our eight or nine parties and then state boldly that he agreed with most of them, and as for the rest he would not shrink to declare, in the face of the world if necessary, that they were full of an intellectual Zeitgeist, unfortunately only too sporadic. He would then sum up by drawing attention to the bargain sale of white goods at the Ballybun Emporium. Everybody liked this, and the Ballybun Bon Marche would send in its advertisement for our next week's issue.

The Binnacle has ceased publication, of course, before. When the editor took his summer holiday or went to a friend's wedding in the country he would often leave the bringing of it out to his staff. The latter used normally to edit the sporting and fashionable columns and was called Flannagan, but had only one eye and was somewhat eccentric. Flannagan couldn't be bothered sometimes and sometimes he would go fishing. Still, although the paper would not come out just when we expected, Flannagan might relent and bring it out two or three days later, and at all events he always told us the news whenever he met us in the street.

Thus we could not strictly say that we had no local newspaper. But now, I fear, the case is altered, and *The Binnacle* has been killed solely by its own popularity.

It doesn't do for an editor to be too popular. People used to drop in on Casey at all hours of the day and lend a hand and smoke his tobacco and try to borrow money. His sanctum became the fashionable lounge of the Ballybun *elite*. A great gap was caused in the front of the paper amongst the best paying advertisements by Kelly's trying to clean his pipe with part of the linotype machine. Casey noticed this, and further attributed the matter to the Censor, whom he attacked vigorously in a leading article for trying to throttle the safety-valve of trade by inoculating the thin end of the wedge; he will do this again, he added, at his own peril. He also told Kelly the same.

As our respected Member of Parliament is hanging tenaciously on to life, and we could not very well invite him to create a vacancy, we were at a loss how to mark our esteem for our popular editor in a practical manner. Casey himself suggested a testimonial. His friends, however, said that nothing sordid should ever enter into the feelings with which they regarded him, and decided finally on electing him to the second highest office a layman in our part can hope to hold. He was elected Judge—"unanimously," as he put it, "by 29 to 3"—and the race meeting came off last week. We hate to hold it in war-time, but the breed of horses and bookies must be kept up. Even the bed-ridden took a day off and trooped to it.

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Picture the feelings of the crowd when Casey merged the judge into the editor and kept declaring race after race a dead heat. They rose at him as one man and clamoured for souvenirs. What was left of Casey shook the dust of Ballybun off his feet, while our impulsive patriots were smashing his office furniture.

This only proves what I have often maintained, that popularity always makes a man unpopular in the long run. Meanwhile *The Ballybun Binnacle* has ceased to appear, but I see from *The Times* there has been a movement in Berlin in favour of letting bygones be bygones.

* * * * *

BOOKS AND BOOKS.

["The last books of the Winter season are creeping out, and some are important and some are not."—*Daily Chronicle*.]

The last books of Winter,
Some slim and some stout,
From the hands of the printer
Are now "creeping out";
And it's helpful to learn from
A man on the spot
That some are important
And others are not.

And yet the conviction
Expressed in this guise
In the matter of fiction
I'd like to revise;
For of the romances
Unceasingly shot
From the press, most are piffle
And very few not.

From minstrelsy's *melee*,
Its foam and its surge,
A Keats or a Shelley
May haply emerge;
Or there may be a Tupper
To leaven the lot—
Some bards are immortal
And others are not.



We're certain to meet with—
The stock never fails—
Some Memoirs replete with
Fatiguing details;
But the chance isn't great of
A Lockhart and Scott,
Or a Boswell and Johnson—
No, certainly not.

Some prophet whose coming
Is yet undivined
May set the world humming
And stagger mankind;
It may be a Darwin
Some publisher's got
Up his sleeve, or it may be
Some one who is not.

There may be some clinkers
Now "creeping" to light,
Tremendous deep thinkers
Or high in their flight;
There may be diffusers
Of air that is hot;
There may be a Bergson,
Again there may not.

Though the publishing season
Is now on the wane,
This isn't a reason
Why we should complain;
For the view of the expert—
His "i's" when we dot—
Is that some books are useful,
But most of them rot.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Hostess (playfully)*. "WHAT—HAVEN'T YOU FINISHED YET?"

Sandy (regarding cake, from which he has been told to help himself). "AH, BUT YE KEN, A CAKE O' THIS SIZE ISNA SAE SOON EATEN AS YE MAY THENK."]

* * * * *

From the report of a speech by the Chief Justice of New Zealand:—

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“His Excellency the Governor may make any conditions he pleases. In fact it is a case of ‘Hoc volo sic jubes; sit pro ratione valunters.’ I do not think the word can be read in that wide sense.”—*New Zealand Times*.

