

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 152, January 10, 1917 eBook

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 152, January 10, 1917

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CHARIVARIA.

The effect of the curtailed train-service throughout the country is already observable. On certain sections of one of our Southern lines there are no trains running except those which started prior to January 1st.

The new Treasury Notes, we are told, are to have a picture of the House of Commons on the back. It is hoped that other places of amusement, such as the Crystal Palace and the Imperial Institute, will be represented on subsequent issues.

It is announced from Germany that arrangements have been made whereby criminals are to be enrolled in the army. They have, of course, already conducted many of its operations.

According to *The Daily Chronicle* there are only twenty-three full Generals in the British Army—a total identical with that of the late Cabinet. It is only fair to the army to state that the number is purely a coincidence.

*“The rise in boot prices
women’s large purchases.”*

The above headlines in a contemporary have caused a good deal of natural jealousy among members of the Force.

“At them and through them!” says the *Hamburger Fremdenblatt* in a seasonable message to the commander of the Turkish Navy. This will not deceive the Turk, who is beginning to realise that, while the invitation to go *at* the enemy is sincere, any opportunities of “going *through*” him will be exclusively grasped by his Teutonic ally.

Prince *Buelow* has again arrived in Switzerland. It is these bold and dramatic strokes that lift the German diplomat above the ranks of the commonplace.



It is explained by a railway official that a passenger who pays threepence for a ticket to-day is really only giving the company twopence, the rest being water, owing to the decline in the purchasing power of money. A movement is now on foot among some of the regular passengers to endeavour to persuade the companies to consent to take their fares neat for the future.

At his Coronation the Emperor *Karl of Austria* waved the sword of *st. Stephen* towards the four corners of the earth, to indicate his intention to protect his empire against all its foes. The incident has been receiving the earnest consideration of the *Kaiser*, who has now finally decided that in the circumstances it is not necessary to regard it as an unfriendly act.

It was felt that the ceremonies connected with the Coronation ought to be curtailed out of regard for the sufferings due to the War. So they dispensed with the customary distribution of bread to the poor.

Lecturing to a juvenile audience Professor *Arthur Keith* said that there was no difference between detectives and scientists, and some of the older boys are still wondering whether he was trying to popularise science or to discredit detective stories.

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Germans cannot now obtain footwear, it is reported, without a permit card. Nevertheless we know a number of them who are assured of getting the boot without any troublesome formalities.

Burglars have stolen eighteen ducks from the estate of *Bethmann-HOLLWEG*. It will be interesting to note how their defence—that “Necessity knows no law”—is received by the distinguished advocate of the invasion of Belgium.

“Taxicab drivers must expect a very low standard of intoxication to apply to them,” said the Lambeth magistrate last week. On the other hand the police should be careful not to misinterpret the air of light-hearted devilry that endeared the “growler” to the hearts of an older generation.

It is stated that L2,250,000 has been sent by Germany into Switzerland to raise the exchanges. A much larger sum, according to Mr. *Putnam*, was sent into the United States merely to raise the wind.

Referring to the Highland regiments a *Globe* writer says, “The streets of London will reel with the music of the pipes when they come back.” This is one of those obstacles to peace that has been overlooked by the *Kaiser*.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Private slogger, just arrived with last Draft and on guard duty for first time, forgets himself when the Colonel appears accompanied by his daughter.*]

* * * * *

Vienna-bound: A reverie en Route.

[A Wireless Press telegram says: “The German Imperial train has reached Constantinople in order to transport the Sultan to Vienna, to take part in the conference of Sovereigns to be held there.”]



I hate all trains and told them so;
I said that I should much prefer
(Being, as Allah knows, no traveller)
To stick to Stamboul and the *status quo*.

They said, "If you would rather walk,
Pray do so; it will save the fare;"
Which shows that *William* (who will take the Chair)
Insists that I shall come and hear him talk.

I've never tried a train before;
It makes me sick; it knocks my nerves;
The noises and the tunnels and the curves
Add a new horror to the woes of war.

What am I here for, anyhow?
I'm summoned for appearance' sake,
To nod approval at the Chief, but take
No further part in his one-man pow-wow.

My job is just to sit, it seems,
And act the silent super's *role*,
The while I wish myself, with all my soul,
Safe back in one or more of my hareems.

I'd let the Conference go hang;
Any who likes can have my pew
And play at peace-talk with this pirate crew,
William and *Karl* and FERDIE—what a gang!

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Our Chairman wants to save his skin
And (curse this train!) to cook a plan
For Germany to pouch what spoils she can—
All very nice; but where do I come in?

At best I'm but the missing link
Upon his Berlin-Baghdad line;
This is the senior partner's show, not mine;
Will he consult my feelings? I don't think.

If Russia's gain should mean my loss,
He'll wince at Teuton schemes cut short,
But for my grief, expelled from my own Porte,
Will he care greatly? Not one little toss.

Well, as I've said and said again,
'Tis Fate (Kismet), and, should it frown,
We Faithful have to take it lying down—
And yet, by Allah, how I loathe this train!

O. S.

* * * * *

"A subaltern friend of mine landed at Gibraltar for a few hours, and he was anxious to be able to say that he had been to Spain. So he walked along the Isthmus to Ceuta, where the British and Spanish sentries faced one another, and directly the Spanish soldier turned his head he hopped quickly over into Spain. Then the sentry turned round, and he hopped back again even more quickly."—*Daily Sketch*.

Those of our readers who have walked from the Gibraltar frontier to Morocco and back, like the above subaltern, know that it takes some doing.

* * * * *

"*James Phillips*, 16, was charged with doing damage to the extent of L4 10s. at a refreshment shop in Hackney belonging to Peter Persico. As he was kept waiting a little time he broke a plate on the table; then he put a saucer under his heel and broke it. When remonstrated with he broke 10 cups and saucers by throwing them at partitions and enamelled decorations, and overturned a marble table, the top of which he smashed."—*The Times*.

No doubt he was incited to these naughty deeds by the line, very popular in Hackney circles, "Persico's odi, puer, apparatus."

* * * * *

Heart-to-heart talks.

(The Emperor of AUSTRIA and Count TISZA.)

Tisza. So there is the full account, your Majesty, of men killed, wounded and captured.

The Emperor. It is a gloomy list and I hardly can bear to consider it.

Tisza. Yes, and beyond the mere list of casualties by fighting there are other matters to be considered. Food is scarce and of a poor quality, in Hungary as elsewhere. The armies we can yet feed, but the home-staying men and the women and children are a growing difficulty. It becomes more and more impossible to provide them with sufficient nourishment.

The Emperor. It is strange, but in Austria the conditions are said to be even worse.

Tisza. You are right, Sire, they are worse, much worse.

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The Emperor. Well, we must lose no time then. We must buy great stocks of food. More money must be spent.

Tisza. More money? But where is it to come from? Not from Hungary, where we are within a narrow margin of financial collapse, and not in Austria, where there is already to all intents and purposes a state of bankruptcy. More money is not to be got, for we have none ourselves and nobody will lend us any.

The Emperor. You paint the situation in dark colours, my friend TISZA.

Tisza. I paint it as it is, Sire, at any rate as I see it. It is not the part of a Royal Counsellor to act otherwise.

