

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 152, March 14, 1917 eBook

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 152, March 14, 1917

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Contents

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 152, March 14, 1917 eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	4
Page 1.....	5
Page 2.....	7
Page 3.....	9
Page 4.....	11
Page 5.....	13
Page 6.....	15
Page 7.....	18
Page 8.....	20
Page 9.....	22
Page 10.....	24
Page 11.....	26
Page 12.....	28
Page 13.....	29
Page 14.....	30
Page 15.....	32
Page 16.....	34
Page 17.....	36
Page 18.....	38
Page 19.....	40
Page 20.....	42
Page 21.....	43
Page 22.....	44

Table of Contents

Section	Table of Contents	Page
Start of eBook		1
Title: Punch, or the London		1
Charivari, Vol. 152, March 14, 1917		
PUNCH, OR THE LONDON		1
CHARIVARI.		
CHARIVARIA.		1
I.		3
II.		3
II.		15

Page 1

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PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.

Vol. 152.

March 14th, 1917.

CHARIVARIA.

It is rumoured that for his mismanagement of the Mexican affair the *Kaiser* has decided to teach Herr *Zimmermann* a terrible lesson. He is to be appointed Food Dictator.

"It is impossible to predict when the War will end," says Field-Marshal *Von HINDENBERG*. Of course this is all nonsense. Many of our Military Experts have predicted it more than once.

A French journal is of the opinion that the War will end this year, but the Germans are not so pessimistic about it.

"Everything is going right for us," says the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. We can't speak for everything, but it is quite true as far as the British Army is concerned.

The Germans waste no time and are already dealing with the Unemployed question. The *Kaiser* has decided to give a dinner to Count BERNSTORFF.

"In America," says Dr. *Otto* FLABE in the *Vossische Zeitung*, "the swindler and the cheat is a hero." It will be remembered how popular Count BERNSTORFF said he had been during his stay there.

Just to show the British Parliament that it can be done, it is rumoured that the *Kaiser* is about to grant Home Rule to Mexico.

The Prussian Herrenhaus has passed a resolution demanding that the Imperial Government should conclude an immediate peace on terms consistent with Pan-German ideals, including annexation of Belgium and Poland, payment of indemnity by the Allies, *etc.* The *German Chancellor* is understood to have replied in effect, "Go and do it yourselves."

Sofia announces that 35,000 Bulgarian geese are to be permitted to go to Germany. As in the case of the Bulgarian Fox who went to Vienna, there appears to be little likelihood that they will ever return.

After the bombardment of Margate, says the *Evening News*, rabbits were found dead from fright in their hutches. To avoid the suspicion of partisanship our contemporary should have explained that they were not at the time in Government employ.

The cost of brown paper is said to have advanced to forty shillings a ton, or four times its price in peace time. Its use as a substitute for "Havana" tobacco (from which it can often be distinguished only by its aroma) is probably responsible for the rise.

Page 2

Allotment holders have been warned to be on their guard against wire-worms, and special constables are keeping a sharp look-out by the potato-beds. A still more efficacious method of protection is to enclose the allotment with barbed wire-wormless.

Two speakers at a Ramsgate meeting recalled that they were chums seventy-three years ago. The touching incident has resulted in a local appeal for them to be drafted to the same regiment when their class is called up.

The Cuckfield Council has appealed to householders not to put broken glass in their swill. With all imports of glass-ware cut off, it is felt that even our pigs must be required to forgo some of their accustomed delicacies.

"The heavy tread of policemen often keeps me awake," said the Willesden magistrate. He admits, however, that the darkened streets and the absence of parental discipline make it more than ever necessary that the Force should put its foot down firmly.

"Seagulls in Thanet," says a contemporary, "are coming to the backs of houses and sharing crumbs with the sparrows." It is doing no more than justice to a much abused bird to point out that the sparrows are also sharing crumbs with the seagulls.

It appears from a contemporary gossip-writer that Count *Plunkett* has definitely decided not to take his seat in the House of Commons until after the War. This will be a relief to the authorities, who had feared that the two events might clash.

* * * * *

Notice.

In order to meet the national need for economy in the consumption of paper, the Proprietors of *Punch* are compelled to reduce the number of its pages, but propose that the amount of matter published in *Punch* shall by condensation and compression be maintained and even, it is hoped, increased.

It is further necessary that means should be taken to restrict the circulation of *Punch*, and beginning with this issue its price is raised to Sixpence. The Proprietors believe that the public will prefer an increase of price to a reduction of matter.

Readers are urged to place an order with their Newsagent for the regular delivery of copies, as *Punch* may otherwise be unobtainable, the shortage of paper making imperative the withdrawal from Newsagents of the "on-sale-or-return" privilege.

In consequence of the increase in the price of *Punch* the period covered by subscriptions already paid direct to the *Punch* Office will be proportionately shortened; or the unexpired value will be refunded, if desired.

* * * * *

The House of Commons Appeal Tribunal has just granted a brief exemption to an importer of Chinese eggs, which are used, it was explained, by bakers and for leather tanning. The bakers are believed to use them for dressing the surfaces of penny buns.

Page 3

The North Somerset Liberal Association have passed a resolution asking Mr. *Joseph king* not to offer himself as a candidate at the next election, and it is thought likely that Mr. *King* will ask his constituents to resign.

A Llanelly correspondent writes to a morning paper to say that a parrot which he had kept for twenty years had just died. But surely the remarkable thing is that it didn't die before.

"No one admits taking drink because they like it," said Mr. D'EYNCOURT the other day. The popular idea is, of course, that the beastly stuff must be got rid of somehow.

Broadstairs Council has been offered six pounds for a sand-artist's pitch. The advance in price is attributed to the growing attraction of the place for foreigners on a flying visit.

"Women will not undertake to rock a cradle after learning to drive a van," says Father Vaughan. But we trust they will still handle the baby ribbons.

Mr. *Edward backhouse*, the Stockton-on-Tees Peace candidate, is reported to have had his first public meeting broken up. He is now of the opinion that it serves us right if the War goes on for the present.

Kent rat and sparrow clubs are offering one shilling a dozen for rats' tails. The price is small, but, as the President of a leading club points out, the vendor is permitted to retain the balance of the rat for his own purposes.

Some exception has been taken to Mr. H.W. FORSTER'S statement to the House of Commons that only 250,000,000 sandbags have been used by the Army in the current year. Several privates home on leave have assured us that they themselves have filled at least that number while waiting for a single counterattack.