Nor do we.

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ANOTHER IMPENDING APOLOGY.

“INDIAN DEFENCE FORCE ORDERS. CALCUTTA SOTTISH.”—*The Empire (Calcutta)*.

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“Defendant was fined 20s. for the abusive language which, said the Chairman, was the worst the Magistrates had ever seen.”—*Provincial Paper*.

Or even tasted.

* * * * *

“Antiques are the ‘best sellers’ at all bazaars, and one meets hunters of them all over the country. I hear of Mrs. —— engaged on the chase at Bath for her charity scheme. The Duchess of —— was there, too, taking the waters.”—*Daily Mirror*.

Some of our collectors will stop at nothing.

* * * * *

ART TO THE RESCUE.

No means to get people to invest in War Bonds can be seriously objected to; but I must confess that when, on a railway station hoarding, I caught sight of a poster representing WHISTLER’S famous portrait of his mother, with the words, “Old Age is Coming,” printed across it, beneath an appeal to the public to be prudent about the future by buying Government stock now, I experienced a jolt. Because this picture has always been one of the sacred things, and to see it again was a necessary part of any visit to Paris. As to the shock which the sight would have caused the painter, were he alive to-day, the pen prefers to say little. Even with three patriotic motives to control him—for he was American by birth, French by sympathy, and English by residence—WHISTLER must have delivered his mind. That he would consider this anything but a gentle art of breaking enemies, is certain; nor can I see him holding his peace about it.

[Illustration: “These good dogs would prefer WAR BONDS to a bone.”]

Personally, however, I got over my own sense of the outrage very quickly. For the new War Bonds must succeed, and the end justifies the means, however desperate—that is how I looked at it, and therefore, instead of maintaining an attitude of preciousness, I began to wonder how I could assist the authorities (who had dared to bend the Butterfly to their purpose) to further useful acts of vandalism. Nothing should, I determined, stand in my way. Where they were merely “hairy,” I would be absolutely bald-headed. Hence, if there is anything in the suggestions that follow which may set the teeth of the reverent on edge, it must be attributed to honest zeal. All that I want is for the Kennedy-Jones of the movement to lift Art from her pedestal for a few days only—in the interests of the Allies and to the lasting detriment of Germany—and then replace her. But there is no need to trouble about the replacing. That will be automatic.

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Beginning with the postulate that War's sinews must be forthcoming, or HAIG and BYNG will batter at the Hun to insufficient purpose, we can do anything. Let then, I say, all the artists be conscripted, whether old masters or young. The facade of the National Gallery is to-day one vast hoarding advertising the progress of the Loan; let us go inside and levy upon its treasures too. A few pictorial suggestions will be found on this page; others will occur to its habitués, and doubtless the Trustees (although Lord LANSDOWNE is one) will be only too glad to fall in with the project.

[Illustration: "She's happy. She's bought WAR BONDS."]

BURNE-JONES'S "Cophetua and the Beggar Maid" hangs, for instance, in the National Gallery—temporarily borrowed from the Tate—at this moment. It would make a good piece of propaganda. "Why is the maid a beggar?" "Because her parents had not provided against the future by provident and patriotic speculation." Close by hangs, also on loan from the Tate, CECIL LAWSON'S "Harvest Moon." "Why on this most favourable of nights is there no raid?" "Because the success of the War Bonds brought about Germany's surrender." After the authorities' most admirable and desirable way with WHISTLER'S mother, you can do anything and should do anything. That is my point.

[Illustration: "Cut your cloth to leave a BIG margin for WAR BONDS."]

And not only the National Gallery, but the galleries of France and Italy, and even Germany herself. Perhaps Germany first of all, for there would be a piquancy in thus employing the cherished possessions of the foe. Could not something be done, for example, with the famous wax bust, the glory of the Kaiser Friedrich Collection, into which LEONARDO DA VINCI, as a finishing touch, crammed an early Victorian waistcoat before delivering the masterpiece to its owner? A really ingenious organiser should be able to make telling use of that, perhaps with a play on the word "investment." But meanwhile LEONARDO would, I am sure, be only too willing to suppress his sensitive feelings and assist his fellow-countrymen in their stand on the Piave by contributing "Monna Lisa." Some such words as these would serve: "Why is she smiling that satisfied smile?" "Because she has bought a nice little packet of War Bonds and thus insured a comfortable old age." At the same time TITIAN could help to save his Venice by lending the "Venus" from the Uffizi. "Why is this lady so naked?" "Because she neglected to invest in War Bonds, and thus had nothing with which to buy clothes later on." Or, if a French or English picture were preferred, INGRES' "La Source," from the Louvre, or LEIGHTON'S "Bath of Psyche" from the National Gallery, could be used with the same touching legend. But I feel that TITIAN should have the first chance. And there are living painters too who would come in. Our own old master—AUGUSTUS JOHN (who is now, I am told, a major)—would, no doubt, be delighted to lend the hoardings one of the pictures from his exhibition now in progress. The portrait of Mr. G.B. SHAW, for example, in which the eyes of the great seer are closed. "Why is

this old gentleman not looking at you?" "Because he is afraid you may not have bought any War Bonds and he can't bear to see anything unpatriotic."

