

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 152, June 13, 1917 eBook

Punch, or the London Charivari, Volume 152, June 13, 1917

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PUNCH,

Or the London charivari.

Vol. 152.

June 13, 1917.

CHARIVARIA.

Count *tisza* has declared his intention of going to the Front for the duration of the War. He denies, however, that he caught the idea from Mr. *Winston Churchill*.

The Germans announced that Cherisy was impregnable. In view of the fact that the place has since been captured by the British it is felt that Sir *Douglas Haig* could not have read the German announcement.

Owners of babies are asked to hang out flags from their houses during the forthcoming Baby Week at Croydon. Parents who have only a little Bunting should hang that out instead.



A parrot owned by a lady at Ipswich is said to make “poll scratchers” for herself out of small pieces of soft wood. In justice to the bird it must be stated that she has frequently expressed a desire to be allowed to do war-work, but has been discouraged.

A Battersea fitter has been committed for trial for breaking into a Kingston jeweller’s and stealing goods worth L2,350. There is really no excuse for this sort of thing, as the public have been repeatedly asked by the Government not to go in for expensive jewellery.

An Eastbourne coal merchant told the tribunal that a substitute sent to him was “too dirty to cart coals.” The department has apologised for the mistake and explained that it was thought the man was required to deliver milk.

According to the *Berliner Tageblatt*, twenty-nine houses in Oberreuth have been burned down and a villager aged ninety-seven years has been arrested. The veteran, it appears, puts down his sudden crime to the baneful influence of the cinema.

One of the latest Army Orders permits the wearing of leather buttons in place of brass. Our readers should not be too ready to assume that this will have any effect on the existing meat-pie shortage.

Recently published statistics of the Zoological Gardens show a marked decrease of mortality among the inmates since they were placed on rations. A nasty rumour is also laid to rest by the declaration that the notices which deal with “Enquiries for Lost Children” and are prominently displayed in the Gardens were actually in vogue before the rationing system was introduced.

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Paper is one of the principal foods of "Chips," the pet goat of Summer-down Camp. In view of the increasing value of this commodity an attempt is to be made to encourage the animal to accept caviare instead.

"Quite good results in the sterilisation of polluted drinking water," says *The British Medical Journal*, "have been obtained by the use of sulphondichloraminobenzoic." It appears that you just mention this name to the germs (stopping for lunch in the middle) and the little beggars are scared to death.

In a recent message to General *Ludendorff*, the *Kaiser* refers to the German defence as being "mainly in your hands." And only last April they were professing to find it in HINDENBURG'S feet.

It is not yet compulsory under the new Order, but as a precaution it is advisable for the owner of a cheese to have his full name and address written on the collar.

The gentleman who advertised last week in a contemporary the loss of two pet dogs will be greatly interested in a little book just published, entitled *How to Keep Dogs*.

"It is the most extraordinary case I ever heard of," said the Chairman of the Middlesex Appeal Tribunal, in the case of a one-eyed man passed for general service. The case is not unique, however, for a one-eyed man named *Nelson* is recorded as having seen some general service in the early part of the nineteenth century.

Brazil has entered the War and Germany is now able to shoot in almost any direction without any appreciable risk of hitting a friend.

A five-months-old boy having been called up at Hull, the mother took the baby to the recruiting office, where we are told the military were satisfied that a mistake had been made.

The author of an article in *The Daily Mail* stated recently that nine readers of that paper had sent him poems. This of course is only to be expected of a newspaper which advocates reprisals.

According to the *Vossische Zeitung* washing soap is unobtainable in Berlin. Even eating soap, it is rumoured, can be obtained only at prohibitive prices.

Before the Law Society Tribunal, Mr. *Jacob Epstein*, the sculptor, was stated to have passed the medical test. On the other hand Mr. EPSTEIN'S Venus is still regarded as medically unfit.

A Devon lady who has just celebrated her one hundredth birthday declares that to drink plenty of water daily is the secret of good health. This is a great triumph for the milk trade.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Curate (to old parishioner troubled with insomnia). "Have you tried counting sheep jumping over A Stile?"*



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Old Lady. “Ah, that’s worse than useless, sir. It sets me WORRYIN’ about them butchers with their one-and-ten-Pence A pound for Mutton.”]

* * * * *

The best game the fairies play.

The best game the fairies play,
The best game of all,
Is sliding down steeples—
You know they’re very tall.
You fly to the weathercock
And when you hear it crow
You fold your wings and clutch your things,
And then you let go!

They have a million other games;
Cloud-catching’s one;
And mud-mixing after rain
Is heaps and heaps of fun;
But when you go and stay with them
Never mind the rest;
Take my advice—they’re very nice,
But steeple-sliding’s best!