A Scottish allotment holder, in the course of digging the other day, discovered three sovereigns, a silver watch and a gold ring. Since this discovery the authorities have been so overwhelmed by applications for allotments that there is some talk of extending the Scottish boundary into England, in order to cope with the business.

"It is essential," says Mr. *Neville Chamberlain*, "that there should be some light entertainment and amusement for the people." Several London magistrates have promised to be funnier.

* * * * *

Herbs of Grace.

I.

Borage.

"Borage for courage,"
The old saw runs.
"Let's grow Borage
And we'll beat the Huns!
Whether for porridge
Or puddings or buns,
Let's go and forage
For tons and tons.

II.

Dill.

Page 4

Water of Dill
Is good to distil
When babies are fractious and witches do ill.
But why should we waste
What gives such a taste
To Summer-time salads that with it are graced?
Old witch, work your will!
Sweet babe, take a pill!
And I'll eat my salad well flavoured with Dill.

* * * * *

Short Service.

"Under Housemaid wanted, for 25 minutes London."—*The Times*.

* * * * *

Another Impending Apology.

"To-morrow week ... the Canadian regimental doctors will be deposited for safe keeping in Bristol Cathedral."—*Bristol Times and Mirror*.

* * * * *

The Art of Bathos.

"Mr. Justice LOW has proved himself one of the ablest and most expeditious of our judges. He was one of three judges who decided, in May, 1915, that a wrinkle is a fish."—*Daily Graphic*.

* * * * *

"London, 30th Jan.—The Fool Controller states that...."—*Indian Paper*.

We had not heard of the appointment of this Minister. But it has been made none too soon.

* * * * *

From a recent University examination paper:—

"Three persons have four coats, five vests and six hats between them. In how many different ways can they dress themselves with them?"



A problem for the coming Clothes Controller.

* * * * *

[Illustration: "FASTER? NO, I AIN'T GOIN' NO FASTER, YOUNG 'IGH VELOCITY. I AIN'T GOT BUT TWO SPEEDS, SLOW AND STOP."]

* * * * *

THE FOOD OF LOVE.

A LYRIC OF MEATLESS DAYS.

Eat to me only with thine eyes
And I will munch with mine;
Or let my lips but brush thy locks
And I shall seem to dine;
The hollow 'neath my belt that lies
For flesh of beeves doth pine;
Yet, might I wolf a roasted ox,
I would, of course, decline.

I sent thee once a juicy steak
To prove thy troth and see
If in that stern ordeal's test
Stedfast thou still wouldst be;
And thou thereof one sniff didst take
And post it back to me,
Since when I wear it next my chest,
Potted, for love of thee.

O.S.

* * * * *

A NATIONAL SKY-SCRAPER.

I have been often asked why the Government, foreseeing the inevitable increase of Departments, had not the elementary imagination to build a colossal sky-scraper to accommodate them all.

The objections to such an act of apparently obvious intelligence may be briefly enumerated.

Page 5

(1) With such a landmark whoever had business to conduct with a Government Department would know where to find it, for which reason alone the system of huts and hotels is to be preferred. The hotels are widely scattered and the huts hidden away in odd corners of public gardens and parks, and even in the bed of a lake. By the use of motor-cars (petrol being for official and not for private consumption) such co-operation as cannot be avoided between Departments is assured.

(2) Even in a single Department too close co-operation is not desirable. An hotel, divided into hundreds of small rooms and flats, enables the occupant of each room to be isolated, and each self-contained flat to have almost the status of a sub-department. Thus the vexatious supervision, the easy intercourse and rapid decision which are so disturbing to official routine are avoided.

(3) The express elevators, by which the visitor is shot up to the higher storeys of a sky-scraper, would suggest a certain directness and celerity in official methods that is calculated to arouse false hopes.

(4) With many or all Departments in one building there would be the temptation to place the entire clerical staff under Mr. Neville Chamberlain as Director-General, who would transfer them from one office to another according to the necessities of each day's work. Such mobility would be unpopular, while the inevitable creation of a central Press-Bureau, Publicity and Information Department would afford the Press a satisfaction that it has done nothing to deserve.

(5) On the top floor of a sky-scraper is usually a luncheon-club; here the various Ministers would meet daily, and could only with difficulty escape the exchange of ideas.

(6) If all Government offices were in a single building the PRIME MINISTER could make daily visits to each, and would find it hard to avoid comparison between the organization and methods of his various Ministers.

These considerations alone finally dispose of any merits which the plan for a national sky-scraper may seem superficially to possess.

* * * * *

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

“SCRUTATOR TEMPORIS ACTI.”—You are not the only one who holds that Parliament could not be better or more patriotically occupied at the present stage of the War than in devoting their energies to a discussion of the Report of the Dardanelles Commission and the detailed evidence on which it was based. We understand that your view is shared by all the keenest patriots among the Central Powers.

“TUBER CAIN.”—The earliest poet to sing of rationing was WILLIAM MORRIS, who repeatedly described himself as “The idle singer of an empty day.”

“A LOVER OF ‘BUSTER BROWN.’”—We gladly gave publicity to your indignant denial of any tribal relationship between “Buster Brown” and Filibuster STONE.

* * * * *

Page 6

"Miss Adela Pankhurst attempted to-day at the Midland Junction, a strong Labour centre, to deliver a lecture directed against Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Hughes.

The audience sang her down with 'Rule Britannia' and 'Australia 5s. a box.'—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

The latter song, no doubt, alluding to the entrance-fee charged by the famous Boxing Kangaroo.

* * * * *

[Illustration: CENTRAL ISOLATION.

GERMAN KAISER. "YOU'RE ABOUT THE ONLY ONE LEFT FOR ME TO TALK TO."

KING OF SPAIN. "AND I'M NOT FEELING VERY CHATTY."

[It is reported that communication between Berlin and America has been interrupted.]]

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Tommy*. "HAVE YER GOT NOTHIN' TO DO ONLY WATCH US WORKING?"

Loafer. "NO."

Tommy. "THEN YER LOOK LIKE HAVIN' A THUNDERIN' IDLE TIME WHEN WE MOVE FROM HERE, DON'T YER?"]

* * * * *

THE FIRST WHIP.

As I wandered home
By Hedworth Combe
I heard a lone horse whinny,
And saw on the hill
Stand statue-still
At the top of the old oak spinney
A rough-haired hack
With a girl on his back,
And "*Hounds!*" I said, "for a guinea."



