

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 152, May 2, 1917 eBook

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 152, May 2, 1917

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Page 1

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PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.

Vol. 152.

May 2nd, 1917.

CHARIVARIA.

We envy the freshness of America's experience as a member of the Alliance. New York will hold its first flag day on June 2nd.

America is anxious to see a settlement of the Irish Question, but there is no truth in the rumour that we have cabled to say that we will take on Mexico if America will take on Ireland.

Von IHNE, the KAISER'S Court architect, is dead. It is thought that future alterations to the House of Hohenzollern will not reflect, as heretofore, the *all*-HIGHEST'S personal taste.



“Stern measures for King Tino,” says a contemporary. We have always felt that that is where the castigation should take place.

The Daily Chronicle reminds us that Downing Street owes its origin to an American. There are some people who never will let bygones be bygones.

Whole haystacks are said to have been eaten in a night by mice in Victoria, Australia. The failure of Mr. *Hughes* to provide a state cat in each rural area may, it is thought, prove to be the deciding factor in the present election campaign.

The *Tageblatt* points out that in view of the extreme goodwill of Germany towards Spain that country cannot possibly find any grievance in the torpedoing of her ships. This assurance of uninterrupted friendliness has confirmed the worst fears of the pessimists in Madrid.

Mr. *Balfour*, it is stated, has invited President *Wilson* to play a game of golf. In the event of a match being arranged there is a growing desire that the occasion should be made a half-holiday throughout the war-area.

The Ministry of Shipping, it is stated, employs only 830 persons. This violent departure from the recognised Parliamentary rule, that a Minister who cannot find use for a couple of thousand employees should resign, has gone far to undermine the popularity of this Department.

Owing to the shortage of corn on which race-horses must be fed, ordinary handicaps will soon have to be abandoned. The idea of putting the horseradish to the use for which it was originally intended does not seem to have struck the imagination of trainers.



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The Director of Women's Service has issued an appeal for several thousand milkmaids. These must not be confused with milksops who are being taken care of by other Departments.

"I have heard more bad music at temperance meetings," says Dr. *Salisbury*, "than I knew the world could contain." The temperance people are certainly having persistent bad luck.

The keenest minds in Germany, says a Berlin correspondent, are now seeking to discover the secret of the Fatherland's world-wide unpopularity. It is this absurd sensitiveness on the part of our cultured opponent that is causing some of her best friends in this country to lose hope.

A swallow has been seen over the Hollow Ponds at Epping Forest, but *The Daily Mail* is still silent as to whether Spring has arrived or not.

"New Laid Eggs," Sir *John Millais'* masterpiece, has recently been sold for L1,155. It is reported that last December, when it looked as if the egg might become extinct, a much higher price was offered for the picture.

In the absence of other grain, hens are to be fed upon frostbitten wheat imported from Canada. Poultry-keepers anticipate that it will result in a greatly increased number of china eggs being laid by their stock.

A correspondent of a morning paper complains that while the entire nation is on rations our Germans, naturalised and unnaturalised, "continue to eat in the usual way." This is not true of the ones we have heard.



In view of the excessive rains of late, we are glad to note that one organisation is not to be caught napping. The National Lifeboat Institution is fitting out its boats with a new life-belt.

The *Kaiser*, it is reported, has written a play. It only needed this to convince us that he is quite himself again.

We also learn that he is once more on speaking terms with Count REVENTLOW. He told the *count*, the other day, "to mind his own business."

There were 1,084,289 visitors to the London Zoological Gardens last year. It is worthy of note that not one of them was accepted.

A wood-pigeon shot at Heytesbury was found to have in its crop sixty-five grains of corn—enough to produce half a sack of wheat. In fairness to the bird it is only right to say that it was not aware of this.

Mr. *Brace* has lately introduced a Bill in the House to reduce the number of jurors at inquests. A further improvement would be to repeal the old technicality which makes it illegal for a man to give evidence at his own inquest.

"I met the prisoner twenty years ago," said a witness in a Northern police court last week, "and I well remember his face." It is better to have that sort of memory than that sort of face.



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At a rally of five hundred boy scouts of London, Wolf Cubs greeted Cardinal *Bourne* with the "Great Howl." It is not known in what way the *Cardinal* had offended the young Cubs.

Under the new order the police will not have power to enter the premises of persons suspected of food hoarding. Cooks who in the past have been in the habit of hoarding cold rabbit pie will have to be dealt with in other ways.

According to a Billingsgate fish merchant kippers are daily increasing in price. It is, of course, too much to hope that they will ever become so dear as to prohibit their use among comedians on the music-hall stage.

* * * * *

[Illustration: "*What makes your husband so cross these times?*"]

"*He keeps fretting dreadful because he's over the age and so he can't be A conscientious objector.*"]

* * * * *

The Potsdam altruist.

[*The Frankfurter Zeitung* protests against the idea that "the *Kaiser* in Germany's gravest times allows anxiety about himself or his dynasty to have access to his thoughts."]

Among the penalties imposed on Kings
Who govern absolutely by divine right,
I am no more affected by the things
That Socialists and other dirty swine write
Than when a pin is thrust
Into a pachyderm's indifferent crust.

But now I deign to answer, even I,
The vilest yet of these revolting sallies,
Where they allege that when our German sky
Rocks to the air of "*Deutschland ueber alles,*"



“*Und Ich*,” I add (aside),
“*Ich ueber Deutschland!*” There the blighters lied.

I’m not like that. I never use the first
Personal pronoun, like the Monarch *Louis*,
Who said (in French—a tongue I deem accurst),
“*L’etat, c’est moi*.” My conscience, clear and dewy,
Tells me that, as a Kaiser,
I am a very poor self-advertiser.

This is a feature of our dynasty;
And no historian who has ever studied
The traits peculiar to the family tree
On which the Hohenzollern *genus* budded
In all that noble list
Has come across a single egoist.

They loved their people better than their throne;
Lightly they sat on it, dispensing Freedom;
They never said, “Your souls are not your own,
But simply there in case your King should need ’em;”
They would have thought it odd
To want to be regarded as a god.

Thus have I served my land; and if a wave
Of lurid revolution overswept her,
And I, her loyal and obedient slave,
Were called upon to down my orb and sceptre,
That grace I’d freely do,
And so, I’m sure, would *little Willie* too.



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O.S.

* * * * *

Gems from the juniors.

The following articles have been written by a little band of patriots who, without any hope of gain or self-aggrandisement, have poured forth of their store of wisdom and experience for the instruction, comfort and encouragement of their fellow-countrymen:

The British Navy.

We are all very proud of the Navy. It is the largest in the world and all the men in it are very brave, and kind too I expect. *Alfred the great* invented it hundreds of years ago so it has had a long time to practise in. When a sailer wants to say yes he says Ay, ay, sir, not often mum because the captain is always a man. Perhaps some day he wont be. I have got an uncle who is a captain in the Navy. He says that in the olden days sailers had such bad food that it walked about and if it was up the other end of the table you ony had to whissel and it came down your end dubble quick. But I don't know if that is true. Anyhow everything is all rite now but this plesant thouhgt must not stop us sending parsels to the sailers, as you cant fish up cakes and apples out of the sea and they like them very much.

John bright (age 9-1/2).

* * * * *

Solgiers.

