

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 153, November 21, 1917 eBook

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CHARIVARIA.

More than a million pounds of concealed sugar have been discovered in New York. It is suspected that this was intended as the nucleus of a hoard.

A contemporary recently stated that *Lenin* claims to stand for the leadership of Russia. But surely they do not stand for leadership in Russia. They rush for it with revolvers.

"This is a time for action, not for talk," said Colonel *house* on his arrival in England. A stinging rejoinder is expected from the *food-controller's* Department.

It is rumoured that the restaurant keepers have agreed among themselves that to avoid confusion the price of all beefsteaks shall be stamped clearly on the sole.

The Meat Order will probably be amended to make meat-stalls rank as shops. At present of course they suffer under the stigma of being merely places where you can purchase meat.

We understand that, in order to avoid confusion and undue alarm, German prisoners in this country will in future be expected to give twelve hours' notice of their intention to escape.

Sugar is to be omitted from a number of medical preparations from December 1st, and children are complaining that the decision has quite spoilt their Christmas prospects.

Counsel, in a prosecution for selling a tobacco substitute, has stated that there is nothing in the Act to prevent a man from smoking what he likes. In the trade this is generally regarded as a nasty underhand jab at the British cigar industry.



Lord RHONDDA, in announcing his new rationing scheme, differentiates between brain workers and manual workers. It will be interesting to see to which category certain Government officials will be assigned.

“The bamboo,” according to a weekly paper, “holds the record among plants for rapid growth, having been known to grow two feet in twelve hours.” The silence of allotment holders on this subject is significant.

Mr. *Sydney G. Gamble*, second in command of the London Fire Brigade, is about to retire. There is some talk of arranging a farewell fire.

We understand, by the way, that retirement from the London Fire Brigade always carries with it the privilege of wearing the uniform at one’s own fires.

A theatrical paper advertises for a “Male impersonator” for pantomime. No conscientious objector need apply.

A news message to the *Politiken* states that the people of Iceland are making demands for their own flag or separation. The movement seems to be an isolated one and not likely to spread. Anyhow, there is no cause for alarm at Tooting, where the authorities are not expecting any trouble of this kind.

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A Cranford dairyman has been selling milk at threepence per quart. In trade circles it is supposed that he is doing it for a wager.

According to *The Evening News*, Councillor *William SHEARRING*, the new Mayor of Bermondsey, started life as a van boy. This gave him a pull over most of us, who started life as infants.

After December 17th, parcels for neutral countries may not be sent without a permit. Cement and other articles intended for enemy consumption can only be forwarded by special arrangement with the Ministry of Blockade.

The average man, says a correspondent of *The Daily Mail*, does not know how to invest five pounds in War Loan. Yet all he has to do is to pay his little fiver across the counter just as if he were buying a pound of tea.

The *Lord mayor's* Coachman has retired after twenty-eight years' service. He was a splendid fellow, taking him all round.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Sociable Escort (to Bosch prisoner, after several ineffectual attempts to start a conversation). "Ahem!—Er—no trouble at home, I hope?"*]

* * * * *

An official memo from the Front:—

"A complaint has been received from the Provost Corps that two horses, apparently ridden by grooms, committed a civil offence in —, in that they crashed into a motor car, which at the time was stationary, damaging same. On being questioned where they came from, they replied, 'From Australia,' and after paying a few more like compliments disappeared at the gallop."

It is supposed that these intelligent animals had been reading a recent article by "Patlander."

* * * * *

“The R.F.C. on the same day bombed the junction. There was a large numtity of rolling stock in the station, on which, and on the station building, several direct hits were observed to cause considerable damage.”—*The Times*.

“Numtity” is doubtless a dodge of the *ensor* to prevent us knowing too much. We suspect that “quanber” was what the writer really wanted to say.

* * * * *

“Mr. Drucker (for the trustees of the Testator) said the late Lord Blythswood had made 51 oleograph codicils to his will, and the difficulty arose over two of them.”—*Evening Paper*.

It rather looks as if the two were not genuine oleographs but only colourable imitations.

* * * * *

“American eggs arriving at Manchester yesterday were quoted from 27s. 6d. to 28s. per 120, which caused Irish eggs to be reduced from sixpence to a shilling.”—*Daily Paper*.



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Very Irish eggs.

* * * * *

“12 Feet Corsets at a ridiculous price of Re. 1 each, all sizes.”—*Advt. in “Advocate of India.”*

“A ridiculous price,” says the advertiser, but “an absurd figure” would have been even better.

* * * * *

“The Examiners appointed by the Board of the Faculty of Natural Science give notice that Wilfrid Dyson Hambly, Jesus College, having submitted a dissertation on ‘Tattooing and other forms of body-marking among primitive peoples,’ will be publicly examined on Monday, November 12, at 2.30 p.m., in the Department of Social Anthropology, Barnett House.”—*Oxford University Gazette.*

We trust he showed, and obtained, full marks.

* * * * *

To ATTILA’S *understudy.*

[Reuter reports that a British prisoner has been sentenced to a year’s imprisonment for calling Germans “Huns.”]

The choice was yours, we understood.
We thought that, when you wished to cater
For China’s spiritual good,
This name received your imprimatur;
“Go forth,” you said, “my sons!
Go and behave exactly like the Huns!”

Though under any other name,
However alien to their nature,
Your people would have smelt the same,
We let you choose their nomenclature,
And studiously respected
The one that in your wisdom you selected.

And now, when someone, clearly set
On flattering you by imitation,
Applies that chosen epithet
To certain units of your nation,



It seems a little odd
That you should go and clap him into quod.

Perhaps you've come to hold the view
That when you claimed to touch their level
You were unfair to heathens who
Candidly called their god a devil;
Who fought some barbarous fights,
But fought at least according to their lights.

So Huns are off. Who takes their place?
Well, since no beast on earth would stick it
If after him we named your race,
We'll call you Germans—there's your ticket;
Just Germans—that's a style
Which can't offend the other vermin's bile.

O. S.

* * * * *

Nightmares.

II.

*Of A T.B.D. Captain, who dreams that he has found his Log book made up by Mr.
Ph*L*P G*BBS.*



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Time.—7.30 A.M.—Once more we set out on our never-ending mission, our ceaseless vigil of the seas. The ruddy weather-stained coxswain swung the wheel this way and that—his eyes were of the blue that only the sea can give—in obedience to, or rather in accord with, the curt, mystic, seaman-like orders of the young officer of the watch. “Hard a-port! Midships! Hard a-starboard! Port 20! Steady as she goes!” And ceaselessly the engine-room telegraph tinkled, and the handy little craft, with death and terror written in her workmanlike lines for the seaman, for all her slim insignificance to the landlubber on the towering decks of the great liner, swung smartly through the crowded water-way out to the perils lurking 'neath the seeming smile of the open sea: the guardian angel of our commerce it went, to meet—what Heaven alone could foretell!

Course.—S. 70 deg. E. Towards the rising sun and our brethren in khaki, toiling in the wet mud as we toil on the wet waters!

Deviation.—1 deg. E. Wonderful the accuracy of the little instrument whereon men's lives do hang, wise in the lore of the firmament!

Patent Log.—O. Nothing—as yet! What will it register ere the day be done? Or will its speckless copper lie rusting in the grey chill of the sea's dank depths?