The wind blew chill
Over Larchley Hill,
And it couldn't have blown much colder;
Her nose was blue
And her pigtails two
Hung damply over her shoulder;
She might have been ten,
Or, guessing again,
She might have been twelve months older.

To a tight pink lip
She pressed her whip,
By way of imposing quiet;
I bowed my head
To the word unsaid,
Accepting the lady's fiat,
And noted the while
Her Belvoir style
As she rated a hound for riot.

A lean form leapt
O'er the fence and crept
Through the ditch, with his thief's heart quaking;
But the face of the maid
No hint betrayed
That she noticed the brambles shaking,
Till she saw him clear
Of her one wild fear—
The chance of his backward breaking.

Then dainty and neat
She rose in her seat
That the better her eyes might follow
Where a shadow of brown
Over Larchley Down
Launched out like a driving swallow;
And she quickened his speed
Through bunch-grass and weed,
With a regular Pytchley holloa!

Raging they came
Like a torrent of flame—
There were nineteen couple and over,
And a huntsman grey
Who blew them away
With the note of a true hound-lover,
While his Whip sat back

On her rough old hack
And called to the last in covert.

Page 7

Then cramming down flat
Her quaint little hat,
And shaking the old horse together,
She was off like a bird,
And the last that I heard
Was a "Forrard!" that died in the heather,
As she took up her place
At the tail of the chase
Like a ten-season lord of the leather.

W.H.O.

* * * * *

"In those same eighteen days, Sir Edward tells us, 607 ships of over a hundred tons arrived and 5,873 left our shores. A German newspaper, it seems, has been asserting that the mere terror of the submarine has swept the seas clean at one blow. Twelve thousand ships, in and out, in eighteen days, does not look, Sir Edward dryly remarked, so very like paralysis."—*The Times*.

Our Thunderer seems to have imitated its Bosch contemporary, for it has swept the seas of some 6,000 ships by a stroke of the pen.

* * * * *

"THE SPECTATOR" AND "THE TRADE."

A PAINFUL RUMOUR.

Last week one of our representatives had the honour of calling at the offices of *The Spectator* to inquire into the credibility of certain strange rumours that have recently been current in The Trade. They were to the effect that Mr. ST. LOE STRACHEY, Editor of *The Spectator*, having gallantly volunteered under the National Service Scheme, had had allotted to him, by one of the DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S subordinates, a post of national importance at Messrs. Bassopp's Brewery. Mr. STRACHEY'S fertile and forcible pen was (so the rumour went) to be employed by this firm in the drawing up of some pungent advertisements under the headings, "The Weakness of the Water Movement," "Up, Glasses!" etc., including a verse series, in Horatian alcoholics, entitled, "Bonnie D.T."

It was reported that in the ironic circumstances in which he found himself, Mr. STRACHEY felt it his duty to acquiesce loyally in the change of view imposed upon him, and to adopt a policy of "Down, Spectators!"

Our representative is happy to state that he has the highest authority for giving an unqualified denial to these sinister allegations.

* * * * *

From a description of a wedding-breakfast:—

“The toast of the presents was also duly honoured.”—*South African Paper*.

After all, next to the bride and bridegroom they are perhaps the most important feature.

* * * * *

“Field Glasses, powerful magnification; sacrifice, 37/6; cost L175.”—*New Zealand Paper*.

We don't know about the magnification, but the diminution is most remarkable.

* * * * *

THE EVERLASTING ROMANCE.

Page 8

The other day I did a perfectly dreadful thing: I intruded, all unconsciously but in the most blundering way, on a love scene. It was in the National Gallery, long famous as the meeting-place of affinities, in the big room where the pictures lent by the Duke of WESTMINSTER and the Duke of BUCCLEUCH are now hanging, and before I knew it I found myself standing between two young people whose eyes were fixed on each other. Naturally I moved away at once, but later I returned and made so bold as to study them a little, for it was clearly, if not yet a passion, a mutual interest of such tender depths that no outsider could affect it.

The boy—for he was no more—was one of the most beautiful that I have ever seen. His hair was perhaps a thought longer than we encourage to-day, but one always sees odd people in the National Gallery, where artists—most careless of men—are now constant visitors, drawn there by the many new pictures, and especially, perhaps, the modern French examples from Sir HUGH LANE'S collection. His hair was the more noticeable because he carried his hat in his hand; his clothes were noticeable too, being a shade too fanciful for London in winter—but then, who cares how people dress in London? I am sure I don't; and especially so when they have such eyes as this boy's, dark and rich, and such a curve to such lips.

There he stood, perfectly still, his steady gaze fixed on the lady opposite, while she in her turn never wavered in her gaze upon him. But whereas there was something bold in his homage there was a half-shy way with her. He was facing her squarely, but she looked at him a little sideways, and a little curiously, in demure dubiousness. One could see that she was enormously intrigued, but her interest was not expressed by any movement. In fact neither moved; they remained some twenty yards apart all the time I observed them: each, I suppose, leaving it to the other—the boy because he was so young, the girl because she was already woman, and woman likes to force advances from man.

I never saw a prettier thing than the little lady, with her cool white skin, and the faintest flush on her cheeks, and her eyes not less dark than the boy's but lacking the sensitive depths of his.

The odd thing was that, although they were so engrossed each in the other, both, I observed, looked also at me. It struck me as not the least strange part of this charming drama that its hero and heroine, while completely absorbed in their own sympathetic relationship, should be able to turn a calm survey upon a stranger too. This gift made them the more memorable and perhaps explains why, for all the rest of the day and at intervals in the night and morning following, I thought of these young people, speculating as to how they were getting on; and perhaps that is why, the next afternoon, drawn by invisible wires, I found myself in the National Gallery again.

Will you believe it?—they also were there. This is an absolute fact. There they were, exactly as I had left them. And yet, not exactly, for I am certain that there was a hint

more of seriousness in the lady's glance and a shade more troubled earnestness in his. But as regards actual distance, they were still as far apart, although certainly nearer in spirit.

Page 9

Curiosity as to names is a foible which should be, I am convinced, discouraged; but on this occasion I could not resist the desire to know more of such assiduous habitues. Drawing one of the attendants aside, I asked him if he could tell who these romantic young things were. "To be sure," he said. "The young gentleman is 'The Blue Boy,' by GAINSBOROUGH, and the young lady is the Lady ELIZABETH MONTAGU, by REYNOLDS."