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But enough has been said. The National War Bonds must be sold, and Art must help, and no one must wince.

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[Illustration: *Mother (in course of an arithmetic lesson).* "WHAT IS HALF FOUR?"

Daughter. "TWO."

Mother. "AND CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT IS HALF FIVE?"

Daughter. "WELL, MUMMIE, IT DEPENDS WHICH HALF YOU MEAN—THE TWO OR THE THREE."]

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OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

Many years ago, when I was younger and more optimistic than to-day, I thought out what struck me as an adventure-story of wonderful promise, and confided the plot to a friend, reputed expert in such matters. He heard me with indulgent attention and, when I had finished, "Capital," says he; "but do you propose to differentiate it in *any* way from *Dead Man's Rock*?" I am reminded of this ancient wound by the appearance of a new buccaneering book by Sir ARTHUR QUILLER-BOUCH; and that not only on account of the name of the author, but because when a tale of this kind begins in Bristol Docks, with a company that includes an apprentice-hero, a one-eyed sailor and a parrot of piratical past, it is impossible not to recall *Treasure Island*. However this may be, *Mortallone* soon attains a development quite sufficiently original, with an island and a secret and a noble store of buried treasure, all in doubloons and pieces of eight, which is exactly how I prefer it. In short a capital yarn, which did but confirm me in an old resolve that, were I ever thinking of commencing pirate or starting any unlawful business of the seas, I should avoid apprentices like the plague. The second part of *Mortallone and Aunt Trinidad* (ARROWSMITH) I found rather less satisfactory. Here a number of tales of the Spanish Main are supposed to be told by a trio of withered beldames whose youthful prime was spent as pirate queens. A striking and novel approach; though my belief in it was hindered by the discovery that these untutored crones not only spoke but wrote an admirable, if slightly mannered, prose, akin to that of STEVENSON or, say, Sir ARTHUR himself. But these be the carpings of age; I am sure that no boy lucky enough to find *Mortallone* among his Christmas presents will leave a paragraph undevoured.

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Dr. H. STUERMER is one of that small band of Germans who have had the courage to denounce the policy and acts of their Government. When the War began he joined the German army, fought in the Masurian operations, was invalided out of the army at the beginning of 1915, and thereupon became correspondent in Constantinople of the *Koelnische Zeitung*, in which capacity he acted until the end of 1916, when his too great truthfulness proved distasteful to his employers and

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he had to give up his place. Now he resides in Switzerland and “makes use,” he says, “of the opportunity ... to range himself boldly on the side of truth, and show that there are still Germans who find it impossible to condone, even tacitly, the moral transgression and political stupidity of their own and an allied Government.” This is a big undertaking, but Dr. STUERMER attacks it manfully in his book, *Two War Years in Constantinople* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON). He gives a harrowing description of the sufferings of the Armenians, and leaves no doubt that he considers Germany responsible for the massacre of a nation. I advise those who desire first-hand knowledge of the political schemes and ambitions of the Germans and their Young Turkish friends to consult this book. It is a mine of information.

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Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL always packs his novels with sober stuff and redeems them from any trace of dulness by the skill with which he handles his theme, and by his conscientious study not only of his characters but of the details of his background. That background in *The Dwelling-Place of Light* (MACMILLAN) is an American cottonmill district with a mixed alien population of operatives, and trouble brewing as the result of a headstrong wage-cutting manager, *Claude Ditmar*, in conflict with the I.W.W. The phases of this grim struggle are most forcibly described, the author holding no brief for either protagonist. And, if widower *Ditmar*, man of iron, for whom the Chippering Mill is his second and abiding mate, be no hero, *Janet*, his typist, has the makings of a notable heroine. How this girl, full of character and of passion bravely restrained, breaks down the business preoccupation of her chief and how her courage and steadfast honour convince him that the liaison he promised himself will not suffice for honour or purified desire—all this is finely told. It was, however, but a faltering and slowly-growing conviction, and death claims him before he can make amends for the wrong into which his masterful pleading has betrayed her. I never quite precisely gathered what was “the dwelling-place of light.” Anyway it wasn’t the Chippering Mill ... But I was sorry when I reached the four hundred and ninth and last of the closely-set pages. Good measure for a book in war-time.

