

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 152, May 9, 1917 eBook

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Contents

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 152, May 9, 1917 eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	4
Page 1.....	5
Page 2.....	7
Page 3.....	9
Page 4.....	11
Page 5.....	12
Page 6.....	14
Page 7.....	16
Page 8.....	18
Page 9.....	20
Page 10.....	22
Page 11.....	24
Page 12.....	26
Page 13.....	27
Page 14.....	29
Page 15.....	31
Page 16.....	32
Page 17.....	34
Page 18.....	36
Page 19.....	38
Page 20.....	40
Page 21.....	42

[Page 22.....](#)[43](#)

[Page 23.....](#)[44](#)

Table of Contents

Section	Table of Contents	Page
Start of eBook		1
CHARIVARIA.		1
THE POWER OF BRITISH HUMOUR.		8
TO MASTER THE ROLLS.		8
THE USE OF ABUSE.		8
WRIT SARCASTIC.		8
II.		16
IX.		19

Page 1

CHARIVARIA.

According to a Rome paper, *Hindenburg* has requested that all the Royal Princes shall be removed from the West Front. The original plan of protecting Their Royal Highnesses by moving the Front further West has been definitely abandoned.

The *Vossische Zeitung* informs us that the late BISSING was a "veritable angel of mercy." The *Kaiser* is wondering who started this scandal.

"We are back in the days," says Mr. PRETYMAN, "when the Mercantile Marine and the Navy were one." If these are the official figures that the Press has been clamouring for, the bread tickets will come none too soon.

Highland sheep-raisers are said to be feeding their lambs by hand on a mixture of hot milk and whisky. The little patients appear to take kindly to the diet, and one or two have even been understood to suggest that it seems rather a waste of milk.

The Imperial Government, we are informed, repudiates responsibility for the attack by one of its airmen on the Dutch village of Zierikzee, on the ground that, notwithstanding repeated warnings to abandon the unneutral practice, the village persisted in looking like a portion of the Isle of Wight.

Saluting is said to have been abolished in the Russian Army. Our own military authorities, on the other hand, declare that it would be unwise to abolish a practice in which the inventive genius of the young soldier has so much scope.

Many Germans, says Mr. *Gerard*, have food concealed in their wainscoting. But very few of them have any noticeable quantity behind their dadoes.

To mark the disapproval of a tax on complimentary theatre tickets several lifelong supporters of the British drama have already requested leading managers to take their names off the free list.

We learn from the Press, among the things that matter, that for two years a well-known Wye Valley angler has been trying to catch a certain large trout and at last he has succeeded in securing it. We understand that the trout died with a smile on his face.

We hope it is not due to the distraction of war, but America seems to be losing her dash. At a baseball match in New York the other day only three of the spectators were injured.

At the Shoreditch Tribunal a firm appealing for a man stated that he was “a director, traveller, buyer, manager, acted as cashier and costs clerk, loaded the vans, kept the place clean and made himself generally useful.” It is just as well that they added the last item, or people might have thought he was one of those slackers we hear too much about.

News comes from Athens that *King Constantine* is realising his position and contemplates abdication in favour of the *crown Prince George*. It is not yet known in whose favour the *crown Prince George* will abdicate.

Page 2

Phenomenal prices were again paid at CHRISTIE'S last week for pearls. It is thought that official action will have to be taken to combat the belief, widely held in munition-making circles, that pearls dissolved in champagne are beneficial to the complexion.

"When we go to the Front we become the worst criminals," writes a German soldier taken prisoner at Trescault. We appreciate this generous attempt to shield his superiors, but cling to our belief that the worst criminals are still a good way behind the German lines.

M. *Trieu*, the Public Executioner to the Emperor of *Austria*, has just been married. The bride has promised to obey him.

It is thought probable that Mexico will very shortly decide to declare peace on America.

Colonel W.F.N. *Noel*, of Newent, claims that Gloucestershire cheese is as good as any made in England. He omits, however, to state whether these cheeses make good pets and are fond of children.

Paper-covered books are foreshadowed by the Publishers' Association, and it is rumoured that in order to conserve the paper supply Mr. *Charles* GARVICE has decided that in future he will not write more than two novels per week.

We resent the suggestion that the public is not prepared to accept "substitutes." Only the other day a man rushed into a London *cafe*, asked if they had any prussic acid, and, when told that they never kept it, remarked, "Very well. Bring me a pork pie."

Three hundred fishing-rods have been sent to the Mesopotamia Field Force. No request was forwarded for flies.

Dealing with IBSEN'S *Ghosts* at the Kingsway Theatre, the critic of a halfpenny morning paper refers to it as a "medley of weird psychopathy and symbolism." Just as if he were writing for a penny paper.

A woman at West London Police Court has been sentenced for "masquerading as a man." Several conscientious objectors are now getting very nervous on sighting a policeman.

Only egg-laying hens will be permitted to survive under the new regulations of the Board of Agriculture. Villagers who in the past have made a nice thing out of training hens to get run over by motor cars will be hard hit.

Now that racing has been prohibited it is unlikely that the Slate Club Secretaries' Sprinting Handicaps will be held this year.

* * * * *

[Illustration: "*No, dear, I'm afraid we shan't be at the Dance to-night. Poor Herbert has got A Touch of allotment feet.*"]

* * * * *

Stomach for the fight.



Page 3

O not because my taste for bread
Tended to make me much too stout,
And all the leading doctors said
I should be better far without;
Not that my health may be more rude,
More svelte my rounded style of beauty,
I sacrifice this staple food—
But from a sense of duty!

I “can no other” when I think
Of how the Hun, docile and meek,
Suffers his ravenous maw to shrink,
And only strikes, say, once a week;
If he for all these months has stood
The sorry fare they feed the brute on,
I hope that I can be as good
A patriot as your Teuton.

Henceforth I spurn the dear delight
That went so well with jam or cheese;
No turn of mine shall wear the white
Flour of a shameless life of ease;
Others may pass one loaf in three,
Some rather more than that, and some less,
But I—the only course for me—
Go absolutely crumbless.

So, when I quit this mortal strife,
Men on my grave these lines shall score:—
“Much as he loved the Staff of Life
He loved his country even more;
He needed no compelling ban;
England, in fact, had but to ask it,
And he surrendered, like a man,
The claims of his bread-basket.”

O.S.

* * * * *

Diplomatic notes.

The Latin-American situation remains obscure. According to advices from Archangel, Paraguay intends to act, though curiously enough a strange cloud of silence hangs over

recent (and coming) events in Ecuador. Bolivia has decided to construct a fleet, despite the fact that the absence of a seaboard is being made a reason for sinister opposition in pro-German circles. Patagonia has mobilised both her soldiers, but her gun is still under repair.

Panagua has declared war on Germany. It is hard to over-estimate the value of this new adhesion to the Allied cause. The standing army is well over six hundred strong, and there is a small but modern fleet, consisting of two revenue cutters, one super skiff, eight canoes (mounted with two pairs of six-inch oars) and one raft (Benamuckee class). The President, in a moving address to the Panaguan Senate, declared, "The world is watching Panagua; it does not watch in vain." Senora Hysterica, the first woman senator, cast the only vote against war. "I cannot," she sobbed.