The Emperor. Yes, but there might be others who would take a different view, and support their belief with equally good reasons.

Tisza. Not if they know the facts and are faithful to their duty as Ministers of the State. Here and there, no doubt, might be found foolish and ambitious men who would be willing to deceive, first themselves and then their Emperor, as to the true condition of affairs. But, if your Majesty trusted them and allowed them to guide you, you would learn too late how ill they had understood their duty. I myself, though determined to do everything in my power to promote the welfare of Hungary and its King, would willingly stand aside if you think that others would give you greater strength.

The Emperor. I have every reason to trust you most fully. Have you any plan for extricating us from this dreadful morass of failure and difficulty into which we are plunged?

Tisza. Your Majesty, there is only one way. We must have peace, and must have it as soon as possible.

The Emperor. I too think we must have peace, but how shall we obtain it when we have a friend and ally who watches us with the closest care, and would not allow us even to hint at any steps that would really lead to peace?

Tisza. Sire, you are a young man, but you are a scion of a great and ancient House, which was powerful and illustrious when the Hohenzollerns were but mean and petty barbarian princelings. Withdraw yourself, while the opportunity is still with you, from the fatal domination of this vain and inflated upstart who endeavours to serve only his own selfish designs. Our enemies will make peace with you, and thus he too will be forced to abandon the War. With him and with the deeds that have outraged the world they will not initiate any movement that tends to peace. He must go through his punishment, as indeed we all must, but his, I think, will be heavier than ours.

The Emperor. Then you want me to make peace?

Tisza. If it could be done by holding up your hand, I would urge you to hold it up at once.

The Emperor. And what would the world say?

Tisza. The world would glorify your name.

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[Illustration: A SHORT WAY WITH TINO.

THE BIG GUN (*ringing up the Entente Exchange*). “OH, YOU ARE THERE, ARE YOU? WELL, PUT ME ON TO NUMBER ONE, ATHENS.”]

* * * * *

A KNIGHT-ERRANT.

Sister Baynes came into my room just as I was putting on my out-door uniform and wanted to know how I was spending my two hours off duty. She is full of curiosity about—she calls it interest in—other people’s affairs. When I told her I was going out to buy a birthday present she looked rather stern. Said she:—

“The giving of unnecessary presents has become a luxury which few of us nowadays think it right to afford.”

I didn’t answer her because at the moment I could think of no really adequate reason why Bobbie *should* have a present, except that I so very much wanted to give him one. Bobbie is tall and young and red-haired and, of course, khaki clad. We are going to be married “when the War is over.”

I pondered Sister Baynes’ words until I reached Oxford Street, and then forgot them in the interest of choosing the present. For a while I hesitated between cigarettes and chocolates, and finally decided on the latter. Bobbie is a perfect pig about sweets. I bought a comfortable-looking box, ornamented with a St. George, improbably attired in khaki, slaying a delightful German dragon clad in blue and a Uhlan helmet. St. George had red hair and a distinct look of Bobbie, which was one reason why I got him.

[Illustration: THE COMBINATION SCOOTER AND CARPET SWEEPER.

BUY YOUR SERVANT ONE AND ADD A ZEST TO HER WORK.]

This business accomplished, I thought I would call on a friend who lives near by. She is middle-aged and rather sad, and spends her time pushing trolleys about a munition works. Just now, however, I knew she had a cold and couldn’t go out. I found her on the floor wrestling with brown paper, preparing a parcel for her soldier on Salisbury Plain. She adopted him through a League, and spends all her spare time and pocket-money in socks and cigarettes for him. She smiled at me wanly, with a piece of string between her teeth, and I felt I simply must do something to cheer her up.

"I've brought you some chocolates for your cold," I said. "Eat one and forget the War and the weather," and I handed her Bobbie's box. Her necessity, as someone says somewhere, seemed at the moment so much greater than his.

"You extravagant child!" she said, but her face lightened for an instant. She admired St. George almost as much as I had done, but, though she fingered the orange-coloured bow, she did not untie it, so I concluded she meant to have an orgy by herself later on. We talked for a while, and then I looked at the clock and fled for the hospital. She thanked me again for the chocolates as I went; she really seemed quite pleased with them.

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Two days later Matron collared me in the passage and gave me a handful of letters and things to distribute. There was a fat parcel for Martha, the ward-maid. I found her in the closet where she keeps her brooms, and gave it her. Her eyes simply danced as she took it, first carefully wiping her hand on her apron.

"It's from my bruvver," she explained. "'Im on Salisbury Plain. Very good to me 'e always is." She stripped off the paper and gave a sigh of rapture. "Lor, Nurse, ain't it beautiful?"

It was a chocolate box, a comfortable-looking chocolate box, ornamented with a red-headed St. George, a large blue dragon and a vivid orange bow.

"It does seem nice," I agreed.

"Fancy 'im spending all that on me," said Martha.

"You'll be able to have quite a feast," said I, smiling at my old friend St. George.

Martha looked suddenly shy.

"I'm not going to keep it," she confided. She came closer to me. "Do you remember young Renshaw, what used to be in your ward, Nurse?"

I nodded; I remembered him well, a cheery boy with a smashed leg, now in a Convalescent Home by the sea.

"'Im and me's engaged," said Martha in a hoarse whisper. "I liked 'im and he liked me, and one day I was doing the windows 'e asked me. 'E says the food down there is that monopolous, so I'll send him this 'ere just to cheer 'im up like."

It seemed an excellent idea to me. I beamed upon Martha. I helped her to re-wrap St. George, and lent her my fountain-pen to write the address which was to send my Knight once more upon his travels. It appeared to me that he and his dragon were seeing a lot of life.

Bobbie had arranged to call for me on his birthday, so when my off duty came I simply flung on my things and raced for the hall. As I passed Matron's door she called me in. I entered trembling; it was always a toss-up with Matron whether you were to be smiled upon or strafed.

To-day she was lamb-like. She sat at a desk piled high with papers. Among them lay a vivid coloured object.

"I've just had a letter from that young Renshaw," she said. "Such a charming letter, thanking us for all our kindness and enclosing a present to show his appreciation." She

smiled. She seemed hugely pleased about something. “He addresses it to me,” she went on; “but, though I am grateful for the kind thought, I do not myself eat chocolates.”

She picked up the box, a comfortable-looking box ornamented with an orange satin bow.

“I think these are more in your line than mine,” she said, “and Renshaw was in your ward. You have really the best right to them.”

She handed me the box of chocolates. I gazed at my travelled Saint and he gazed back. I could almost have sworn he winked.

Clutching him and his dragon, I departed and danced down the corridor into the hall. There waited Bobbie, red-haired and khaki-clad, more like St. George than the gallant knight himself.

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"How do you do?" I greeted him. "Many happy returns, dear old thing!" As he held out his hand I put something into it. "A box of chocolates," I explained; "I bought them for your birthday!"

* * * * *

"Wanted, for Low Comedian, really Funny Sons."—*The Stage*.

As a change, we suppose, from the eternal mother-in-law.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Inveterate Golfer (stung by the leading article)*. "I SUPPOSE I AM REALLY NON-ESSENTIAL. IT'S HARD TO REALISE THIS WITH ONE'S HANDICAP JUST REDUCED TO SEVEN."]

