

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 152, February 7, 1917 eBook

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 152, February 7, 1917

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CHARIVARIA.

To celebrate his birthday, the *Kaiser* arranged a theatrical performance, entitled *The German Blacksmith*, of which he was part author. It is not yet known in what way his people had offended him.

It is feared that we have sadly misjudged Greece. They have saluted the Entente flags, and it is rumoured that *King Constantine* is even prepared to put out his tongue at the *Kaiser*.

Chancellor *Bethmann-HOLLWEG* has been accused by the Junker Press of selling his countrymen to the Allies. But, to judge from the latest German Note to America, the fact appears to be that he has simply given them away.

As the result of the cold snap, wild boars have made their appearance in Northern France. Numbers have already been killed, and it is reported that the *Kaiser* has agreed with an American syndicate to be filmed in the *role* of their destroyer, the proceeds to be devoted to the furtherance of the league to enforce peace.

Many German soldiers have, according to the Hamburg *Fremdenblatt*, received slips of pasteboard inscribed, "Soldiers of the Fatherland, fight on!" It is rumoured that several of the soldiers have written across the cards, "Fight on what?"

After the 22nd of February, all enemy aliens engaged in business in this country will be obliged to trade in their own names. With a few honourable exceptions, like the great Frankfurt house of Wurst, our alien business men have sedulously concealed their identity.

The patriotic Coroner for East Essex, who has erected a pig-sty in the middle of his choice rose-garden, informs us that Frau Karl Druschki has already thrown out some nice strong suckers.

“Cheddar cheese,” says a news item, “is 1_s._ 6_d._ a pound in Norwich.” But what the public are clamouring to know is the price of Wensleydale cheese in Ilfracombe.

The American gentleman who caused so much commotion in a London hotel, the other day, by his impatience at dinner must, after all, be excused. It appears the poor fellow was anxious to get through with his meal before a new Government department commandeered the place.

The *speaker’s* Electoral Reform Committee recommends that Candidates’ expenses shall not exceed 4_d._ per elector in three-member boroughs, and several political agents have written to point out that it cannot possibly be done in view of the recent increase in the price of beer.

The Shirley Park (Croydon) Golf Club has decided to reduce the course from 18 holes to 9; but a suggestion that the half-course thus saved should be added to the Club luncheon has met with an emphatic refusal from the *food controller*.

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A farmer in the Weald of Kent is offering 13_s._ 6_d._ a week, board and lodging not provided, to a horseman willing to work fifteen hours a day. It is understood that this insidious attempt to popularise agriculture at the expense of the army has been the subject of a heated interchange of letters between the War Office and the Board of Agriculture.

“The warmest places in England yesterday,” says *The Pall Mall Gazette*, “were Scotland and the South-West of England.” We have got into trouble before now with our Caledonian purists for speaking of Great Britain as England, but we never said a thing like that.

A London doctor, says *The Daily Mail*, estimates that colds cost this country L15,000,000 annually. If that is the case we may say at once that we think the charge is excessive.

A gossip-writer makes much of the fact that he saw a telegraph messenger running in Shoe Lane the other morning. We are glad to be in a position to clear up this mystery. It appears that the messenger in question was in the act of going off duty.

There seems to be no intention of issuing sugar tickets—until a suitable palace can be obtained for the accommodation of the functionary responsible for this feature.

The charge for cleaning white gloves has been increased, and it is likely that there will be a return to the piebald evening wear so much in vogue in Soho restaurants.

The 1917 pennies appear to be thinner than those of pre-War issues, and several maiden ladies have written to the authorities asking if income tax has been deducted at the source.

* * * * *

[Illustration: “*What the devil are you doing down that shell-hole? Didn’t you hear me say we were out against four to one?*”

Geordie (a trade-unionist). “Ay. AA heard you; but AA’VE killed Ma Fower.”]

* * * * *

“‘The Land of Promise’ ... was only withdrawn from the Duke of York’s in the height of its success owing to the declaration of War in 1894.”—*The Stage*.

Is it *really* only twenty-three years?

* * * * *

“Residents early astir on Sunday morning had an unpleasant surprise. A sharp frost over-night had converted the road surfaces into glassy ice, which made walking impossible without some assistance. A walking-stick, without some sort of boot covering, was of little avail.”—*Oxford Times*.

That was our own experience with a walking-stick which was absolutely bootless.

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* * * * *

The mud-larks.

Our mess was situated on the crest of a ridge, and enjoyed an uninterrupted view of rolling leagues of mud; it had the appearance of a packing-case floating on an ocean of ooze.

We and our servants, and our rats and our cockroaches, and our other bosom-companions slept in tents pitched round and about the mess.

The whole camp was connected with the outer world by a pathway of ammunition boxes, laid stepping-stone-wise; we went to and fro, lepping from box to box as leps the chamois from Alp to Alp. Should you miss your lep there would be a swirl of mud, a gulping noise, and that was the end of you; your sorrowing comrades shed a little chloride of lime over the spot where you were last seen, posted you as "Believed missing" and indented for another Second-Lieutenant (or Field-Marshal, as the case might be).

Our mess was constructed of loosely piled shell boxes, and roofed by a tin lid. We stole the ingredients box by box, and erected the house with our own fair hands, so we loved it with parental love; but it had its little drawbacks. Whenever the field guns in our neighbourhood did any business, the tin lid rattled madly and the shell boxes jostled each other all over the place. It was quite possible to leave our mess at peep o'day severely Gothic in design, and to return at dewy eve to find it rakishly Rococo.

William, our Transport Officer and Mess President, was everlastingly piping all hands on deck at unseemly hours to save the home and push it back into shape; we were householders in the fullest sense of the term.

Before the War, William assures us, he was a bright young thing, full of merry quips and jolly practical jokes, the life and soul of any party, but what with the contortions of the mess and the vagaries of the transport mules he had become a saddened man.

Between them—the mules and the mess—he never got a whole night in bod; either the mules were having bad dreams, sleep-walking into strange lines and getting themselves abhorred, or the field guns were on the job and the mess had the jumps. If Hans, the Hun, had not been the perfect little gentleman he is, and had dropped a shell anywhere near us (instead of assiduously spraying a distant ridge where nobody ever was, is, or will be) our mess would have been with Tyre and Sidon; but Hans never forgot himself for a moment; it was our own side we distrusted. The Heavies, for instance. The Heavies warped themselves laboriously into position behind our hill, disguised themselves as gooseberry bushes, and gave an impression of the crack of doom at 2 A.M. one snowy morning.

Our mess immediately broke out into St. Vitus's dance, and William piped all hands on deck.

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The Skipper, picturesquely clad in boots (gum, high) and a goat's skin, flung himself on the east wing, and became an animated buttress. Albert Edward climbed aloft and sat on the tin lid, which was opening and shutting at every pore. Mactavish put his shoulder to the south wall to keep it from working round to the north. I clung to the pantry, which was coming adrift from its parent stem, while William ran about everywhere, giving advice and falling over things. The mess passed rapidly through every style of architecture, from a Chinese pagoda to a Swiss chalet, and was on the point of confusing itself with a Spanish castle when the Heavies switched off their hate and went to bed. And not a second too soon. Another moment and I should have dropped the pantry, Albert Edward would have been sea-sick, and the Skipper would have let the east wing go west.