Things are moving in Mexico. General *Carranza* has summoned a mass-meeting of ex-Presidents to consider the situation, and a counter-demonstration by the Brigands' Trade Union Congress is feared. Even as far north as Greenland the repercussion may be felt. Here, owing to the new regime of blubber-cards, Eskimo opinion is in a very nervous state. Indeed, according to an inspired semi-official utterance by Prince Bowo, the Siamese Deputy Vice-Consul at Fez, it is not too much to say that almost anything may, or may not, happen in this Arctic quarter.

Page 4

The outlook in Palestine is dark. Strict-silence is enforced in all public places, and even whispering is forbidden at street corners. More than two-thirds of the population are spies. Relatives are only allowed to speak to each other if granted a special licence or talking-ticket by the Sheikh-ul-Islam, though there is a special dispensation for mothers-in-law. The reported mobilization of eighty goats on Mount Tabor shows pretty clearly which way the wind is blowing; whilst it is persistently rumoured in Joppa that five camels were seen passing through Jerusalem yesterday. Suspicious dredging operations in the Dead Sea are also reported by a Berne correspondent. The future is big with presage.

All eyes are fixed on the two great African Powers which still stand aside from the maelstroem of war. The position in Ethiopia is, to say the least of it, tendentious, and at any moment the natives may change their skin. The coronation of the new Empress of Abyssinia is being followed as usual by the great Feast of the Blue Umbrella, at which an important pronouncement is, I learn, to be made. I hear, moreover (from a private source in Trondhjem, *via* Mecca and Amsterdam), that Wady-ul-Dzjinn, the new Premier, and a staunch pro-Ally, is expected to speak with no uncertain voice. Unfortunately serious liquorice riots have broken out in the capital, and these are being cunningly used by German agents to turn popular discontent against the Allies. Fraeulein von Schlimm, a niece by marriage of the acting Montenegrin Envoy, is accused of purposely hoarding five hundred sticks of "Spanish" so as to aggravate the crisis. The usually reliable correspondent of *The Salt Lake City Morning Pioneer* telegraphs (*via* Tomsk) that she only escaped lynching by distributing her treasure to the mob.

In a similar way economic issues are determining the attitude of Thibet. Prices in Lhasa are rising fabulously. The new Food Controller is endeavouring to grapple with the situation, and the yak ration has again been reduced. It behoves British diplomacy to see that the ensuing discontent is not turned into Germanophil currents. Where is our Foreign Office? What is being done? We are in the third year of the War and yet, while the German Minister is distributing free arrowroot to the populace, Whitehall slumbers on. It may be nothing to our mandarins that a full platoon was added to the Thibetan field-strength only last week, and that the Government dinghy is already watertight.

Later. Paraguay's attitude is now defined as one of Stark Neutrality. Patagonia has increased her army by fifty per cent. The new recruit promises to make an excellent fighting unit.

* * * * *

In A good cause.

Page 5

Mr. Punch begs to call attention to a Great Lottery of Paintings, Drawings, Sculptures, etc., by many of the chief British artists of the day and of earlier schools, which is being organised, by licence of the Board of Trade, in aid of the St. Dunstan's Hostels for Blinded Soldiers and Sailors. These works of art (including many by Mr. Punch's artists) will be exhibited at the Bazaar which is being held this week at the Royal Albert Hall in aid of the same splendid cause. After May 10th they may be seen at the Chenil Galleries. Tickets for the Lottery (5s.) are to be obtained from Mr. Kinton Parkes, The Chenil Galleries, 183A, King's Road, Chelsea, S.W. The drawing of the Lottery Prizes will take place on July 10th at St. Dunstan's Hostel, Regent's Park.

* * * * *

Mr. Punch also commends to his kind readers the claims of "Lamp Day," which is to be celebrated in London on Friday, May 11th, and in the suburbs on May 12th, the birthday of *Florence Nightingale*. The proceeds are to be divided between the Women's Service Bureau, which registers and trains women for national employment, and the Scottish Women's Hospitals, whose London units are doing gallant work with the Serbian division of the Russian Army in Roumania. Each of these is a cause that would have appealed to the heart of the "Lady of the Lamp," devoted pioneer of Women's Service both at home and in the field. Those who live outside the Metropolitan area are begged to send a little money to the Hon. Treasurer of Lamp Day, Lady COWDRAY, 16, Carlton House Terrace, S.W. Cheques and Postal Orders to be crossed "London County and Westminster Bank, Victoria Branch."

* * * * *

[Illustration: DONNERWETTER.

Hindenburg: "Whichever comes out, it's rotten weather for me!"]

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Lidy (referring to Court Rival)*. "I won't 'ARF give 'er SOMEFINK when I see 'er—LEARNIN' 'er BLOOMIN' kids to swank past my Door SUCKIN' SUGAR—like BLINKIN' PLUTERCRATS."]

* * * * *

Told to the Marines.

This is the yarn wot Sergeant Wells
O' 'Is Majesty's Marine
Told in the mess 'bout seven bells—
'E's the skipper's servant an' knows a lot;



An' I don't say it's true and I don't say it's not,
But it easily might 'ave been.

"'Twas in the fust few months o' the War,
An' the vessel wot I was on
Was layin' a couple of cables from shore;
I'd pulled to the steps in the scullin' boat
To get some thread for the skipper's coat
Where the seam of the arm 'ad gone.

"I was driftin' back on the fallin' tide,
And feeling a trifle queer,
When somethin' grated agin the side;
I sat up straight and I scratched my 'ead;
'There ain't no rocks round 'ere,' I said,
'It must 'ave bin all that beer.'



Page 6

"When suddenly close on my starboard beam,
With scarcely a foot between
(I can see it now like an 'ijjus dream),
Rearin' its 'ead like a pisonous snake
Was a periscope, an' I saw the wake
Of a big 'Un submarine.

"An' I knew the ship was an easy mark,
Like shootin' a sittin' 'en,
For the sky was bright an' 'er 'ull was dark
With the 'ole of 'er broadside showin' clear—
Couldn't 'ave missed, she was layin' so near,
If 'e 'd got 'er bearin's then.

"I saw 'is cruel little eye
A-swivellin' stem to starn;
'Now, Wells,' I ses, 'you must do or die,'
So I crammed my cap a-top o' the slit
And lashed it fast in place with a bit,
Wot I'd pinched, of the bo'sun's yarn.

"'E was blinded, of course, an' 'e sank like a stone,
Which was all that the blighter could do,
An' I 'urried to speak to the skipper alone;
I found 'im pacin' the quarter-deck,
An' I told 'im the truth in every respec'
The same as I'm tellin' you.

"Well, 'e looked me up an' 'e looked me down
Till I felt my cheeks go warm,
For I knowed there was somethin' adrift by 'is frown;
Then 'e closed 'is jaw with a wicious snap;
'Where,' ses 'e, 'is your perishin' cap?
Do you call that uniform?.'