Solgiers wear karki. If you are an offiser the others salut you if you arn't they don't. People musn't kill each other unless they have to becos it's rwong. Solgiers have to. They have to pollish there buttens as well. It is there cheef job unless they are offisers. Then they don't becos they get paid more and let some one else do it for them. Before the war solgiers were only one kind of man, now they are all kinds but mostly good. Granpa is a genral so he knows. A frend of fathers is a private, he is quite nice but he mayn't come to dinner when granpas here. I shall be a solgier when I grow up praps a genral but Im not sure. I would like to be someone with a sord and a drum. Granpa hasn't got a drum.

Douglas BAYSWATER (age 8).

* * * * *

America.



America is really the name of a continent but when we say America we mean the bit of it that used to belong to us. Americans do not have a king they used to have our King but they gave him up. It wasn't the King we have now or perhaps they wouldn't have. So they have someone called a President who does instead but he doesn't wear a crown and he only lasts a short time like the Lord Mare or a little longer. Besides the President there are men called millionaires, they are normously rich and do insted of princes and dukes, who they haven't got either but not because they don't like them but because it is a Republic. Americans don't like war but if they have to fight they can do it all right Father says.



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Mary grey (age 10).

* * * * *

Our allies.

It is with great pleasure that I take up my pen to write about Our Allies. They are France, Belgium, Russia, Italy, Serbia, Portugal, Rumania, and America. I think that all at present but eight is a good number. To begin with France. In time of peace the French are a gay and polite people which is very nice I think. They are noted for their coffee and for their fashions as both are better than ours. And all the women can cook. How beautiful it would be for England if she could imitate her sister country in these things! I can make a cake but not a very light one. Now let us look at Verdun on the map. It is a great fortress and the Germans thought they could take it but I rejoice to say they couldn't as the bravery and patrioticness of the French troops came in the way. Belgium is the next on the list. Belgium is a little country and Germany is a big one so of course the Germans had the best of it at first but they won't much longer. So it will be all right soon if we don't eat too many sweets and things. Russia, Italy, Serbia, Portugal, Rumania, America and Montynegro, which I forgot before, are all splendid countries but space forbids more.

Kathleen Chalfont (age 12).

* * * * *

The German soldiers' opinion of "retirement according to plan": "Each for himself; and the Devil take the Hindenburg."

* * * * *

"To fill up the gaps in the ranks trains of German reserves are being hushed to the front incessantly."—*Star*.

We don't believe this. The Bosch has long given up the habit of singing as he goes into battle.

* * * * *

"J.J. (New Brighton) sends us a case of a novel method to keep out would-be marauders from the garden. A friend of his who has some expensive ferns planted in a rockery put up the notice, 'Beware of the Scolopendriums and Polypodiums'—which, of course, are the Latin names of garden insects."—*Pearson's Weekly*.

Clearly a case of nature mimicry.



* * * * *

[Illustration: *Self-Protection*.

John Bull. "I've invested A Mint of money in other lands, it's time I put something into my own."]

* * * * *

Revivals and revisions.

"It" (as Mr. Gosse says at the beginning of his fascinating monograph on *Swinburne*, a work which we understand has just been crowned by the Band of Hope) it is now beyond doubt that Mr. H.B. IRVING'S drastic way with *Hamlet* is to have a far-reaching effect on all revivals. New authors can be acted more or less as they write, or as they happen to be stronger or weaker than their "producers"; but to be revived is henceforward to be revised, and fairly stringently too.



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Mr. IRVING has made a clearance of certain parts of *Hamlet* which interfere with the movement of its story. Actuated by old-fashioned motives and writing for a public that was not yet wholly lacking in discrimination, SHAKSPEARE did his best to make *Hamlet* a poetical as well as a dramatic tragedy. With this end in view he accumulated the mass of rhetoric with which we are now so familiar. It has been Mr. IRVING'S task to prune this well-meant but somewhat excessive verbiage so that the real dramatic stuff can at last "get over." But he has done no more. Any rumour to the effect that he has introduced American songs or dances, or that a "joy plank" bisects the stalls of the Savoy is untrue and deserves the severest denial.

One of Mr. Punch's liveliest although middle-aged wires, who has been interviewing the great managers of the Metropolis—and by great he means those most likely to become revivalists—says that it is the same tale with all. For example, Mr. FRED TERRY, interviewed at his home near the Zoo, in his study furnished with the works of all the greatest writers, from the Baroness ORCZY to HAVELOCK ELLIS, admitted that it was perfectly true that he was contemplating a revival of *The Three Musketeers*, with certain alterations to bring it into line with modern taste in warrior heroes.

"To-day," said Mr. TERRY, "as you may have noticed, soldiers wear khaki. Very well then, the musketeers shall wear khaki. They shall also be transformed into Englishmen and be made recognisable and friendly. Thus *D'Artagnan* will become an airman, *Aramis* a padre with fighting instincts, *Athos* a general, and *Porthos* an officer in the A.S.C. A certain amount of re-writing and adjusting is necessary, but that will come."

In order to find Mr. GEORGE GROSSMITH, of the old firm of Grossmith and Laurillard, who is now, as all the world, and especially Germany, knows, a conning-tower of strength in the Navy, it is necessary to visit the North Sea; but Mr. Punch's middle-aged men stick at nothing.

"Yes," said Mr. GROSSMITH, "we are doing *The Bells*. Mr. IRVING has kindly leased it to us. But we are not adhering too slavishly to the plot, nor does he wish us to; and, in fact, we have turned the part made so famous by Mr. IRVING'S father into something a shade more droll, to suit Mr. LESLIE HENSON, than whom, I take the liberty of thinking,"—here the young officer saluted—"no funnier comedian now walks the boards. We are also changing the title from *The Bells* to *The Belles*, as being more in keeping with Gaiety traditions. But I must ask you to excuse me; I fancy Sir DAVID BEATTY wants me."

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But the most interesting case of revision will be that of *The School for Scandal*, because, two managements being at work upon it, each with somewhat peculiar ideas, the public will be presented, at the same time, with versions so unlike as to amount to two different plays. And this suggests how valuable is Mr. IRVING'S lead, for it means that one old play can be multiplied into as many new plays as the thoroughly conscientious brains through which it passes. The two managers who have cast longing eyes on SHERIDAN'S comedy are Mr. SEYMOUR HICKS and Mr. OSCAR ASCHE. Mr. SEYMOUR HICKS is convinced that there is a new lease of life for this play if it is taken at a quicker pace. He has therefore arranged an acting version which will occupy about an hour, with laughs. By eliminating the word "sentiment" alone, which is tediously harped upon, several minutes are saved. Some of *Sir Peter* and *Lady Teazle's* repetition of the word "Never" also goes. The satirical conversation in Act I. is much abbreviated as being out of date, and the whole piece is redressed in the present manner. Mr. ASCHE also is re-dressing it, or rather un-dressing it. In his opinion what the play lacks is a touch of savagery. It is too sophisticated. He has therefore kept no more of the plot than is consistent with a change of scene to Hawaii, the fashionable primitive country of the moment. By this change, even if a little of the wit and spirit evaporate, a certain force is gained, a powerful epidermic part for Miss LILY BRAYTON as *Mrs. Candour* (the new heroine of the comedy) being not only possible but natural. Mr. ASCHE himself will play *Charles Surface*, with the accent on the surface, since he turns out to be a devotee of sun-baths and the simple life.