Only portraits after all, you say. But don't be too hasty. Go rather to the National Gallery and see for yourself. Maybe you will then realise that there is more there than paint....

Shallow people talk about accidents. But the wise know that accidents do not happen. The wise know that the War broke out in order that Grosvenor House, where "The Blue Boy" normally resides, and Montagu House, the home of this little Buccleuch lady with skin like an anemone, might be needed for War-work, so that when the pictures were sent to the National Gallery for safer keeping these two might be placed opposite each other in the same room. Chance? The only chance is destiny.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Munition Worker*. "I'VE BOUGHT A PIANO."

Foreman. "GOT ANYBODY AT HOME WHO CAN PLAY IT?"

Munition Worker. "NO, NOT AT PRESENT; BUT WE'VE A FRIEND COMING ROUND THIS EVENING TO PUT US IN THE WAY OF IT.]"

* * * * *

"Fish, or woman, for block work; must be exp. and accustomed to best class trade."—*Daily Paper*.

Why not combine the two and get a mermaid?

* * * * *

"MAN WHO WILL KEEP EYE ON POTATOES. MR. DENNIS AS VEGETABLE AND FRUIT DIRECTOR."—*The Daily Mirror*.

Mr. D. need not trouble; we prefer them without eyes.

* * * * *

[Illustration: A LEAN DAY.

Luncheon Hostess. "I DO HOPE YOU DON'T MIND, MRS. STOKER, BUT ON WEDNESDAYS WE ONLY HAVE MEAT AT DINNER."

Dinner Hostess. "I DO HOPE YOU DON'T MIND, MRS. STOKER, BUT ON WEDNESDAYS WE ONLY HAVE MEAT AT LUNCHEON."]

* * * * *

MON SOLDAT ET MON CURE.

"Donne un peu, Maman, s'il te plait," said Jeanne eagerly.

Maman handed over the newspaper from which she had just read aloud and explained the passage so full of touching interest to them both, and Jeanne, with help at the difficult places, read out:—

"CITATIONS A L'ORDRE DU JOUR.

Jacques Martin, soldat au 170e d'infanterie, grenadier d'elite, au cours des combats du 26 et du 27 novembre, 1916, a, par son mepris du danger et par son ardeur, assure la progression dans un boyau defendu pas a pas par l'ennemi.

Le soldat Jacques Martin est Monsieur l'abbe Martin, cure de ——.'

Page 10

“Oui, nous savons bien d’où il est cure!” cried Jeanne, in admiration and awe. “C’est bien beau, hein, Maman?” Then suddenly she became silent and thoughtful, remembering the subsequent fate of her friend and hero.

“Dire qu’il est maintenant prisonnier en Alle... en Bochie!” she said. They had known long ago that he was mentioned in despatches, and they had been on the look-out for the glorious details in print, but only this morning had they heard of his capture.

How proud they were of their gentle cure and brave soldier! Jeanne had at first been greatly perplexed by the strange dual personality, with its incompatibilities, and many were the questions that had arisen in her active little mind. “Le cure de Suzanne, c’est autre chose,” she reflected, for though technically a soldier was he not a *brancardier* rescuing the wounded? Her own practical conclusions, however, and the answers to her questions smoothed away many difficulties, and perfect faith in her friend did the rest.

Still she had never been able quite to merge the *religieux* and the *poilu* into one picture; besides, she liked to play with the idea and confront the one with the other. “Que va dire Monsieur le cure lorsque le soldat tuera un homme?” And she had slipped into the habit of calling him “Mon soldat et mon cure,” suddenly inspired to adapt the title of Cousin Juliette’s absorbing book, *Mon Oncle et mon Cure*, and she refused to abandon it when told that they were two separate persons. For that matter so were the *soldat* and the *cure*.

“Maman, nous allons tout de suite préparer son paquet de comforts,” urged Jeanne. And, thinking out what comforts had best be included in the parcel, her mind went off now in one channel, now in another, as she pictured the priest or the *piou-piou*. The latter presented no difficulty—for him good things to eat were the first necessity—but the *cure* would require spiritual comforts.

“Des livres de messe,” she said to herself; and thereupon the image of the cold and hungry soldier arose before her, and “un poulet ou un bon bifteck!” she added. Then, her eye lighting upon an advertisement in the newspaper before her, “Maman, que veut dire por-ta-tif?” she asked. The explanation received, she clapped her hands with joy; yes, surely a *portable* one was the very thing! “Maman, si nous envoyions à mon cure un autel por-ta-tif?”

But Maman thought that, all things considered, it would be better to send only food in the first parcel. So Jeanne reconciled herself to the idea, although the *cure* still remained a shadowy figure in the background with his own especial need.

And prisoners were cold as well as hungry. What a pity something *hot* could not be sent.

“Tiens! J’y suis!” cried Jeanne. “O Maman, j’ai une si bonne idee! Si nous envoyions un bon repas bien chaud dans *l’auto-cuiseur!*” Perhaps it would keep hot for a day or two. *How* long did it take for a parcel to reach *Bochie*?

Page 11

But Maman decided this plan could not be risked; there was often delay, and the moist food might turn sour.

A little chilled but nowise daunted, for she was sure the hay-box would come in somehow, Jeanne remained for some time plunged deep in thought. Then came light and her face grew radiant. Why not send the *auto-cuiseur* filled with dry food? *Les Boches* would surely give, or sell, some boiling water and let him just start cooking on their stove. And he would be able to use the cooker constantly, buying *des choses pas cheres* to cook; and yes, why not slip into the package a copy of *Plats economiques*, the little cookery book whose recipes they had found so satisfactory?

“Et mon cure?” But now the two figures merged more nearly than ever before into one, and Jeanne felt that *his* first need was one with that of the soldier, and the *marmite* would hold enough for both.

“Mais *oui*,” she exclaimed, “c’est cela!... Ecoute, Maman! Envoyons l’auto-cuiseur *aux deux*... Ne vois-tu pas que mon soldat pourra alors manger tous les jours un bon repas bien chaud, et que mon cure pourra en donner aux autres affames? C’est la tout juste l’affaire d’un cure. L’auto-cuiseur est comme ca deux cadeaux en un, comme mon soldat et mon cure sont deux hommes en un!”

* * * * *

“GERMANY IS STARVING.—THE REAL FACTS.”—*Cassell’s Magazine of fiction.*

Not exclusively fiction, we trust.

* * * * *

From the Appendix to the Report of the Royal Commission on the Public Service in India:—

“The two last pensions depended entirely on the approval of Government, so that a man might retire after 85 years’ service on Rs. 5000 pension only...”