Revs.—I don't know, but the propellers swirl faithfully and unceasingly.

Wind.—W. by E. Bearing a message across the vast Atlantic of hope and present succour from our new great Ally, the mighty Republic of the West. America, ah America! But we of the sea are men of few words, and this is not the place.

Force.—3. A balmy zephyr, yet with the sharp salt tang of the sea that a sailor loves.

Sea.—2. Softly undulating is the swell, scarce perceptible to inexperienced eyes, such as those of the land-lubbers on the towering decks of the great liners; gleaming dead copper and blue in the morning sun, flecked with spectral white in the distance—the easy roll of untrammelled waters!

Weather.—C. Detached clouds. Almost had I written “B,” seeing the perfect filmy blue all around the horizon; but a seaman's scrutiny showed me faint fluffy wisps o'erhead, luminous and marged with palest gold; and ever must a sailor be suspicious of the treacherous weather-god.

Thermometer.—42 deg. Not yet is Winter here, but its threat approaches.

Barometer.—30.01. Will it stay there?

Remarks.—Once more we set out on our ceaseless vigil, our

* * * * *

Remarks.—(7.30 P.M.).—Another day has passed, another day's duty has been done.



Nothing *apparently* has happened outside the ordinary routine of the ship. One keen-eyed young officer has succeeded another on the bridge, with tired lines on a face grey beneath the great brown hood of his duffle—a face so youthful, yet with the knowledge of the command of men writ plain thereon. The propellers have swirled faithfully and unceasingly; the good ship in consequence has cleft the passive waves. But who knows what hideous lurking peril of mine or torpedo we have not survived, what baleful eye has not glowered at us, itself unseen, and retired again to its foul underworld, balked of its thirsted prey?



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III.

OF THE EDITOR OF *THE DAILY YAP*, ON OBSERVING THAT HIS SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT IS A RETIRED LIEUT., R.N., WHO SENDS HIM THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF A PUSH:—

Time: 6.0 A.M. Course: (approx.) E. Distance run: 1-1/2 m. Wind: S.W. Force: 6. State of land: 5 (rough, owing to craters). Weather: R. Therm.: 35 deg. Bar.: 28.89. Remarks: Objectives attained. Observation hampered by weather.

* * * * *

BIG GAME SHOOTING.

“Angus Bowser, the popular feed merchant of Dartmouth, shot his mouse on Thanksgiving Day. With a couple of friends he left in auto about 1 o'clock Monday afternoon for Bowser's Station. The party was in the woods for about two hours when the mouse was sighted.”—*Canadian Paper*.

We hope Mr. ROOSEVELT will not be jealous.

* * * * *

Extracts from a recent novel:—

“He stepped out at Fernhurst Station, and walked up past the Grey Abbey that watched as a sentinel over the dreamy Derbyshire town.... So it was the system that was at fault, not Fernhurst. Fairly contentedly he went back by the 3.30 from Waterloo.”

The train system which sent him to the Midlands by the South-Western was doubtless deranged by military exigencies.

* * * * *

“Although Lord Warwick is the most sympathetic and attentive of listeners, he has not remembered more than one good story, and that has now been quoted in all the papers; we mean Lord Beaconsfield story is said to be unprintable; then why tantalise Lord Rosslyn, on account of the possible effect of his language on the pack, compensated by the Commissionership of the Kirk of Scotland. The other Beaconsfield story is said to be unprintable, then why tantalise us?”—*Saturday Review*.

Why, indeed?

* * * * *



[Illustration: THE GREAT UNCONTROLLED.

LORD RHONDDA. "LOOK HERE, JOHN, ARE YOU GOING TO TIGHTEN THAT BELT, OR MUST I DO IT FOR YOU?"

JOHN BULL. "YOU DO IT FOR ME. THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE THERE FOR.]"

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Farmer*. "WHY DO THEY LET THAT CLOCK CHIME? AREN'T THEY AFRAID THE HUNS MIGHT HEAR IT?"

Yokel. "BLESS YOU, THAT'S TO DECEIVE 'EM. IT'S 'ALF-A-HOUR FAST.]"

* * * * *

HOW TO BECOME A TOWN-MAJOR.

Through large and luminous glasses Second-Lieut. St. John regards this War and its problems. He is a man of infinite jobs. There are few villages in France of which he has not been Town Major. Between times he has been Intelligence Officer, Divisional Burial Officer, Divisional Disbursing Officer, Salvage Officer, Claims, Baths, Soda-water and Canteens Officer.



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He was once appointed Town-Major of some brick-dust, a rafter and two empty bully-beef tins—all of which in combination bore the name of a village. He assumed his duties with a bland Pickwickian zest, which did good to the heart. He had boards painted.

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_____  
|           |  
| THIS IS BLANK VILLAGE |  
|_____ |
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said one aggressively, and

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_____  
|           |  
| TO THE TOWN-MAJOR OF BLANK |  
|           == > |  
|_____ |
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said another. A third read,

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_____  
|           |  
| TO THE INCINERATOR |  
| < == |  
|_____ |
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though there was nothing there to incinerate and (incidentally) no incinerator. "HORSES," shouted another didactically, "MUST NOT TROT THROUGH THE MAIN STREET." That there was no street there at all did not detract from the splendour of his notices, on which he spent much paint and happiness.

With the slightest encouragement he would have placarded that arid wilderness with "NO SMOKING IN THE LIFTS," and "BEWARE OF PICKPOCKETS," but he had small encouragement, and so he contented himself with a final placard which warned the troops against riding through standing crops and occupying the houses of civilians without permission from the Town-Major.

Still, no one becomes a Town-Major without some sort of claim to the post.



Second-Lieut. St. John's first appearance in Armageddon took place during "peace-time warfare." An unpleasant and quite unnecessary little bulge in the trench-line, known as the Toadstool, was manned by the platoon of which he found himself second-in-command. It is rumoured that a Hun patrol, crawling to the edge of our parapet, saw in the ghastly glare of a Verey light the benign and spectacled countenance of Second-Lieut. St. John staring amiably across No Man's Land, and came to the hasty conclusion that they had made a mistake as to direction, since here was obviously one of their own officers of the Herr Professor type. Rumour adds that they retired to their own lines and were promptly shot for cowardice.

Certain it is that on that particular night Second-Lieut. St. John did a thing the full details of which are now revealed to the Intelligence Corps for the first time. He fired a Verey light. It pleased him enormously. The sense that he, and he alone, was the cause of all those sliding shadows and that flood of greenish light in No Man's Land went to his head like strong drink. He fired another and another and another.... The Hun was puzzled at this departure from routine, and opened a morose machine-gun fire which skimmed the top of the parapet and covered Second-Lieut. St. John with earth from shattered sandbags. He went on firing Verey lights in a sort of bland ecstasy till his supply ran out, when he went to his Company Commander's dug-out for more. He filled his pockets with fresh ammunition, went back to his post, and began firing again. The first light was mauve. He almost clapped his hands at it, and fired the second. It was pink. The third was yellow, the fourth scarlet, and the fifth emerald green.

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“The Crystal Palace,” said Second-Lieut. St. John, “isn’t in it.” And then, because his watch had ended, he handed over to another yawning subaltern and went to bed.