In reply to a cablegram to America, Sir HERBERT BEERBOHM TREE sends the following message:—"Am busy rehearsing *He Stoops to Cinema; or, The Mistakes of a Knight.*"

* * * * *

[Illustration: UNPLEASANT NIGHTMARE OF HANS, THE EX-CINEMA ATTENDANT, AFTER LEARNING OF THE AMERICAN DECLARATION OF WAR.]

* * * * *

FOOD CONTROL.

There is no truth in the rumour that there is to be a "sauceless" day for our Post-Office employees.

* * * * *

"The Craven Stakes of 500 sobs."—*Evening News (Portsmouth)*.

Horse-racing in war-time *is* rather a sorry business.

* * * * *

“A lady giving up her electromobile, on account of the war, which is in good running order...”—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

We are glad to have this confirmation of reports from General Headquarters.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Skinner*. “WHAT ARE YOU DOING ABOUT THE RATIONING?”

Podmore. “OH, WHEN MEALTIME COMES I TIGHTEN MY BELT.”



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Skinner. "FROM THE OUTSIDE OR THE INSIDE?"]

* * * * *

FROM A FULL HEART.

In days of peace my fellow-men
Rightly regarded me as more like
A Bishop than a Major-Gen.,
And nothing since has made me warlike;
But when this age-long struggle ends
And I have seen the Allies dish up
The goose of HINDENBURG—oh, friends!
I shall out-bish the mildest Bishop.

*When the War is over and the KAISER's out of print, I'm going to buy some tortoises
and watch the beggars sprint; When the War is over and the sword at last we sheathe,
I'm going to keep a jelly-fish and listen to it breathe.*

I never really longed for gore,
And any taste for red corpuscles
That lingered with me left before
The German troops had entered Brussels.
In early days the Colonel's "Shun!"
Froze me; and, as the War grew older,
The noise of someone else's gun
Left me considerably colder.

*When the War is over and the battle has been won, I'm going to buy a barnacle and
take it for a run; When the War is over and the German Fleet we sink, I'm going to keep
a silk-worm's egg and listen to it think.*

The Captains and the Kings depart—
It may be so, but not lieutenants;
Dawn after weary dawn I start
The never-ending round of penance;
One rock amid the welter stands
On which my gaze is fixed intently—
An after-life in quiet lands
Lived very lazily and gently.

*When the War is over and we've done the Belgians proud, I'm going to keep a chrysalis
and read to it aloud; When the War is over and we've finished up the show, I'm going to
plant a lemon-pip and listen to it grow. Oh, I'm tired of the noise and the turmoil of battle,*



And I'm even upset by the lowing of cattle,
And the clang of the bluebells is death to my liver,
And the roar of the dandelion gives me a shiver,
And a glacier, in movement, is much too exciting,
And I'm nervous, when standing on one, of alighting—
Give me Peace; that is all, that is all that I seek ...

Say, starting on Saturday week.

A.A.M.

* * * * *

THINGS THAT MATTER IN WAR-TIME.

“Among the audience the Duchess of ——’s slim height and long neck,
swathed in sables, stood out.”—*Evening Standard*.

“Mrs. —— was looking beautiful in a bottle-green suiting, collared
with skunk, but a little thin, I thought.”—*Daily Sketch*.

* * * * *

“King Albert of Belgium made a long aeroplane flight, under fire, over the fighting
front... German anti-aircraft guns kept up a sustained fire, but no German airman
ventured in the way of the King’s aeog rogartb-habtheb habtheb habtha aeroplane.”—
Vancouver Daily Province.

It is rumoured that the Air Board has already ordered a number of machines of the new
type.

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* * * * *

THE WATCH DOGS.

LX.

My dear CHARLES,—Those who insist that between the Higher Commands on either side there is a tacit understanding not to disregard each other's personal comfort and welfare must now modify their views. Recent movements show that there is no such bargain, or else that the lawless Hun has broken it. He has attained little else by his destructiveness save the discomfort of H.Q. Otherwise the War progresses as merrily as ever; more merrily, perhaps, owing to the difficulties to be overcome. Soldiers love difficulties to overcome. That is their business in life.

It was open to the Camp Commandant, when it became likely that H.Q. would move, to go sick, to retire from business, or else, locking his front-door, shutting his shutters, disconnecting his telephone and confining to their billets all potential bearers of urgent messages, to isolate himself from the throbbing world around him. Being a soldier himself, however, he was undone by his own innate lust for overcoming difficulties. He was seen hovering about, as good as asking for the instructions he most dreaded. And he got them, short and sharp, as all good military instructions should be.

If I was called upon to move a busy community from one village to another, and if the other village was discovered, upon inquiry, not to be there, I should ask for ten to twelve months' time to do it in. The C.C. asked for a fortnight, hoping to get ten days; he got a week. "It is now the 31st. We should move to the new place about the 7th," said the Highest Authority. "Let it be April 7th." Thus April 7th became permanently and irrevocably fixed. For everybody except the C.C. and his accomplices the thing was as good as done.

The ultimatum went forth at 10 A.M. at noon on the same day; the period of unrest for the C.C. was well set in. Every department, learning by instinct what was forward, forthwith discovered what it had long suspected, its own immediate and paramount importance. Every department appointed a representative to go round and see the C.C. about it, another representative to write to him about it, and a third to ring him up on the telephone, and go on ringing him up on the telephone, about it. The only departments that kept modestly in the background were those upon which the execution of the move fell. The C.C., noting the queue of representatives at his front-door and the agitation of his telephone, slipped out by the back-door, and went to look for the workers, and, when he'd found them, he lived with them, night and day, here, there and everywhere.

Humanity is not constituted for such close friendships. As time passed the C.C. and his accomplices found relations becoming strained. They said things to each other which

afterwards they regretted. Meanwhile also the departments with the paramount and immediate needs grew bitter and restless. Only the Highest Authorities remained tranquil.

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I'm told it was an A.D.C. who called attention to the difficulty of milk supply. This was a popular suggestion; it was just the sort of difficulty a soldier loves. In the bare and arid circumstances of the new camp there was no milk supply. "Buy one," said the Highest Authority, and again the thing was as good as done, except for the C.C., who had to think out a cow, so to speak, with regard to its purchase, equipment, transport, housing, maintenance and education. A man of infinite variety, the arrival of the cow (in bulk) found the C.C. nonplussed. He could not even begin to solve the food question. To him it seemed there were only two alternatives for the beast: bully beef or ration allowance at three francs a day in lieu of rations. The cow, he was told, was entitled and likely to refuse both.

We all crowded round the C.C. to help. "As to a simple matter like food," said A. and Q., "the Lord will provide. But as to the more difficult and complicated matters of establishment we will issue your orders." These ran: "Reference COW: (1) This unit should be shown on your Weekly Strength Return, with a statement of all casualties affecting same. Casualties include admission to or evacuation from hospital; change of address; marriage, and leave to the United Kingdom. (2) To be brought on the proper establishment of H.Q., it should be shown as 'Officer's Charger, one,' and should be trained and employed by you as such. (3) Please report action taken, and whether by you or by the Cow."