And not before he had deserved it.

* * * * *

“Deptford Borough Council will recommend to the authorities that considering the brief period of darkness in May, June, July, and August resulting from the daylight saving scheme, it is desirable to dispense with street lighting during these months except at dangerous street crossings.”—*Daily Express.*

Apparently by a slight amendment of the Summertime Act Great Britain might be transformed into the land of the Midnight Sun.

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE GREATER NEED.

FLORA (*To Ceres.*) "ENTER, AND TAKE MY PLACE. THIS IS YOUR YEAR."]

* * * * *

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

Page 12

Monday, March 5th.—General cheers greeted Mr. CHAMBERLAIN'S announcement that the Government of India had undertaken to pay the interest on a hundred millions of war-debt, but when he proceeded to say that part of the new revenue required would be obtained by an increase in the cotton duties there was a notable cooling of enthusiasm among Members from Lancashire. Mr. RUNCIMAN at once sounded the alarm on behalf of Manchester by asking if there would be a corresponding excise duty on Indian cottons. "All India is against it," replied Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, who is finding, as his father did before him, how difficult it is to get Englishmen to "think imperially" where their own particular trade is concerned.

There is no doubt that the FOOD CONTROLLER possesses a sense of judicial humour. Complaints have been made of late that while the ordinary British citizen was expected to confine himself to four pounds of bread per week the pampered German prisoner, instead of getting less, was given nearly three times that amount. Lord DEVONPORT has now approved a new dietary scale for prisoners, under which the bread ration will be cut down to sixty-three ounces, or just one ounce less than the allowance of the free and independent Englishman. On the Army Estimates Mr. PRINGLE attacked the Salonika Expedition with a vigour which must have greatly pleased the Bulgar. By a curious lapse of memory, as Mr. CHURCHILL pointed out, he omitted all reference to the position of M. VENIZELOS and our honourable obligations to our Allies.

Mr. CHURCHILL was indeed more statesmanlike than he has been of late, His "amphibious intervention" was on this occasion quite justified. There was good sense in his warning that, while perseverance towards a definite objective was a virtue, "perseverance with an eye on the past" was an equally serious vice; and I hope it signifies a determination on his part not to allow his brilliant future to be all behind him.

Tuesday, March 6th.—Ever since the War began, Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL'S most cherished ambition—second, of course, to his desire to quit Westminster for College Green—has been to get the Dukes of CUMBERLAND and SAXE-COBURG deprived of their British titles. He has worried three successive Governments on the subject, and some time ago received a definite promise that it should be dealt with. A further question regarding it stood in his name to-day, but when he rose to put it Mr. GINNELL squeaked out, "May I ask you, Mr. SPEAKER, what this House has to do with these family matters?" Mr. MACNEILL, of course, like most of his countrymen, has royal blood in his veins, but nevertheless did not seem pleased with the allusion.

Page 13

Further protests against the mutilation of the Dardanelles Report were made by Sir WALTER ESSEX, Sir CHARLES HOBHOUSE, and Sir JOHN JARDINE. Free disclosure to all Members of Parliament, and no preferential treatment of party-leaders, was their demand. Mr. BONAR LAW manfully resisted their assaults, and the SPEAKER declined to accept a motion for the adjournment. A word from Mr. ASQUITH would no doubt have quelled the storm, but as one of the favoured few who are to receive the full Report he felt himself, I suppose, precluded from saying it. The late Mr. LABOUCHERE would probably have suggested that the difficulty should be solved, on the analogy of a famous edition of MARTIAL, by issuing the Report as expurgated, together with an appendix containing all the omitted passages. But there is no LABOUCHERE in the House to-day—more's the pity.

What Mr. HOGGE does not know about pensions is not worth knowing. He has already made havoc of more than one Government scheme, and unless he has an official ring put in his nose he will evidently do his best to upset the latest of them. On the whole, however, Mr. BARNES'S exposition of the new pension scheme was well received. Though not unduly generous—that would be impossible in the circumstances—it will at least, as Capt. STEPHEN GWYNN put it, “enable us to look disabled men in the face.”

Wednesday, March 7th.—Lords SHEFFIELD and PARMOOR are much disturbed because British subjects have been interned without trial, and had to be reminded by the LORD CHANCELLOR that there was a war in progress, and that it was better that individuals should lose a portion of their liberties than that the community should lose them altogether.

A full appreciation of this truth might have prevented the Irish Nationalists from seeking at this moment to get Home Rule out of cold storage. If the attempt had to be made Mr. T.P. O'CONNOR was not perhaps the best person to make it. For over an hour he meandered through the more melancholy episodes of Irish history, from the Treaty of Limerick to the Easter Monday rebellion, rather in the manner of one of those film-dramas of which he is now the Censor. I am afraid his endeavour to prove that Ireland is not “an irrational country, demanding impossible things,” was not entirely convincing.

It failed, at any rate—although backed by a brief appeal by Major WILLIE REDMOND, which touched the House by its manifest sincerity—to convince the PRIME MINISTER that this was the accepted time for plunging Ireland once more into civil strife. Those parts of Ireland that wanted Home Rule could have it to-morrow if they wished; neither he nor any other British statesman would force the people of N.E. Ulster under a government they disliked. When those two facts were thoroughly understood there might be a chance of a settlement.

[Illustration: A TRUE IRISHMAN.]

Mr. John Redmond. “I'VE FINISHED WITH THE BRITISH EMPIRE—

Page 14

—EXCEPT, BEDAD, THAT WE'RE GOING TO BEAT THE BOSCH!"]

Mr. JOHN REDMOND, refusing to continue what he regarded as a futile and humiliating debate, marched out of the House at the head of his supporters. This manoeuvre, rather effective in the Gladstonian era, did not much impress the House on this occasion; for news that something of the kind was intended had leaked out; and Mr. HEALY'S subsequent allusion to it as "a dramatic skedaddle" was felt to be justified.

Thursday, March 8th.—I should have thought that the Dardanelles Report, which everyone is reading, contained enough sensations to satisfy the most *outree* taste. But Sir CHARLES HOBHOUSE is still anxious to know the real meaning of the tantalizing asterisks which occur here and there in it, and wants a day to discuss the matter. Mr. BONAR LAW did not absolutely refuse, but hoped that when his right hon. friend had examined the Report he would forgo his desire for further information. It may safely be said that the omitted passages, whatever they are, could hardly alter the public verdict on the extraordinary notions of conducting a war which seem to have prevailed in the Cabinet of which Sir CHARLES HOBHOUSE was himself a member.