"An' so long as Brittanyer is queen of the sea,
Which is wot she 'as always bin,
You may do your dooty as well as me,
But you won't 'ave no credit at all for the same
Unless you give 'eed to the rules of the game,
Which is Service Discipline."

* * * * *

Our POLYGAMISTS.

“The bride carried a sheaf of harem lilies and orchids.”—*Provincial Paper*.

* * * * *

[Illustration: WAR-TIME IN THE WILD WEST.

POSTMORTEM PETE APPEARS BEFORE THE LONE GULCH TRIBUNAL TO PLEAD
FOR
EXEMPTION ON CONSCIENTIOUS GROUNDS.]

* * * * *

DOCKING THE DRAMA.

It has been reported that, in view of the necessity for restricting the consumption of artificial illuminant, the authorities propose drastically to curtail the duration of theatrical entertainments. Should this prove to be the case, we venture to anticipate certain further regulations that may shortly be added to those already printed upon the programmes:—

(1) Every possible effort must be made to reduce the two-and-a-half hours' traffic of the stage to one hour-and-a-half. With this purpose it is enacted that—

(2) No reference to any supposed events prior to the commencement of the action will be permitted in the dialogue. All such particulars as may be essential to an understanding of the plot must be legibly printed upon the programmes.

(3) No performer to take more than thirty-five seconds in quitting the stage. Backward looks and doorway pauses forbidden (provided always that nothing in this section shall apply to the case of an actor-manager when surrendering heroine to youthful rival).

Page 7

(4) All applause, except at the fall of the curtain, to be instantly suppressed by ushers appointed for that purpose.

(5) Friend-of-the-Family parts to be restricted to one illustrative anecdote and one advisory monologue, neither to exceed three-and-a-half minutes in delivery.

In addition, the Limelight Control Committee furnishes us with the following scale of allowances and restrictions under a new clause of the Defence of the Realm Act:—

DRAMA.—The duration of the employment of limelight in Drama may be as follows:—

During eviction of heroine into snowstorm, allowance of one beam for a reasonable period not to exceed one minute.

For death of infant-phenomenon, double-beam lasting two minutes; supplementary allowance for angelic vision subsequent to same.

Embrace of hero and heroine at curtain fall, double-beam, two-and-a-half minutes.

FARCE AND COMEDY.—It is regretted that, in view of the situation, no allowances of limelight can at present be sanctioned.

MUSICAL PLAYS AND REVUES.—Patriotic or Hortatory Songs may be accompanied by four beams, with supplementary allowance for encore verses. (N.B. In these cases application should be supported by a recommendation from the particular Government Department, War Office. Admiralty, or Ministry of Munitions, extolled in the proposed ballad.)

Ethiopian Serenades, hitherto given by the light of (apparently) two full-moons, must be restricted to one beam, of reduced candle-power, thus combining realism with economy.

* * * * *

THE MYSTERIES OF ARBORICULTURE.

From an American Nursery Company's pamphlet:—

“Practise thinning in the winter time and head back in the summer. A tree can be kept bearing practically regular crops. Of course, it is impossible to keep any tree bearing practically regular crops, but, of course, it is impossible to keep any tree bearing a full crop regularly. Wonders can be done by this system of pruning.”

We can well believe this.

* * * * *

“‘Wild Foods of Great Britain,’ with 46 figs. 1s. 6d. net.”—*“Times” Literary Supplement*.

With fruit at present prices the figs alone should be worth the money.

* * * * *

HINTS TO GROSVENOR HOUSE.

Mr. Punch is not more free from correspondents who know how to solve the food problem than other papers are.

The following six letters have been selected with care from some thousand and three received during the week. The others are at the service of any enterprising editor, or Lord DEVONPORT can have them if he will send a waggon to take them away. They should make pleasant week-end reading.

AN EXCELLENT SUGGESTION.

SIR,—What we plain men want to know and what we are entitled to know is—What does Lord DEVONPORT eat? What does Mr. KENNEDY-JONES eat? What does Mr. ALFRED BUTT eat? It would make a vast difference to the success of the food campaign if each of these administrators was visible at his meals, doing himself extremely ill. I suggest that a prominent shop window should be taken for each, and they should have their luncheon and dinner there in full view of the public.

Page 8

Yours, *etc.*,
COMMON SENSE.

THE POWER OF BRITISH HUMOUR.

SIR,—If the Food Economy posters were more carefully thought out the trick would be done. I suggest, for example, something really pithy and witty, such as—

IT IS NOT ENOUGH
FOR
ONE OR TWO DAYS
TO BE
MEATLESS DAYS.
YOU SHOULD SEE
THAT ALL DAYS
ARE
EAT-LESS DAYS.

Something like that would soon drive the fear of England into the [unprintable word] Germans.

Yours, *etc.*,
DOWNRIGHT.

TO MASTER THE ROLLS.

SIR,—My experience is that all rolls are too big. I personally can get through a meal comfortably with only half the fat roll that is automatically put before me at most of the restaurants. Let Lord DEVONPORT decree a roll just half the size, and the difference both in consumption and waste will be enormous. At a dinner-party which I attended the other evening, not, Sir, a hundred miles from your own office, the excessive size of the rolls was the subject of much comment. No one should be given the opportunity of leaving any bread. It should be doled out in the smallest doses.

Yours, *etc.*,
OBSERVER.

THE USE OF ABUSE.

SIR,—The real trouble with the food economy campaign is that ordinary people, who perhaps, not unnaturally, have got into the habit of not believing the daily papers, do not realise what their enemy and the chief enemy of the country at this moment is—I mean

the German submarine. In order to get this fact into their intelligence I suggest that free classes in oburgation are at once instituted, in which, instead of the common “You beast!” “You brute!” “You blighter!” and so forth, the necessity of saying nothing but “You (U) boat!” in every dispute or quarrel is insisted upon. The young might also be thus instructed.

Yours, *etc.*,
FAR SIGHTED.

WRIT SARCASTIC.

SIR,—I have an infallible plan for diminishing the consumption of good food, at any rate among Members of the Government. Let them give up all other forms of nutriment and eat their own words. The PRIME MINISTER might begin. I am,

Yours, *etc.*,
ORGANISED OPPOSITION.

“FOOD HOGS” SUPERSEDED.

SIR,—I am told that there are people so lost to shame that they are still, in spite of the KING’S Proclamation and all the other appeals to their patriotism, eating as usual. I suggest that they be branded as the “Alimentary Canaille.”

Yours, *etc.*,
DISGUSTED.

* * * * *

“Sir G. Cornwall Lewis made the best speeches in the moist manner.”—*British Weekly*.

Page 9

We had always understood till now that he was one of our dry speakers.

* * * * *

“Mr. R. M’Neill was surprised that the hon. member should have thought it worth while to make a point of that sort. Surely he knew the rule ‘Qui facit per alium facit perse.’”—*The Times*.

The maxim seems to have jammed.