Even as the C.C. was contemplating this communication and hearkening to the cow grumbling away in his front-garden, his old regiment took occasion to march through the village and, in so doing, added insult to injury. The regiment had a mascot; the mascot was a goat; the goat fell out on the march and went sick. It did this in that portion of the C.C.'s front garden which was not already occupied by the cow, and its orders from the Colonel, who was its C.O. and had once been the Camp Commandant's C.O., were to remain with the C.C. and upon his charge till called for. This is all a very true story, but it's poor rations I'll be getting from the C.C. during what remains of this War for divulging it.

Be anything in the military world you like, Charles, from a courtly General to a thrusting Loot in charge of some overwhelmingly important department or other, but do not be a Camp Commandant. As there is no terrible complication which may not occur in the life of such, so there is no bitter irony which may not follow all. The early afternoon of April 6th found the C.C. on the site of the now camp, surrounded by confusion and an angry crowd of experts. There had been words and more words; there had only just not been blows, and all with regard to this wretched and incessant subject of April 7th. The C.C., never broad-minded on the point, had become positively ridiculous and tiresome about that irrevocable date, April 7th. It was a dull subject in any case, said the experts, but in the circumstances it was inane and cruel to go on insisting on it. R.E., Lorries, Signals and all their suites, not having been on too friendly terms among themselves these latter days, were fast becoming united in their intense loathing of the C.C. and his everlasting and impossible April 7th.



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At this moment the Highest Authority itself arrived on the scene to have a look at it. He was not in the least discontented with what he saw; he was inclined to congratulate the experts upon their expedition.

“We shall be hard put to it, Sir,” said the C.C., “to be ready for to-morrow.”

“To-morrow?” said the Highest Authority. “Why to-morrow particularly?”

“To-morrow is the 7th, Sir,” said the C.C., with sinister emphasis.

“And what about it if it is?” asked the Highest Authority.

“We have to move in here on April 7th, Sir,” said the C.C., with almost an injured note in his voice.

“Have you?” said the Highest Authority. “Why?”

The experts saluted and moved off, commenting quietly among themselves upon the good sense and magnanimity of the Highest Authority. As for that Camp Commandant

Yours ever, HENRY.

* * * * *

FOOD BEFORE CLOTHES.

“Exchange Fawn Costume, slight figure, good condition, for two broody hens.”—*The Smallholder*.

* * * * *

THE HEROINE OF THE NEW NOVEL.

[Illustration: “BUT I CANNOT LINGER THUS WITH YOU, SIR REGINALD,” SAID THE RUSTIC BEAUTY; “I HAVE TO CLEAN THE PIG-STY.” SHE PAUSED, AND THEN ALMOST INAUDIBLY, “YOU MAY HELP ME, IF YOU LIKE.”

SIR REGINALD VAVASOUR’S HEART LEAPT WITHIN HIM.]

[Illustration: AT LAST HE HAD HIS CHANCE. “HOW MUCH IS IT TO THE MARBLE ARCH?” HE ASKED.

“TUPPENCE,” SHE REPLIED SOFTLY; AND THE SIMPLE WORD RANG THROUGH EVERY FIBRE OF HIS BODY.]



[Illustration: DUSK WAS DESCENDING. HIS BACK TYRE WAS PUNCTURED, AND HE WAS ALONE—LOST IN THE WILD MOORLAND. SUDDENLY A CHEERY YOUNG VOICE SMOTE UPON HIS EAR: “WHAT’S UP, OLD CHAP? CAN I BE ANY USE?”]

[Illustration: “OH, I’M SO FEARFULLY SORRY!” SAID A SWEET YOUNG VOICE IN DISTRESSED ACCENTS. AND THEN HE BECAME AWARE OF A DAINTY LITTLE FOOT AND ANKLE COYLY PROTRUDING FROM A BLUE TROUSER ALMOST AT A LEVEL WITH HIS EYE.]

* * * * *

IN MEMORIAM.

FRANCIS COWLEY BURNAND,

1836—1917.

EDITOR OF “PUNCH,” 1880—1906.

Hail and Farewell, dear Brother of the Pen,
Maker of sunshine for the minds of men,
Lord of bright cheer and master of our hearts—
What plaint is fit when such a friend departs?
Not with mere ceremonial words of woe
Come we to mourn—you would not have it so;
But with our memories stored with joyous fun,
Your constant largesse till your life was done,
With quips, that flashed through frequent twists and bends,
Caught from the common intercourse of friends;
And gay allusions gayer for the zest
Of one who hurt no friend and spared no jest.
What arts were yours that taught you to indite
What all men thought, but only you could



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write!

That wrung from gloom itself a fleeting smile;
Rippled with laughter but refrained from guile;
Led you to prick some bladder of conceit
Or trip intrusive folly's blundering feet,
While wisdom at your call came down to earth,
Unbent awhile and gave a hand to mirth!

You too had pondered mid your jesting strife
The deeper issues of our mortal life;
Guided to God by faith no doubt could dim
You fought your fight and left the rest to Him,
Content to set your heart on things above
And rule your days by laughter and by love.
Rest in our memories! You are guarded there
By those who knew you as you lived and were.
There mid our Happy Thoughts you take your stand,
A sun-girt shade, and light that shadow-land.

R.C.L.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Captain (newly attached)*. "ER—IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE ME TO GET ON TO, SIR?"

Major (regimental economist). "AH, YES! I WISH YOU'D JUST LOOK AFTER THE BONES AND DRIPPING."]

* * * * *

CHILDREN'S TALES FOR GROWN-UPS.

VIII.

SOUR GRAPES.

"I have no doubt," said the fox, after a last futile attempt to reach them, "that the grapes are sour;" and he went off slowly down the hill.

At the bottom of the hill a barrel was lying, and the philosopher was filled with new hope. "The very thing," he said to himself.



He put his shoulder to the barrel and pushed and panted and panted and pushed till he got it nearly to the top. But it broke away at the last moment and rolled down the hill.

He rolled it up again and again perseveringly. He tried as often as Sisyphus. He tried indeed just once more, because at last he succeeded and the barrel was placed on end under the vine.

Joyfully he climbed on the barrel and bit at the fruit.

Then he jumped down with a bark of disgust.

The grapes *were* sour.

* * * * *

“Mutiny aboard a German U-boat, aided by the demolarizing effects of a submarine bomb, made the diver a prize of the British Admiralty and her crew the willing prisoners of a patrol boat.”—*Ottawa Evening Journal*.

This kind of bomb—the demolariser—is just what we want to draw the enemy’s teeth.

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE END OF THE THOUSAND-AND-ONE NIGHTS.

THE OFFICIAL STORY-TELLER (*to Wilhelm-al-Raschid*). “I CAN’T THINK OF ANY FRESH FAIRY TALES. WOULD YOU LIKE A TRUE ONE NOW?”

[April 30th was the thousand-and-first day of the War.]]

* * * * *

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

Monday, April 23rd.—Any intelligent foreigner who obtained admission to the Distinguished Strangers’ Gallery in the expectation that on the feast-day of our national saint and the birthday of our national poet he would be privileged to listen to a series of eloquent speeches upon patriotism, delivered by our most accomplished orators, must have been deeply disappointed. The one subject that the House of Commons seems to care about is food.

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The CONTROLLER has hit one section of the House in its tenderest portion. Those Members who make their mid-day meal off tea and bread-and-butter think it very hard that they should be allowed no more bread than others who take the full luncheon. On their behalf Mr. LONDON, like *The Carpenter*, said, "Give us another slice." But, despite a slight facial resemblance to *The Walrus*, Colonel LOCKWOOD was inexorable.