* * * * *

THE REGIMENTAL MASCOT.

When his honour the Colonel took the owld rigiment to France, Herself came home bringin' the rigimental mascot with her. A big white long-haired billy-goat he was, the same.

"I'll not be afther lavin him at the daypo," says Herself; "'tis no place for a domestic animal at all, the language them little drummer-boys uses, the dear knows," says she.

So me bowld mascot he stops up at the Castle and makes free with the flower-beds and the hall and the drawin'-room and the domestic maids the way he'd be the Lord-Lieutenant o' the land, and not jist a plain human Angory goat. A proud arrygent crature it is, be the powers! Steppin' about as disdainy as a Dublin gerrl in Ballydehob, and if, mebbe, you'd address him for to get off your flower-beds with the colour of anger in your mouth he'd let a roar out of him like a Sligo piper with poteen taken, and fetch you a skelp with his horns that would lay you out for dead.

And sorra the use is it of complainin' to Herself.

"Ah, Delaney, 'tis the marshal sperit widin him," she'd say; "we must be patient with him for the sake of the owld rigiment;" and with that she'd start hand-feedin' him with warmed-up sponge-cake and playin' with his long silky hair.

"Far be it from me," I says to Mikeen, the herd, "to question the workings o' Providence, but were I the Colonel of a rigiment, which I am not, and *had* to have a mascot, it's not a raparee billy I'd be afther havin', but a nanny, or mebbe a cow, that would step along dacently with the rigiment and bring ye luck, and mebbe a dropeen o' milk for the

orficers' tea as well. If it's such cratures that bring ye fortune may I die a peaceful death in a poor-house," says I.

"I'm wid ye," says Mikeen, groanin', he bein' spotted like a leopard with bruises by rason of him havin' to comb the mascot's silky hair twice daily, and the quick temper of the baste at the tangles.

The long of a summer the billy stops up at the Castle, archin' his neck at the wurld and growin' prouder and prouder by dint of the standin' he had with the owld rigiment and the high-feedin' he had from Herself. Faith, 'tis a great delight we servints had of him I'm tellin' ye! It was as much as your life's blood was worth to cross his path in the garden, and if the domestic maids would be meetin' him in the house they'd let him eat the dresses off them before they dare say a word.

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In the autumn me bowld mascot gets a wee trifle powerful by dint o' the high-feedin' and the natural nature of the crature. Herself, wid her iligant lady's nose, is afther noticin' it, and she sends wan o' the gerrls to tell meself and Mikeen to wash the baste.

"There will be murdher done this day," says I to the lad, "but 'tis the orders—go get the cart-rope and the chain off the bull-dog, and we'll do it. Faith, it isn't all the bravery that's at the Front," says I.

"That's the true wurrd," says he, rubbin' the lumps on his shins, the poor boy.

"Oh, Delaney," says the domestic gerrl, drawin' a bottle from her apron pocket, "Herself says will ye plaze be so obligin' to sprinkle the mascot wid a dropeen of this ody-koloney scent—mebbe it will quench his powerfulness, she says."

I put the bottle in me pocket. We tripped up me brave goat with the rope, got the bull's collar and chain, and dragged him away towards the pond, him buckin' and ragin' between us like a Tyrone Street lady in the arms of the poliss. To hear the roars he let out of him would turn your hearts cowl'd as lead, but we held on.

The Saints were wid us; in half-an-hour we had him as wet as an eel, and broke the bottle of ody-koloney over his back.

He was clane mad. "God save us all when he gets that chain off him!" I says. "God save us it is!" says Mikeen, looking around for a tree to shin.

Just at the minut we heard a great screechin' o' dogs, and through the fence comes the harrier pack that the Reserve orficers kept in the camp beyond. ("Harriers" they called them, but, begob! there wasn't anythin' they wouldn't hunt from a fox to a turkey, those ones.)

"What are they afther chasin'?" says Mikeen.

"'Tis a stag to-day, be the newspapers," I says, "but the dear knows they'll not cotch him this month, he must be gone by this half-hour, and the breath is from them, their tongues is hangin' out a yard," I says.

'Twas at that moment the Blessed Saints gave me wisdom.

"Mikeen," I says, "drag the mascot out before them; we'll see sport this day."

"Herself—" he begins.

"Hoult your whisht," says I, "and come on." With that we dragged me bowld goat out before the dogs and let go the chain.

The dogs sniffed up the strong blast of ody-koloney and let a yowl out of them like all the banshees in the nation of Ireland, and the billy legged it for his life—small blame to him!

Meself and Mikeen climbed a double to see the sport.

“They have him,” says Mikeen. “They have not,” says I; “the crature howlds them by two lengths.”

“He has doubled on them,” says Mikeen; “he is as sly as a Jew.”

“He is forninst the rabbit holes now,” I says. “I thank the howly Saints he cannot burrow.”

“He has tripped up—they have him bayed,” says Mikeen.

And that was the mortal truth, the dogs had him.

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Oh, but it was a bowld billy! He went in among those hounds like a lad to a fair, you could hear his horns lambastin' their ribs a mile away. But they were too many for him and bit the grand silky hair off him by the mouthful. The way it flew you'd think it was a snowstorm.

"They have him desthroyed," says Mikeen.

"They have," says I, "God be praised!"

At the moment the huntsman leps his harse up on the double beside us; he was phlastered with muck from his hair to his boots.

"What have they out there?" says he, blinkin' through the mud and not knowin' rightly what his hounds were coursin' out before him, whether it would be a stag or a Bengal tiger.

"'Tis her ladyship's Rile Imperial Mascot Goat," says I; "an' God save your honour for she'll have your blood in a bottle for this day's work."

The huntsman lets a curse out of his stummick and rides afther them, flat on his saddle, both spurs tearin'. In the wink of an eye he is down among the dogs, larruppin' them with his whip and drawin' down curses on them that would wither ye to hear him—he had great eddication, that oficer.

"Come now," says I to Mikeen, the poor lad, "let you and me bear the cowl'd corpse of the diseased back to Herself; mebbe she'll have a shillin' handy in her hand, the way she'd reward us for saving the body from the dogs," says I.

But was me bowld mascot dead? He was not. He was alive and well, the thickness of his wool had saved him. For all that he had not a hair of it left to him, and when he stood up before you you wouldn't know him; he was that ordinary without his fleece, he was no more than a common poor man's goat, he was no more to look at than a skinned rabbit, and that's the truth.

He walked home with meself and Mikeen as meek as a young gerrl.

Herself came runnin' out, all fluttery, to look at him.

"Ah, but that's not *my* mascot," says she.

"It is, Marm," says I; and I swore to it by the whole Calendar—Mikeen too.

"Bah! how disgustin'. Take it to the cow-house," says she, and stepped indoors without another word.

We led the billy away, him hangin' his head for shame at his nakedness.

"Ye'll do no more mascottin' avic," says I to him. "Sorra luck you would bring to a blind beggar-man the way you are now—you'll never step along again with the drums and tambourines."

And that was the true word, for though Herself had Mikeen rubbing him daily with bear's-grease and hair-lotion he never grew the same grand fleece again, and he'd stand about in the back-field, brooding for hours together, the divilment clane gone out of his system; and if, mebbe, you'd draw the stroke of an ash-plant across his ribs to hearten him, he'd only just look at you sad-like and pass no remarks.