Over miles and miles of country wild-eyed gunners were glaring into the night and asking each other blasphemous questions. What did it mean?

“It must be Huns,” said the British gunners; “they’re coming over.”

“That is without doubt an English signal,” said the enemy. “We will prepare for an attack.”

Then the Hun gunners suddenly made up their minds to be on the safe side, and they put down a tremendous barrage on to No Man’s Land.

“Told you so; they’re on to our front line,” said we, and put down a tremendous barrage on to No Man’s Land.

A Hun sentry, waking with a start, sounded the gas alarm. It was taken up all along the German line and overheard by a vigilant British sentry, who promptly set himself to make all possible noise with every possible means.

Old French ladies in villages twenty miles back from the line lay all that night hideous in respirators. Anxious Staffs rang up other anxious Staffs. Gunners questioned the infantry. The infantry desired information from the gunners. All along the line the private soldier was jolted from that kind of trance which he calls “getting down to it,” and was bidden to stand to till morning.

And our Mr. St. John, who was a new and superfluous officer and liable to be overlooked, slept through it all with a fat smile.

* * * * *

It was after that that they made him a Town-Major.

* * * * *

OUR PAMPERED “CONCHIES.”

“There was a long and interesting debate on the imprisonment of conscientious objectors in the House of Lords.”—*The Times*.

This beats Donington Hall to a frazzle.

* * * * *



“Teachers will welcome the resolution deploring ‘the omission from the Bill of any limitation upon the size of classics.’”—*Teacher’s World*.

Their pupils are believed to hold a diametrically opposite opinion.

* * * * *

After the Guildhall Banquet:—

“Some had black leather bags, some had aprons. Others had nothing at all and staggered off with a conglomeration of beef, pie, and turtle soup tucked up under their arms.”—*Weekly Dispatch*.

The menu said “Clear Soup,” but this must have been a bit thick.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Sandy (on departure of peace-crank, who has been holding forth)*. “MAN, HE’S A QUEER CARD, THAT. THINK YE HE’S A’ THERE, DONALD?”

Donald. “DOD, SANDY, IF WHAT’S NO THERE IS LIKE WHAT IS THERE, IT’S JUST AS WEEL HE’S NO A’ THERE.”]

* * * * *



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LEGAL INTELLIGENCE.

DAVID LLOYD GEORGE, described as Prime Minister, was charged, on the information of HERBERT HENRY ASQUITH, with exceeding the speech limit while on tour. Mr. BONAR LAW, who appeared for the defendant, asked for an adjournment and invited the Court to “wait and see.” Upon hearing those words prosecutor broke down and had to be assisted out of the court.

* * * * *

HORATIO BOTTOMLEY pleaded “Not guilty” to a charge of fortune-telling. It appears that the defendant had stated that the War would be over by Christmas. For the defence it was stated that the defendant had not specified which Christmas, and even so if he had said so it was so. Defendant asked for a remand to enable him to dispense with legal assistance.

* * * * *

RESULT OF THE FOOD SHORTAGE?

“Exchange new gold full plate, seven teeth, for good brown skin hearthrug.”—*The Lady*.

* * * * *

From the police-notice *re* air-raid warnings:—

“When the car has two occupants one might concentrate on whistling and calling out ‘Take Cover.’”

As his own won't be enough he should borrow the other occupant's mouth.

* * * * *

THE NEW MRS. MARKHAM.

v.

CONVERSATION ON CHAPTER LXXIII.

Mary. There were two things in your last chapter that I did not quite understand—the National Debt and the Flappers.

Mrs. M. About the National Debt, my dear child, I think you must wait until your papa comes home to tea, but perhaps I can satisfy your curiosity about the Flappers, who



were indeed amongst the most singular and formidable products of the age we have been discussing. The origin of the term is obscure, some authorities connecting it with the term "flap-doodle," others with the motion of a bird's wings, and I remember a verse in an old song which ran as follows:—

"Place me somewhere east of Suez
On a lone and rocky shore,
Where the Britons cease from Britling
And the flappers flap no more."

This, however, does not throw much light on the subject. Perhaps the term Flapper may best be defined as meaning a twentieth-century hoyden, and was applied to a type of girl from the age of thirteen to seventeen, whose extravagances in speech, manner and dress caused deep dismay among the more serious members of the community. In particular the learned Dr. SHADWELL denounced them with great severity in a leading review, but with little result. They bedizened themselves with frippery, shrieked like parrots on all occasions and interpreted the motto of the time, "Carry On," in a sense deplorably remote from its higher significance.

George. I think it seems, Mamma, as if the young girls of those times must have tried to make themselves as unpleasant as possible. How thankful I am that Mary is not a Flapper!

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Mrs. M. You may well be. But allowance must be made for the misapplied energy of our ancestors. If the Flappers excite our disgust, their subsequent treatment moves our commiseration, since the Sumptuary and Disciplinary Laws passed by the House of Ladies dealt in drastic fashion with the offences which I have described. As a matter of fact many Flappers grew up into excellent and patriotic women. I remember my grandmother saying to me once, "When I was sixteen I had a voice like a cockatoo and the manners of a monkey," but nothing could have been more discreet or sedate than her deportment in old age.

Richard. Did the Flappers speak English?

Mrs. M. Presumably; but, judging from the records of their dialect which have come down to us, their speech was made up of a succession of squeals rather than of articulate words, and has so far defied the efforts of modern philologists. Indeed speech seems to have been almost at a discount, owing to the immense popularity of the moving picture play, then in its infancy and as yet unaccompanied by mechanical reproduction of the voices of the actors. Indeed at one time it was said that there were only three adjectives in use in Flapper society—"ripping," "rotten" and "top-hole," I think they were.

George. What stupid words! I wish they could have heard some of papa's adjectives.

Mrs. M. Your father, my dear, has a copious and picturesque vocabulary, but phrases which are pardonable in moments of expansion in a person of mature years are not always suitable for juveniles.

* * * * *

THE TRANSGRESSOR.

I was walking painfully along a lonely road towing my three-thousand-guinea ten-cylinder twelve-seater. According to Regulation 777 X, both brakes were on. My overcoat collar was turned up to protect my sensitive skin from a blasting easterly gale, and through the twilight I was able to see but a few yards ahead. I had a blister on my heel. Somewhere, many miles to the eastward, lay my destination. Suddenly two gigantic forms emerged from the hedgerow and laid each a gigantic paw upon my shoulders. A gruff voice barked accusingly in my ear.

"You are the owner of a motorcar?"

Was it any use denying the fact? I thought not.

"Yes," I replied humbly, "I am."



“Have you the permit which allows you to possess this?” He waved towards the stagnant ’bus.

“I have.”

“Have you the licence which allows you to take it upon the high road?”

With frozen fingers I held it out to him. He moved to the back of the car, unscrewed the entrance to the petrol tank and applied his nose to the aperture. After three official sniffs he turned upon me aggressively.

“There is an undeniable odour of petroleum. How do you account for that?”

“Sir,” I replied, “last week my little son had his knockabout suit dry-cleaned in Perthshire by the petrol-substitute process. This morning he climbed upon the back of the car to see whether his Silver Campine had laid an egg in the hood.”