The late Mr. JUSTIN MCCARTHY was once described by his ex-leader as "a nice old gentleman for a quiet tea-party." If anyone had said that a Sunday-School treat would furnish the appropriate *milieu* for that ardent Pacifist, Mr. JOWETT, I should, until this afternoon, have been inclined to agree with him. But it is evident that his acquaintance with Sunday-School treats is purely academic, for in requesting the FOOD CONTROLLER to remove the ban lately placed upon them he spoke of the treat as a "simple meal, consisting of a bun and tea only." The italic is our own comment on this estimate of the capacity of our brave tea-fighters.

Tuesday, April 24th.—Those Members to whom their constituents have given notice to quit at the next election, and who have recently been somewhat depressed by the thought of the impending loss to the nation of their valuable services, are plucking up heart again now that the life of Parliament is to be once more extended. Mr. KING, for example, was in his best form this afternoon. It goes without saying that his advice to the Board of Agriculture to set a good example to the country by sending their racehorses out to grass was well received, for any reference to the Government stud is equivalent to the "Pass the mustard" of the established humourist. His real success came when Mr. BONAR LAW denied that Sir GEORGE MCCRAE had been appointed Chief Whip to the Government. Mr. KING drawled out, "As *The Times* has stated that this gentleman was so appointed will its foreign circulation be stopped?" Then the laughter came spontaneous and loud.

[Illustration: *Hodge*. "I'M TO BE QUEEN OF THE MAY."]

Another little joke which tickled the House was, I suspect, the outcome of a conspiracy. At least I cannot understand why Mr. OUTHWAITE should have been so anxious to know the amount of ginger imported into this country last year, unless it was to afford Mr. MACVEAGH an opportunity of asking, when the amount, some three thousand tons, had been announced, "How is it that the new Government has got none of it?"

There is a growing tendency on the part of Ministers, when charged with the conduct of a Bill, to speak of it as "a poor thing not mine own." They imagine, I suppose, that an air of deprecation, not to say depreciation, is likely to commend the measure to an audience in which party-spirit is supposed to be defunct.

[Illustration: VISCOUNT CHAPLIN MAKING NOTES ON THE MILLENNIUM FROM THE PEERS' GALLERY.]



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At first it seemed as if Mr. PROTHERO, in moving the second reading of the Corn Production Bill, was going to adopt the modern attitude of *insouciance*, for he spoke of it as “bristling with controversial points” (as if it were intended to promote the growth of quite another kind of corn), and observed that he himself had originally been opposed to State interference with agriculture. But he soon warmed to his work, and spoke with all the zeal of the convert. Among his most appreciative listeners were the occupants of the Peers’ Gallery—the Duke of MARLBOROUGH, who has transformed the sword of Blenheim into a ploughshare, and Viscount CHAPLIN, to whom the announcement of State bounties for wheat-growing seems like the arrival of the Millennium.

Another ex-Minister of Agriculture was, to put it mildly, less enthusiastic. I should be doing Mr. RUNCIMAN little injustice to say that for the moment the politician in him rose superior to the patriot. If after the War the old party-quarrels are to break out again with all their fatal futility I can imagine that Liberal wire-pullers in the rural districts will be much embarrassed by the existence of bounties which economically they cannot approve but which politically they dare not remove. But surely we shall have learned our lesson badly if the old strife of Tory and Liberal is to be revived in all its former virulence and sterility. Besides there is the Labour Party to be considered, as Mr. GEORGE ROBERTS reminded the House in the best speech he has made since he went on the Treasury Bench. He pointed out that if high wages and good conditions were to be secured for agricultural workers the prosperity of the agricultural industry as a whole must be ensured; and he hoped that the policy of State-aid would not stop there. No wonder the hard-shell Free Traders looked glum.

Sir HEDWORTH MEUX must be careful or he will jeopardize his reputation as a humourist. Mr. PARTINGTON having asked whether the Government would put down their racehorses, the gallant Admiral could think of no better jest than that the proposal was as futile as that of the hon. Member’s namesake, who endeavoured to keep out the Atlantic with a mop. Shortly afterwards Mr. YEO asked whether the Government would consider the destruction of cats, with a view, perhaps, to the suppression of MEUX.

The Corn Production Bill had to run the gauntlet of a good many criticisms during the second day’s debate. The unkindest cut of all was delivered by the SPEAKER. Mr. MOLTENO had asked whether Members who were landowners or farmers might vote on a measure affecting their financial interests, and Mr. LOWTHER replied that the benefits were “so problematical and so uncertain” that he thought they might. Mr. MOLTENO used his freedom to vote against the Second Reading; but only a handful of Members followed his example. Mr. RUNCIMAN and his friends decided that abstention was the better part of valour.



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Thursday, April 26th.—Major BAIRD made a modest and candid defence of the Air Board against its many critics. He did not pretend that they were yet satisfied—in the case of so new a service there could be no finality— but he claimed that the departments had worked much more harmoniously since they were all housed under the hospitable roof of the Hotel Cecil, a statement which Lord HUGH of that ilk subsequently endorsed. Major BAIRD, despite the general mildness of his voice and demeanour, can deliver a good hard knock on occasion. He warned the House against indulging in a certain class of criticism, on the ground that there was no surer way of killing an airman than to destroy his confidence in the machine he was flying; and he asserted that the “mastery of the air” was a meaningless phrase impossible of realization. I think Mr. PEMBERTON-HICKS and Mr. JOYNSON-BILLING took the rebuke to heart, for they were much less aggressive than usual.

* * * * *

[Illustration: “BE A GOOD BOY AND STOP YOUR ’OLLERIN, AND I’LL LET YER SEE THE OLD GENT FALL ORF THE BUS.”]

* * * * *

SICK.

Dear MR. PUNCH,—Excuse this tosh,
 But I’ve succumbed to measles (Bosch),
 And all my dreary hours are spent
 Inside a vast and gloomy tent.
 So, as I’m feeling rather blue,
 I thought I’d better write to you.
 All known diseases here you’ll find
 (This letter’s steamed, you needn’t mind);
 But in my tent there’s only one,
 I’m glad to say, *viz.*, measles (Hun).
 The Nurses all are Scotch and stout,
 So are the drinks I do without;
 I don’t complain of lack of fruit—
 At least we don’t get arrowroot—
 Nor have I even ever seen a
 Single plate of semolina.
 So life is not so bad, you see,
 Except for chlorine in the tea.
 I think that’s all, so now will end,
 Hoping this finds you, dearest friend,
 Just as it leaves me, in the pink
 (My rash is not quite gone, I think).



* * * * *

“Now those precious divisions have to be hurled into the furnace to avert a veritable landslide.”—*Sunday Paper*.

The shortage of men in the German Army has evidently been exaggerated. This confirms the evidence from other sources that they have troops to burn.

* * * * *

AT THE PLAY.

“HAMLET.”

To prepare a very own version of *Hamlet* and play it with credit—that is still the blue riband of the Stage. Mr. H.B. IRVING has fairly won it. The version seemed to me apt. He tells us that his main purpose was to bring out the story as if for those who had never seen the play before. It is a rational point of view, and certainly it seemed a distinct improvement not to lose sight of *Hamlet's* adventure to England, as is commonly the case, and to keep the essential sequence of events and the personality of the Prince constantly before the audience. The justification of the heroic cuts and adaptations was that the action did move faster towards the tragic end, instead of seeming to drag rather tiresomely as (be it confessed) it sometimes does.