* * * * *

“Mr. Bonar Law replied: ‘The Imperial War Cabinet is both executive and consultative, its functions being regulated by the nature of the subject of the Bandman Opera Coy.’”—*The Empire (Calcutta)*.

As one of the subjects of the Company (according to its advertised programme) is a piece entitled “The Rotters,” we feel confident that Mr. BONAR LAW has been misreported.

* * * * *

TROOP HORSES.

Through lingering long months idle
They have kept you ready and fit,
All shining from hock to bridle,
All burnished from hoof to bit;
The set of your silk coat’s beauty,
The lie of its lightest hair,
Was an anxious trooper’s duty
And a watchful captain’s care.

Not the keenest eye could discover
The sign of the sloth on you,
From the last mane-lock laid over
To the last nail tight in the shoe;
A blast, and your ranks stood ready;
A shout, and your saddles filled;
A wave, and your troop was ready
To wheel where the leaders willed.

“Fine-drawn and fit to the buckle!”
Was your confident Colonel’s pride,
And the faith of the lads—“Our luck’ll



Come back when the Spring winds ride;"
And, dropping their quaint oaths drolly,
They dragged their spurs in the mire,
Till the Western Front woke slowly
And they won to their hearts' desire.

They loose you now to the labours
That the needs of the hour reveal,
And you carry the proud old sabres
To cross with a tarnished steel;
So, steady—and keep position—
And stout be your hearts to-day,
As you shoulder the old tradition
And charge in the ancient way!

W.H.O.

* * * * *

MORE ZOO NOTES.

Raw sugar, Captain BATHURST states, cannot be sold on account of the presence of the sugar louse. It is thought that Mr. POCOCK, who has so successfully brought the Zoo's rations into conformity with war conditions, might probably persuade the animal to live on hemp seed.

* * * * *

"Changes in the Zoo's dietary," says Mr. POCOCK, "were effected without difficulty." The rumour that the hippopotamus demanded a pailful of jam with its mangel-wurzels, in the belief that they were some kind of homoeopathic pill, appears to have been baseless.

Page 10

* * * * *

In order to assist the many fine specimens of moth in the Insect House, it is reported that several actor-managers owning fur coats have offered them a good home.

* * * * *

The birds of paradise are no longer fed on beetroot. Since the all-red root has been denied them they protest against being called birds of paradise, and wish to be known simply as “birds.”

* * * * *

[Illustration: OUR PERSEVERING OFFICIALS;

OR, THE RECRUIT THAT WAS PASSED AT THE THIRTEENTH EXAMINATION.]

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Private Saunders (whose battalion, having been sent back from the front line for “rest,” is compelled to spend the night in the street, its billets being still occupied by other troops—to cheery pal, who breaks into song). “USH, GINGER—YOU’LL GIVE THE TOWN A BAD NAME.”*]

* * * * *

WHITEHALL WHISPERINGS.

(With apologies to the seers of the Sunday papers.)

A great port was swathed in bunting last week. I was there, but I must not say what caused this outburst of enthusiasm. But even the Censor can scarcely forbid my hinting that it was connected with a naval success of peculiar brilliance which must be suppressed because we wish to keep the Bosches guessing.

* * * * *

Who was in Switzerland when he was regularly reported as being in attendance at War Council meetings? Who was actually supposed to have addressed a public meeting in England when in reality he was hundreds of miles away? I make no statement; I merely write the word “Austria.” To those who understand it will be enough.

* * * * *

Have you noticed that for some weeks we have had no news from the Port of Danzig? I draw no deduction, but do not be surprised to hear in a few weeks that the Port of Danzig has ceased to exist.

* * * * *

There is grave trouble at Scotland Yard. A Hun Colonel captured at Arras was found to have in his pocket a receipted bill from a London hotel of the previous week's date. It would surprise you very much if I told you at which hotel "Mr. Perkins" stayed and what guests he entertained there.

* * * * *

Why did the Liberian envoy call at the Foreign Office six times last week? His explanation, offered to an inquiring Pressman, that he had lost an umbrella, was naive, to say the least. I must not betray what I know, but I may hint that KING FERDINAND of Bulgaria is famous for the devious ways in which he carries on negotiations.

* * * * *

A neutral diplomatist of considerable importance has never taken a holiday since the War began, and has always told his friends that he will never leave his post till peace comes. On an afternoon this week he was seen with beaming face buying a travelling rug and two portable trunks at one of London's largest emporia. I wonder—yes, I wonder.

Page 11

* * * * *

[*The Editor*. You are not very spicy this week.

The Contributor. Nor would you be if you had been confined to the house at Peckham Rye with influenza. Better work next week. I have an appointment to lunch with a member of the National Liberal Club and shall get right to the heart of things.]

* * * * *

Extract from Army Orders at the Front:—

“A C. of E. Chaplain will shortly join the Heavy Artillery.
Please make arrangements for him to be accommodated in the ——
Heavy Battery Horse Lines.”

The nearest thing that could be got, we suppose, to a Canon’s stall.

* * * * *

“As approved up to date, the bread ticket will comprise four squares, each entitling the holder to purchase two ounces of bread; or, by presenting the whole ticket, two quartern loaves of 4 lb. each.”—*Birmingham Daily Mail*.

Mr. Punch, though yielding in patriotism to no one, has already decided to present the whole ticket.

* * * * *

From a letter by “Retired Diplomat” on “Maize Bread”:—

“To obtain this result the hard yellow husk must be separated
from the soft white core, as does the parrot, and the latter
alone retained for baking purposes.”—*Evening Paper*.

As in these days no means of increasing the supply of food-stuffs should be neglected, we have much pleasure in passing on “Retired Diplomat’s” suggestion to the authorities of the Zoo. Personally we prefer Cockatoo *en casserole*.

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE PRICE OF VICTORY.

“WELL, OLD GIRL, IF WE CAN’T DO THAT MUCH, WE DON’T DESERVE TO WIN.”]

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ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

Monday, April 30th.—After this week Newmarket will be “a blasted heath,” for all horse-racing is to be stopped. Irish Members could hardly believe the dreadful news. What are the hundred thousand young men who refuse to for their country to do with their spare time?

Scotch Members, on the contrary, were rather pleased. Mr. DUNCAN MILLAR, whose desire to deprive his countrymen of their national beverage is only equalled by his zeal on behalf of their national food, rejoiced in the prospect that fewer oats for high-mettled racers would mean more “parritch” for humble constituents.

[Illustration: THE PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF THE LADIES’ GRILLE.

The SPEAKER and Sir A. MOND (together). “AFTER YOU, SIR.”]

Page 12

There never was a dockyard Member who more faithfully fulfilled the House of Commons' conception of the type than Sir CLEMENT KINLOCH-COOKE. In a comparatively short Parliamentary career he must have already cost the country a pretty penny in extra pay and pensions to the "mateys" and "matlows" of Devonport. Latterly he has given the Admiralty a rest and has devoted himself to strafing the Home Office for its alleged tenderness to the Conscientious Objectors lodged at Princetown—a race of sturdy beggars, according to his account, who live like fighting-cocks, do next to no work, get leave periodically to air their eloquence at pacifist meetings, and, worst of all, invade his constituency in their leisure hours. Mr. SHIRLEY BENN, who represents the neighbouring borough of Plymouth, supported this indictment, and added the amazing detail that one of the Princetown pacifists was an ex-pugilist.