The determining factor in the inception of the Dardanelles affair seems to have been the disastrous confidence of the then First Lord of the Admiralty in the 15-inch guns of the *Queen Elizabeth*. The outcome recalls a verse from a song popular when Master WINSTON was in petticoats:—

"I joined the Naval Demon-strat-i-on,
But we never fired so much as a gun,
And the Turk he laughed and said, 'Oh, what fun!
It's all on account of Eliza!'"

* * * * *

Distressing Sequel to Early Marriage.

"An exciting scene on Waterloo Bridge was described at Bow-street yesterday when Lydia Wilderspin, aged 2, married, was charged with attempting suicide."—*Illustrated Sunday Herald*.

* * * * *

"RANK AND FILE.

The following casualties are reported under various dates:—

(The home team is Liverpool except where otherwise shown).—*Liverpool Daily Post*.

But surely this is an “away” match?

* * * * *

Extract from interview with French journalist:—

“Mr. Lloyd George’s face lit up proudly as he modestly replied.”

Will the PRIME MINISTER please tell us how is is done? It might solve the problem of getting about in the darkened streets.

* * * * *

“JAMES KENNEDY,
Monumental Sculptor,

Having been called up for Military Service, Mr. Kennedy is forced to close down his Business, all the other male members of the family being already on Service. He begs to take this opportunity of thanking all patrons who have accorded him their support in the past, and he hopes that any who might have business requiring his attention may be able to hold over same until his return to business.”—*Ayrshire Post*.

Page 15

We shall do our best to oblige. "Live and let live" is our motto.

* * * * *

CHILDREN'S TALES FOR GROWN-UPS.

II.

BELLING THE CAT.

"The only question is," said the old mouse, "who is to bell the cat?"

"An absurd question," said the strategist.

"It has finished the story for hundreds of years," said the old mouse crossly.

The strategist turned his back on the old mouse. "What is needed," he said, "is a plan. We must make the cat appear ridiculous, and the people of the house will see it is no use as a mouser. Then they will turn it into a pet cat and bell it themselves."

"Shall we send a deputation?" growled the old mouse.

"We must go out and hunt for food in the daytime," said the strategist.

"We shall all be killed," cried the mice, shivering with terror.

"No more than are killed now," said the strategist. "Less, in fact, because cats do not see so well in the daytime."

And it turned out as the strategist predicted. Mice ran about boldly everywhere, and though the cat caught some of them the people of the house were dissatisfied. "We might as well drown that cat at once and get a real mouser," said the master.

"Oh, don't drown poor pussy," said the little girl. "Do let me keep her."

"Well, mind you put a bell round her neck, then," laughed the master of the house, "so that she may know that she's not a real mouser."

That night there was joy unheard of among the mice. They scampered about happily, and ran away chuckling when pussy came tinkling along. The strategist was crowned king.

Next day the real mouser arrived. His first victim was the strategist.

* * * * *

Illumination.

"In my youth I had learnt, by sedulously imitating the pantaloons in the harlequinades, to drop flat on my face instinctively, and to produce the illusion of being picked up neatly by the slack of my trousers and set on my feet again."—*Mr. Bernard Shaw in "The Daily Chronicle."*

This revelation of youthful self-culture helps one to understand so much that Mr. SHAW does to-day.

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[Illustration: THE SCARECROW.]

* * * * *

A SONG OF FOOD-SAVING.

[Being a faithful effort to versify the article written by Dr. E.I. SPRIGGS, at the request of the FOOD CONTROLLER, on the food requirements of people of different ages and build.]

Good people, who long for a lead
On the paramount crux of the time,
I pray you give diligent heed
To the lessons I weave into rhyme;
And first, let us note, one and all—
Whether living in castles or "digs"—
"Large people need more than the small,"
For that's the first maxim of SPRIGGS.

Page 16

Now, as most of the food that we eat
Is wanted for keeping us warm,
The requisite quota of heat
Is largely a question of form;
And the ratio of surface to weight,
As anyone readily twigs,
Is the root of the point in debate
As sagely expounded by SPRIGGS.

Hence the more we resemble a sphere
Less heat on the surface is lost,
And the needful supply, it is clear,
Is maintained at less lavish a cost;
'Tis economy, then, to be plump
As partridges, puffins or pigs,
Who are never a prey to the hump,
So at least I interpret my SPRIGGS.

Next, the harder it freezes or snows
The greater the value of fat,
And the larger the appetite grows
Of John, Sandy, Taffy and Pat.
(Conversely, in Midsummer days,
When liquid more freely one swigs,
Less viand the appetite stays—
This quatrain's a gloss upon SPRIGGS).

For strenuous muscular work
A larger allowance of grub
We need than is due if we shirk
Exertion, and lounge in a pub;
For the loafer who rests in a chair
Everlastingly puffing at "cigs"
Can live pretty nearly on air,
So I gather at least from my SPRIGGS.

Why children need plentiful food
He nextly proceeds to relate:
Their capacity's larger than you'd
Be disposed to infer from their weight;
They're growing in bulk and in height,
They're normally active as grigs,
And exercise breeds appetite—
This stanza is absolute SPRIGGS.



Last of all, with an eloquent plea
For porridge at breakfast in place
Of the loaf, and for oatcake at tea
A similar gap to efface;
For potatoless dinners—with rice,
For puddings of maize and of figs,
Which are filling, nutritious and nice—
Thus ends the Epistle of SPRIGGS.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Short-sighted Lady*. "THAT'S RATHER AN AFFECTIONATE COUPLE."

Her Friend. "THAT'S MY HUSBAND." *Short-sighted Lady*. "OH, I'M SO SORRY."

Her Friend. "AND I'M SORRY, TOO, FOR I SEE HE'S GOT HIS LIGHT OVERCOAT
ON, AND I TOLD HIM NEVER TO WEAR IT WHEN BRINGING HOME THE COALS."]

* * * * *

"The L.C.C. had decided to grant only L5,300 amongst L21,000 teachers,
which would average a shilling a head per week. (Shame!)"—*Daily
Paper*.

We agree. Why any War bonus at all to such bulging plutocrats?

* * * * *

"As I watched youths obediently obeying the whistle I wondered what
football would be like after the war."—*Daily Paper*.

At present it seems rather redundantly redundant.