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[Illustration: "OUR SON IS FAT AND SCANT OF BREATH."

(We shouldn't have guessed it, but his own mother ought to know.)

Hamlet MR. H.B. IRVING.]

Observers contrasting this with Mr. IRVING'S earlier performance remarked a gain in depth and fire and a happier restraint of mannerism. It was a very notable and gracious piece of work. He has the player's first gift, an arresting personality. His elocution has distinction. He conveys the beauty of the words and the richness of the packed thought thoughtfully. The complex play of action and motive—the purpose blunted by overmuch thinking, the spurs to dull revenge, the self-contempt, the assumed antic disposition, at times the real mental disturbance—all this was set before us with a fine skill and resource. The "To be or not to be" soliloquy was masterly in its sincerity and restraint; the two broken love passages with *Ophelia* showed a fine tenderness through the distraught, bitter mood. An ingenious turn was given to that difficult change of weapons in the fencing bout, though I doubt if the Sword Club would wholly have approved the technique of the fencing.

Miss GERTRUDE ELLIOTT'S *Ophelia* in the Mad Scene was full of beauty, sweetness and dignity—and we have so often been bored by our lesser *Ophelias*. A very fine performance. Mr. HOLMAN CLARK was the foolish prating knave, a *Polonius* robbed of his best speech, and the more consistent therefore. Mr. IRVING is obviously right in his view that *Polonius* could never by any chance have given any such advice to his truculent son.

One may congratulate the producer on the courage of his convictions. But I wonder if the Shakspearean tradition is really dying. The general quality of the performance was, it must be confessed, not inspiring. There was little of the king's divinity hedging *Claudius*; the *Queen* (an always difficult part) was elaborately unconvincing, though played by a clever actress; *Guildestern* and awkward *Rosencrantz* deserved any fate which awaited them in England. Neither *Laertes* nor *Horatio* seemed authentic. But Mr. TOM REYNOLDS' grave-digger had humour and avoided tedium. *Hamlet* was the thing.

T.

* * * * *

"A Berlin official telegram states that the Kaiser has sent the following telegram to the Crown Prince:—'The troops of all the German tribes under your command, with steel-hard determination and strongly led, have brought to failure the great French attempt to break through on the Aisne and in Champagne. Also there, again, the infantry had to bear the grunt.'"—*Northern Whig*.

The Imperial euphemism, we suppose, for the cry of “Kamerad!”

* * * * *

THE NEW RATIONS.

“Joint Hospital Board, ——, 14th April, 1917. The above Board require two Probationer Nurses for their Consumption.”—*Provincial Paper*.



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* * * * *

A correspondent having observed in a morning paper the headline, "Pomeranians Surrender!" sends us a suggested contents-bill for *The Barking Gazette*:—

GREAT CAPTURE OF POMS!
PEKINESE BREAK OFF RELATIONS.
GREAT DANES NEUTRAL.
RAID BY TERRITORIAL FLYING CORPS
(SKY TERRIERS).
ROUT OF DALMATIANS.
FIELD-GREYHOUNDS DRIVEN OFF.

* * * * *

THE ADJUTANT ON LEAVE.

"Leave, I'm afraid," remarked the Adjutant, standing with his back to the fire and hitching his bath towel more securely over his left shoulder, "can only be granted now in special circumstances."

Flying being prevented for that afternoon by the weather conditions, we had been playing hockey, and the Adjutant, who by virtue of seniority had just had first go at the bathroom, was in a warm and expansive mood. The rest of us sat about in his quarters awaiting our turns at a hot-water supply that would certainly cease to have anything warming or expansive about it by the time it reached the junior Second Lieutenant.

"The question is," said that dejected officer, fixing the Adjutant with a watchful eye—"the question is, what are you going to regard as special circumstances?"

"You state your circumstances to me officially to-morrow," said the Adjutant cheerfully, "and I'll tell you quickly enough whether they're special or not,"

"I suppose," suggested the Stunt Pilot, "that a wedding would be a pretty special sort of circumstance, wouldn't it?"

"That depends," replied the Adjutant. "Are you thinking of getting married yourself?"

The Stunt Pilot said that he hadn't been, but if there was any leave going with it he might think of it.

"One's simply got to get leave *somehow*," he complained. "What about a breach of promise case? Suppose I manage to get mixed up in a breach of promise case, wouldn't that do?"



“That’s no good,” commented the Junior Officer gloomily. “You’d have to get leave for something else first before you could manage it.”

“And if you did,” added the Adjutant severely, “you’d get leave for rather longer than you bargained for.”

“How about funerals?” put in the Equipment Officer hopefully. “Funerals are a fairly sound stunt, aren’t they?”

“Funerals,” observed the Adjutant, “are played out. If you come to me to-morrow and talk about dead uncles and things I shall have all sorts of inquiries made that will surprise you. I’ve been had before by funerals. When I was in the Army”—the Adjutant talks like this since he was attached to the Flying Corps—“when I was in the Army there was a fellow who used to come to the orderly-room and talk funerals to me until I was sick of the sight of him. After some months of it I made him give me a written list of all his surviving relations, and then as he killed them off I used to scratch them out. I caught him at last on his third grandmother.”



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"That's all very nice," said the Stunt Pilot, "but the question at present before the meeting is how are we poor beggars to get any leave?"

"It's no good blaming me," returned the Adjutant blandly. "Command Orders are Command Orders."

There was a brief silence, and then the Stunt Pilot lifted up his voice and spoke eloquently about the War Office and Brass Hats generally. He said that they had hearts of granite and were strangers to all loving-kindness. Their days were spent in idleness in the Metropolis (so said the Stunt Pilot), while he and his fellows drove rotten 'buses for hours together over the beastliest district in Europe. Of an evening the Carlton and the Piccadilly, the Bing Boys and the Bing Girls, all the delights of London were ready to their hands, while poor devils like himself, shorn of leave, were condemned to languish in a moth-eaten Mess in the society of such people as the Adjutant. Where was the sense in it, where the justice, and when the deuce were they, any of them, going to get a chance at the bath-room?

The Adjutant regarded him with amused pity.

"The fact of it is," he observed, "you people have been absolutely spoilt over leave. When I was in the Infantry we used to consider three or four days in six months quite handsome."

The Stunt Pilot inquired sarcastically whether he meant three or four days' work or three or four days' leave.

"I don't mind saying," pursued the Adjutant, ignoring this sally, "at the risk of making myself unpopular, that personally I think it's a very good thing that leave *has* been cut down. My own opinion is that in the past there's been a lot too much leave flying about. Running up and down to London on leave isn't going to help beat the Germans. What we've got to do if we want to win this War is to—"

At this moment the C.O. entered and put down a hockey-stick in the corner.

"Thanks for the stick, Jervis," he said, and turned to go. "By the way, shall I see you at the orderly-room tomorrow before you go? What train are you catching?"

The Adjutant hesitated for the fraction of a second.

"Well, Sir," he said, "I thought of taking the 9.5."

"I see," said the C.O. "Right-o. You won't be away longer than forty-eight hours, I suppose?"