* * * * *

“Home wanted for tabby Persian Cat, 3 years old
(neutral).”—*Scotch Paper.*

Why doesn’t it join the Allies?

* * * * *

A short way with submarines.

“A short way with submarines?” said Bill; “oh, yes, we’ve *got* one all right; but,” he added regretfully, “I don’t know as I’m at liberty to tell you. Wot I’m thinkin’ about is this ‘ere Defence o’ the Realm Act—see? Why, there was a feller I knew got ten days’ cells for just tellin’ a young woman where ’er sweet’ear’s ship was.”

It was the last day of Bill’s “leaf,” of which he had spent the greater part warding off the attacks of old acquaintances bent upon finding out something interesting about the Navy. Of course during his absence Bill had written home regularly, but his letters had been models of discretion and confined to matters of the strictest personal interest.

Since his return quite a number of temporary coldnesses had arisen as a result of his obstinate reticence, and the retired station-master, after several attacks both in front and flank had ignominiously failed, flew into a rage and said he didn't believe there was any Navy left to tell about, the Germans having sunk it all at the Battle of Jutland.

Bill said they might 'ave done, he really didn't know, not to be certain.

But now, with his bundle handkerchief beside him, just having another drink on his way to the station, Bill really seemed to be relenting a little. The customers of the "Malt House" all leaned forward attentively to listen.

"It's all among friends, Bill," said the landlord encouragingly, "it won't go no further, you can rest easy about that."

"I've 'eard tell as it's this 'ere Mr. Macaroni," began the baker, who took in a twopenny paper every day, and gave himself well-informed airs in consequence.

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"If you'd ever been properly eddicated," said Bill, wiping his mouth on the back of his hand, "you'd know as the best discoveries 'ave been made by haccident, same as when the feller invented the steam-engine along of an apple tumblin' on 'is 'ead. That's 'ow it is with this 'ere submarine business, an' no macaroni about it an' no cheese neither.

"Sailormen gets a deal o' presents sent 'em nowadays, rangin' from wrist-watches an' cottage-pianners to woolly 'ug-me-tights in double sennit. But the best present we ever 'ad—well, I'll tell you.

"An old lady as was aunt or godmother or something o' the sort to our Navigatin' Lootenant sent him a present of an extra large tin of peppermint 'umbugs. Real 'ot uns, they was, and big—well, I believe you! I've 'ad a deal o' peppermints in my time, but this 'ere consignment from the Navigator's great-aunt fairly put the lid on. You'd ha' thought all 'ands was requirin' dental treatment the day the Navigator shared 'em out, an' when the steersman come off duty, 'e give the course to the feller reliev'in' the wheel as if 'e'd got an 'ot potato in 'is mouth.

"Well, the peppermints was in full blast an' the ship smellin' like a bloomin' sweet factory when the look-out reported a submarine on our port bow. O' course we was all cleared for haction, an' beginnin' to feel our Iron Crosses burnin' 'oles in our jumpers, when we begun to see as there was something funny about 'er.

"Naturally we was lookin' for 'er to submerge—but not she! There she sat, waitin' for us, an' all 'er crew was pushin' an' fightin' to get their 'eads out of 'er conning tower. We was right on top of 'er in two twos, and all as we 'ad to do was to pick up the officers and crew as if they was a lot o' wasps as 'ad been drinkin' beer, an' tow the submarine—which was in fust-rate goin' order, not a month out o' Kiel dockyard—'ome to a port as I'm not at liberty to mention."

"But 'ow?" began the baker.

"I thought as I'd made it middlin' plain," said Bill severely, "but seein' as some folks wants winders lettin' into their 'eads I suppose I'd better make it plainer. I daresay you've 'eard as they're very short o' sweet-stuff in Germany."

"I 'ave," said the baker triumphantly, "I read it in my paper."

"Well," said Bill, "there was a wind settin' good and strong from us towards the submarine, an' when one of 'em as 'appened to be takin' the air at the time got a sniff of us 'e just couldn't leave off sniffin'. Then 'e passed the word down to the others, an' the hodour of the peppermints was that powerful it knocked 'em all of a 'eap, the same as food on an empty stummnick. See? That's the real reason o' the sugar shortage. There's 'arf-a-dozen factories workin' night an' day on Admiralty contracts, turnin' out nothin' at all only peppermint 'umbugs.

“Simple, ain’t it?” Bill concluded, as he paid for his beer and reached for his bundle.
“Anyway, it does as well as anything else to tell a lot o’ folks as can’t let a decent sailorman spend ‘is bit o’ leaf in peace an’ quietness without tryin’ to get to know what ‘e’s got no business to tell ‘em nor them to find out.”