* * * * *

TOP-O'-THE-MORNING.

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Top-o'-the-Morning's shoes are off;
He runs in the orchard, rough, all day;
Chasing the hens for a turn at the trough,
Fighting the cows for a place at the hay;
With a coat where the Wiltshire mud has dried,
With brambles caught in his mane and tail—
Top-o'-the-Morning, pearl and pride
Of the foremost flight of the White Horse Vale!

The master he carried is Somewhere in France
Leading a cavalry troop to-day,
Ready, if Fortune but give him the chance,
Ready as ever to show them the way,
Riding as straight to his new desire
As ever he rode to the line of old,
Facing his fences of blood and fire
With a brow of flint and a heart of gold.

Do the hoofs of his horses wake a dream
Of a trampling crowd at the covert-side,
Of a lead on the grass and a glinting stream
And Top-o'-the-Morning shortening stride?
Does the triumph leap to his shining eyes
As the wind of the vale on his cheek blows cold,
And the buffeting big brown shoulders rise
To his light heel's touch and his light hand's hold?

When the swords are sheathed and the strife is done,
And the cry of hounds is a call to men;
When the straight-necked Wiltshire foxes run
And the first flight rides on the grass again;
May Top-o'-the-Morning, sleek of hide,
Shod, and tidy of mane and tail,
Light, and fit for a man to ride,
Lead them once more in the White Horse Vale!

W.H.O.

* * * * *

Polygamy in Workington.

“Supper was served by some of the wives of some of the members.”—*Workington News*.

* * * * *

TRAGEDY OF A DUTIFUL WIFE.

[Illustration: “I SAY, THAT MRS. DASHWOOD SPIFFINGTON SEEMS A JOLLY WOMAN—WHAT?” “ISN’T SHE A LITTLE—ER—”

“NOT A BIT OF IT. A WOMAN OUGHT TO BE CHEERY, ESPECIALLY IN THESE TIMES.” “I SEE, DEAR.”]

[Illustration: “WHAT ON EARTH—?”

“I’M MAKING A NEW HAT, DEAR. I SAW MRS. DASHWOOD SPIFFINGTON WEARING ONE VERY LIKE THIS.”]

[Illustration: “GREAT HEAVENS! WHAT ARE YOU CUTTING YOUR NEW DRESS TO BITS FOR?”

“IT’S ALL RIGHT, DEAR. MRS. DASHWOOD SPIFFINGTON HAS ONE QUITE AS SHORT AS THIS.”]

[Illustration: “GOOD LORD! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO YOUR FACE?”

“MRS. DASHWOOD SPIFFINGTON ALWAYS MAKES UP A LITTLE WHEN SHE’S GOING OUT. OH—I FORGOT TO TELL YOU—I HAVEN’T ORDERED ANY DINNER, AS I THOUGHT WE MIGHT GO AND DINE AT A RESTAURANT.”]

[Illustration: “AREN’T YOU MAKING YOURSELF RATHER CONSPICUOUS?”

“BUT I THOUGHT YOU LIKED CHEERY PEOPLE LIKE MRS. DASHWOOD SPIFFINGTON.”]

[Illustration: “I’M AWFULLY SORRY, DEAR. I OUGHT TO HAVE PRACTISED SMOKING. I EXPECT MRS. DASHWOOD SPIFFINGTON—”



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"D—— MRS. DASHWOOD SPIFFINGTON!"

"VERY WELL, DEAR."]

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE PINCH OF WAR.

Lady of the House (War Profiteer's wife, forlornly). "THEY'VE JUST TAKEN OUR THIRD FOOTMAN; AND IF ANY MORE OF OUR MEN HAVE TO GO WE SHALL CLOSE THE HOUSE AND LIVE AT THE RITZ UNTIL THE WAR IS OVER—(*brightly*)—HOWEVER, WE MUST ALL SACRIFICE SOMETHING."]

* * * * *

OVER-WEIGHT.

Scene: A London Terminus.

Porter (with an air of finality). It weighs 'undred-and-four pounds. You can't take it, mum.

Lady Traveller. Oh, I must take it.

[*Porter is obliged by an irritation of the head to remove his cap, but does not speak.*

Lady Traveller. It's all right. I know the manager of the line, and he would pass it for me.

Her Friend. Isn't your friend manager of the Great Southern?

Lady Traveller (sharply). He has a great deal to do with all these railways now. (*To Porter, hopefully, but not very confidently*) That will be all right.

Porter. Very sorry, mum. It can't be done.

Lady Traveller. My friend the manager would be very much annoyed at my being stopped like this. Only four pounds, too. Why, it's nothing.

[*Porter removes his cap again on account of further irritation.*

Lady Traveller (to her Friend). I don't know what I'm to do. (*To Porter*) What am I to do?

Porter (deliberately). You must open it and take somethink out.

Lady Traveller. I can't open it here.

Porter (ignoring this). Somethink weighing a bit over four pounds.

Lady Traveller. But I can't do it here.

Porter (ignoring this). Pair o' boots or somethink.

Lady Traveller (to her Friend). He seems to think my boots weigh four pounds.

Her Friend. Haven't you got two pairs?

Lady Traveller (sourly). Yes, but two pairs of my boots wouldn't weigh four pounds.

Porter (who has been quietly undoing the straps_). Is it locked, mum?

Lady Traveller (producing key and almost in tears). It's too bad.

[She dives into box and extracts two pairs of boots wrapped in newspapers.

Porter (taking them and weighing them judiciously in his hands). That's all right, mum.

[He pushes box on to weighing machine which registers under 100 lbs.

Lady Traveller. They're very thick boots, of course. Whatever am I to do with them now?

Her Friend. We shall have to carry them. *[Takes one parcel.*

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Lady Traveller. Jane shall hear of this. I told her never to use newspaper for packing.

Her Friend (suddenly). There's Major Merriman.

Lady Traveller. So it is. Don't let him see us with these dreadful parcels. (*Angrily*) Why don't you turn round? He'll see you.

Major Merriman. How do you do?

Lady Traveller (in great surprise). Oh, how do you do, Major Merriman? We've been having such an amusing experience, *etc.*, *etc.*

* * * * *

What made Lord Devonport Dizzy.

"The following resolution was unanimously passed, and ordered to be sent to the Prime Minister and the Food Controller (Lord Beaconsfield)."—*The Western Gazette*.

* * * * *

"Lamp-posts and trees and other pedestrians were found with unpleasant and sometimes violent frequency."—*Beckenham Journal*.

That's the worst of a fog; landmarks will keep on walking about.

* * * * *

A propos of the TSAR'S manifesto:—

"The *Retch*, says: 'The order puts the dot on all the "t's."'"—*Provincial Paper*.

It is a far, far better thing to dot your "t's" than cross your "i's."

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[Illustration: THE DAWN OF DOUBT.

GRETCHEN. "I WONDER IF THIS GENTLEMAN REALLY IS MY GOOD ANGEL AFTER ALL!"]

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[Illustration: *Benevolent Gentleman*. "YOU MUST BE CAREFUL, MY MAN, OR YOU WILL GET CLERGYMAN'S SORE THROAT."]