"Oh, no," said the Adjutant. "That'll do well, Sir."



A brief astonished silence followed the C.O.'s departure, a silence broken by the excited tones of the Stunt Pilot.

"The 9.5?" he cried. "Are you going to *London*?"

The Adjutant lit a cigarette with some deliberation.

"Only just for forty-eight hours," he remarked.

"Forty-eight hours!" gasped the indignant Pilot; then, raising his voice to surmount the din, "Forty-eight hours' leave in London, and you've just been pouring out hot air about —"

"*Leave*?" interrupted the Adjutant, in pained surprise. "What d'you mean by leave? I'm going on *duty*."



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A chorus of derisive laughter greeted the announcement. "Duty?" echoed the Stunt Pilot bitterly. "What duty?"

The Adjutant took another furl in his bath-towel.

"If you really must know," he said composedly, "I'm going to buy a vacuum-cleaner for the Mess."

"You infernal old wangler!" cried the outraged Pilot, when at last he was able to make himself heard. "Of course it takes forty-eight hours to buy a vacuum-cleaner, doesn't it?"

"As a matter of fact," said the Adjutant solemnly, "my whole experience of vacuum-cleaners leads me to the conviction that you have to look at a great many of them before you can pick a really good one." He glanced round for his clothes. "And now if you fellows will get on with your baths, I've got an air mechanic coming in a minute or two to cut my hair. I expect I shall be far too busy in town for the next two days to have any time to waste on barbers."

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[Illustration: *Farmer (to "land-lady")*. "HI, MISSIE, WHAT BE YE DOIN' WI TRACE-HORSE BEHIND, AND A LOAD LIKE THAT?"

"Land-lady." "OH, WELL, YOU SEE, WHEN HE WAS IN FRONT HE WAS ALWAYS TURNING ROUND WRONG WAY ON, SO I JUST PUT HIM BEHIND TO HELP UP HILLS, LIKE THE RAILWAY ENGINES."]

* * * * *

GENERAL POST.

Everything was just as usual. I caught my tram at the corner of the street. It was the six o'clock car—I noticed the usual evening crowd, and they were all as bored and cross and frigid as usual.

The old gentleman of the whiskers was, as usual, reading his evening paper. He looked personally affronted as I sat down beside him. The elderly relative—as I call her—was opposite to me. She had her small attache-case and her knitting as usual, and she made me feel at a glance that my face bored her intolerably. For the rest, I saw the fat paterfamilias, the wish-I-had-a-motor lady, the pert flapper and all the crew who travel with dejected spirits to and fro on our suburban line.

So far all was in order. Then the conductress came round.



“Tuppenny,” I murmured. “Albemarle Road.”

“What’s your town?” she asked, taking a pencil from behind her ear.

“Town? It’s Albemarle Road I want.”

“But what town do you choose for Post?” she asked. “You’ve all got to have a town, you know. Don’t make it too long. Hurry up! I’ve got to write you all down, and it’s time to begin.”

“Pontresina,” I gasped wildly. That seemed to be the only town I had ever heard of.

“And you, Sir?” she was asking the old gentleman.

“Macclesfield,” he said very decidedly.

The elderly relative was fidgeting to say hers. I could have guessed it would be St. Ives.

The conductress made her way from one end to the other.

“All got towns?” she asked. “You, Sir? Pernambuco? I do wish you’d stick to English names. Are you all ready?”



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She rang the bell.

“Now,” she said, “the gentleman on the stool has to catch. The Post is going from Paris to Pontresina.”

I rose and looked wildly down the car. The flapper was beckoning slightly. Her contemptuous boredom had vanished, and she looked a merry child again. I rushed, stumbled, rocked into her place; she sank with a gasp into mine.

“York to St. Ives!”

It was the paterfamilias who was up now, and the elderly relative was signing to him. In a breathless scurry she was in his place gasping beside me. For the first time in her life she spoke to me.

“What an escape!” she said. “There, *he’s* caught—York, I mean. I don’t know his proper name. It’s odd, isn’t it, we know each other’s faces so well and yet we don’t know each other’s names. Now that we have towns for names, it will be far more friendly, won’t it? I always called you Cicero to myself. Oh, I hardly know why—you looked a little satirical sometimes. But now you’re Pontresina, of course.”

“Macclesfield to Pernambuco!”

“There!” laughed my companion. “I knew Macclesfield would be caught—he’s so stately, isn’t he? But look how he’s laughing. Do you know I never thought any of the people in this car *could* laugh, or even smile. I do think this Society for the Abolition of Boredom in Public Conveyances is an excellent thing, don’t you?”

“Pontresina to St. Ives!”

Breathlessly we changed places; her black hat was a little crooked, but she only laughed.

“I’ve lost my knitting, too,” she said, “but I don’t mind. This exercise keeps one so warm these cold days.”

The game was in wild progress; the car rocked and jolted and the conductress shouted the names.

“General Post!” she called. “Those inside change places with those outside.”

That was the most breathlessly exciting moment of the whole game. There was a solid struggling mass of humanity on the tram staircase. Those without were pushing frantically to come down; we were shoving to get up.



The lady called St. Ives was thumping my shoulders.

“Climb up the railing,” she said.

Somehow I did it, and leaned down to catch her hands and drag her upwards. We launched ourselves breathlessly on to the furthest seat.

Stout old Macclesfield was the next. He had lost his hat and his white hair was ruffled.

“I’m here,” he said. “Macclesfield for ever!”

The flapper had scrambled up the front staircase against the rules. She cast herself down beside Macclesfield.

“Here I am, old dear,” she exclaimed. “I left York simply *jammed* in the wedge. Oh, isn’t it fun? I never laughed so much. We never *can* be serious with each other after this, can we?”

St. Ives nodded.

“I’ll never forget Pontresina climbing the rail,” she said. “I used to think him so haughty; now—”



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“Albemarle Road—don’t you want Albemarle Road?” the conductress was asking me. She spoke very loudly.

“Pontresina—I’m Pontresina,” I answered.

“This is Albemarle Road. If you’re going on it’ll be another penny,” she insisted.

I rose in bewilderment.

St. Ives was looking at me while she knitted. I raised my hat to her and smiled. We had been such good friends all the evening—how could I ever forget it? But she did not smile; she only stared. She seemed to think I was mad. Macclesfield was reading his *Star* just as if he had never hurled himself on to the top of the ’bus. The flapper was squinting at herself in a little pocket-mirror; she looked contemptuously at me as I passed. Old York was half asleep. One would think they had never been rushing about in that frantic General Post. And we were all inside the car again.

It was odd!

* * * * *

[Illustration: “THE BLOKE WOT PAINTED THAT KNEW ‘OW TO DO A BIT O’ FOOD ‘OARDING, DIDN’T ‘E?”]

* * * * *

’T WAS FIFTY YEARS AGO.

(Lines suggested by an old Magazine.)

Published the year I went to school—
 The second of life’s seven ages—
 How fragrant of Victorian rule
 Are these forgotten pages!
 When meat and fruit were still uncanned;
 When good CHARLES DICKENS still was writing;
 And SWINBURNE’S poetry was banned
 As rather too exciting.