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He glared at me.

“Ah! Have you the necessary extension which allows you to use a motorcar as a habitation for hens?”

I gave it to him.

Then, frustrated with fury, he thundered at me successively: “Have you a towing permit? Have you a dog licence? Can you produce a boot and shoe grant? Do you hold any rubber shares? Have you been inoculated for premature decay? What did you do in the Great War?”

I gave him the necessary documents in perfect order. For a moment he was nonplussed. Then he asked with sly intention, “Have you the champagne and chicken sandwich ration which is apportioned to super-inspectors?”

I handed it to him with a table-napkin (unused) and a pair of wire-cutters thrown in. For some minutes he remained silent, except in the gustatory sense, then he turned upon me and, handing back an empty bottle, said triumphantly, “You must now produce, under Clause 5005 Gerrard, framed this morning at 11-30 o'clock, one pint of old ale and six ounces of bread and cheese for the sustentation of the sub-inspector.”

I regarded him stonily and leant against the cold, cold bonnet of the car. Alas! I had it not.

“Sir,” I pleaded, “I did not know ... give me time. The next inn is but a few miles. If you and your companion will take a seat I will bring you to the inn door and all will be well.”

He laughed in my face.

“Algernon Brocklebank Smith,” he said sternly, “you have betrayed yourself into our hands.” He turned to his myrmidon: “Get a move on you, Herbert; it’s a bit parky standing about here.”

After all he was but a coarse fellow.

Herbert, galvanised into action, produced a small oblong object from his pocket, lighted the end of it with the glowing butt of one of my Corona Coronas, and placed it underneath the car. In a few moments all that remained of my three-thousand-guinea ten—cylinder twelve-seater was one small nut, which was immediately impounded.

I raised the collar of my overcoat (second reef), shifted my face to the eastward, and, notwithstanding the blister on my heel, turned my steps towards my destination.

I uttered no plaint. I had transgressed against the immutable law.



* * * * *

IS THE RACE LOSING ITS NERVE?

“A sensation has been caused by the announcement that Miss Teddie Gerard is leaving ‘Bubbly’ to play the leading part in ‘Cheep’ at the Vaudeville Theatre.”—*Daily Mirror*.

* * * * *

THE “WAR LEADER” AND TWO SENSITIVE SOULS.

[Illustration: “THE ENTIRE GERMAN ECONOMIC STRUCTURE IS ON THE VERGE OF COLLAPSE,”]

BUT

[Illustration: “WE SHOULD BE MAD IF WE BLINDED OUR EYES TO THE FACT THAT THEY CAN HOLD OUT FOR YEARS YET.”]

[Illustration: “THE SUBMARINE CAMPAIGN HAS BEEN AN UTTER FAILURE. NO SHORTAGE OF FOOD EXISTS OR WILL EXIST”]



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IF

[Illustration: “WE ONE AND ALL DETERMINE NOT TO CONSUME AN OUNCE MORE FOOD THAN IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO KEEP BODY AND SOUL TOGETHER.”]

[Illustration: “THE WAR IS, TO ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, ALREADY WON,”]

PROVIDED

[Illustration: “THAT IN THE NEXT THREE YEARS THE WHOLE NATION MAKES SUCH A STUPENDOUS EFFORT AS WE HAVE NOT AS YET DREAMED OF,” ETC., ETC.]

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Bookmaker (with long experience of the Turf but none of Coursing)*. “I’M GIVIN’ YOU SIX TO FOUR AGAINST THE FAWN, SIR. NOW I’LL GIVE ANYONE SIX TO FOUR AGAINST THE BLACK.”

Friend (hurriedly). “BUT YOU CAN’T GIVE THOSE ODDS WITH ONLY TWO RUNNERS.”

Bookmaker. “WHY? AIN’T THE BLOOMIN’ RABBIT GOT A CHANCE?”]

* * * * *

NEW MEN AND OLD FACES.

[According to a writer in *The Daily Chronicle*, Lord Morley’s face “in conformation gets more and more like Goethe’s.”]

VISCOUNT, better known as plain JOHN MORLEY,
As I gather from a chatty screed,
Ever daily grows exteriorly
(Pray forgive a rhymers’ urgent need)
More like GOETHE—please pronounce it “Gertie”—
Who expired soon after eighteen-thirty.

But this instance is not isolated,
As a survey of our statesmen shows;
WINSTON now suggests a long post-dated
DAN O’CONNELL in his mouth and nose;



NORTHCLIFFE's growing more Napoleonic
Than the Corsican, though less laconic.

In the noble lineaments of BILLING
Shrewd observers (like myself) can trace
Wonderful, inspiring, vivid, thrilling
Memories of JULIUS CAESAR'S face,
With a hint of something far more regal,
More suggestive of the soaring eagle.

I admit GEORGE MOORE is not yet showing
Marked resemblance to his namesake, TOM;
But great CHESTERTON is hourly growing
Almost indistinguishable from
Dr. JOHNSON; daily grows more plain
SHAKSPEARE'S facial forecast of HALL CAINE.

HALDANE and his spiritual brother,
SCHOPENHAUER, that dyspeptic sage,
Monthly grow so very like each other,
As portrayed in MAXSE'S lurid page,
That it passes MAXSE'S Christian charity
To detect the least dissimilarity.

BELLOC is approximating closely
To the massive mien of CHARLES JAMES FOX;
BUCHAN plagiarizes very grossly
From the rapt expression of JOHN KNOX;
And the LAUREATE, if his hair grew scanty
Or he shaved his beard, might look like DANTE.

CLARA BUTT, the eminent musician,
Vividly resembles PERICLES;
SARGENT and the late lamented TITIAN
Are as like each other as two peas;
LOREBURN, known to cronies as "Bob" Reid,
Duplicates the Venerable BEDE.



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But enough of this identifying
Instances of the recurrent face;
Rather let us foster an undying
Resolution in the British race
Evermore and evermore to shun
Any imitation of the Hun.

* * * * *

A POSER FROM THE BENCH.

From the report of a collision case:—

“Mr. Justice ——: ‘Which car hit the other first?’ ‘I cannot say.’”—*Freeman’s Journal*.

* * * * *

“OUR SWEEP IN THE HOLY LAND.”—*Daily News*.

Ours is in Mesopotamia.

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[Illustration: HOW IT STRIKES A SOLDIER.

THE KAISER. “WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THIS LLOYD GEORGE AFFAIR?”

MARSHAL VON HINDENBURG. “I’VE NO TIME TO READ POLITICAL SPEECHES, SIRE. THIS FELLOW HAIG KEEPS ME TOO BUSY.”]

* * * * *

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

Monday, November 12th.—An old Parliamentarian, when asked by a friend to what party the PRIME MINISTER now belonged, sententiously replied, “He used to be a Radical; he will some day be a Conservative; and at present he is the leader of the Improvisatories.”

The latest example of his inventive capacity does not meet with unmitigated approval. Members were very curious to know exactly how the new Allied Council was going to work, and what would be the relations between the Council’s Military advisers and the existing General Staffs of the countries concerned. Mr. BONAR LAW assured the



House that the responsibility for strategy would remain where it is now, but did not altogether succeed in explaining why in that case the Council required other military advisers.

The SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND is about the mildest-mannered man that ever sat upon the Treasury Bench. But even he can be "*tres mechant*" at a pinch. When Mr. WATT renewed his complaint that sheriffs-principal in Scotland had very little to do for the high salaries they received, Mr. MUNRO replied that "it would just be as unsafe to measure the activities of the sheriff-principal by the number of appeals he hears as to measure the political activities of my hon. friend by the number of questions he puts."

The Pensions Department at Chelsea is to be reorganised. Mr. HODGE excused the delays by pointing out that an average of thirty-three thousand letters a day is despatched, but, as he added that there is a staff of four thousand five hundred persons to do it, it hardly looks as if they were overworked.

Tuesday, November 13th.—The House of Lords was to have discussed the state of Ireland, but, owing to the absence of its LEADER, fell back upon the less exciting but more practical topics of sugar-substitutes for jam, and barley for beer. It was cheering to learn from the Duke of MARLBOROUGH that the jam-manufacturers gave great care to exclude arsenic from their glucose, and from Lord RHONDDA that there would be plenty of barley for both cakes and ale.



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Mr. WARDLE is the latest example of the poacher turned gamekeeper. A few months ago, as leader of the Labour Party, he was instant in criticism of the ineptitudes of Government officials. This afternoon, upon his old friend, Mr. TYSON WILSON, venturing to refer to the “stupid decisions” of the Board of Trade, Mr. WARDLE was down on him in a moment. With the air of one who had been born and brought up in Whitehall Gardens, he replied, “Stupid decisions are not made by the Board of Trade.”

The Pacifists had rather a mixed day.

* * * * *

[Illustration: PENSIONS.

MR. HODGE.]

* * * * *

They were visibly relieved when Mr. BONAR LAW (supported by Mr. ASQUITH) declined to admit into the Bill for extending the life of this Parliament a provision enabling constituencies to get rid of Members who had ceased to represent them. But they did not like his contemptuous reference to their argumentative powers. Mr. TREVELYAN, who regards himself as the representative (by literary descent) of CHARLES JAMES FOX, was particularly annoyed.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *IN RE* ADMIRAL JELLICOE.

MR. LYNCH. DR. MACNAMARA.]

* * * * *

As party-funds are rather under a cloud just now the Government thought they might justify their existence by drawing on them for the campaign against enemy propaganda. But their custodians thought otherwise. The Tory Whip was prepared to make a small contribution; the Liberal would give nothing, on the ground that the total required was extravagantly large. So the country will have to foot the bill.

Wednesday, November 14th.—The knowledge that Mr. ASQUITH was to “interpellate” the PRIME MINISTER regarding his recent speech in Paris, and the Allied War Council therein described, brought a crowd of Members to the House, and filled the Peers’ Gallery with ex-Ministers scenting a first-class crisis.

The protagonists on entering the arena were loudly cheered by their respective adherents, but the expected duel did not come off. Mr. ASQUITH’S questions were



searching enough, but not provocative. Mr. LLOYD GEORGE'S reply was comprehensive and conciliatory, and ended with the promise of a day for discussion. Instead of a fight there was only an armistice, usually a preliminary to a definite peace.

A little disappointed, perhaps, the Peers betook themselves to their own Chamber, there to hear Lord PARMOOR discourse upon the woes of conscientious objectors. Many of them, he thought, had been vindictively punished for their peculiar opinions. Nobody, in a somewhat cloudy discussion, made it quite clear whether the Tribunals or the Army authorities or the Home Office were most at fault; and Lord CURZON'S suggestion that persons who refused not merely to fight but to render any kind of service to their country in its time of need were not wholly free from blame had almost the air of novelty.

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The Air-Force Bill passed through Committee in one sitting. The credit for this achievement may be divided equally between Major BAIRD, who proved himself once more a skilful pilot, and Mr. BILLING, who spoke so often that other intending critics got little chance. Counting speeches and interruptions, I find from the official reports that he addressed the House exactly one hundred times; and it is therefore worth noticing that his last words were, "This is what you call muzzling the House of Commons."

Thursday, November 15th.—Lord WIMBORNE did his best to-night to defend the inaction of the Irish Executive in the face of the Sinn Fein menace. But he would have been wiser not to have adduced the argument that Ireland was a *terra incognita*. If there is one subject that the Peers think they know all about it is the sister-island. Lord CURZON thought it would be a mistake, by enforcing "a superficial quiet," to check the wholesome influences brought into being by the Convention. He did not go so far as to say that Mr. DE VALERA was one of them.

At last the Government have decided to take short order with the pernicious literature of the Pacifists. In future all such documents are to be submitted to the Press Bureau before publication. A howl of derisive laughter greeted the HOME SECRETARY'S announcement, but when Mr. SNOWDEN essayed to move the adjournment, although he and his friends were joined by some of the Scotch and Irish malcontents, the total muster was only thirty-three, and the motion accordingly came to earth with a thud.

By a large majority the House refused to reinstate the Livery franchise in the City of London. In any case this ancient privilege could not long have survived the curtailment of the Lord Mayor's Feast.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *The Colonel*. "I'D TAKE ALL THOSE MUTINOUS HOUNDS AND PUT 'EM AGAINST THE WALL."

Aunt Jane. "BUT, MY DEAR, THE AWFUL THING IS THAT IT HAS SPREAD TO OUR OWN ARMY. I HEARD TWO SOLDIERS IN THE TRAIN TO-DAY TALKING ABOUT THEIR SERGEANT-MAJOR IN A DREADFUL WAY."]

* * * * *

BOON FOR BUSY BRIDEGROOMS.

In these days of military hustle, when a soldier comes home, falls in love, gets engaged, marries, sets up a home, and returns to the Front in less than a week, there is little time for the ordinary courtesies of matrimonial procedure. It is felt, therefore, that the appended printed form of thanks for wedding presents—based on the model of the Field Service Postcard—will prove a great boon to all soldiers who meditate matrimony during

short leave. It will be found sufficient merely to strike out inappropriate words in the printed form, which is as follows:—



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“Captain and Mrs. — beg to return thanks for your

Beautiful | —
 Charming |
 Generous |
 Very generous |
 Useful | Gift
 Very Useful |- Cheque
 More than useful | Letter.”
 Unexpected |
 Totally unexpected |
 Remarkable |
 Artistic |

_ |

Examples.—(1) To a rich and miserly uncle, who has come down with an astonishingly handsome sum—strike out everything except “Very generous—more than useful—totally unexpected cheque.”

(2) To an eccentric former admirer of the bride, who has sent a forty-stanza poem, entitled “Sunset in the White-chapel Road: Thoughts Thereon”—strike out everything except “Remarkable gift.”

(3) To an enormously wealthy female relative, who disapproves of the bride and has sent a second-hand plated sugar-sifter—strike out everything except “Gift.”

(4) To anyone of whom much was expected, but who neither gave a present nor wrote—strike out everything on the postcard.

* * * * *

“Strange Story of a Wedding in the Divorce Court.”—*Daily News*.

It seems a rather unfortunate choice of *locale*.

* * * * *

Extract from an Indian begging-letter:—

“My mother is a widow, poor chap, and has a postmortem son.”