* * * * *

NURSERY RHYMES OF LONDON TOWN.

(SECOND SERIES.)

XV.—THE TOWER.

They put a Lady in the Tower,
Heigh-o, fiddlededee!
They put a Lady in the Tower
And told her she was in their power
And left her there for half-an-hour,
Heigh-o, fiddlededee!

They put a Padlock on the Chain,
Heigh-o, fiddlededee!
They put a Padlock on the Chain,
But they left the Key in the South of Spain,
So the Lady took it off again,
Heigh-o, fiddlededee!

They put a Bulldog at the Door,
Heigh-o, fiddlededee!
They put a Bulldog at the Door,
He was so old he could only snore,
And he'd lost his Tooth the day before,
Heigh-o, fiddlededee!

They put a Beefeater at the Gate,
Heigh-o, fiddlededee!
They put a Beefeater at the Gate,
But as his age was eighty-eight
His Grandmother said he couldn't wait,
Heigh-o, fiddlededee!

They put a Prince to watch the Stair,
Heigh-o, fiddlededee!
They put a Prince to watch the Stair,
But he had a Golden Ring to spare,
So he married the Lady then and there,
Heigh-o, fiddlededee!



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And ever since that grievous hour,
Heigh-o, fiddlededee!
Ever since that grievous hour
When the lovely Lady was in their power
They've never put nobody in the Tower,
Heigh-o, fiddlededee!

* * * * *

Flattery from the Front.

"I got your parcel quite undamaged, and it came at a time when we were short of grub. I could have eaten a dead monkey, so your cake came in very useful."

* * * * *

"Major-General (Temporary General) Sir Hugh de la Poer Bough, K.C.B., whose name appears in the New Year list of honours as being promoted to the rank of lieutenant-general, is a second cousin of Major-General Hugh Sutlej Kough."—*Liverpool Echo*.

It is rumoured that he is also connected with that famous fighting family the GOUGHS.

* * * * *

A POSTSCRIPT.

(Suggested by a later list of L. & N.W.R. stations which have been closed.)

A further list of closed stations
Elicits further protestations.
Blank desolation, grim and stark,
Broods sadly o'er Carpenders Park,
And Friezland, as perhaps is meet,
Is suffering badly from cold feet.
The population of Rhosneigr
Is raging like a wounded tiger;
And those who used to book at Llong
Are using language, loud and strong,
While residents around Chalk Farm
Are filled with anguish and alarm.

N.B. In our anterior lay
One letter somehow went astray;



We therefore now apologise;
'Tis Aspley, and not Apsley, Guise.

* * * * *

From an article on "Greece and Belgium":—

"King Tino has a black record of blood and treachery to answer, and to compare his case with that of King Leopold is the blackest outrage of all."—*Star*.

Personally we think that it were blacker still to compare his case with that of KING ALBERT.

* * * * *

[Illustration: "HI! BILL! DON'T COME DOWN THIS LADDER. I'VE TOOK IT AWAY."]

* * * * *

THE LITTLE RIFT.

My wife and I are in perfect agreement about everything. We are like the Allied Ministers who meet at Paris; we always "arrive at a complete understanding" in all matters of policy. When strict economy was enjoined upon us I moved my desk into the dining-room to save a fire. She made a summer hat out of a bit of my old Panama, encased in the remnants of an evening gown. All was well.

I should be giving you a wrong impression altogether if I were to suggest that there was the slightest difference of opinion between us. I most solemnly declare that I am as good a patriot as she is. Still, as time goes on, I do feel a certain uneasiness, a suggestion of a new domestic element that needs watching.

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We are both in it, but the initiative rests with her. She asks me to take two Belgian refugees and the housemaid and the dog and the laundry-hamper along with me in the two-seater to the station, to save petrol. Well, I am willing. She fills the herbaceous border with alternating potatoes and carnations. Well, I am more than willing. She bottles peas and beans. And I say to you that I am proud and happy that she should think of these things.

Above all she gets at the very root of the food problem. I should say that here she has advantages over some, as I belong to the class of husband known as Easily Fed. She has got hold of a whole sheaf of leaflets from the War Office or somewhere—"When is a pie not a pie?" "Leave out the egg;" "How to make something out of something else," *etc., etc.*; and we feed on those chiefly. She knows I don't like rabbits, and yet I am well aware that rabbits are repeatedly insinuated in such forms as not to leave a single clue. I cannot tell you how I admire and approve. Still it makes me thoughtful sometimes.

No doubt you will believe that we are being drawn together by sharing these hardships. Well, yes. In a way. And yet I don't feel easy about it. We are quite in sympathy, but there is a difference in our point of view. Mine, I affirm, is the nobler. I economize, although I loathe it; while she, I am convinced, is beginning to like it. I don't mean to say that she does it on purpose, but that phrase may give you an idea what I mean. I sometimes wonder wistfully if the hand that put that ugly new steel contraption at the back of the fire to save the coal is really the hand that I wooed and won ten years ago. I see in her the steady growth of an implacable conscience. In moments of depression I have a horrid feeling that she always wanted to do this sort of thing and never got a real chance till now.

We were extraordinarily happy before the War. We were not at all hard up and we had no compunctions about spending money. But now—I wonder how long the War will last? What I am afraid of is the formation of habits. I am already guarding against it by talking about all the things that we are going to do after the War. She quite agrees with me about them, but she isn't enthusiastic. I put my claims pretty high. The garden is to be reconstructed, and I am adding a wing to the house. We are going to travel first, and I am not sure that we shan't have a new cook. And we are to have an Airedale and an Axminster, and a Stilton and a new Panama.

As a matter of fact that is all bluff on my part. I only want to have something in hand to bargain with. If I can ever get back to the *status quo ante* I will not ask for annexations.

Well, that is how it is. Most eagerly do I fall in with her latest suggestion that I should let her clean my flannel suit with benzine (I don't like the smell of it) instead of getting a new one. Only I live in a growing fear that the day when peace is signed in Europe will be the signal for an outbreak of a new form of warfare in our happy home.

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[Illustration: *Mistress (from upper window)*. “WHATEVER ARE YOU DOING OUT-OF-DOORS AT *THIS* TIME OF NIGHT, JANE?”

Romantic Maid. “ONLY THROWING A FEW CRUMBS TO THE OWLS, MA’AM.”]

* * * * *

WHAT DID MR. ASQUITH DO?

A famous story tells how a heckler once broke up a Liberal meeting by asking with raucous iteration, “What did Mr. GLADSTONE say in 1878?” or whatever year it was. Nobody knew, and neither did the inquirer himself, but uproar followed and his end was achieved. Now had the question run, “What did Mr. GLADSTONE do?” how different a result! For Mr. GLADSTONE, apart from any trifles of statesmanship or legislation, did two priceless things, as I will show.

Although, writes the Returned Traveller who in our last number was so unhappy about the deterioration that has come upon taxi-drivers, I left England only in October last, I find it a changed place; but no change, not even the iniquitous prices demanded by London’s restaurateurs, or the increased darkness, or the queer division of *hors d’oeuvres* into half-courses and whole-courses (providing an answer at last to the pathetic query, “What is a sardine?” “A whole course, of course”)—no change is so striking as the fact that when a paper now refers to the PRIME MINISTER or the PREMIER, it means no longer HERBERT HENRY but DAVID. In a world of flux and mutability I had come to think of Mr. ASQUITH as a rock, a pyramid, a pole-star. But, alas! even he was subject to alteration.