* * * * *

Page 17

[Illustration: *First Lady (an old resident, gushingly)*. “AH, MRS. ROBINSON, I AM SO ASHAMED OF MYSELF FOR NOT HAVING BEEN TO CALL UPON YOU. DO FORGIVE ME AND CONSIDER THIS AS MY CALL, WON’T YOU?”

Mrs. Robinson (a new-comer, sweetly). “OH, CERTAINLY; AND YOU WILL CONSIDER IT AS MY RETURN CALL, TOO, WON’T YOU?”]

* * * * *

AT THE PLAY.

“THE MAN WHO WENT ABROAD.”

The authors of *The Man Who Stayed at Home* (I preserve their modest anonymity) have contrived a sequel to that exciting and veracious stage account of secret service activities. *The Man Who Went Abroad* on one of those famous State-paper chases, in which conspirators conspire in the least likely places, such as the promenade decks of liners, is the man who spent his time in chimneys at home in the earlier part of the War—*Kit Brent*.

[Illustration: THE MAN WHO STAYED IN HIS TENT.

Christopher Brent. MR. KENNETH DOUGLAS.

Ani Kiraly. MISS IRIS HOEY.]

He had a cousin, *Lord Goring*, Cabinet Minister, bound on a mission to Washington; and *Kit*, who was as like his cousin as clean-shaven KENNETH DOUGLAS was like KENNETH DOUGLAS with a toothbrush moustache, took his cabin while the important peer preceded him in another boat. On board *Kit* disports himself as a fatuous ass, of the kind that hyphenated Americans (in plays) would naturally assume to be the staple of a British Cabinet. Not that *Goring* really was such an ass; but it was *Kit*’s plan to be so guileless as to induce the enemy agents to think they had a sitter. And I must say they were pretty easily induced. Their general schema was to get those inevitable papers, copy and return them, and delay *Goring*’s visit to Washington, while the late lamented BERNSTORFF put in a suggestion which would make the British schemes, whatever they were—it was secret service, so we, rightly, never knew—look foolish. And they had the Hunnish idea of compromising the silly peer with an irresistible Austrian *danseuse* (*Ani Kiraly*), so that fear of exposure (by Hidden-Hand Press) of intrigue with enemy aliens would make him hand over the “papers.” *Brent* played up to all this. But the lady of the ballet fell really in love with him, and besides was actually a Dalmatian and on the right side, a fact which she proclaimed at the top of her voice on the promenade dock, though, as she added, it meant death if discovered. In New York the *Kiraly* appears in *Kit*’s bed-bathroom in the early morning, for devilment; to our loud

enjoyment, for the great bath joke has an assured immortality. The *Kiraly's* husband appears too. Fat in fire. When *Kit* goes to the hyphenated's flat to exchange fake papers in his belt for letter acknowledging *Kiraly's* innocence, an agitated Hun appears with the news that the real *Goring* is in Washington, and the papers all spoof; which was annoying, as a reading-glass had already disclosed to the chief spy the British Government watermark, which obviously proved they were genuine.

Page 18

Nothing for it but to clear out (through a portrait of the All-Highest), leaving *Kit* in the safe to suffocate. Enter police (comic). Where is *Kit*? Brain-wave. In the safe, behind secret panel. Problem: how to open it. The service was evidently so secret that it had never told one of its brightest young men about combination letter-locks. But the dancer remembers that the chief spy had carefully explained to her the letters of the combination. Release of *Kit* and a curtain which suggested that the initiative remained with the *Kiraly*.

The authors are to be congratulated. They provided a good unpretentious evening's entertainment. No dull and pedantic realism for them. The dialogue was bright, occasionally to the sparkling point. The players were competent and zealous. Mr. KENNETH DOUGLAS gave the right variety to his three parts, *Goring* as he was, *Goring* as he was assumed to be for purpose of bluffing the enemy, and *Kit Brent*; and he played his great bathroom scene with humour and complete discretion. Miss IRIS HOEY was a charming innocent adventuress with heart of gold and eye of gladness; Mr. HIGNETT, as *Kit's* self-possessed man *Cosens*, quite admirable, with just the right mixture of friendliness without impertinence and restraint without servility. Mr. WENMAN as a superabundant gum-chewing impresario, and Mr. EILLE NORWOOD as head villain, were quite plausible in the interesting and unlikely situation. I must say I like this kind of nonsense immensely. T.

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[Illustration: HOMEWARDS: AN ALLOTMENT IDYLL.]

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A Cautious Prophecy.

"... One of the reasons of the satisfaction is that the huge yield of the Loan effectively postpones any further borrowings on a similar scale until the end of the War. By that time victory should either have been attained or be in sight."—*Irish Paper*.

* * * * *

"A well educated young lady, the daughter of a French interned prisoner of war, desires to make the acquaintance with an English or American family to mutually improve the languages."—*Daily Paper, Lausanne*.

The result will be awaited with interest in editorial circles.

* * * * *

SEED POTATOES FOR PATRIOTS.

(Garnered from the catalogue of the George Washington Seed Company.)

“*Adonis.*”—Strikingly handsome oval tuber of the fashionable nigger-brown shade. Never had a day’s illness. Every “Adonis” potato is inoculated for wireworm before leaving our grounds.

“*Automatic.*”—Remarkable novelty; digs itself in, and jumps out of the ground when ready. Self-peeling; skin comes off in the saucepan. Immense boon to busy housewives.

“*Little Gem.*”—For window-boxes. Flowers closely resemble *Odontoglossum*. Much in demand for Mayfair mansions. Dainty electro-plated trowel given away with every order for a hundred-weight.

Page 19

The “*Beanato*.”—Sensational discovery; the result of a cross between an Early Rose potato and a scarlet-runner. Will take the place of ramblers on pergolas. Blooms brilliantly all the summer; festoons of khaki fruit with green facings in the autumn. Retains the lusciousness of the bean with the full floury flavour of the tuber.

“*Argus*.”—The potato with a hundred eyes. Never sprouts in less than ninety-eight places. Should be put through the mincing-machine before planting.

* * * * *

[Illustration: “LOOK HERE, MISS! YOU’VE TAKEN A BIT OUT OF MY EAR!”

“SORRY, SIR; BUT, YOU SEE, I’VE BEEN ON THE DISTRICT RAILWAY FOR THE LAST THREE MONTHS PUNCHING TICKETS.”]

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War-Work.

“LADY.—Will any lady exercise a terrier (good-tempered), daily, for a small remuneration?”—*Bournemouth Daily Echo*.