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* * * * *

“Concrete holds its own in the construction of our houses, our public buildings, our brides....”—*New Zealand Paper*.

This ought to cement the affections.

* * * * *

[Illustration: COMMON IDEALS.

BRITISH FOOD PROFITEER (*to German ditto*). “ALAS! MY POOR BROTHER. YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN AN ENGLISHMAN. ENGLAND IS A FREE COUNTRY.”

[The Berlin *Vossische Zeitung* states that about four thousand cases of profiteering are dealt with monthly in Germany.]]

* * * * *

THE FUNERAL OF M. DE BLANCHET.

“Never let your husband have a grievance,” said Madame Marcot, stirring the lump of sugar that she had brought with her to put into her cup of tea. “It destroys the happiness of the most admirable households. Have you heard of the distressing case of the de Blanchets—Victor de Blanchet and his wife?”

We had not.

“Very dear friends of mine,” said Madame Marcot vivaciously, delighted at the chance of an uninterrupted innings, “and belonging to a family of the most distinguished. They were a truly devoted couple, and had never been apart during the whole of their married life. As for him, he was an excellent fellow. If he had a fault, it was only that perhaps he was a little near; but still, a good fault, is it not? When he was called to the Front his wife was desolated, simply desolated. And then, poor M. de Blanchet—*not* the figure for a soldier—of a rotundity, Mesdames!” And Madame Marcot lifted her eyes heavenwards, struck speechless for a moment at the thought of M. de Blanchet’s outline. “However, like all good Frenchmen, he made no fuss, but went off to do his duty. He wrote to his wife every day, and she wrote to him.

“All at once his letters ceased, and then, after a long delay, came the official notice, ‘Missing.’ Imagine the suspense, the anxiety! For weeks she continued to hope against hope, but at last she heard that his body had been found. It had been recognised by the clothes, the identity disc (or whatever you call it), and the stoutness, for, alas, the unfortunate gentleman’s head had been nearly blown away by a shell and was quite unrecognisable. Poor Madame de Blanchet’s grief was terrible to witness when they

brought her his sad clothing, with the embroidered initials upon it worked by her own hand. One thing she insisted on, and that was that his body should be buried at A——, in the family vault of the de Blanchets, who, as I have said before, are very distinguished people. “This meant endless red tape, as you may imagine, and endless correspondence with the authorities, and delays and vexations, but finally she got her wish, and the funeral was the most magnificent ever witnessed in that part of the world. You should have seen the ‘*faire part*,’” said Madame Marcot, alluding

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to the black-bordered mourning intimations sent out in France, inscribed with the names of every individual member of the family concerned, from the greatest down to the most insignificant and obscure. "Several pages, I assure you; and everybody came. The cortege was a mile long. M. l'Abbe Colaix officiated; there was a full choral mass; and she got her second cousin once removed, M. Aristide Gerant, who, as you know, is Director of the College of Music at A——, to compose a requiem specially for the occasion; and he did not do it for nothing, you may believe me. In fine, a first-class funeral. But, as she said, when some of her near relations, including her stepmother, who is not of the most generous, remonstrated with her on the score of the expense, 'I would wish to honour my dear husband in death as I honoured him in life.'

"After it was all over she had a magnificent marble monument erected over the tomb, recording all his virtues, and with a bas-relief of herself (a very inaccurate representation, I am told, as it gave her a Madonna-like appearance to which she can lay no claim in real life) shedding tears upon his sarcophagus."

Madame Marcot paused for breath, and, thinking the story finished, we drifted in with appropriate comments. But we were soon cut short.

"Ten months afterwards," continued the lady dramatically, "as Madame de Blanchet, dressed of course in the deepest mourning, was making strawberry jam in the kitchen and weeping over her sorrows, who should walk in but Monsieur?"

"What—her husband?" cried everybody.

"The same," answered Madame Marcot. "He was a spectacle. He had lost an arm; his clothing was in tatters, and he was as thin as a skeleton. But it was Monsieur de Blanchet all the same."

"What had happened?" we shrieked in chorus.

"What has happened more than once in the course of this War. He had been taken prisoner, had been unable to communicate and at last, after many marvellous adventures, had succeeded in escaping."

"But the other?" we cried.

"Ah, now we come to the really desolating part of the affair," said Madame Marcot. "The corpse in M. de Blanchets clothing, what was he but a villainous Boche—stout, as is the way of these messieurs—who had appropriated the clothes of the unfortunate prisoner, uniform, badges, disc and all, in order, no doubt, to get into our lines and play the spy. Happily a shell put an end to his activities; but by the grossest piece of ill-luck it made him completely unrecognisable, so that Madame de Blanchet, as well as the officers

who identified him, were naturally led into the mistake of thinking him a good Frenchman, fallen in the exercise of his duty.”