Thinking earnestly upon his career I have realised how sad it is that he has bequeathed us no ASQUITH legend. Always reserved and intent, he discouraged Press gossip to such a degree as actually to have turned the key on the Tenth Muse. Everybody else might lunch at the hospitable board in Downing Street, but interviewers had no chance. In vain did the Quexes of this frivolous city hope for even a crumb—there was nothing for them. Mr. ASQUITH came into office, held it, and left it without a single concession to Demos’s love of personalia. He did not even wear comic collars or white hats or a single eyeglass or any other grotesquely significant thing; and how much poorer are we in consequence and how much poorer will posterity be!

Contrast the case of Mr. GLADSTONE, from whom anyone could draw a postcard and most people a chip of some recently-felled tree, and who is in my mind wonderful and supreme by reason of two inventions which, though no one would ever guess them to be the result of a Prime Minister’s cogitations, deserve the widest fame. Of these one

was the product of his unaided genius; the other the result of the collaboration with his wife.

Let us begin with the individual triumph.

Everyone who has ever stayed under anyone else's roof, from a dine-and-sleep at Windsor Castle to a week in lovely Lucerne, has been confronted, when packing-up time arrived, with the problem of the sponge. No matter how muscular the fingers that wring this article, no matter how thick and costly the rubbered receptacle that holds it, there is always the chance of dampness communicating itself to other things in the bag. Isn't there?

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How so to squeeze the sponge as to drive out the last drop of moisture was the problem before the massive intellect of the Grand Old Man. Need I say that he solved it? His method, as he himself in his unselfish way, told one of the diarists, possibly Sir M.E. GRANT-DUFF, possibly Mr. G.W.E. RUSSELL—I forget whom—was to wrap up the sponge in a bath-towel and jump on it. Here, for the historical painter, is a theme indeed—something worth all the ordinary dull occasions which provoke his talented if somewhat staid brush: the great Liberal statesman, the promoter of Home Rule, the author of *The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*, leaping upon the bath-towel that held his sponge. But no historical painter could do justice to such a scene. It needs the movies.

Those of us then who dry our sponges in this way—and I am a fervent devotee—owe the inventor a meed of praise. And equally those of us who put into our hot water bottles at night hot tea instead of hot water (as I never have done and never mean to do), so that, waking in the small hours, we may yet not be without refreshment, owe a meed of praise to the same inspired innovator, for, if the chroniclers are correct, it was Mrs. GLADSTONE'S habit to retire to rest with a bottle thus nutritiously filled, which would be ready for her great man on his return from the House weary and athirst.

Here we see the difference between Liberal Premiers. For what has Mr. ASQUITH done towards the solution of domestic problems? Who can name a thing? Has he devised a collar stud that cannot be lost? Has he hit upon a way instantly to stop a shaving cut from bleeding? Has he contrived a taxi window that will open when shut or shut when open? No. In all these years he has spared no time for any inventions.

No wonder then that he was found wanting and forced to resign.

* * * * *

A Scot among the Cynics.

"The railway fares are being raised, we are told, to stop pleasure travelling, but it can hardly be imagined that a munition worker going home to spend his week-end with his family is bent on pleasure."— *Glasgow Evening News*.

* * * * *

"Beautiful set of civic cat; very large stole and muff; accept L12."—*The Lady*.

As DICK WHITTINGTON'S mascot is the only civic cat known to history we think the relic should be secured for the Guildhall Museum.

* * * * *

“Simply as a citizen and as a non-party man, I want to say that Mr. Asquith has my affection and respect—and that is the highest guerdon that any statesman can have.”—*Extract from Letter in Yorkshire Paper*.

We know now why Mr. ASQUITH refused a peerage. He did not want to vex his modest admirer.

* * * * *

“At Caxton Hall the conference was resumed of municipal authorities interested in the conversation of old fruit, sardine and salmon tins.”—*Birmingham Daily Mail*.

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We ourselves always listen with pleasure to their talk. It has at once a fruity and a fishy flavour.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Gentleman (In favour of national work for everyone)*. “AND WHY SHOULDN'T PEOPLE BE DOING TO-DAY WHAT THEY NEVER DREAMED OF DOING BEFORE THE WAR?”

New Assistant (his first operation). “EXACTLY, SIR. ALL THE SAME, IF ANYBODY HAD TOLD ME TWO DAYS AGO THAT I SHOULD NOW BE CUTTING THE HAIR OF A COMPLETE STRANGER, I'D NEVER HAVE BELIEVED 'IM.”]

WARS OF THE PAST.

(As recorded in the Press of the period.)

VI.

From “The Athens Advertiser and Piraeus Post.”

MACEDONIA'S ARMY.

THE FAMOUS PHALANX.

(By our Military Expert.)

The Macedonian Army has recently undergone an entire reconstruction at the hands of KING PHILIP. It is now organised on a national and territorial basis and is divided into infantry and cavalry. The cavalry predominates and is therefore the stronger arm. The unit of cavalry is the squadron, of infantry the battalion. (It is of the utmost interest to note that there are two battalions in a regiment, each about fifteen hundred strong).

KING PHILIP, it will be remembered, received his military education in the school of EPAMINONDAS, who, as is well known, revolutionised the Higher Thought of every Higher Command by the discovery and application of a single tactical fact—namely, that the chances of A being able to give B a stronger push than B can give him are *in direct ratio to the numerical superiority of A over B*. It follows, then, that, faced with a sufficient superiority, B *must* retire, and *the initiative then rests with the side that possesses it*.

In pursuance of this tactical ideal EPAMINONDAS argued that the old method of winning battles, which was that A should exercise superior force against every point of B's line (or body), required that A should be bigger than B, buskin for buskin and brisket for brisket. But since it is sufficient, while “refusing” the rest of one's own body (or line),



to bring an overwhelming force to bear on the point of a person's jaw, in order to discomfit him, so in a battle a numerically inferior A, by concentrating on a vital point of numerically superior B, can gain a local numerical superiority which will enable him to rout B utterly. (This is always supposing that B is not doing the same thing himself on the other wing, in which case each army would miss the other altogether—a condition of things into which the military art does not care to follow them).

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Hence the phalanx or “preponderating mass formation.” The Macedonian development of this depends (to reduce the matter to the simple algebraical formula to which all military problems are susceptible) on the fact that if x equals the greatest efficiency of an army, and the rooted square of stability to the n th rank equals the phalanx, then the rooted square of stability to the n th rank equals x minus the tangential curve of velocity of mobility. This should be plain even to the amateur student of tactics. Blending almost a military expert’s appreciation of this cardinal doctrine with his natural selfishness as a leader of cavalry, PHILIP has given to this, the mobile arm, much of the striking power of the original phalanx. This is now placed in the centre, its business being mainly to force a salient in the enemy’s line, the two resultant enclaves of which can then be shattered (at their re-entrants) by the cavalry squadrons, hurled forward on both phalanxes. It should be noted, as a brilliant example of PHILIP’S staff work, that in the Macedonian Army, for the avoidance of confusion in the field, “phalanxes” is now spelt “flanks.”