* * * * *

“AMATEUR GENT., experienced, wanted, for week at Xmas. All expenses paid.” *Daily Telegraph*.



Why not have a professional one and do the thing handsomely?

* * * * *

ONCE UPON A TIME.

THE LETTER.

Once upon a time, not so very long ago, an illustrious man of affairs—soldier and statesman too—visited our shores, and by his wise counsels so captured the imagination of his hearers and readers that one of the greatest of all compliments was paid to him, and anyone with a black cocker spaniel to name named it after him; and he had a name rather peculiarly adapted to such ends too.

It chanced that among the puppies thus made illustrious was one which a young soldier before leaving for France to win the War gave to his sister, and when writing to him, as, being a good girl, she regularly and abundantly did, she never omitted to give tidings as to how the little creature was developing; and I need hardly say that in the whole history of dogs, from TOBIT'S faithful trotting companion onwards, there never was a dog so packed with intelligence and fidelity as this. Most girls' dogs are perfect, but this one was more remarkable still.



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Now it happened that the gallant brother, in the course of his duties as a war-winner, was moved from place to place so often that he gradually lost definition, as the photographers say, and the result was that one of her recent letters failed to catch up with him. That was a pity, because it was a better letter than usual. It gave all the news that he would most want to hear. It said what picture her father was working on at the moment, and told, without spoiling them, his two last jokes. It said whom her mother had called on and who had called on her mother and how something must be done to stop her smoking too many cigarettes. It said that their young brother, having sprained his ankle at hockey, had become a wolf for jig-saw puzzles. It said where their parents had dined recently and where they were going to dine and who was coming next week. It said what she had seen at the theatre last Saturday and what book she was reading. It said which of the other V.A.D.'s had become engaged. It said what an awful time they had had trying to buy some tea, and how scarce butter had become, and what a cold she had caught in the last raid, and how Uncle Jim had influenza and couldn't go on being a special, and how Aunt Sibyl had been introduced to one of the GEDDESES and talked to him as though it was the other, and how she herself had met Evelyn in the street the other day and Evelyn had asked "with suspicious interest after you"—and a thousand other things such as a good sister, even though busy at a hospital, finds time to write to a brother over there, all among the mud and the shells, winning the War. And not being in the habit of signing her name, when writing in this familiar way, she finished up with a reference to the darlingest of all dogs by sending its love at the very end: "Love from ——" and so forth.

Well, the letter, as I have said, could not be delivered. The postal people at the Front, and behind the Front, are astonishingly good, but they could not get in touch with the brother this time, and therefore they opened the letter and looked at the foot of it for the name of the writer and found that of the dog, and at the head of it for the street and town where the writer lived, and sent it back as "insufficiently addressed."

And that is why in a certain house in Chelsea a treasured possession is a returned letter for General SMUTS.

* * * * *

From an article entitled "Is it Safe for Cousins to marry?":—

"It is just as well, however, to pick out somebody besides your cousin for your wife." *The Family Doctor*.

Before acting on this advice, however, it might be safer to consult The Family Lawyer.

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[Illustration: AFTER A DAY ON THE ALLOTMENT.

“SUDDENLY SHE REALISED THAT HER IDOL HAD FEET OF CLAY.”—*Extract from popular novel.*]

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THE VERY GLAD EYE.

Mother put down the key of the hen-house and took up the letters that lay beside her plate.

"If only Joan would write larger," she sighed, turning over an envelope across which an ant seemed to have walked and left an inky trail. "I've mislaid my glass too, and shan't be able to read a word. Where could I have put the miserable thing?" she asked, peering again at the ridiculous little script.

Father put down his paper and said these hunts for Aunt Matilda were getting monotonous. Only yesterday he had rescued her from some dried bulbs in the greenhouse, and didn't Mother think it time she saw a good oculist and had proper spectacles, instead of using the old lens in that carved gold bauble belonging once to his grandmother's aunt.

"Perhaps it's just a bad habit," she answered with a smile, "or my eyes are getting lazy. But really I can see so well through it, and if they would print the newspapers better—"

"No one we know in this morning's list," said Father shortly, as he turned a sheet; "and we should be hearing from those rascals now that the push is over," he added, glancing at Mother who began to sip her coffee hurriedly.

"They might even get leave together," ventured Margery. "It's five months since Dick came home, and as for Christopher—"

"What swank for old Margots, now her hair is up," piped Archie. "Two brothers from the trenches to—"

"If you'd make a little less noise, my son," said Father in a strange voice, "I might be able to take in what I'm reading. There's something here about Christopher."

"What?" cried Mother, springing from her chair.

"Yes, it's Christopher plain enough," he repeated with shining eyes. "Christopher Charles Bentley, and—God bless my soul!—the boy has been splendid! It's all down here, and—"

"Read, read!" we clamoured, as his voice grew husky and indistinct.

"Read!" again we shouted, as Mother came and took the paper gently from him.

"When you're all quiet, children," she began, devouring the words before her.

Quiet! Even the canary held its breath while Mother read that wonderful paragraph.



It was a long one, and every word of it a tribute to our magnificent Chris, who had organised a small volunteer party, attacked a strong point, and captured fifteen of the enemy and a machine-gun, for which gallant act he had been awarded the M.C.

With lingering pride she went through it a second time, and only then did we see that she was staring at the paper, proudly and fiercely, through the handle of the hen-house key!

* * * * *

[Illustration: *First A.B. (indicating old tramp steamer in ballast).* "THANK 'EAVENS WE AIN'T GOT PROPELLERS WHAT STICK OUT LIKE THAT ON THIS 'ERE JUNK, BILL."

Second A.B. "WHAT ARE YOU GROUSING ABOUT NOW?"



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First A.B. "WHY, THE BLOOMIN' FIRST-LOOTENANT WOULD MAKE US POLISH THE BLINKIN' THING."]

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THE MUSICAL CRITIC'S ORDEAL.

[Mr. CYRIL SCOTT, the musical composer, in his recently published volume on *The Philosophy of Modernism in its connection with Music*, states that the criterion of lofty music, the method of gauging the spiritual value of art, "is only possible to him who has awakened the latent faculties of the pineal gland and the pituitary body."]

Lately I've been reading CYRIL SCOTT'S
Book on Music, modern and unmuzzled,
And, though solving many toughish knots,
By one statement I am sadly puzzled,
Namely, that if we would understand
What divides the noble from the shoddy
We must cultivate "the pineal gland,"
Also "the pituitary body."

But unfortunately SCOTT refrains
(Hence my present painful agitation)
From elucidating how one gains
This desiderated consummation.
Must I fly to silken Samarcand,
Or explore the distant Irrawaddy
For the culture of my pineal gland
And of my pituitary body?

Is the object gained by force of will
Or some drastic vegetarian diet?
Does it mean a compound radium pill
Causing vast upheaval and disquiet?
Do I need some special "Hidden Hand,"
Or the very strongest whisky toddy
To arouse my dormant pineal gland,
My unused pituitary body?

Should I read the works of Mr. YEATS,
Or the lays of WILCOX (ELLA WHEELER)?
Must I visit the United States
And consult the newest occult "healer"?
Is the tragedy of IBSEN'S *Brand*



Or the humour of *Poor Pillycuddy*
Better feeding for my pineal gland
And for my pituitary body?