We pushed the mess back into shape, and went inside it for a peg of something and a consultation. Next evening William called on the Heavies' commander and decoyed him up to dine. We regaled him with wassail and gramophone and explained the situation to him. The Lord of the Heavies, a charming fellow, nearly burst into tears when he heard of the ill he had unwittingly done us, and was led home by William at 1.30 A.M., swearing to withdraw his infernal machines, or beat them into ploughshares, the very next day. The very next night our mess, without any sort of preliminary warning, lost its balance, sat down with a crash, and lay littered about a quarter of an acre of ground. We all turned out and miserably surveyed the ruins. What had done it? We couldn't guess. The field guns had gone to bye-bye, the Heavies had gone elsewhere. Hans, the Hun, couldn't have made a mistake and shelled us? Never! It was a mystery; so we all lifted up our voices and wailed for William. He was Mess President; it was his fault, of course.

At that moment William hove out of the night, driving his tent before him by bashing it with a mallet.

According to William there was one, "Sunny Jim," a morbid transport mule, inside the tent, providing the motive power. "Sunny Jim" had always been something of a somnambulist, and this time he had sleep-walked clean through our mess and on into William's tent, where the mallet woke him up. He was then making the best of his way home to lines again, expedited by William and the mallet.

So now we are messless; now we crouch shivering in tents and talk lovingly of the good old times beneath our good old tin roof-tree, of the wonderful view of the mud we used to get from our window, and of the homely tune our shell-boxes used to perform as they jostled together of a stormy night.

And sometimes, as we crouch shivering in our tents, we hear a strange sound stealing up-hill from the lines. It is the mules laughing.

* * * * *

Songs of food production.

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I.

Goddess, hear me—oh, incline a
Gracious ear to me, Lucina!
Patroness of parturition,
Pray make this a special mission;
Prove a kind inaugurator
Of my votive incubator!

Seventy eggs I put into it—
Each a chick, if you ensue it.
Pray you, let me not be saddled
With a single “clear” or addled.
See! the temperature is steady.
Now then, Goddess, *are you ready?*

Hear me, Goddess, next invoking You to keep the lamp from smoking, And, the plea so humbly voiced, you’re *Sure* to regulate the moisture? Oh, Lucina, ’twill be ripping When we hear the eggs all pipping!

When no chick the shell encumbers,
Goddess, hear their tuneful numbers!
Then, O patroness of hatches,
We will try some further batches.
Goddess, hear me!—oh, incline a
Gracious ear to me, Lucina!

* * * * *

“MATRIMONY.—Two young, respectable fellows wish to meet two respectable young girls, between the ages of 20 and 30, view above.—T.S.R. and E.C.P., Clematis P.O., Paradise.”—*Melbourne Argus*.

If marriages are made in heaven these respectable young fellows have selected a really promising postal address.

* * * * *

“Nine petty officers were landed from the damaged German destroyer V69 and brought to the Willem Barrentz Hotel, Ymuiden, to-night. My correspondent engaged them in conversation at a late hour. After some Dutch Bock beer they rapidly recovered their spirits and began to sing Luther’s well-known hymn, ‘Ein Feste Bung.’”—*Provincial Paper*.

Very appropriate too, but wouldn't a loose "Bung" have pleased them even better?

* * * * *

[Illustration: A PLAIN DUTY.

"WELL, GOODBYE, OLD CHAP, AND GOOD LUCK! I'M GOING IN HERE TO DO MY BIT, THE BEST WAY I CAN. THE MORE EVERYBODY SCRAPES TOGETHER FOR THE WAR LOAN, THE SOONER YOU'LL BE BACK FROM THE TRENCHES.]"

* * * * *

[Illustration: "STICK TO HIM—STICK TO HIM!"

"I'LL STICK TO HIM, SIR. BUT WHICH ONE DO YOU MEAN?"]

* * * * *

LETTERS FROM MACEDONIA.

IV.

MY DEAR JERRY,—I am writing this from my position on top of a small hill, while my devoted band of followers sits round me and waits for me to speak. I always sit here, because if I wanted to go somewhere else I should have to climb down this hill and then up another one. I hate hills. So does the devoted band.

Behind another little hill a hundred yards away we believe there lurks an army corps of Bulgars, but we are afraid to look and see. Instead, we fix and unfix bayonets every ten minutes and make martial noises. This, we hope, affects the enemy's *moral*, and having your *moral* affected every ten minutes is no joke, I can tell you.

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The spirit of our troops remains excellent. You can see that this is true from the fact that my joke still works. Every night for the last three months, while administering quinine to my army, I have exhorted them not to be greedy and not to take too much. They still laugh heartily, nay uproariously. We are a wonderful nation.

Our chief source of combined instruction and amusement is still the anthep beside us, and in this connection, Jeremiah, I must introduce to you Herbert, a young officer in the ant A.S.C.

When we first knew Herbert (or “Erb” as he was known in those days), he was an impudent and pushful private. When his corps were engaged in removing the larger pieces of straw out of their hole in the hill, many a time I have seen him staggering manfully towards the entrance with an enormous piece on his slender shoulders, against the tide of his comrades; for he never could resist the temptation to replace the really big stalks in the hole. As he knocked against one and another the older ants would step aside, lay down their loads, and expostulate with him, always ending by giving him a good clip on the ear; but ‘Erb was never dismayed.

Now and again, during a temporary slackness in the stream, he would disappear triumphantly into the hole, his log trailing behind him; but his triumph was always short-lived. I would seem to hear a scuffle and two bumps, and ‘Erb would shoot gracefully upwards, followed by his burden, and fall in a heap beside the door. However, as soon as he recovered he would try again. On one sultry afternoon I noticed he succeeded in effecting an entrance after twenty-three successive chuck-outs.

His persistence piqued my curiosity. I wondered why he should so obstinately try to do a thing which was obviously distasteful to all his seniors. And then, yesterday, there was a change.

‘Erb was resting after his eighth chuck-out under a plank when a venerable ant, heavy with the accumulated wisdom and weakness of years, approached the exit from within and tried to get out, but in vain. He swore and struggled in a futile sort of way, while his attendant subordinates stood about helplessly. ‘Erb saw his opportunity. He seized his plank, dashed forward—you may not believe me, Jerry, but it is the gospel truth—saluted smartly, and laid down his plank as a sort of ladder. Supporting himself upon it the veteran crawled out. Then he spoke to ‘Erb, and I think I saw him asking someone the lad’s name.

That is why Second Lieutenant Herbert is to-day in charge of a working party. He is now engaged in clipping the ear of a larger ant. I imagine there must have been some lack of discipline. Possibly his inferior had addressed him as “Erb.”

Well, all our prospects are pleasing and only Bulgar vile. I must now make a martial noise, so *au revoir*.

Thine,
PETER.

* * * * *

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[Illustration: DISTRACTIONS OF CAMP LIFE.