[Illustration: THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER LYING IN WAIT FOR A RICH PRIZE.]

Invited to select from the 670 members of the House the two men least likely to engage in personal violence I should have thought myself safe in choosing Sir GEORGE GREENWOOD and Mr. JOSEPH KING. The former is so devoted to animals that he would not turn upon a worm; the thought of bloodshed so shocks the latter that he welcomes any suggestion of peace however illusory. But, when Mr. KING described a proposal of Sir GEORGE'S as "infected with Prussianism," that gallant knight promptly invited him to repeat his language outside the House; and Mr. KING, nothing daunted, declared his readiness "to meet the hon. Member where he likes and with whatever weapons he likes." If the meeting had come off it is believed that Blue Books at forty yards would have been the choice; but, happily, peace was soon afterwards restored.

Tuesday, May 1st.—Some of our super-patriots have no luck. Mr. JOYNSON-HICKS, having discovered that the British Vice-Consul at Riga was a gentleman with the suspicious name of WISKEMANN, thought that he had got hold of a sure thing—not the whole Hidden Hand, perhaps, but certainly one of the phalanges. And then down came Lord ROBERT CECIL with the information that the gentleman in question was not only British-born but was a product of Wellington and Cambridge, and a public servant in whom the Foreign Office had the utmost confidence. "Foiled again," muttered HICKS to JOYNSON, "but a time will come!"

Like the retired soap-boiler who always looked in on melting-days Lord HARCOURT could not resist the attraction of the Office of Works' Vote. He never displayed his ability more signally than in the rapidity and ease with which he used as First Commissioner to get his Estimates through the House. It was a treat to hear him poking fun at the bores, demolishing the captious and humouring the serious critics of his administration. His present successor goes about his business in a more stolid way. In his hands the rapier has become a ploughshare.

Page 13

At first the few Members who stayed to listen found him *Le Mond qui nous ennuie*, but he woke them up later with the startling announcement that he can, if he likes, with a stroke of the pen remove the ladies' grille, and admit the fair visitors to a full view of the House, and, what is more important, admit the House to a full view of the fair visitors. For the moment, I gather, he means to hold his hand, pending full consideration of all the changes that such a revolution may involve. Besides, the SPEAKER may have to be consulted, although up to the present he has exhibited no desire to rush in where angels—bless them!—love to tread.

Wednesday, May 2nd.—Curiosity to hear Mr. BONAR LAW'S first Budget-speech caused a full House. The Peers attended in force, and among the distinguished strangers was "Dr. JIM," a man of action who, as a rule, takes little interest in the men of talk.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER'S Budget statement was praised by his predecessor for its ability and lucidity. Personally, I thought rapidity was its most notable characteristic. Unhampered by manuscript (save a couple of sheets of notepaper containing a few of the principal figures) and relying upon his exceptional memory, he rattled through his thousand-million totals at such a pace that my panting pencil toiled after him in vain. In seventy-five minutes by the clock he spoke four solid columns of *The Times*.

As we have failed to drink ourselves out of our difficulties, for the Excise returns show a steady falling off, we are to do our bit towards smoking ourselves out of them by paying 1s. 10d. a pound more on our tobacco. This last impost constitutes a real piece of self-denial on the CHANCELLOR'S part, for he is much addicted to cigars both long and strong, somewhat resembling those which enabled Mr. W.J. TRAVIS to carry off the Amateur Golf Championship to America.

Thursday, May 3rd.—The secrets of the Budget were so well kept that Mr. LAW himself forgot the most important of them until to-day. In future it will be a case of "one man (or woman) one dog," unless the owner is prepared to pay on an ascending scale for his extra pets. In our fight with Germany we must neglect no precaution however small. To get the KAISER back to his kennel we will, if necessary, empty our own. Doggedness is essential to victory, but not over-doggedness. Then let us, in CALVERLEY'S phrase, "curtail the already cur-tailed cur."

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[Illustration: A CADET'S DAY.

9 A.M.—SAD BAGS. 7 P.M.—GLAD RAGS.]

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A MINISTERIAL WAIL.

["The most trenchant critics of the Government since its formation have been Mr. PRINGLE and Mr. HOGGE."—*British Weekly*].

The gipsy camping in a dingle
I reckon as a lucky dog;
He doesn't hear the voice of PRINGLE,
He doesn't hear the snorts of HOGGE.

Page 14

The moujik crouching in his ingle
Somewhere near Tomsk or Taganrog
I envy; he is far from PRINGLE
And equally remote from HOGGE.

I find them deadly when they're single,
But deadlier in the duologue,
When the insufferable PRINGLE
Backs the intolerable HOGGE.

I'd rather walk for miles on shingle
Or flounder knee-deep in a bog
Than listen to a speech from PRINGLE
Or hearken to the howls of HOGGE.

Their tyrannous exactions mingle
The vices of Kings Stork and Log;
One day I give the palm to PRINGLE,
The next I offer it to HOGGE.

The style of *Mr. Alfred Jingle*
Was jumpy, but he did not clog
His sense with woolly words, like PRINGLE,
With priggish petulance, like HOGGE.

I'd love to see the *Bing Boys* bingle,
To go to music-halls *incog.*,
Instead of being posed by PRINGLE
And heckled by the hateful HOGGE.

My appetite is gone; I "plinge"
(As Norfolk puts it) with my prog;
My meals are marred by thoughts of PRINGLE,
My sleep is massacred by HOGGE.

O patriots, with your nerves a-tingle,
With all your righteous souls agog,
Will none of you demolish PRINGLE
And utterly extinguish HOGGE?

* * * * *

OF MARGARINE: *C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas le beurre.*

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Friend (to animal painter)*. “I SAY, OLD CHAP, YOU LOOK A BIT OFF COLOUR TO-DAY.”

Artist. “YES, I AM. I CAN’T DO A STROKE OF WORK.”

Friend. “ONE OF YOUR MEATLESS DAYS, IN FACT.”]

* * * * *

THE MUD LARKS.

IN the long long-ago, Frobisher and I, assisted by a handful of native troopers, kept the flag flying at M’Vini.

We hoisted it to the top of a tree at sun-up, where it remained, languidly flapping its tatters over leagues of Central African bush till sun-set, when we hauled it down again—an arduous life. After we had been at M’Vini about six months, had shot everything worth shooting, and knew one another’s funny stories off by heart, Frobisher and I grew bored with each other, hated in fact the sight, sound and mere propinquity of each other, and, shutting ourselves up in our separate huts, communicated only on occasions of the direct necessity, and then by the curtest of official notes. Thus a further three months dragged on.

Then one red-hot afternoon came Frobisher’s boy to my wattle-and-dab, bearing a note.