Vain the subtle art of HENRY JAMES,
Vain the wealth of ROTHSCHILDS or of MORGANS,
If I fail to satisfy the claims
Of these mystic and momentous organs;
I'm no better than a grain of sand
Or a simple common polypody,
With an undeveloped pineal gland,
An inert pituitary body.

Blindly seeking for a helpful clue, Welcoming no matter what suggestion, I have lately
sounded one or two Leading doctors on this vital question; But they think I'll have to be
trepanned If I wish effectively to modify the structure of my pineal gland Or of my
pituitary body.

MORAL.

*'Gin pituitary bodies, With awakened eye, Meet with humble hoddy-doddies— Smaller
human fry— Cries and kissing both are missing When they're passing by, And the astral
demi-god is Comin' thro' the rye.*

* * * * *

OUR COLLOQUIAL CONTEMPORARIES.

“Repeated charges by Turkish cavalry resulted in only a slight
gain of ground at the expense of heavy osses.”—*Daily News*.



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* * * * *

FREE FOODERS.

“ROSYTH WORKERS AND THE COST OF LIVING.

“Mr. Douglas moved that they demand a reduction in the cost of living of 200 per cent. by abolishing profiteering and securing national control of food supplies. It was subsequently agreed to demand 100 per cent. decrease in the cost of food.”—*Glasgow Herald*.

* * * * *

THE COMPLETE PLASHER.

“Francesca,” I said, “listen to this.”

“I will,” she said, “if it’s worth listening to.”

“You can’t tell that till you’ve heard it, can you?”

“Well, what is it, anyhow?”

“It’s a letter,” I said, “from Harry Penruddock.”

“That doesn’t sound very exciting.”

“Ah, but wait a bit.”

“Well, get a move on. I’ve got to see the cook.”

“He sends me,” I said, “a notice which has been served upon him about his cottage at Smoltham. He wants to have my opinion about it.”

“Very well, give him your opinion, and let’s get on with the War.”

“Francesca,” I said, “are you not more than a little peevish this morning?”

“I have no patience,” she said, “with notices that have to be served. It’s always done by sanitary inspectors and rate collectors, and people of that sort. Why can’t they just post them and have done with it?”

“Who are you,” I said, “that you should fly in the face of Providence in this way? Can’t you see that if a notice is ‘served,’ it immediately becomes twice as important?”



“Oh, if it adds to the dignity of an inspector, well and good; but for my part I should have posted it.”

“You are not a sanitary inspector, and cannot realise the feelings of one.”

“They have no feelings, and that’s why they’re made inspectors.”

“Hush!” I said, and began to read:—

“In pursuance of the directions given in an Act passed in the fifth and sixth years of the reign of King William the Fourth, entitled “An Act to consolidate and amend the Laws relating to Highways in that part of Great Britain called England,” I, T. Bradish, of the Town Hall, Smoltham, do hereby give you notice forthwith to cut, prune, plash or lop certain Trees and Hedges overhanging the highway immediately adjoining your premises, No. 15, East Gate, in the Parish of Smoltham, and which are causing an obstruction and annoyance to the said highway, so that the obstructions caused to the said highway shall be removed.

“Dated this 19th day of October, 1917.”

“Isn’t it priceless?” I said.

“It is,” said Francesca. “I never knew before that a road could be annoyed.”

“Even a road has its feelings.”

“Yes, perhaps it’s a short lane, and everybody tramples on it, and it turns at last.”

“So do borough engineers and surveyors, it seems.”



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"I bet this one's a Tartar."

"How can you tell that?"

"I can tell it by his style, which is very severe and uncompromising."

"His style," I said, "is as the statute made it, and mustn't be impugned by us."

"I particularly like that bit about plashing the trees. How in the name of all that's English do you plash a tree?"

"If," I said, "you were a fountain and wanted to be poetical, you would plash, instead of splashing."

"That's nonsense," she said.

"No," I said, "it's poetry."

"But you don't pour poetry on overhanging trees. It must mean something else."

"I'll tell you what; we'll get a dictionary."

"Yes," she said, "you get it. I'm no good at dictionaries. I always find such a lot of fascinating words that I never get to the one I want."

"I'm rather like that myself," I said. "However I'll exercise self-restraint. Here you are: Packthread, Pastime, Pin—there's a lot about Pin—Plash. Got it! It means 'to bend down and interweave the branches or twigs of.'"

"Now," she said, "we know what Mr. Bradish wants."

"He's a very arbitrary man," I said. "How can he expect Harry Penruddock to bend down and interweave the branches or twigs of?"

"Anyway, Harry's got to do it, whether he understands it or not."

"Yes," I said, "borough surveyors take no denials. And now that you've had your lesson in English, you can go and see the cook."

"Half a mo'," she said; "I'm acquiring a lot of useful information about 'Plaster.' I never knew—"

"Hurry up," I said, "or we shan't get any lunch."

R.C.L.



* * * * *

DERELICT.

(Notices to Mariners. North Atlantic Ocean. Derelict reported.)

“We left ’er ’eaded for Lord knows where, in latitude forty-nine,
With a cargo o’ deals from Puget Sound, an’ ’er bows blown out by a mine;
I seen ’er just as the dark come down—I seen ’er floatin’ still,
An’ I ’ope them deals’d let her sink afore so long,” said Bill.

“It warn’t no use to stand by ’er—she could neither sail nor steer—
With the biggest part of a thousand mile between ’er and Cape Clear;
The sea was up to ’er waterways an’ gainin’ fast below,
But I’d like to know she went to ’er rest as a ship’s a right to go.

“For it’s bitter ’ard on a decent ship, look at it ’ow you may,
That’s worked her traverse an’ stood ’er trick an’ done ’er best in ’er day,
To be driftin’ around like a nine-days-drowned on the Western Ocean swell,
With never a hand to reef an’ furl an’ steer an’ strike the bell.

“No one to tend ’er binnacle lamps an’ light ’er masthead light,
Or scour ’er plankin’ or scrape ’er seams when the days are sunny an’ bright;
No one to sit on the hatch an’ yarn an’ smoke when work is done,
An’ say, ‘That gear wants reevin’ new some fine dogwatch, my son.’



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“No one to stand by tack an’ sheet when it’s comin’ on to blow;
Never the roar of ‘Rio Grande’ to the watch’s stamp-an’-go;
An’ the seagulls settin’ along the rail an’ callin’ the long day through,
Like the souls of old dead sailor-men as used to be ’er crew.

“Never a port of all ’er ports for ’er to fetch again,
Nothin’ only the sea an’ the sky, the sun, the wind an’ the rain;
It’s cruel ’ard on a decent ship, an’ so I tell you true,
An’ I wish I knew she ’ad gone to ’er rest as a good ship ought to do.”

C.F.S.

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[Illustration: *Mabel*. “WHAT SORT OF A DANCE WAS IT LAST NIGHT? HOW DID YOU GET ON?”

Gladys. “OH, ALL RIGHT. I WAS UP TO MY KNEES IN BOYS ALL THE EVENING.”]