Tommy (by roadside). "OUT ON THE SPREE AGAIN? GOING TO THE PICTURES?"

Highlander. "NO. WE'RE AWA' TO SEE YOUR LOT CHANGE GUARD."]

* * * * *

"*The Motor Cycle* says over 165,000 magnates have been made in Britain for war purposes."—*Provincial Paper*.

And the New Year Honours List (political services) has yet to appear.

* * * * *

"We owed all this more to our splendid navy and its silent virgil than to anything else."—*Provincial Paper*.

We suppose the CENSOR won't let him narrate the epic exploits of the Fleet, but he might have allowed him a capital initial.

* * * * *

"Surbiton residents have supplied for British prisoners in Germany 800 waistcoats made from 2,100 old kid gloves." *Manchester Evening News*.

A notable instance of large-handed generosity.

* * * * *

SIX VILE VERBS.

(*To the makers of journalese, and others, from a fastidious reader.*)

When I see on a poster
A programme which "features"
CHARLIE CHAPLIN and other
Delectable creatures,
I feel just as if
Someone hit me a slam
Or a strenuous biff
On the mid diaphragm.



When I read in a story,
Though void of offences,
That somebody "glimpses"
Or somebody "senses,"
The chord that is struck
Fills my bosom with ire,
And I'm ready to chuck
The whole book in the fire.

When against any writer
It's urged that he "stresses"
His points, or that something
His fancy "obsesses,"
In awarding his blame
Though the critic be right,
Yet I feel all the same
I could shoot him at sight.

But (worst of these horrors)
Whenever I read
That somebody "voices"
A national need,
As the Bulgars and Greeks
Are abhorred by the Serb,
So I feel toward the freaks
Who employ this vile verb.

* * * * *

"Some of the public men of Rawmarsh have high ambitions for their township, and at the Council meeting on Wednesday there was considerable industrial developments immediately after the war." *Botherham Advertiser*.

Happy Rawmarsh! In our part of the country it is not over yet.

* * * * *

"NAVY Pram. for Sale, good condition." *Provincial Paper*.

Just the thing to prepare baby for being "rocked in the cradle of the deep."

* * * * *

THE SUPER-CHAR.

SCENE.—A square in Kensington. At every other door is seen the lady of the house at work with pail, broom, scrubbing-brush, rags, metal-polish, etc.



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Chorus of Ladies.

In days before the War
Had turned the world to Hades
We did not soil
Our hands with toil—
We all were perfect ladies;
To scrub the kitchen floor
Was *infra dig.*—disgusting;
We'd cook, at most,
A slice of toast
Or do a bit of dusting.

But those old days are flown,
And now we ply our labours:
We cook and scrub,
We scour and rub,
Regardless of our neighbours;
The steps we bravely stone,
Nor care a straw who passes
The while we clean
With shameless mien
Quite brazenly the brasses.

First Lady. Lo! Who approaches? Some great dame of state?

Second Lady. Rather I think some walking fashion-plate.

Third Lady. What clothes! What furs!

First Lady. And tango boots! How thrilling!

They must have cost five guineas if a shilling.

Second Lady. Sh, dears! It eyes us hard. What can it be?

Third Lady. It would be spoke to.

Second Lady. Would it?

First Lady. Let us see!

Enter the Super-Char.

Super-char. My friend the butcher told me 'e'd 'eard say
You 'adn't got no servants round this way,
And as I've time on 'and—more than I wish,
Seein' as all the kids is in munish—
I thought as 'ow, pervided that the wige
Should suit, I might be willin' to oblige.



Chorus of Ladies.

O joy! O rapture!
If we capture
Such a prize as this!
Then we may become once more
Ladies, as in days of yore,
Lay aside the brooms and pails,
Manicure our broken nails,
Try the last complexion cream—
What a dream
Of bliss!

Super-Char. 'Old on! Let's get to business, and no kidding!

I'm up for auction; 'oo will start the bidding?

First Lady. I want a charlady from ten to four,
To cook the lunch and scrub the basement floor.

Super-Char. Cook? Scrub? Thanks! Nothink doin'! Next, please! You, Mum,
What are the dooties you would 'ave me do, Mum?

Second Lady. I want a lady who will kindly call
And help me dust the dining-room and hall;
At tea, if need be, bring an extra cup,
And sometimes do a little washing up.

Super-Char. A little bit of dusting I might lump,
But washing up—it gives me fair the 'ump!
Next, please!

Third Lady. My foremost thought would always be
The comfort of the lady helping me.
We have a cask of beer that's solely for
Your use—we are teetotal for the War.
I am a cook of more than moderate skill;
I'll gladly cook whatever dish you will—
Soups, entrees.

Super-Char. Now you're talkin'! That's some sense!
So kindly let me 'ave



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your reference,

And if I finds it satisfact'ry, Mum,

Why, s'elp me, I 'ave arf a mind to come.

Third Lady. My last good lady left six months ago

Because she said I'd singed the *souffle* so;

She gave me no address to write to—

Super-Char. What!

You've got no reference?

Third Lady. Alas, I've not!

Super-Char. Of course I could not dream of taking you

Without one, so there's nothing more to do.

These women—'ow they spoil one's temper! Pah!

Hi! (*she hails a passing taxi*) Drive me to the nearest cinema.

[She steps into the taxi and is whirled off.]

Chorus of Ladies.

Not yet the consolation

Of manicure and cream;

Not yet the barber dresses

Our dusty tousled tresses;

The thought of titivation

Is still a distant dream;

Not yet the consolation

Of manicure and cream.

Still, still, with vim and vigour,

'Tis ours to scour and scrub;

With rag and metal polish

The dirt we must demolish;

Still, still, with toil-bowed figure,

Among the grates we grub;

Still, still, with vim and vigour,

'Tis ours to scour and scrub.

CURTAIN.

* * * * *

A TALE OF A COINCIDENCE.

"Coincidences," said the ordinary seaman, "are rum things. Now I can tell you of a rum un that happened to me."

It said Royal Naval Reserve round his cap, but he looked as if he ought to be wearing gold earrings and a gaudy handkerchief.

“When I was a young feller I made a voyage or two in an old hooker called the *Pearl of Asia*. Her old man at that time was old Captain Gillson, him that had the gold tooth an’ the swell ma’ogany fist in place o’ the one that got blown off by a rocket in Falmouth Roads. Well, I was walkin’ out with a young woman at Liverpool—nice young thing—an’ she give me a ring to keep to remember ’er by, the day before we sailed. Nice thing it was; it had ‘Mizpah’ wrote on it.

“We ’ad two or three fellers in the crowd for’ard that voyage as would ’andle anything as wasn’t too ’ot or too ’eavy which explains why I got into a ’abit of slippin’ my bits o’ vallybles, such as joolery, into a bit of a cache I found all nice and ’andy in the planking’ back o’ my bunk.

“We ’ad a long passage of it ’ome, a ’undred-and-sixty days from Portland, Oregon, to London River, an’ what with thinkin’ of the thumpin’ lump o’ pay I’d have to draw an’ one thing an’ another, I clean forgot all about the ring I’d left cached in the little place back o’ my bunk yonder.