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Kilties Dumbfounded.

Extract from Brigade Orders (Highland Brigade):—

“Socks must be changed and feet greased at least every 24 hours. Socks can be dried by being placed in trouser pockets.”

* * * * *

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

Zella Sees Herself (HEINEMANN) is an unusual and very subtle analysis of a single character. The author, E.M. DELAFIELD, has made an almost uncannily penetrating study of the development of a *poseuse*. *Zella* posed instinctively, from the days when as a child she alienated her father by attitudinising (with the best intentions) about her mother’s funeral. It became a habit with her. In Rome, before the Arch of Titus, she thought more of what she might acceptably say about it than of any wonder or beauty in the thing itself. She fooled the honest man who imagined he was in love with her by making herself, for the time, just what her fatal facility for such perception told her he

would most like her to be. The skill of the book is proved by the increasing anxiety, and even agitation, with which one awaits the moment that shall fulfil the title. It comes, bringing with it that almost intolerable tragedy of the soul, the black loneliness that waits upon insincerity. Then poor deluded *Zella*, seeing herself, sees also the fate that eventually befalls those who have deliberately falsified the signals by which alone one human heart can speak to and assist another. That is all the plot of the story, told with remarkable insight and a care that is both sympathetic and wholly unsparing. I am mistaken if you will not find it one of the most absorbing within recent experience. But I am not saying that it may not leave you just a little uncomfortable.

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Page 20

BOYD CABLE is already one of the prose Laureates of the War, having earned his wreath by *Between the Lines* and *Action Front*. He now proves that he is still entitled to it by *Grapes of Wrath* (SMITH, ELDER). The two former books gave us detached articles all relating to the one great subject. The present book is a continuous story, the episodes of which are held together by the deeds and characters of a quartette of friends, *Larry Arundel*, *Billy Simson*, *Pug Sneath*, and the noble and adventurous American, *Kentucky Lee*, who had enlisted in our Army to prove that "too proud to fight" was a phrase which did not agree with the traditions of an old Kentucky family. These four and the rest of the regiment, the Stonewalls, are plunged into one of the big "pushes" of the British Army, and their achievements in one form or another are thick on every page of the book. The author has reduced the description of a modern battle to a fine art. No one can describe more vividly the noise, the squalor, the terror, the high courage, the self-sacrifice and again the nerve-shattering noise, that go to make up the fierce confusion of trench-fighting. How anyone succeeds in surviving when so many instruments are used for his destruction is a mystery. The book is very certainly one to be read and re-read.

* * * * *

Separation (CASSELL) is another of those intimate studies of Anglo-Indian life that ALICE PERRIN has made specially her own. The tragedy of it is sufficiently conveyed by the title. Separation, of husband from wife or parent from child, is of course the spectre that haunts the Anglo-Indian home. It was, chiefly at least, for the health of their child *Winnie* that *Guy Bassett* was forced to let her and his wife abide permanently in Kensington while he himself continued his Eastern career as a grass-widower. Very naturally, the result was all sorts of trouble. This first took the form of a flirtation, only half serious, with an artful young woman of the type with which Mr. KIPLING has made us familiar. Unfortunately poor *Bassett* escapes from this emotional frying-pan only to plunge into the fire of a much more scorching attachment. But I will not spoil for you an ingenious plot. For one thing at least the book is worth reading, and that is the picture, admirably drawn, of the half-caste *Orchard* family, whose ways and speech and general outlook you will find an abiding joy. Mrs. PERRIN has nothing better in her whole gallery, which is saying much.

* * * * *

Page 21

You probably know Mr. BLACKWOOD'S elusive method of mystery-mongering by now. None of his characters can ever *quite* make out whether the latest noise is a mewling cat, the wind in the trees or the Great God Pan flirting with the Hamadryads. He meets in Egypt a Russian, consumptive with a hooked nose and a rotten bad temper, and persists in seeing him as a hawk-man dedicated to the winged god, Horus. "No one could say exactly what happened." (They never can.) But it was something very solemn and important, and in the end the Russian, in a fancy dress of feathers, was found dead at the foot of the cliff, whither he had flown (or was it danced?—well, no one quite knew). He all but carried with him little golden-haired *Vera*, who was all but a dove. This is a quite characteristic sample out of *Day and Night Stories* (CASSELL). And the conclusion I came to was that Mr. BLACKWOOD must get a lot of fun out of staying in "cosmopolitan hotels." You need a special attitude for the proper enjoyment of these mystical yarns. I read them all conscientiously through, and I got far the best thrill out of "The Occupant of the Room," which, attempting less, was much more successful. "H.S.H.," His Satanic Majesty, of course, who was climbing the Devil's Saddle and turned in to the Club hut for desultory conversation about his lost kingdom with a stranded mountaineer, left me inappropriately cold. I suppose I am immune, a bad subject: but I feel as sure as I've felt about anything in the realm of light letters that a charming writer is overworking an unprofitable vein.

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Mrs. Vernon's Daughter (METHUEN) is what one might call a story of situation. That is to say, it leads up to, and declines from, one big *scene a faire*. The scene, in this instance, is that in which *Demaris*, who has always previously imagined her mother to be an undervalued heroine, finds that on the contrary she is really no better (indeed a good deal worse) than she should be. And as if this disillusion were not enough the poor girl gets almost simultaneously the further shock of learning that the same adored parent, supposed by her to be a tragedienne of the first water, is in fact no more than a handsome stick, and unable (as they say) to act for nuts. Jestings apart, I am bound to admit that Lady TROUBRIDGE has risen admirably to the demands of her theme, and written a story both direct and appealing. Perhaps (dare I say?) its emotion is rather more secure than its grammar. The fact that she makes a duchess allude to "these kind of things" struck me at first as a subtlety of characterization, till I discovered that, some pages later, the author fell herself into the identical pit. But I suppose there is hardly any one of us wholly innocent of this offence; anyhow, it is only a small blemish upon a pleasant and (in its mild way) interesting story.

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Page 22

[Illustration: *Lady of rather uncertain age (filling in application form for employment).*
“COULD YOU TELL ME WHAT YEAR I SHOULD HAVE TO BE BORN IN TO MAKE ME
TWENTY-EIGHT?”]

* * * * *

“A large assortment of real fur soft felt cats (Clerical).”—*Advt. in*
“Glasgow Herald.”

The tame kind, we suppose, so popular at tea-parties.