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Throughout a vagabond career that began in happiness on a farm and finished, thankfully, amongst the fields, *Frank Rainger* followed always the pathway of the broader experience. Followed it so stoutly and was such good company on the long road that whether it was high holiday at Cranbrook Circus with *Maggie Coalbran*, or a fight for the hopeless cause of the Southern States in shell-torn Vicksburg, or only the keeping of eternal lazy summer with the peons of Yucatan, I was altogether content to go humbly forward with him, convinced that, as it was written, so and

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no otherwise should it be. Even when he deservedly failed to become a shining light in the literary firmament to which he aspired—an unheard-of piece of audacity on the part of his authoress—I did not rebel. Miss SHEILA KAYE SMITH has an essential clarity of visualisation, a deep and still reserve of unforced pathos and an exquisite sense of the haunting word, that combine with a most competent alertness of movement to make her latest artistic success, *The Challenge to Sirius* (NISBET), a book for which I can hardly find adequate words of praise. Most admirable of all, perhaps, is a strange faculty she has shown for making one satisfied that her people should remain perennially rather poor and unambitious and dull, and should even grow old without occasioning us regret. With the deep under-drift of the writer's philosophy one may not be completely in accord, but certainly it will worry nobody, while the unity and beauty of her methods hold one in willing bondage from beginning to end. This is real literature, and everyone should read it.

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Without any very exceptional gifts as a story-teller Fleet-Surgeon T.T. JEANS, R.N., scores heavily off most writers of boys' adventure tales by having actually lived the life he describes. Here, for instance, in *A Naval Venture* (BLACKIE) we do get the real thing, and boys would be well-advised to sample it and see if it is not preferable to the kind of adventurous fiction produced so prolifically for their amusement. Not that this yarn is lacking in adventure; indeed it is concerned with the Gallipoli campaign, from the landings until the evacuation, and anything more adventurous it would be hard to imagine. In reading this story of *The Orphan*, *The Lamp-post*, *Bubbles*, *The Hun*, *Rawlins* and *The Pink Rat*, one feels that the author actually knows these "snotties," with their high courage, animal spirits and elementary humour. It is in fact history spiced with fiction. Of all the characters my vote goes to *Kaiser Bill*, for although, being a tortoise, he performed no deeds of actual gallantry, he carried good luck with him wherever he went. Besides, his name might annoy the ALL-HIGHEST. Mr. JEANS made an extremely good shot when he drew his bow at *A Naval Venture*.

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You would hardly believe what a remarkably unprincipled set of persons make up the cast of Mr. WILLIAM CAINE'S newest story. He calls them *Drones* (METHUEN), but that, I feel, is a charitable understatement. There was *Eric Wanstanley*, rising young sculptor, who, because he didn't rise quickly enough, was capable of borrowing the savings of his friend's parlourmaid to work a system at roulette. The friend, *Austin Jenner*, was also an artist and also rising. His little failing was concealment of the fact that he was almost wholly supported by remittances furnished by his hard-working brother.

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Incidentally he was engaged to *Eric's* sister, but abandoned her without a qualm for the beringed hand of one *Mrs. Meldrum*, a rich widow, known as The B.Q. (Biscuit Queen). Need I say that *Mrs. Meldrum*, moving in these circles, and with ambitions as an art patroness, lived in Cheyne Walk? Indeed the setting of the whole comedy is inevitably Chelsea. Having regard to the number of bad hats among the *dramatis personae*, you will probably not be astonished to be told that their goings-on are excellently entertaining; though I cannot but think that to give both his leading lady and his *soubrette*, or Singing Chambermaid, the handicap of morally deficient young brothers, does look like laziness on the part of Mr. CAINE. Surely there exist other avenues to calamity. But it's an amusing rogues' comedy.

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[Illustration: UNPUBLISHED INCIDENTS IN ANCIENT HISTORY. PANOPEUS EXPLAINS HIS MODEL AT THE WAR OFFICE, ATHENS, DURING THE TROJAN WAR.]

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FOR THE SAVING OF CHILD-LIFE.

Mr. G.K. CHESTERTON will lecture on "How Dickens' tales came true," on Friday, December 14th, at 3 o'clock, at 20, Arlington Street (kindly lent by the Marchioness of Salisbury), in aid of the Kentish Town Day Nursery. Tickets, L1 1s. 0d., 10s. 6d., 7s. 6d., may be obtained from Countess GREY, of Chester Street, N.W.1.