“Well, I drew my pay all right, and after a bit I tramped it to Liverpool, to look out for another ship. An’ the first person I met in Liverpool was the young woman I ’ad the ring of.

“‘Where’s my ring?’ she says, before I’d time to look round.

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"Now, I never was one as liked 'avin' words with a woman, so I pitched her a nice yarn about the cache I 'ad at the back o' my bunk, an' 'ow I valled 'er ring that 'igh I stowed it there to keep it safe, an' 'ow I'd slid down the anchor cable an' swum ashore an' left everything I 'ad behind me, I was that red-'ot for a sight of 'er.

"'Ye didn't,' she says quite ratty, 'ye gave it to one o' them nasty yaller gals ye sing about.'

"'I didn't,' I says; 'Ye did,' she says; 'I didn't,' says I. An' we went on like that for a bit until I says at last, 'If I can get aboard the old *Pearl* again,' I says, 'I'll get the ring,' I says, 'an' send it you in a letter,' I says, 'an' then per'aps you'll be sorry for the nasty way you've spoke to me,' I says.

"'Ho, yes,' she says, sniffy-like, 'per'aps I will, per'aps I won't,' an' off she goes with 'er nose in the air.

"My next ship was for Frisco to load grain; and I made sure of droppin' acrost the *Pearl* there, for she was bound the same way. But I never did. She was dismasted in the South Pacific on the outward passage, and had to put in to one of them Chile ports for repairs. So she never got to Frisco until after we sailed for 'ome. An' that was the way it went on. She kep' dodgin' me all over the seven seas, an' the nearest I got to 'er was when we give 'er a cheer off Sydney Heads, outward bound, when we was just pickin' up our pilot. The last I 'eard of 'er after that was from a feller that 'ad seen 'er knockin' round the South Pacific, sailin' out o' Carrizal or Antofagasta or one o' them places. I was in the Western Ocean mail-boat service at the time, and so o' course she was off my run altogether.

"I was still in the same mail-boat when she give up the passenger business an' went on the North Sea patrol.

"Well, one day we boarded a Chile barque in the ordinary course o' duty, and I was one o' those as went on board with the lootenant. They generally takes me on them jobs, the reason bein' that I know a deal o' foreign languages. I don't believe there's a country in the world where I couldn't make myself understood, partic'lar when I'm wantin' a drink bad.

"I wasn't takin' that much notice of this 'ere ship at the time (there was a bit of a nasty jobble on the water, for one thing, and we 'ad our work cut out gettin' alongside), except that 'er name was the *Maria de Somethink-or-other*—some Dago name. But while we was waitin' for the lootenant to finish 'is business with Old Monkey Brand, which was the black-faced Chileno captain she 'ad, it come over me all of a suddent.

“Strike me pink!’ I says, ‘may my name be Dennis if I ‘aven’t seen that there bit o’ fancy-work on the poop ladder rails before;’ which so I ‘ad, for I done it myself in the doldrums, an’ a nice bit o’ work it was, too.

“You’ll ‘ave guessed by now that she was none other than the *Pearl of Asia*; an’ no wonder I ‘adn’t reckernised ‘er, what with the mess she was in alow and aloft, an’ allyminian paint all over the poop railin’s as would ‘ave made our old blue-nose mate die o’ rage.

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“You carry on ‘ere,’ I says to the feller that was with me; ‘I’m goin’ for’ard a minute.’

“Arf a minute, an’ I was in my old bunk; an’ there was the cache all right, just like I left it.”

He paused dramatically; I supposed it was for histrionic effect, but it lasted so long that I said, “And so I suppose you sent the ring to the girl after all?”

“Oh! ‘er!” he said, with an air of surprise, “I’ve forgot ‘er name and all about ‘er, only that she ‘ad a brother in one o’ them monkey-boats of ELDER DEMPSTER’S—’e ‘ad the biggest thirst I ever struck.”

“But the ring?” I said. “I suppose it was there all right?”

He stopped his pipe down with his thumb, with an enigmatical expression.

“That’s where the bloomin’ coincidence come in,” he said; “it weren’t.”

C.F.S.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Colonel (to private told off to act as caddie).* “NOW I HOPE YOU KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT IT. THE LAST MAN I HAD PUT ME RIGHT OFF. HAVE YOU EVER HANDLED CLUBS BEFORE?”

Private. “NOT SINCE I PLAYED IN THE AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP, SIR.” (*Colonel is put off again.*)]

* * * * *

“Miss ——, the World-renounced Teacher of Dancing.”—*Southern Standard.*

Another victim of the War.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Major-General (addressing the men before practising an attack behind the lines).* “I WANT YOU TO UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A REHEARSAL, AND THE REAL THING. THERE ARE THREE ESSENTIAL DIFFERENCES: FIRST, THE ABSENCE OF THE ENEMY. NOW (*turning to the Regimental Sergeant-Major*) WHAT IS THE SECOND DIFFERENCE?”

Sergeant-Major. “THE ABSENCE OF THE GENERAL, SIR.”]

* * * * *



TO TOWSER.

No pampered pound of peevish fluff
That goggles from a lady's muff
Art thou, my Towser. In the Park
Thy form occasions no remark
Unless it be a friendly call
From soldiers walking in the Mall,
Or the impertinence of pugs
Stretched at their ease on carriage rugs.
For thou art sturdy and thy fur
Is rougher than the prickly burr,
Thy manners brusque, thy deep "bow wow"
(Inherited, but Lord knows how!)
Far other than the frenzied yaps
That emanate from ladies' laps,
Thou art, in fact, of doggy size
And hast the brown and faithful eyes,
So full of love, so void of blame,
That fill a master's heart with shame
Because he knows he never can
Be more a dog and less a man.
No champion of a hundred shows,
The prey of every draught that blows,
Art thou; in fact thy charms present
The earmarks of a mixed descent.
And, though too proud to start a fight
With every cur that looms in sight,

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None ever saw thee quail beneath
A foeman worthy of thy teeth.
Thou art, in brief, a model hound,
Not so much beautiful as sound
In heart and limb; not always strong
When nose and eyes impel to wrong,
Nor always doing just as bid,
But sterling as the minted quid.
And I have loved thee in my fashion,
Shared with thy face my frugal ration,
Squandered my balance at the bank
When thou didst chew the postman's shank,
And gone in debt replacing stocks
Of private cats and Plymouth Rocks.
And, when they claimed the annual fee
That seals the bond twixt thee and me,
Against harsh Circumstance's edge
Did I not put my fob in pledge
And cheat the minions of excise
Who otherwise had ta'en thee prize?
And thou with leaps of lightsome mood
Didst bark eternal gratitude
And seek my feelings to assail
With agitations of the tail.
Yet are there beings lost to grace
Who claim that thou art out of place,
That when the dogs of war are loose
Domestic kinds are void of use,
And that a chicken or a hog
Should take the place of every dog,
Which, though with appetite endued,
Is not itself a source of food.
What! shall we part? Nay, rather we'll
Renounce the cheap but wholesome meal
That men begrudge us, and we'll take
Our leave of bones and puppy cake.
Back to the woods we'll hie, and there
Thou'lt hunt the fleet but fearful hare,
Pursue the hedge's prickly pig,
Dine upon rabbits' eggs and dig

With practised paw and eager snuffle
The shy but oh! so toothsome truffle.
ALGOL.