No murmurs of impending strife
 Were heard, no dark suggestions hinted;
 Our novelists still looked on life
 Through spectacles rose-tinted;
 And Paris, in those giddy years,
 Still laughed at OFFENBACH and SCHNEIDER,



Blind to the doom of blood and tears,
With none to warn or guide her.

The index and the authors' names,
Their stories and their lucubrations,
Recall old literary aims
And faded reputations;
We wonder at the influence
That SALA'S florid periods had on
His fellows, and the vogue immense
Of versatile Miss BRADDON.

And yet I read *Aurora Floyd*
In youth with rapture quite unholy—
Not in the way that I enjoyed
Mince-pies or roly-poly;
While "G.A.S." appeared to me
Like a Leonid fresh from starland,
Not the young lion that we see
Portrayed in *Friendship's Garland*.

And there are tinklings of the lute
In orthodox decorous fashion,
But altogether destitute
Of "elemental" passion;
And illustrations which refrain
From all that verges on the shady,
But glorify the whiskered swain,
The lachrymose young lady.

The sirens of the "sixties" showed
No inkling of our modern Circes,
And swells had not evolved the code
That guides our precious Percys;
Woman, in short, was grave or gay,
But not a problem or a riddle,
And maidens still were taught to play
The harp and not the fiddle.

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And writers in the main eschewed
All topics tending to disquiet,
All efforts to reorganize
Our dogmas or our diet;
You could not carp at MENDELSSOHN
Without creating quite a scandal,
And rag-time on the gramophone
Had not supplanted HANDEL.

Blameless and wholesome in their way,
At times agreeably subacid,
I love these records of a day
Long dead, but calm and placid;
And with a sigh I now replace
This ancient volume of *Belgravia*
And turn the “latest news” to face
Mutans amaris suavia.

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[Illustration: *Rector's Daughter*. “HOW SPLENDID OF JOE JARVIS'S SON TO VOLUNTEER FOR THAT VERY DANGEROUS JOB! I'M SO GLAD HE GOT THE MILITARY MEDAL.”

Mrs. Mullins (not to be outdone). “YES, MISS. AND MY BOY COULD HAVE GOT IT TOO IF HE'D CARED TO HAVE TAKEN THE RISK.”]

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A SLUMP IN MARIONETTES.

“For the first time for centuries the Old Bailey Sessions were opened on Tuesday without the customary ceremonies connected with the summoning of a Grand Jury.”—*Lincolnshire Echo*.

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“Too proud to fight” has now become “Proud to fight too.”

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“‘It was between half-past seven and eight,’ said a fireman, ‘and as I was off duty I came out on deck for a blow. The force of the explosion threw me along the deck for some yards.’”—*Daily Paper*.



“This is indeed a blow,” said the gallant stoker—we *don’t* think.

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[Illustration: “HENRY, I WISH YOU WOULD WRITE TO THE URBAN COUNCIL AND TELL THEM TO SEND A DUSTMAN WHO TURNS HIS TOES *IN*. OUR ROCK BORDER’S BEING COMPLETELY RUINED!”]

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OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

I have the feeling that when Mr. RUDYARD KIPLING called his new volume *A Diversity of Creatures* (MACMILLAN) he was rather taking the word out of my mouth, or the sword out of my hand, or whatever one does for the confusion and discomforting of critics. Because it is just the extreme diversity of the tales herein which, while providing (as they say) something for all tastes, makes it very hard to appraise the book as a whole. In form it follows the KIPLING convention, endeared to us by so much pleasure, of sandwiching prose and verse, the poems echoing the idea of the tale that has preceded them, and themselves likely to prove for many the most attractive pages of the book. As for the stories, here we get diversity indeed; and not of theme alone. It is, of course, almost impossible for anything signed by Mr. KIPLING

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to be wholly commonplace, but I am bound to admit that there is at least one of the collection (which, pardon me, I do not mean to name) that makes a notable effort in that direction. Also there are two of which one can honestly say that no other pen could have written them with anything like such finished art—*The Village that Voted the Earth was Flat*, which one might call a fantasia upon Publicity, and (to my mind the best thing in the volume) *My Son's Wife*, an exquisitely humorous and cunning study in the Influence of Landed Estate upon a Modern. If this definition strikes you as obscure, read the story and you will understand. For the rest, as I said above, all tastes are catered for; so that the rival schools who admire Mr. KIPLING most as the creator of *Plain Tales*, or *Stalky* or *Puck*, will each receive encouragement and support; while, if there be those who prefer the pot-boiler undisguisable, they too will not find themselves altogether neglected.

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I do wish our publishers would grasp the great truth that praise of their own wares needs (to say the least of it) most careful handling. What they, or some anonymous admirer, say on the cover of *The Worn Doorstep* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON) is that they should like to shout its merits from the housetop. Possibly; but let me protest that it is for me, and not for them, to do the shouting, if any; which said, I will proceed to admit that the book is one of considerable charm. It is told in the form of letters (never to be posted, since they are from a young wife to her soldier-husband, presumed to have been killed before the opening of the book). Miss MARGARET SHERWOOD thus reverts to a convention more popular some few years ago than with our present-day romanticists. The matter of her tale shows how the young wife in question found consolation in befriending others, especially in the love affairs of a Belgian refugee couple, to whom she opens her home and heart. A very pretty idea, developed with many dainty and amiable touches. Perhaps (I set down no dogmatic verdict on the point) the cynical or impatient may find its sweetness something too drawn out. On the other hand, there are many "gentle readers," probably a vast majority, to whom its appeal will prove entirely successful. And as they can be trusted to spread its merits in the right quarters there will be no need for the publishers to shout, either from the house-top or anywhere else, which (as I suggested above) is as it should be.

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When we are introduced to *Margaret Grenfield*, the heroine of *Fetters on the Feet* (ARNOLD), she is living with some Quaker cousins and spending most of her time in mending stockings. So many people make stockings who refuse absolutely to mend them that I imagine there must be something peculiarly unattractive in this work of restoration, and it was a fortunate day for *Margaret* when the pedantic young man of the house proposed to marry her. After this we discover that she has both a history and a will of her own. She leaves the Quakers, and goes as secretary to a lady who holds eccentric if broadminded views on every conceivable subject, and the change of atmosphere, however delightful in various ways, was too much for *Margaret's* peace of mind. The young Quaker was an obstinate wooer and followed her up, but his chances of success, which were never rosy, grew dimmer and dimmer as *Margaret*, freeing herself of shackles, gradually began to see life as a whole instead of through the eye of a darning-needle. In the end MRS. FRED REYNOLDS tells us that "the day dawned. The whole earth sang and sparkled in the glad light of it," which is her way of saying that *Margaret* had found happiness. But all the same I fancy that introspection had become such a habit of this heroine that she is still likely to have days when the dawn is grey and no birds sing.

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"He was also the first officer to make a successful flight from the deck of a British warship, and on one occasion he changed an aeroplane propeller blade whilst flying 2,000ft. above the sea."—*Evening Paper*.

The above extract has been forwarded by the members of a R.F.C. mess, who are anxious to know what happened when he stopped his engine.

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"Wanted, for a Farmhouse, Middle-Aged Person to look an Old Lady; lifting and light duties."—*Newcastle Daily Journal*.

We doubt if there will be much response. Most middle-aged persons nowadays prefer to look like flappers.

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From a trade prospectus:—

"—Cubes contain the nourishing proprieties of beef."

We have always been great believers in bovine modesty.