“Visitor approaching from S.W. got up like a May-Queen; think it must be the KAISER. Lend me a bottle of whisky and mount guard—must impress the blighter.”

Page 15

I attached my last bottle of Scotch to the messenger and sallied forth to mount a guard, none too easy a job, as the Army had gone to celebrate somebody's birthday in the neighbouring village. However, I discovered one remaining trooper lying in the shade of a loquat-tree. He was sick—dying, he assured me; but I persuaded him to postpone his demise for at least half-an-hour, requisitioned his physician (the local witch doctor) and two camp followers, and, leaving my cook-boy to valet them, dashed to my hut to make my own toilet. A glimpse through the cane mats five minutes later showed me that our visitors had arrived.

A fruity German officer in full gala rig (white gloves and all) was cruising about on mule-back before our camp, trying to discover whether it was inhabited or not. We let him cruise for a quarter of an hour without taking any steps to enlighten him. Then, at a given signal, Frobisher, caparisoned in every fal-lal he could collect, issued from his hut, and I turned out the improvised guard. A stirring spectacle; and it had the desired effect, for the German afterwards admitted to being deeply impressed, especially by the local wizard, who paraded in his professional regalia, and, coming to cross-purposes with his rifle, bayoneted himself and wept bitterly. The ceremonies over and the casualty removed we adjourned to Frobisher's *kya*, broached the whisky and sat about in solemn state, stiff with accoutrements, sodden with perspiration. Our visitor kept the Red, White and Black flying on a tree over the border, he explained; this was his annual ceremonial call. He sighed and brushed the sweat from his nose with the tips of a white glove—"the weather was warm, *nicht wahr?*" I admitted that we dabbled in flag-flying ourselves and that the weather was all he claimed for it (which effort cost me about four pounds in weight). Tongues lolling, flanks heaving, we discussed the hut-tax, the melon crop, the monkey-nut market, the nigger—and the weather again.

Suddenly Frobisher sprang up, cast loose the shackles of his Sam Browne, hurled it into a corner, and began tearing at his tunic hooks. I stared at him in amazement—such manners before visitors. But our immaculate guest leapt to his feet with a roar like a freed lion, and, stripping his white gloves, flung them after the Sam Browne, whereupon a fury of undressing came upon us. Helmets, belts, tunics, shirts were piled into the corner, until at length we stood in our underclothes, laughing and unashamed. After that we got on famously, that Teuton and we, and three days later, when he swarmed aboard his mule and left home (in pyjamas this time) it was with real regret we waved him farewell.

But not for long. Within a month we were surprised by a hail from the bush, and there was Otto, mule, pyjamas and all.

"Ullo, 'ullo, 'ullo!" he carolled. "'Ere gomes ze Sherman invasion! Durn out ze guard!" He roared with laughter, fell off his palfrey and bawled for his batman, who ambled up balancing a square box on his woolly pate.

Page 16

His mother in Munich had sent him a case of Lion Brew, Otto explained, so he had brought it along.

We wassailed deep into that night and out the other side, and we liked our Otto more than ever. We had plenty in common, the same loneliness, fevers, climate, and niggers to wrestle with; moreover he had been in England, and liked it; he smoked a pipe; he washed. Also, as he privily confided to us in the young hours of one morning, he had his doubts as to the divinity of the KAISER, and was not quite convinced that RICHARD STRAUSS had composed the music of the spheres.

He was a bad Hun (which probably accounted for his presence at the uttermost, hottermost edge of the ALL-HIGHEST'S dominions), but a good fellow. Anyhow, we liked him, Frobisher and I; liked his bull-mouthed laughter, his drinking songs and full-blooded anecdotes, and, on the occasions of his frequent visits, put our boredom from us, pretended to be on the most affectionate terms, and even laughed uproariously at each other's funny stories. Up at M'Vini, in the long long-ago, the gleam of pyjamas amongst the loquats, and "'Ere gomes ze Sherman invasion!" booming through the bush, became a signal for general good-will.

In the fulness of time Otto went home on leave, and, shortly afterwards, the world blew up.

And now I have met him again, a sodden, muddy, bloody, shrunken, saddened Otto, limping through a snowstorm in the custody of a Canadian Corporal. He was the survivor of a rear-guard, the Canuck explained, and had "scrapped like a bag of wild-cats" until knocked out by a rifle butt. As for Otto himself, he hadn't much to say; he looked old, cold, sick and infinitely disgusted. He had always been a poor Hun.

Only once did he show a gleam of his ancient form of those old hot, happy, pyjama days on the Equator.

A rabble of prisoners—Jaegers, Grenadiers, Uhlans, what-nots—came trudging down the road, an unshorn, dishevelled herd of cut-throats, propelled by a brace of diminutive kilties, who paused occasionally to treat them to snatches of flings and to hoot triumphantly.

Otto regarded his fallen compatriots with disgusted lack-lustre eyes, then turning to me with a ghost of his old smile, "'Ere gomes ze Sherman invasion," said he.

* * * * *

CAUTIONARY TALES FOR THE ARMY.

II.

(Second-Lieutenant Humphrey Spence, who was slightly wounded through a lack of a proper sense of the rights of rank.)

Second-Lieutenant Humphrey Spence
Had no idea of precedence;
To him his Colonel was no more
Than any other messroom bore;
And he would try to make a pal
Not merely of a General,
But even a horrified non-com
He'd greet with "Tiddly-om-pom-pom!"
Although in other ways quite nice,
He was perverted by this vice.

Page 17

For instance, once he had to tea
A private in the A.S.C.,
And asked to meet him Cathcart-Crewe,
A Major in the Horse Guards Blue.
Too frequently did it occur
That, when a senior officer
Was with him, he would up and take
Salutes from privates. Why, he'd shake
Even Sir DOUGLAS by the hand
And say, "Old chap, you're doing grand."

This sort of thing caused some distress
Among the members of his mess.
He often took the Colonel's chair;
He often flourished in the air
His water-glass (when wine was scanty),
And shouted, "Cheero, Adjutanty!"
You see, he simply had no sense
Of military precedence.

His regiment went out to France
To help a general advance.
Now in a minute they must hop
Like billy-o across the top.
Amid the din the Colonel said,
"It will be hellish overhead.
Machine-guns will let loose a jet
Of bullets on the parapet;
We'll meet a burst of rifle fire,
And, as for shells, I don't desire
To see in so confined a space
A thicker lot than we shall face.
Now, gentlemen, attend, I pray—
When we attack, I lead the way!"

Now wouldn't anyone concur,
Saying at once, "With pleasure, Sir!"
Nor with undisciplined delight
Baulk the good Colonel of his right?
Not so young Spence. The moment came,

And, heedless of the cries of "Shame!"
He never offered *once* to wait
Until the Colonel, more sedate,
Had scrambled o'er the parapet,
But got there first—and promptly met
A bullet.... *Folk who arrogate
The privileges of the great
Must take what ills thereto attach*
(The Colonel never got a scratch).

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[Illustration: *Distracted Wife*. "OH, ALFRED—THE POTATO-PATCH!"]

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"KAMERAD!"