* * * * *

“A landslide in Monmouthshire threatens to close the natural course of the River Ebbw, seriously interfering with its fflww.”—*Star*.

It certainly sounds rather diverting.

* * * * *

From a list of gramophone records:—

“Nothing could seem easier in the wide world than the emission of the cascade of notes that falls from the mouth of the horn—which might indeed be Tetrzzini’s own mouth.”

“The diameter of my own gramophone horn is eighteen inches,” writes the sender of the extract.

* * * * *

[Illustration: “THE ROAD TO VICTORY.”

GERMANY. “ARE WE NEARLY THERE, ALL-HIGHEST?”

ALL-HIGHEST. “YES; WE’RE GETTING NEAR THE END NOW.”]

* * * * *

[Illustration: “‘AVE YOU ‘EARD ABOUT THESE ‘ERE NEW INVISIBLE ZEPPELINS THEY’RE MAKIN’?”

“YES. BUT I DON’T RECKON WE SHALL SEE MANY OF ‘EM OVER ‘ERE.”]

* * * * *

TAXIS AND TALK.

Conversation in the streets of London has never been easy; not, at any rate, until the small hours, when the best of it is done. But it becomes even more complex when one of the talkers is pressed for time and wants a taxi, and disengaged taxis are as rare as new jokes in a revue.



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Let the following dialogue prove it. I leave open the question whether or not I have reported the real terms of our conversation, merely reminding you that two men together, removed from the frivolity of women, tend, even in the street and when the thermometer is below freezing-point, to a high seriousness rare when the sexes are mingled.

Imagine us facing a wind from the east composed of steel filings and all uncharity. We are somewhere in Chelsea, and for some reason or other, or none at all, I am accompanying him.

He (looking at his watch). I've got to be at Grosvenor Gardens by half-past one and there's not a taxi anywhere. We must walk fast and perhaps we'll meet one. Dash this War anyhow. *(He said, as a matter of fact, "damn," but I am getting so tired of that word, in print that I shall employ alternatives every time. Someone really must institute a close season for "damns" or they won't any longer be funny on the stage; and, since to laugh in theatres has become a national duty, that, in the present state of the wit market, would be privation indeed.)*

I (submerged by brain wave). Perhaps we'll meet one.

He. Keep a sharp look out, won't you? I've got to be there by half-past one, and I hate to be late.

I. Those tailors you were asking me about—I think you'll find them very decent people. They——

He (excitedly). Here comes one. Hi! Hi!

[A taxi, obviously full of people, approaches and passes, the driver casting a pitying glance at my poor signalling friend.]

He. I thought it was free.

I. The flag was down.

He. I couldn't be sure. What were you saying? Sorry.

I. Oh, only about those tailors. If you really want to change, you know, I could——

He. Do you mind walking a little faster?

I (mendaciously). Not at all. I could give you my card, don't you know. But of course you might not like them. Tastes differ. To me they seem to be first-rate, as tailors go.

He (profoundly—though he is not more profound than I am). Of course, as tailors go.



I. They 're best at——

He (excited again). Here's another. Hi! Hi! Taxi. No, it's engaged.

I (with a kind impulse). If you'll ask me, I'll tell you whether the flags are up or not. I think I must be able to see farther than you.

He. Do.

I. I was always rather famous for long sight. It's——

He (turning round)). Isn't that one behind us? Is that free?

I. I can't tell yet.

He. Surely the flag's up.

[He steps into the road and waves his stick.

I. It's a private car.

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He. Hang the thing! so it is. They ought to be painted white or something. Life is not worth living just now.

I. They're best for trousers, I should say. Their overcoats——

He (pointing up side-street). Isn't that one there? Hi, taxi! Good heavens, that other fellow's got it. We really must walk faster. If there isn't one on the rank in Sloane Square, I'm done. If there's one thing I hate it's being late. Besides, I'm blamed hungry. When I'm hungry I'm miserable till I eat. No good to anyone.

I. As I was saying——

He. What I want to know is, where are the taxis? They're not on the streets, anyway; then where are they? One never sees a yard full of them, but they must be somewhere. It's a scandal—a positive outrage.

I. Their overcoats can be very disappointing. I don't know how it is, but they don't seem to understand overcoats. But they're so good in other ways, you know, that really if you are thinking——

He. Here's one, really empty. Hi! Hi! Taxi! Hi! Hi!

[The flag is up but the driver shakes his head, makes a noise which sounds like "dinner" and glides serenely on.]

He. Well, I'm blamed! Did you ever see anything like it? What's that he said?

I. It sounded like "dinner."

He. Dinner! Of all the something cheek! Dinner! What's the world coming to?

I (brilliantly). Perhaps he's hungry.

He. Hungry! Greedy, you mean. Hansom drivers never refused to take you because they were hungry. It's monstrous. Bless the War, anyway. *(Looking at his watch)* I say, we must put a spurt on. You don't mind, do you?

I (more mendaciously, and wondering why I'm so weak). Oh, no.

[We both begin to scuttle, half run and half walk.]

I (panting). As I was saying, they're not A1 at overcoats, but they've a first-class cutter for everything else. Just tell me if you want to change and I'll introduce you, and then you'll get special treatment. There's nothing they wouldn't do for me.

He (breathlessly). Ah! There's the rank. There's just one cab there. How awful if it were to be taken before he saw us. Run like Heaven.

I (running like Heaven). I think I'll leave you here.

He (running still more like Heaven, a little ahead). Oh no, come on. I want to hear about those tailors. Hi! Hi! Wave your stick like Heaven!

[We both wave our sticks like Heaven.

He (subsiding into a walk). Ah! it's all right. He's seen us. *(Taking out his watch)* I've got four minutes. We shall just do it. Good-bye.

[He leaps into the cab and I turn away wondering where I shall get lunch.

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He (shouting from window). Let me know about those tailors some day; if they're any good, you know.

* * * * *

[Illustration: "ARE YE WOUNDED, TERENCE?"

"I AM THAT, MICHAEL; 'TIS IN THE FUT."

"BAD CESS TO THIM BODY-SHIELDS! I NIVER HAD MUCH FAITH IN THIM!"]

* * * * *

"The best people are still wearing their own clothes,' said Mr. Williams."—*Star*.

With all respect, Mr. WILLIAMS, the best people are wearing the KING'S.

* * * * *

"DONKEYS.—Wanted to purchase 100 reasonable. Apply M.S."
Advt. in Colonial Paper.

We have never met this kind of donkey ourselves, but we wish M.S. the best of luck.

* * * * *

AT THE PLAY.

"ANTHONY IN WONDERLAND."

It was not till about the middle of the play, and after a narcotic had been administered to him, that *Anthony* got there; but we were in Wonderland almost from the start, without the aid of drugs. For we were asked to believe that Mr. CHARLES HAWTREY was a visionary, amorous of an ideal which no earthly woman could realise for him. Occasionally he had caught a glimpse of it in the creations of Art—at the Tate Gallery or Madame TUSSAUD'S or the cinema; but in Bond Street never.