To the intelligent student who has followed me thus far in these articles it should not be necessary to explain again the terms “enclave,” “salient,” and “re-entrant.” “Tactical” is a term used when one is not using the term “strategical,” and *vice versa*.

* * * * *

“In the words of Bacon, it should be ‘read, marked, learned and inwardly digested.’”—*Financial Paper*.

Our gay contemporary does not tell us whether it was before or after completing the works usually attributed to SHAKSPEARE that BACON compiled the Book of Common Prayer.

* * * * *

THE FLAPPER.

[Dr. ARTHUR SHADWELL, in the January *Nineteenth Century*, in his article on “Ordeal by Fire,” after denouncing idlers and loafers and shirkers, falls foul “above all” of the young girls called flappers, “with high heels, skirts up to their knees and blouses open to the diaphragm, painted, powdered, self-conscious, ogling: ‘Allus adallacked and dizenized oot and a ‘unting arter the men.’”]

Good Dr. ARTHUR SHADWELL, who lends lustre to a name
Which DRYDEN in his satires oft endeavoured to defame,
Has lately been discussing in a high-class magazine
The trials that confront us in the year Nineteen Seventeen.



He is not a smooth-tongued prophet; no, he takes a serious view;
We must make tremendous efforts if we're going to win through;
And though he's not unhopeful of the issue of the fray
He finds abundant causes for misgiving and dismay.

Our optimistic journals his exasperation fire,
And the idlers and the loafers stimulate his righteous ire;
But it is the flapper chiefly that in his gizzard sticks,
And he's down upon her failings like a waggon-load of bricks.

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She's ubiquitous in theatres, in rail and 'bus and tram,
She wears her "blouses open down to the diaphragm,"
And, instead of realising what our men are fighting for,
She's an orgiastic nuisance who in fact *enjoys* the War.

It's a strenuous indictment of our petticoated youth
And contains a large substratum of unpalatable truth;
Our women have been splendid, but the Sun himself has specks,
And the flapper can't be reckoned as a credit to her sex.

Still it needs to be remembered, to extenuate her crimes,
That these flappers have not always had the very best of times;
And the life that now she's leading, with no Mentors to restrain,
Is decidedly unhinging to an undeveloped brain.

Then again we only see her when she's out for play or meals,
And distresses the fastidious by her gestures and her squeals,
But she is not always idle or a decorative drone,
And if she wastes her wages, well, she wastes what is her own.

Still to say that she's heroic, as some scribes of late have said,
Is unkind as well as foolish, for it only swells her head;
She oughtn't to be flattered, she requires to be repressed,
Or she'll grow into a portent and a peril and a pest.

Dr. SHADWELL to the PREMIER makes an eloquent appeal
In firm and drastic fashion with this element to deal;
And 'twould be a real feather in our gifted Cambrian's cap
If he taught the peccant flapper less flamboyantly to flap.

But, in *Punch's* way of thinking, 'tis for women, kind and wise,
These neglected scattered units to enrol and mobilize,
Their vagabond activities to curb and concentrate,
And turn the skittish hoyden to a servant of the State.

She's young; her eyes are dazzled by the glamour of the streets;
She has to learn that life is not all cinemas and sweets;
But given wholesome guidance she may rise to self-control
And earn the right of entry on the Nation's golden Roll.

* * * * *

THE ONLY STEGGLES.



Steggles is my groom, and my crowning mercy. But for his deafness I am sure he would long since have left the humble rank of gunner far beneath him, and the Staff might have gained a brilliant strategist. In addition to dulness of hearing, Steggles is endowed—I should indeed be ungrateful to use the word afflicted—with a vacuity of expression which puts rivals or antagonists off their guard, and doubles his value during the vicissitudes of active service. What would be handicaps to ordinary men Steggles turns to the advantage of himself, Sapphira my mare, and me.

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When on the march the Battery arrives at the morass allotted to it for horse lines, I know that all will be well with the mud-bespattered Sapphira. Steggles leaps from the waggon whereon, in company with one of the cooks, he tours the pleasant land of France, and receives the mare. With his toes strangely pointed out, he leads her away from the scene of labour and language, disappearing amidst the hovels of the adjacent village. Often I never see him or obtain news of him till next morning, when he produces Sapphira polished like a silk hat and every scrap of metal about her sparkling. Occasionally I have tracked him to the shelter where he secretes and waits upon Sapphira, always to find that he has discovered and occupied the best stable in the village. The grooms of my brother-officers never learn that Steggles' vacuous expression is the disguise of an intellect subtle, discriminating and alert, so they never trouble to endeavour to forestall him. To find Sapphira is to find Steggles, as he always likes to spread his blanket where she could tread on him if she wanted anything during the night.

From time to time he chooses the occasion of a night's halt on the march to indulge in a bilious attack; but he has no other vice except an inveterate reluctance to leave off polishing my boots when I mount. No matter how Sapphira may prance and back and sidle, he follows her round and round with a remnant of a shirt, rubbing mud-spots off my boots in the stirrup. It is quite useless to bellow, "That will do, Steggles!"—his ideal is the unattainable perfection, and he persists. I have to escape by giving Sapphira the spur at the risk of knocking Steggles into the mud, or be late in turning out.

He never gives anything, even his own performances, unqualified praise; in fact it is extremely hard to win from him any encomium higher than "It's not too bad." Perhaps there is Scotch blood in his veins.

I very much want to recommend him for some decoration, but the organization likely to appreciate the most gallant of his deeds has not yet been formed—the S.P.G.P., or Society for the Preservation of Government Property.

Steggles was once riding behind me down a valley liberally dimpled with shell-holes, further dimples being in process of formation as we rode. I was returning from an O Pip, or Observation Post, and Steggles was carrying a pair of my boots with a rolled puttee stuffed into each. Suddenly I was aware that he had wheeled his horse about, and was trotting back towards the most dimply area of the valley. Out of regard for his family, I cantered after him. He broke into a gallop. When, after a thrilling ride, I caught him and had a little talk amongst the dimples, it appeared that he had dropped one of the puttees, and wished to return and look for it. This incident will, I think, demonstrate the exceptional character of the man, who did not appear to regard himself as a hero, or to pose as a desperate *farceur*, or to aspire to the post of Q.M.S., though, incredible as it may seem, the puttee in question was of the variety G.S.

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[Illustration: *Orderly Officer*. "WHY DON'T YOU CHALLENGE ME?"

Latest called-up Recruit. "I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE COMING."

Orderly Officer. "WHAT DID THE CORPORAL SAY WHEN HE POSTED YOU?"

Recruit. "I WOULDN'T LIKE TO REPEAT IT TO AN OFFICER, SIR."]