"Baby Girl, 18 months, will surrender entirely to good home."—*Daily Paper*.

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"The Archdeacon of Stow thought it was a good maxim not to
argue with the huntsmen while shooting the rabbits, and moved
the previous question."—*Morning Post*.

If you want a real argument with a huntsman (of the ante-bellum type) you should try
shooting a fox.

* * * * *

Consecutive paragraphs from *The Continental Daily Mail*:—

"Mr. Arthur J. Balfour, like President Wilson, is an ardent golfer. He has challenged Mr. Wilson to a match, and the President of the United States immediately took him up. The match will be played in a few days." "Every able-bodied man and woman found golfing at the present time should be taken by the scruff of the neck and made to do some work of national importance," said Mr. Waldie at the Edinburgh Parish Council."

So that's that.

Page 18

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SCHOOL.

During the past week there has taken place, almost without our knowledge, a great migration of boys. From their homes, out on to the roads and railways, has been pouring a flood of big boys, middle-sized boys, small boys, old boys, new boys, all tending towards the various schools where they are supposed to make all the best parts of human knowledge their own and to live a life of dignified abstraction from the troubles of the world, in the midst of their own *argot* and their own special traditions.

Of the big boys and the middle-sized boys I have little to say. They are already imbued, if one may say so, with the influence of their school, and can hold their own with the masters and their fellow-boys. Much as they enjoy their holidays, they show no undue reluctance to take up again the burden of their studies at a place which they will afterwards consider as having given them some of the happiest days of their lives. Many of them indeed are already or are in process of becoming the trusted coadjutors of the headmaster and his colleagues in the work of maintaining good order and discipline in the school. They are monitors—tremendous word!—or prefects or praepostors, and their *mitis sapientia*, no less than their muscular strength, causes them to be feared and venerated.

Of such awful beings one must not speak lightly lest some terrific fate reserved for scoffers overtake one. No, my concern at present is rather with the little boys who have gone up for the first time to their preparatory school, those forlorn scraps of humanity who are beginning a life entirely new to them in all its details. Hitherto, except for visits to the seaside with their parents and family, they have not spent a night away from home. Now they are separated from their parents and plunged into a world of perfect strangers. Everything is done to make them at ease and comfortable in their new surroundings; the headmaster is kindness itself, the matron beams on them with smiles and fortifies them with encouragement; but just at first the wrench for the little fellows is great. In a day or two, however, they will begin to acclimatise themselves; the strangeness will begin to wear off; and having borne up bravely against their first sense of loneliness in the midst of a crowd they will gradually become parts of the machine to the making of which many gentle and sympathising hands for years past have contributed.

“Schools are not what they were,” says one of my friends. “There is no bullying nowadays and little roughness of any kind. Masters are not looked upon as the natural enemies of boys. Corporal punishment, except for the gravest offences, is abolished. Whereas, formerly, little boys were at once sucked into the vortex of a Public School, there are now Preparatory Schools, where Tommie and Dickie and Harry, aged from nine to ten, learn the business of Public Schooling in a manner suited to their age and capacity. When we were boys,” he continues, “these admirable buffer states were so

few that they might almost be said not to exist at all; they now flourish everywhere. The path of the little boy is thus made easier for him.”

Page 19

"But," I said, "is a little boy, then, never brought to a sense of his unimportance by being physically, if not morally, kicked? Is he to pass his life in a condition of Sybaritic softness?"

"You need not," he said, "worry about that. Softness makes no appeal to the average English boy."

When therefore, on a day in last week, it happened to me to take a little boy I happen to know to his Preparatory School on his first day of his first term there, I did so with no undue depression. "Be a good boy," I said to him; "never tell a lie, never push yourself forward, and don't swank about yourself." It was good advice so far as it went, but it did not make any great impression on him, for he only answered, "Of course," or "Of course I shan't," to every item that I put before him. I wonder how many fathers have recently inculcated these and similar high-toned principles on their little boys, only to meet with the same uninterested acquiescence. And even our parting was not so dejected as it might have been, for by that time another new boy had come upon the scene, and he and mine had been irresistibly drawn to one another, and were chatting gaily when it was time for me to go.

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[Illustration: THE CELEBRITY.

THIS IS BILLY SMIFF, 'IM WOT REMEMBERS THE TIME WHEN THERE WASN'T NO WAR.]

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CHILDREN'S TALES FOR GROWN-UPS.

IX.

THE UNWRITTEN TREATY.

"Be careful," said the worm to the slug, "there is one of those nasty birds over there. What ugly things they are!"

"Not half so ugly as men. Ugh!" said the slug.

"Men are big, not ugly. They don't eat worms."

"But they cut them in two with spades."



“Only by accident. There is nothing so ugly as a bloated over-grown bird eating a slender delicate worm.”

“Except,” said the slug, “a monstrous man crushing a tender slug under his clumsy hoofs. Birds I can tolerate. They are not so big as men.”

“But they hop quicker and eat more for their size,” said the worm.

“Not slugs, they don’t eat slugs. We have a treaty with the birds, you know.”

“Was it signed?” asked the worm.

“There was no need. You see it is a matter of convenience. We don’t get eaten, and the birds don’t get their beaks slimy.”

“Convenience is a great thing,” said the worm, “but it isn’t everything. Well, good-bye; I am going in till the bird goes.”

“And I am staying out till the man comes.”

“Slugs are nasty slimy things,” said the thrush, “but in these hard times one must eat what one can get,” and he swallowed the slug with a wry face.

* * * * *

WELL-MEANT.

Extract from a New Zealand school-boy’s letter:—

Page 20

“We also had songs, the College song, and the Harrow School song, for the special benifit (*sic*) of the Governor, who is an Etonian.”

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[Illustration: *_Motor-Launch Officer_ (who has rung for full-speed without result).*
“WHAT’S THE MATTER?”

Voice from below. “ONE OF THE CYLINDERS IS MISSING, SIR.”

Commander. “WELL, LOOK SHARP AND FIND THE BALLY THING—WE WANT TO GET ON.”]

* * * * *

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

I was some way into *Thorgills of Treadholt* (WARD, LOCK), thinking what an unusually plausible and imaginative yarn it was, when I turned back for possible enlightenment, and found a note to the effect that it was a transcription of an Icelandic saga. Those old fellows knew their business. I am not sagacious enough to guess where Mr. MAURICE HEWLETT has passed beyond transcription to creation, but I can tell you that he offers his readers a very charming and finished piece of work. Boys of all ages should delight in this record of the fights and wanderings and stout diplomacy of the chieftain *Thorgills*, who was destined from his cradle to be a notable leader of men. His marriage with *Thorey* was a romance of as exquisite a flavour as any that our sophisticated age can show, and its tragic end wrings the heart with its infinite pathos. By some singular discretion Mr. HEWLETT has chosen to eschew the least approach to Wardour-Street idiom, and this gives the narrative a simplicity, a sanity and a vivid sense of reality which are extraordinarily more effective than the goodliest tushery, of which flamboyant art Mr. HEWLETT is no mean master. I am sure he has chosen this time a more excellent way. There are transcriptions and transcriptions. This is brilliantly done.