And the pity of it was that he had come in for a fortune of seven hundred thousand pounds odd, which would pass elsewhere unless he married by a given date. It was therefore the clear duty of his relatives—a couple of sisters and their husbands—to find a wife for him. After vainly trying him with every pretty woman of their acquaintance they had resort, in desperation, to the black art of a certain *Mr. Mortimer John* (U.S.A.), an infallible inventor of stunts, who made a rapid diagnosis of the case and at once pronounced himself confident of success.

Briefly—for it is a long and elaborate story—his scheme is to choose a charming girl, and make a film drama round her. *Anthony*, with family, is taken to see the show and occupies the best box in the Prince of Wales's Theatre, from which, after a little critical comment upon us in the audience, he falls in love with the heroine. It is the typical film of lurid life on a Californian ranch, and might almost have been modelled on one of Mr. Punch's cinema burlesques. There are the familiar scenes of a plot to hang the girl's lover, swiftly alternating with scenes of her progress on horseback through the primeval forest, and concluding with her arrival just in time to shoot the villain and untie the noose that encircles her lover's carotid.

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On the return of the party from the cinema, *Mortimer John* describes to *Anthony* the powers of a drug which induces the most vivid of dreams. He, *John*, had once been in *Anthony's* pitiful case, and through the services of this drug had achieved his quest of the ideal woman. *Anthony*, greatly intrigued, consents to swallow a sample of the potion. It is a simple narcotic, and under its influence he is conveyed, in a state of coma and a suitable change of apparel, into the heart of Surrey, where at sunrise he is restored to animation and has the scenes of the evening's drama re-enacted before his eyes, as originally filmed for exhibition. Under the impression that this is merely the vivid dream that he had been promised, he himself takes part in the living drama, playing the noble *role* of an exceptionally white man. In the course of it he exchanges pledges of eternal love with *Aloney* the heroine. Finally, in a spasm of heroic self-sacrifice, he takes poison with the alleged purpose of saving the heroine's life. We never quite gather how his suicide should serve this end, but then the whole atmosphere is charged with that obscurity which is the very breath of the film-drama.

[Illustration: AN IDYLL OF MOVIE-LAND.

Anthony Silvertree MR. CHARLES HAWTREY.

Aloney MISS WINIFRED BARNES.]

The poison is nothing worse than another dose of the narcotic, and under its spell he is spirited back to London, where, on arrival, he is confronted with the lady of his "dream," and *Mortimer John* secures a colossal fee. In addition, for he has had the happy thought of selecting his own daughter for the heroine, he secures a plutocrat for his son-in-law.

The worst of a play in which one is conducted out of ordinary life into the regions of improbability by processes of which every step has to be just conceivably possible, is that the conscientious development of the scheme is apt to be tedious. And, frankly, the first scene or two, though lightened by expectation, were on the heavy side.

But the film itself, when we got to it, was excellent fooling, and the reconstruction of the original drama at Dorking-in-the-Wild-West was really delightful. You can easily guess that Mr. CHARLES HAWTREY, as a cinema hero, very conscious of his heroism ("it's a way we have in Montague Square"), but always comfortably aware that in a dream, as he imagines it to be, he can well afford to make the handsomest of sacrifices, had a great chance. And he took it.

As the heroine, who has to play a rather thankless part in the mercenary designs of her parent, Miss WINIFRED BARNES contrived, very naively and prettily, to preserve an air of maiden reluctance under the most discouraging conditions. As *Mortimer John* Mr. SYDNEY VALENTINE had admirable scope for his sound and businesslike methods. Of *Anthony's* relations, all very natural and human, Miss LYDIA BILBROOKE was an

attractive figure, and the part of *Herbert Clatterby*, K.C., was played by Mr. EDMUND MAURICE with his accustomed ease of manner.

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If I wanted to find fault with any detail of the construction, it would be in the matter of the ring which *Anthony* places on the finger of *Aloney* in the cinema play. This was a spontaneous act not included in the scheme for which *Mortimer John* was given the credit. Yet as the means by which *Anthony* identified her on his return to consciousness it went far to bring that scheme to fruition. I think also that he ought to have shown some trace of surprise (I should myself) on finding that he had unconsciously exchanged his spotless evening clothes for the kit of a broncho-buster.

I have hinted already at the comparative dulness of the long introduction to what is the *clou* of the play—the film and its reconstructed scenes. Why not take a further wrinkle from the cinematic drama and throw upon the screen a succinct resume of the previous argument? Three or four minutes of steady application to the text, and we might plunge into the very heart of things. I throw out this suggestion not with any hope of reward, but in part payment of my debt for some very joyous laughter. O.S.

* * * * *

“Wanted, Gentlewoman a few days old.” *The Lady*.

This is much prettier than “Baby taken from birth.”

* * * * *

[Illustration: “AND LOOK HERE, FRITZ—]

[Illustration: —WHATEVER HAPPENS—]

[Illustration: —SEE YOU KEEP—]

[Illustration: —THEM HANDS OF YOURS—]

[Illustration: —WELL ABOVE—]

[Illustration: —YOUR BLINKIN’ HEAD.”]

* * * * *

A SONG OF THE WOODLAND ELVES.

We hear the ruthless axes; we watch our rafters fall;
The seawind blows unhindered where stood our banquet-hall;
Our grassy rings are trampled, our leafy tents are torn—
Yet more would we, and gladly, to help the English-born.



For, leafy-crowned or frosted, the English oaks are ours;
The beeches are our playrooms, the elms our outlook towers;
And we were forest rangers before these woods had name,
And we were elves in England before the Romans came.

We watched the Druids worship; we watched the wild bulls feed;
We gave our oaks to ALFRED to build his ships at need;
And often in the moonlight our pricked ears in the wood
Have heard the hail of RUFUS, the horn of ROBIN HOOD. But if our age-old roof-beams
can serve her cause to-day,
The woodland elves of England will sign their rights away;
For none but will be woeful to hear the axes ring,
Yet none but would go homeless to aid an English King.

W.H.O.

* * * * *

GOOD OLD GOTHIC.

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[An agitation for the total disuse of the Latin character, we learn from Press quotations published in *The Daily Chronicle*, is raging through the German Empire, and the Prussian Minister of the Interior has forbidden the use of any other character than German Gothic in the publications of the Statistical Bureau.]

The ways of the Hun comprehension elude,
They're so cleverly crass, so painstakingly crude;
For, in spite of his cunning and forethought immense,
He is often incurably stupid and dense
To the point of allowing his patriot zeal
To put a large spoke in his own driving-wheel.

An excellent instance of zeal of this sort
Is the movement, endorsed by official support,
To ban Latin type in the papers that flow
From the press of the Prussian Statistics Bureau.