* * * * *

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

To those who would learn what soldiering is like in the armies of democratic France I would heartily commend two books recently published by Messrs. ALLEN AND UNWIN, *Battles and Bivouacs*, by JACQUES ROUJON, and *The Diary of a French Private*, by GASTON RIOU. M. ROUJON, infantryman of the line, was in private life a journalist on *Le Figaro*; M. RIOU, Red Cross orderly, a liberal lay-theologian and writer of European reputation. The former's transliterator ("Munitions are distributed around," writes he undismayed; and has also discovered a territory known as "Oriental Prussia") obtrudes a little between author and reader. M. RIOU fares better; but both contrive to give a really vivid impression of the horrors and anxieties of the early days of the War before the tide turned at the Marne, of the flying rumours so far from the actual truth, of the fine spirit of *camaraderie* in common danger, of the intimate relations between officers and men, details, terrible or trivial, of campaigning, and, because our spirited brothers-in-arms are not ashamed to express their innermost feelings, of the deeper emotions at work under the surface gaieties. M. RIOU'S narrative is mainly the record of his year's captivity in a Bavarian fort. On his way he faced the fanatical hatred and cruelty of the German civilians, of the women especially, with a cynical fortitude. The commandant of his prison, Baron von STENGEL, was, however, a gentleman and a brick, and did everything in his power to make the difficult life bearable. An episode pleasant to recall is the reception of the Russian prisoners (intended by their captors to cause dissensions) by their French comrades in misfortune. The whole record gives an impression of fine courage and resourcefulness.

* * * * *

Very probably you are already acquainted with that restful and admirable book, *Father Payne* (SMITH, ELDER), of which a new edition has just now been published. The point of this new edition is that, in its special Preface, the genesis and authorship of the book are assigned, for the first time on this side the Atlantic, to Mr. A.C. BENSON. And the point of the new preface is that it entirely gives away the original edition (also printed

here), in which the secret was elaborately concealed. My wonder is, reading the book with this added knowledge, that anyone can have at any time failed to detect in it the gently persuasive hand of the Master of Magdalene, Cambridge.

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You remember, no doubt, how *Father Payne* (a courtesy title), having had a small estate left to him, proceeded to turn it into the home of a secular community for young men desirous of pursuing the literary gift, and how he financed, encouraged and generally supervised them. Leisure, an exquisite setting, and the society of enthusiastic and personally-selected youth—one might call the book perhaps a Tutor's Dream of the Millennium. Anyhow, *Father Payne*, as shown in this volume, which is practically a record of his table-talk upon a great variety of themes, is exactly the gentle, shrewd and idealistic philosopher whom (knowing his parentage) one would expect. Bensonians (of the A.C. pattern) will certainly be glad to have what must surely have been their suspicions confirmed, and to admit *Father Payne* to the shelves of authenticity.

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Miss DOROTHEA CONYERS has long ere this established herself as a specialist of repute in Irish sporting tales. You will need but one look at the picture wrapper of *The Financing of Fiona* (ALLEN) to see that a repetition of the same agreeable mixture awaits you within. *Fiona* was a charming young woman (Irish, of course) with a rich uncle and a poor, very unattractive cousin, who loved her for her expectations. As *Fiona* had no conception about money beyond the spending of it, the uncle made a will, whose object was that she should have plenty. The suitor, however, knowing of this, and being a naughty, rather improbable person, destroyed part of it, with the result that *Fiona* was apparently left only the ancestral home and no cash to keep it up. So she was forced to take in gentleman boarders for the hunting, and (for propriety's sake) to invent a mythical chaperon, who lived above stairs. And, after all, she needn't have done any such thing, because the rich uncle, in leaving her all the contents of the mansion, had foolishly forgotten to mention a secret drawer full of Canadian securities. As for the villain, I really hardly dare tell you the impossibly silly way in which he allowed himself to be caught out. But of course all this melodrama is not what matters. The important thing about Miss CONYERS' people is that (whatever their private worries) a-hunting they will go; and *Fiona*, financed by her paying guests, shows in this respect as capital sport as any of her predecessors. For the rest, I can hardly say with honesty that the story is equal to its author's best form.

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What I like particularly about Mr. FREDERICK NIVEN is the friendly way in which he contrives to make his readers and himself into a family party. "We must," he writes at the beginning of a chapter in *Cinderella of Skookum Greek* (NASH), "get a move on with the story, in case you become more tired of Archer's compound fracture than he was himself." This is by no means the only occasion on which he

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shows his thoughtfulness for us, and I think it very kind and nice of him. At the same time I will ungraciously admit that the weak point of his story is that it does not move quite fast enough. Admirable artist in psychology and atmosphere, his plot, if you can call it a plot, is very slight. *Cyrus Archer*, the young American of the compound fracture (who had my sympathy from the start because he could never remember dates), goes out into the back of beyond for a spell before settling down to married life and a place in his father's business, and at Skookum Creek, where he grows tomatoes and studies Indians, he meets his *Cinderella*, with the result that his life has to be completely rearranged. A commonplace tale, but there is a rare and distinct flavour about the telling of it. Mr. NIVEN'S manner has indeed a very particular charm, over which one would take an even keener pleasure in lingering if only he himself lingered a little less over his story.

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I hardly think that Madame ALBANESI has chosen quite the most appropriate name for the story that she calls *Hearts and Sweethearts* (HUTCHINSON). Personally, I fancy that *Suits and Lawsuits* would have come nearer the mark; because, though there is a certain proportion of love-making in the tale, there is considerably more about going to law. One difficulty with which I fancy the writer had to contend is due to the fact that her hero and heroine are (in a sense) the opposing protagonists in a case of disputed succession; *Jemima Frant* being engaged in the attempt to turn out *Sir John Norminster* from his estates and establish the claim to them of her dead sister's child. Naturally, therefore, till this is settled their opportunities for the tender passion are, to put it very gently, restricted. But of course—well, a novel with such a title is hardly likely to leave anybody of importance unmarried at the final page. Before this is turned, you have some pleasant comedy of London in war-time, and meet a number of agreeably sketched persons, whose conversation may amuse you, or, on the other hand, may cause you to wish them a little less discursive. Madame ALBANESI indeed impressed me as having occasionally turned her subordinate characters loose into a chapter, with instructions to fill it up anyhow, while she herself thought out the next move. But the law was always leisurely, so this characteristic might perhaps be expected in a story so much concerned with it.

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[Illustration: *The Mother (overhauling little Tommy's wardrobe)*. "OH, CHARLES, JUST SEE WHAT THAT DREADFUL CHILD HAS BEEN CARRYING ABOUT IN HIS POCKET! A REAL CARTRIDGE WITH A BULLET IN IT. HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN BLOWN TO BITS!"

The Father (with a glowing consciousness of assisting his country at a critical time).
“JUST PUT IT IN A COOL PLACE FOR TO-NIGHT, MY DEAR, AND I WILL LEAVE IT
AT THE WAR OFFICE TO-MORROW ON MY WAY TO BUSINESS.”]

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Handel in War-Time.

“The anthem ‘O Thou that tillest’ (Messiah), will be rendered.”—*Dublin Evening Mail*.

No pains are being spared to promote agriculture in Ireland.

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“The river in many places has overflown its banks.”—*Henley Newspaper*.

Even Father Thames cannot resist the modern mania for aviation.

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Extract from a review of Dr. JOHN FITZPATRICK’S “*This Realm, This England*”:—

“From a Scotsman, we deprecate the definition of ‘This Realm’ as ‘England,’ and would suggest to the learned doctor that he would have done nothing derogatory to himself, even in the eyes of Englishmen, if he had used the really correct and comprehensive name Britain.”—*Scots Pictorial*.

SHAKSPEARE (ghost of), please note.