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I cannot help regretting that Miss RHODA BROUGHTON has not thought fit to publish her total fictional tonnage (if without disrespect I may employ a metaphor of the moment) on the title-page of her latest volume. Certainly the tale of her output must by this time reach impressive dimensions. And the wonder is that *A Thorn in the Flesh* (STANLEY PAUL) betrays absolutely no evidence of staleness. If the outlook here is a thought less romantic than in certain novels that drew sighs from my adolescent breast, this is a change inherent in the theme. For the matter of the present work is a study in conjugal tedium. *Parthenope* (name of ill-omen) was one of those unhappy and

devastating beings who go through life fated to bore their nearest and dearest to the verge of lunacy. So that her marriage to poor well-meaning *Willy Steele* had not endured for more than a matter of weeks before the wretched man fled from his newly-made nest, with the heart-cry (uttered to *Parthenope's* female relatives, themselves

Page 21

too sympathetic to resent it), "I cannot stand her any longer!" This unfortunate *debacle* is very ingeniously contrasted with the courtship of another couple, immune from the curse; and the whole story is as fresh as it is amusing. Perhaps it might have been told in fewer words; at times the slender theme seems a trifle overladen. But probably your true Broughtonians (who must be reckoned in thousands) would condemn such a suggestion as heresy; and, if they be satisfied, as they certainly will be, then all is well.

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It is a tribute at once to the art of her treatment and the actuality of her theme that, after reading the delicate little study of modern romance that ELIZABETH ROBINS PENNELL calls *The Lovers* (HEINEMANN), I cannot determine whether the clever writer was reproducing or inventing—she begins so convincingly with the statement that it was her first chapter, itself an article in *The Century*, describing the life of *The Lovers* as she watched it from her window, that brought about her friendship with the originals, and thus her knowledge of their further history. Anyhow, true or not, it is the kind of story that has been going on all round us in these days of love and heroism. Mrs. PENNELL first began to watch her pair of *amoureux* in their attic, which was overlooked from her higher window (most readers could probably make a shrewd guess at its postal district) in those seemingly so distant years when the young champions of artistic London used to meet at a certain *cafe*, wonderfully clad, to consume vast quantities of milk. Then came the War; the boy-husband enlisted, went to the Front—and the end is as we all have known it many and many times. In this little book the too familiar story is given with a restraint and absence of striving after effect that leave me, as I say, uncertain whether its appeal is due to art or actuality. But in either case Mrs. PENNELL has told it very well.

* * * * *

"Father, what is the difference between Tories and Radicals?" "Radicals, my dear, are the infamous crew who wish to destroy all the noble institutions for which the Tories would give their life-blood." "And which are you, Father?" I have inflicted this ancient (and, I always think, rather touching) scrap of dialogue upon you because it exactly illustrates my impression of *The Soul of Ulster* (HURST AND BLACKETT). In other words, this little book, written as ably and attractively as you would expect from the author of *The First Seven Divisions*, is really less a dispassionate survey of the Home Rule difficulty than a piece of special pleading for the Northern cause. According, therefore, to your own attitude towards this problem will characters occupies her rural stage—an old grandmother, be your estimate of Lord ERNEST HAMILTON'S arguments. To the bigoted (or confirmed) Orangeman they will seem revelation; to the confirmed (or bigoted)

Page 22

Nationalist they will as clearly seem rubbish. Even I, who admit the justice of the author's contentions, fancied now and again (as in the matter of the "Peep-o'-Day Boys," for example) that a slightly more generous admission of faults on his own side would have strengthened the presentation of his case. One of the most interesting chapters of a quite short volume is that in which the author explains his belief, at first rather startling, that the eventual solution of the vexed question may be provided through the Sinn Fein movement. That hope, and the reasons for it, are certainly alone worth the half-crown for which you can examine them.

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[Illustration: "SEE THAT, SIR? 'FARM LABOURERS, MINIMUM TWENTY-FIVE SHILLINGS A WEEK.' NOW, SIR, WOULD YOU ADVISE ME TO LEAVE MY PRESENT OCCUPATION AND TAKE UP FARM-WORK?"]

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SERGE AKSAKOFF, a distinguished Russian writer of the first half of the nineteenth century, gave the world a portrait of his grandfather. It is now translated with a singular felicity by Mr. J.D. DUFF, under the title, *A Russian Gentleman* (ARNOLD), and I should like to say that I, who have suffered something from translations out of the Russian, have very rarely read one which ran with such plausible smoothness and gave so clear an impression of a charming original. STEFAN MIHAILOVITCH BAGROFF was reckoned a good sort and a just if rather uncompromising man. His character is drawn with faithful exactness and praised with simple filial appreciation. The foibles of this worthy patriarch, such as the dragging of his wife along the floor when he was excessively annoyed, so that she went with her head bound for a year thereafter, are excused on the ground of his general decency. And indeed he was a lovable old boy, and the simple and unselfconscious artistry with which the author develops his character, and that of his daughter-in-law, SOFYA NIKOLAYEVNA, delights the jaded literary palate. AKSAKOFF has a quite singular power of selecting just the incident, the phrase, the gesture, the feature of the landscape which make you exclaim with a start, "Why, I'm seeing and hearing all this!" It is such a book as an historian of the modern school would delight in, more engrossing than fiction of the most realistic type. There is incident in it too—as of the degenerate KUROLYESSOFF, a cousin-in-law of MIHAILOVITCH, who used to flog his serfs, sometimes to death, for the pleasure of seeing them suffer; while the opening pages, describing the trekking of the family out of far-eastern Orenburg into the adjoining province of Ufa, and the building of the mill and the dam, are astonishingly vivid and agreeable.

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Page 23

A Maid o' Dorset (CASSELL) can be recommended to anyone in need of light refreshment after a course of sterner literature. Here we are back again in the world of small things; but if "M.E. FRANCIS'S" theme is trivial there is no denying the art with which she handles it. Just a quartette of characters occupies her rural stage—an old grandmother, wise with the wisdom of years, her granddaughter, a middle-aged farmer and a young gipsy "dairy-chap." To the horror of her relations the Maid o' Dorset conceives an infatuation for the gipsy, a clever rogue but no match for the grandmother. I have met a good many farmers in my time, but never one so simple-minded as *Solomon Blanchard*. It is all very Franciscan, and seems easy enough, but if you think, for that reason, that you could do it yourself, you couldn't. Its charm lies in its fragrance, and that is a quality which is not lightly come by.

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OUR HELPFUL CONTEMPORARIES.

"The majority of the Russian soldiers are not so naif as, after having deposed the Tsar, to set to work for the King of Prussia.

"Note.—'Travailler from le Rois des Prusses' is the French colloquial equivalent for 'To work for nothing.'"—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

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FAINT PRAISE.

"Commander Wedgwood said there was no newspaper in this country—not even the *Daily Mail*—which had not printed during the three years of war something to which objection could not be taken."—*Daily Paper*.