Now the pride of the Germans, as dear as their pipe
And their beer, is their wonderful old Gothic type;
It makes ev'ry page look as black as your hat,
For the face of the letters is stodgy and fat;
It adds to the labour of reading, and tries
The student's pre-eminent asset, his eyes,
And in consequence lends a most lucrative aid
To people engaged in the spectacle trade.
But these manifest drawbacks to little amount
When tried by the only criteria that count:
Though the people who use it don't really need it,
It exasperates aliens whenever they read it.
It is solid, *echt-Deutsch*, free from Frenchified froth,
And in fine it is Gothic, befitting the Goth.

So when the great Prussian Statistics Bureau
Proscribes Latin letters and says they must go,
They are giving a lead which we earnestly hope
Will be followed beyond its original scope;
For the more German books that in Gothic are printed
The more will the spread of Hun "genius" be stinted,
And the larger the number, released from its gripe,
Of the students of Latin ideas—and type.

* * * * *



“Furniture for Poultry: 2 easy chairs, solid walnut frames, nicely upholstered and sound, 12/6 each; also 2 armchairs, 4 small chairs, walnut frames, nicely upholstered and sound, L2; 5 other chairs, upholstered in tapestry and leather, 5/- each.”—*The Bazaar*.

Has this sort of thing Mr. PROTHERO’S approval? Some hens are already too much inclined to sit when we want them to lay.

* * * * *

THE TIPINBANOLA.

“There,” I said, “you’ve interrupted me again.”

“Tut tut,” said Francesca.

“And the dogs are barking,” I said, “and the guinea-hens are squawking.”

“I daresay,” she said; “but you can’t hear the guinea-hens; they’re much too far away.”

“Yes, but I know they’re squawking—they always are—and for a sensitive highly-strung man it’s the same thing.”

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"Tut-t——"

"Tut me no more of your tuts, Francesca," I said, "for I am engaged in a most complicated and difficult arithmetical calculation."

"If," said Francesca deliberately, "two men in corduroys, with straps below their knees, and a boy in flannel shorts, all working seven hours and a half per day for a week, can plant five thousand potatoes on an acre of land, how many girls in knickerbockers will be required to——"

"Stop, Francesca," I said, "or I shall go mad."

"If," she continued inexorably, "a train travelling at the rate of sixty-two miles and three-quarters in an hour takes two and a half seconds to pass a lame man walking in the same direction find how many men with one arm each can board a motor-bus in Piccadilly Circus, having first extracted the square root of the wheel-base."

"Stow it," I said.

"Isn't that rude?" she said.

"Yes," I said; "it was intended to be."

"Well, but what *are* you doing?"

"I'm calculating rates of percentage on the new War Loan," I said.

"Why worry over that?" she said. "It announces itself as a five-per-center, and I'm willing to take it at its word. What's your difficulty? Surely you do not impute prevarication to the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER."

"No," I said, "far from it. I have the greatest possible respect for him. I'm sure he would not deceive a poor investor; but he doesn't know my difficulties. It's this getting L100 by paying only L95 that's knocking me sideways; and then there's the income tax, and the other loan at four per cent., on which no income tax is to be charged, and the conversion of the old four-and-a-half per cent. War Loan, and of the various lots of Exchequer Bonds. It's all as generous as it can be, but for a man whose mathematical education has been, shall we say, defective, it's as bad as a barbed-wire entanglement."

"Oh, don't muddle your unfortunate head any more. Just plank down your money and take what they give you. That's my motto."

"No doubt," I said; "that's all very well for you. You aren't the head of the household, with all its cares depending on you. Heads of households ought-to know their exact position."

“Well, then, heads of households ought to have learnt their arithmetic better and remembered more of it. The children and I haven’t allowed ourselves to be hindered by little obstacles of that kind.”

“What,” I said, “are you and the children in it too?”

“Yes, we’re all in it. I’ve put in the spare money from the housekeeping——”

“I always knew you got too much.”

“And the children have chipped in with their savings.”

“Savings?” I said. “How have they got any savings?”

“Presents from affectionate godmothers and aunts, which were put into the Post Office Savings Bank. They’re all out now and into the Loan—all, that is, except Frederick’s little all.”

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"And what's happened to that?"

"That's put into War Certificates. It was his own idea. He was fascinated by the poster, and insisted that his money should go in the purchase of cartridges, so there it is."

"And at the end of five years he'll get back L1 for every 15_s._ 6_d._ he's put in."

"Yes, he'll get L5. He made a lot of difficulty about that."

"You don't mean to say he jibbed about getting his money back?"

"That's precisely what did happen. He said he'd *given* the money for cartridge buying, and how could he take it back with a bit extra after the cartridges had been bought. He's really rather annoyed about it."

"I shall tell him," I said, "not to let it worry him, and shall explain to him how much *per cent.* he's getting *per annum.*"

"You'll have to work it out yourself first of all," she said, "and I know you can't do that. And, by the way, you may as well be ready for him; he's going to ask you if he may join the Army as a drummer-boy."

"What on earth's put that into his head?"

"He's been talking to the Sergeant-Major, and he's invented a musical instrument of his own. It's made out of a cardboard box, some pins and two or three elastic bands. There it is—you'll find its name inscribed on it."

I took it up and saw inscribed upon it in large pencilled letters this strange device: "THE TIPINBANOLA; made for soldiers only."

"Francesca," I said, "it's a superb name. Where did he get it from?"

"Out of his head," she said.

"I wonder," I said, "if he keeps any arithmetic there?"

"Ask him; I'm sure he'd be proud to help you."

"No," I said, "I must plough my weary furrow alone."

"And the guinea-hens," she said, "are still squawking."

"Yes," I said, "isn't it awful?"

"I'll go and stop them," she said.

"It's no good," I said, "I shan't hear them stop."

R.C.L.

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE MODERN RALEIGH.]

* * * * *

"If the ploughman is taken the farmer may as well put up his shutters."—*A farmer in "The Daily News."*

And if the shop-walker is taken, the tradesman may as well let his windows lie fallow.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Officer*. "WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY FEEDING THAT HORSE BEFORE THE CALL SOUNDED?"

Recruit. "I DIDN'T THINK AS 'OW 'E'D START EATING BEFORE THE TRUMPET BLEW, SIR."]

* * * * *

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

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Mr. S.P.B. MAIS, in a dedicatory letter to *Interlude* (CHAPMAN AND HALL), tells us that he has “simply tried to show what a man constituted like Shelley would have made of his life had he been alive in 1917.” Without any doubt his attempt has succeeded. I am, however, bound to add this warning (if Mr. MAIS’S is not enough), that a novel with such a purpose is not, and could not be, milk for babes. Nothing that I had previously read of Mr. MAIS’S had prepared me for the proficiency he shows here. Obviously attached to the modern school of novelists, he has many of its faults and more of its virtues. One may accept his main point of view, yet be offended sometimes by his details. But the fact remains that in *Geoffrey Battersby* he has given us a piece of character-drawing almost flawlessly perfect. Not for a very long time has it been my good fortune to attend such a triumph, and I wish to proclaim it. The women by whom *Geoffrey*, the weak and the wayward, was attracted hither and thither are also well drawn; but here Mr. MAIS shows his present limitations. Nevertheless I feel sure that he has within him the qualities that go to make a great novelist, and that if he will free himself from certain marked prejudices his future lies straight and clear before him.