* * * * *

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

Generally speaking, stories left unfinished because of the death of the writer in mid course can only be at best an uncomfortable, exasperating legacy to his admirers. But by a thrice happy chance this is not the case with the two novels upon which the late HENRY JAMES was engaged at the time of his fatal illness. This good fortune comes from the fact that it was the writer’s habit “to test and explore,” in a written or dictated sketch, the possible developments of any theme before embarking upon its treatment in detail. I get the phrase “test and explore,” than which there could be no better, from the brief preface to the volume now before me, *The Ivory Tower* (COLLINS). It exactly suggests the method of this preliminary study, doubly precious now, both as supplying the key by which we can understand the fragment that has been worked out, and as in itself giving us a glimpse, wonderfully fascinating, of its evolution. *The Ivory Tower* (called so characteristically after an object whose bearing upon the intrigue is of the slightest) is a study of wealth in its effect upon the mutual relations of a small group of persons belonging to the plutocracy of pre-war America. Its special motive was to be a development of situation as between a young legatee, in whom the business instinct is entirely wanting, and his friend and adviser, whom he was presently to detect in dishonest dealing, yet refrain from any act of challenge that would mean exposure. “Refrain”—does this not give you in one word the whole secret of what would have been a study in character and emotion obviously to the taste of the writer? For itself, and still

more for the glimpse of what it was to become, *The Ivory Tower* must have a place in every collection where the unmatched wit of HENRY JAMES is honoured as it should be.

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Something less successful perhaps for itself, though even more absorbing technically, is the volume containing the unfinished fragment of another HENRY JAMES novel, to be called *The Sense of the Past* (COLLINS). Here especially it is the preliminary study that furnishes the chief interest; the spectacle of this so-skilled craftsman struggling to master an idea that might well, I think, have been found later too unsubstantial, too subtly fantastic, for working out. Very briefly, the theme is to treat of a young American, in whom this "Sense of the Past" is all-powerful; whom the gift of an old London house and its furnishings enables to transport himself bodily into the life of 1820. More than this, he lives that life (and it is here that one suspects the idea of becoming unmanageable) in the person of an actual youth of that time, in whom a corresponding Sense of the Future has been so strong that he has answered the curiosity of his descendant by an exchange of personalities. Of course the dangers and confusions of the plan, a kind of psychological version of one often used in farce (except that it precisely wasn't to be any manner of dream), are such as might well alarm any writer—and, one might add, any reader also. It is a further misfortune that the style of what is actually written should be in the master's most remote and obscure manner, so much so that one is forced to wonder whether, without the notes as guide, it would be in any sort clear what the whole thing was about. The transition, for example, from the actual to the supernatural event is so abrupt that it might well have left the uninformed helplessly befogged. But this very fact again, as supposing some further treatment only now to be guessed at, helps to make the unique fascination of the book as revealing the difficulties and rewards of letters.

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Whatever Mr. ERNEST THOMPSON SETON cares to write I am glad to read, but there were moments in *The Preacher of Cedar Mountain* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON) when the great moral lesson of the story was as much as I could bear. The tale reveals the spiritual and moral development of *Jim Hartigan*. The author assures us that most of the characters are drawn from life, and that some of the main events are historical. All which I can easily believe, for Mr. SETON'S blunt method of describing *Jim Hartigan*'s evolution from an unhallowed stable-boy to a muscular Christian continually suggests reality. It is not a stylish method, but it gets home, and in a tale of this kind that is the main, if not the only, matter of importance. *Jim*'s besetting weaknesses were drink and an overwhelming love for horses. The former he conquered fairly soon, but the latter tripped him up more than once, and if he had not been guided by the wisest woman who ever came from the West his end would have been chaotic. The races at Fort Ryan are excellently described, and as a picture of the West of America some forty years ago you will find this story of *Jim*'s conversion both instructive and intriguing. All the same Mr. SETON has so often delighted me by his tales of the animal world that I hope this excursion is merely a holiday from the work for which he has a real genius.



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[Illustration: THE ABOVE GENTLEMAN IS SUPERSTITIOUS ON THE SUBJECT OF WALKING UNDER LADDERS.]

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Up to the present time the crop of German spy-stories has been distinguished by quantity rather than by quality. Possibly the authors, realising that the wildest flights of their highly-trained fancies could never match the actual machinations of the German Secret Service as revealed in the official news, have not put their hearts into the work. In *The Lost Naval Papers* and other stories (MURRAY) Mr. BENNET COPPLESTONE has shown unusual boldness in connecting the activities of his super-policeman, *Dawson*, with the more prominent events of the War. Indeed, I am not sure that the terror he professes to feel in the presence of the Scotland Yard official (for he tells his stories *in propria persona*) is not to some extent justified. "Dora" is very sensitive and six months ago would never have permitted Mr. COPPLESTONE to reveal to our enemies either the bumptious egoism of a nameless First Lord or the platitudinous vacillations of an anonymous Premier, even in the interests of popular fiction. Though we concede his audacity in allowing his superlative sleuth to stop a general strike of engineers by threatening them with martial law and to tempt the German fleet to come out by sending it false news of our battleship strength, or to enable the battle of the Falkland Islands to be won by piling dummy battle cruisers up outside Plymouth harbour, the merit of Mr. COPPLESTONE'S book does not lie in the complexity or vitality of his plots. It lies in a keen sense of humour and clever character suggestion, and the recognition that the thing written about is of less importance than the manner of writing. We earnestly desire that Mr. COPPLESTONE should devote another volume—a whole one—to the inimitable *Madame Guilbert*; but whatever he writes about will be welcome, provided it be written in the vein of the volume before us.

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Out of such workaday elements as the hypnotic fascinations of a sleek music-master, the follies of a runaway schoolgirl and the well-disciplined affections of a most superior young gentleman, Mr. W.E. NORRIS has contrived to create yet another new story, without infringement of his own or anyone else's copyright. Thanks to the incidence of War and the author's skilful manipulation of Europe's distresses (for once the KAISER'S intrusion into the middle of a peaceful—almost too peaceful—narrative is not unwelcome), the second half of *The Fond Fugitives* (HUTCHINSON) is better than the first. Not, indeed, that such a wary hand as the writer has been so ill-advised as to follow his hero to Flanders, or even to let his heroine do so; but his wounded soldier, come home with sympathy and understanding grown big enough to realise that a girl, though indiscreet

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once, may yet be adorable ever after, is certainly more to one's taste than the philanderer about town, admiring other men's wives, in July, 1914. And so the story, slight though it is, ends on a strong note and with fair hope of happiness for two wiser and not much sadder people. Some of the minor characters are quite capably drawn, particularly the old father and mother in pathetic flight before the shadow of their daughter's disgrace; but it is the freshness of the heroine herself, outraging all tradition by refusing, though without bravado, to remain for ever in the gloom of a childish error, that one likes to remember. Altogether, the author's friends will find this book not at all below the level of his best work.

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Small Craft (ELKIN MATTHEWS), by Miss C. FOX SMITH, contains several poems that have appeared in *Punch* over the initials "C.F.S." They should receive a fresh welcome from all who share her understanding of the ways of seafaring men, and from the larger public that is beginning to appreciate the gallantry and devotion of our Merchant Service.

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Extract from a letter in *The Saturday Review*:—

"But posterity ought to share the burden, as it has always done in the past."

A tardy but complete answer to the old question, "What has posterity done to deserve our consideration?"