* * * * *

It was a happy idea of the Sisters MARY and JANE FINDLATER to call their new book of short stories *Seen and Heard* (SMITH, ELDER), with the sub-title, *Before and After 1914*. I say short stories, but actually these have so far outgrown the term that a half-dozen of them make up the volume. They are all examples of the same gentle and painstaking craft that their writers have before now exhibited elsewhere. Here are no sensational happenings; the drama of the tales is wholly emotional. My own favourites are the first, called “The Little Tinker,” a half-ironical study of the temptation of a tramp mother to surrender her child to the blessings of civilisation; and how, by the intervention of a terrible old woman, the queen of the tribe, this momentary weakness was overcome. My other choice, the last tale in the collection (and the only one contributed by Miss MARY FINDLATER), is a dour little comedy of the regeneration, through poverty and hard work, of two underemployed and unpleasant elderly ladies. A restful book, such as will keep no one awake at nights, but will give pleasure to all who appreciate slight studies of ordinary life sketched with precise and careful finish.

* * * * *

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Their Lives (STANLEY PAUL) has at least this point of originality, that it ends with the wedding of somebody other than the heroine, or rather, I should say, the chief heroine, because, strictly speaking, all three daughters of *Mr. and Mrs. Radmall* might be said jointly to fill this post, but it is *Christina*, the eldest, who fills most of it. The other two were named *Virgilia* and *Orinthia*, and I can't say that these horrific labels did them any injustice. As for the story of "their lives," as VIOLET HUNT tells it, there is really nothing very much to charm in a history of three disagreeable children developing into detestable young women. Perhaps it may have some value as a study of feminine adolescence, but I defy anyone to call the result attractive. Its chief incident, which is (not to mince matters) the attempted seduction by *Christina* of a middle-aged man, the father of one of her friends, mercifully comes to nothing. I like to believe that this sort of thing is as unusual as it is unpleasant. For the rest, the picture of the "artistic" household in which the children grew up, of their managing mother, and the slightly soured and disappointed painter their father, is drawn vividly enough. But what unamiable people they all are! "MILES IGNOTUS," who supplies a quaintly attractive little preface, in which he speaks of having read the book in proof under shell-fire, affects to discover in them a kinship with Prussia. Certainly they are almost frightful enough.

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Having read all about *The Rise of Ledger Dunstan* (DUCKWORTH) from obscurity to wealth, literary success and aristocratic wedlock, I should be infinitely content to leave him at that and have done; but Mr. ALFRED TRESIDDER SHEPPARD warns us that there is more to follow, and even hints that the sequel, opening in July, 1914, may in many respects be far indeed from the dulness of happily-ever-after. If *Ledgar* had been satisfied to marry the sweetheart of his school-days there might have been some danger of such a disaster; but, having put his humble past, including his Nonconformist conscience, too diligently behind him for that, he will have to face whatever his author and the KAISER may have in store, supported only by a wife who is going, I trust and believe, to revenge on him all the irritation which she and I both felt at his attitude of unemotional superiority towards all the world. Some people may think it almost a pity that the lady cannot deal similarly with Mr. SHEPPARD himself in just reprisal for his long-winded and nebulous way of talking about Anti-Christ and Armageddon, and for his revolting incidents of murder and insanity introduced without any excuse of necessity. The book contains a considerable element of lively if indiscriminating humour, but its insistence on the gruesome is so unfortunate that unless his hero's future fate be already irrevocably fixed in manuscript one would like to remind the author that essays in this kind are the easiest form of all literary effort and the least supportable.

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With Serbia into Exile (MELROSE) is a book that will suffer little from the fact that its tragic tale has already been told by several other pens. Mr. FORTIER JONES, the writer, has much that is fresh to say, and a very fresh and vigorous way of saying it. His book and himself are both American of the best kind—which is to say, wonderfully resourceful, observant, sympathetic and alive. From a newspaper flung away by a stranger on the Broadway Express, Mr. JONES first became aware that men were wanted for relief work in Serbia, and “in an hour I had become part of the expedition.” That is a phrase characteristic of the whole book. Though the matter of it is the story, “incredibly hideous and incredibly heroic,” of a nation going into exile, Mr. JONES has always a keen eye for the picturesque and even humorous aspects of the tragedy; he has a quick sense of the effective which enables him to touch in many haunting pictures—the delusive peace of a sunny Autumn day among the Bosnian mountains; the face of KING PETER seen for a moment by lamplight amid a crowd of refugees; and countless others. More than a passing mention also is due to the many quite admirable snapshots with which the volume is illustrated. The author seems successfully to have communicated his own gifts of observation and selection to his camera, an instrument only too apt to betray those who look to it for support. One is glad for many reasons to think that our American cousins will read this book.

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The Man in the Fog (HEATH, CRANTON) is a book that I find exceedingly hard to classify. Its author, Mr. HARRY TIGHE, has several previous stories to his credit, all of which seem to have moved the critics to pleasant sayings. But for my own part I have frankly to confess that I found *The Man in the Fog* somewhat wheezy company. The *Man* of the title was a kind of Northern Joseph, dismissed from a promising partnership with Potiphar after a domestic intrigue on the lines of the original. The fog happens when, years later, he meets the daughter of Mrs. Potiphar returning to her mother's house, and (at the risk of the poor girl catching her death) detains her on the front step with foggy allusions to the mysterious past. I may mention that his own conduct in the interval had been such as I can only regard as a lamentable relapse from the altitude of the earlier chapters. But it is all vastly serious—it would perhaps be unkind to say sententious—and wholly unruffled by the faintest suggestion of comedy. For which reason I should never be startled to learn that HARRY TIGHE was either youthful, Scotch, or female (or indeed, for that matter, all three). In any case I can only hope that he, or she, will not resent my parting advice to cultivate a somewhat lighter touch, and the selection of such words as come easily from the tongue. Some of the dialogue in the present book is painfully unhuman.

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[Illustration: "GOD BLESS THE OLD WOMAN! SHE IS THOUGHTFUL. I TOLD 'ER THERE WAS ICE IN THE TRENCHES THE LARST TIME I WROTE, AND I'M BLEST IF SHE 'ASN'T SENT ME A PAIR OF SKATES!"]

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A Great Problem Solved.

Some carry their season tickets in their hat-bands, others fasten them on their wrists, others wear them attached to cords. A correspondent writes:—

"In my own overcoat I find an ingenious arrangement excellently suited for the purpose of carrying a season ticket, so that it shall be at once secure and easily accessible. The tailor has made a horizontal slit, about two-and-a-half inches wide, in the right side of the coat, and cunningly inserted a small rectangular bag or pouch of linen, the whole thing being strongly stitched and neatly finished off with a flap. It makes an admirable receptacle for a season ticket of ordinary dimensions, and I recommend this contrivance to those who may not be acquainted with it."

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"Well-fed as we are at home, and conscious that the men who are fighting our battles are the best provisioned forces who ever took the field, we can contemplate the continuance of the coldest weather for twenty years with equanimity."—*Daily Chronicle*.

Or even for the duration of the War.