“What happiness to see him back!” I remarked.

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"I believe you," said Madame Marcot, "and touching was the joy of M. de Blanchet too, until he observed her mourning. He was then inclined to be slightly hurt at her taking his death so readily for granted. However, she soon explained the case; but, when he heard that a nameless member of the unspeakable race was occupying the place in the family vault that he had been reserving for himself for years past at considerable cost, he became exceedingly annoyed; and when, through the medium of his relations, he learned of the first-class funeral, and of the oak coffin studded with silver, and the expensive full choral mass, and the requiem specially written for the occasion, and the marble monument, his wrath was such that in pre-war days, and before he had undergone the reducing influence of the German hunger-diet, he would certainly have had an apoplectic seizure. To a man of his economical turn of mind it was naturally enraging. But the thing that put the climax on his exasperation was the bas-relief of his wife, 'ridiculously svelte' as he remarked, shedding tears over the ashes of a wretched Boche.

"The situation for him and for the family generally," concluded Madame Marcot, "is, as you will readily conceive, one of extreme unpleasantness and delicacy. The cost of exhuming the Hun, after the really outrageous expense of his interment, is one that a thrifty man like M. de Blanchet must naturally shrink from; indeed he assures me that his pocket simply does not permit of it.

"In the meantime he can never go to lay a wreath upon the tombs of his sainted father and mother, or pass through the cemetery on his way to mass (he is a good Catholic), without being reminded of the miserable interloper and all the circumstances of his magnificent first-class funeral. Hence he is a man with a grievance—an undying grievance, I may say—for he is practically certain to have a ghost hereafter haunting the spot that ought to be its resting-place but isn't. Still, it is *chic* to have a ghost in the family. The de Blanchets will be more distinguished than ever."

* * * * *

[Illustration: "'OW'S YOUR SON GETTIN' ON IN THE ARMY, MRS. PODDISH?"]

"FINE, THANKEE. THEY'VE MADE 'IM A COLONEL."

"OH, COME——"

"CAPTAIN, THEN."

"GO ON. YOU MEAN CORPORAL, P'RAPS."

"WELL, 'AVE IT THAT WAY IF YOU LIKE. I KNOW IT BEGAN WITH A 'K.'"]

* * * * *

LIFTING AND UPLIFTING.

Our Canadian contemporary, *Jack Canuck*, publishes a protest against the invasion of Canada by British temperance reformers, whom it describes as “uplifters.” Immediately below this protest it produces a picture from *Punch*, lifted without any acknowledgment of its origin.

* * * * *

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“On Sunday one British pilot, flying at 1,000 ft., saw four hostile craft at about 5,000 ft., and dived more than a mile directly at them. As he whirled past the nearest machine he opened fire, and saw the observer crumple up in the fuselage as the pilot put the machine into a steep live.”—*Daily Sketch*.

While confessing ignorance as to the exact nature of a “live,” we are sure it is not as steep as the rest of the story.

* * * * *

A MUSCULAR CHRISTIAN.

“Vicar, Compton Dando, Bristol, would Let two Fields, or few Yearlings could run with him.”—*Bristol Times and Mirror*.

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE PERSONAL EQUATION.

Time 1940.

“WHAT DID YOU DO IN THE GREAT WAR, GRANDPA?” “WHAT DID I DO, MY LAD? I HELPED TO RELIEVE MAFEKING.”]

* * * * *

THE MUSINGS OF MARCUS MULL.

(IN THE MANNER OF AN ILLUSTRIOUS MENTOR.)

I.

I noted in last week’s issue the persistence of the strange story that Mr. GLADSTONE, in his wrath at his reduced majority in Midlothian, broke chairs when the news arrived. I was careful to add that, as the result of searching investigation, I was in a position to state that Mr. GLADSTONE never did any such thing. Still I cannot altogether regret having alluded to the story in view of the interesting letters on the subject which have reached me from a number of esteemed correspondents.

II.

As an eminent Dundonian divine, who wishes to remain anonymous, remarks, it is a melancholy fact that men of genius have often been prone to violent ebullitions of

temper. He recalls the sad case of MILTON, who, while he was dictating his *Areopagitica*, threw an ink-horn at his daughter, “to the complete denigration of her habiliments,” as he himself described it. Yet MILTON was a man of high character and replete with moral uplift. I remember that my old master, Professor Cawker of Aberdeen, once told me that as a child he was liable to fits of freakishness, in one of which he secreted himself under the table during a dinner-party at his father’s house and sewed the dresses of the ladies together. The result, when they rose to leave the room, was disastrous in the extreme. But Professor Cawker, as I need hardly remind my readers, was a genial and noble-hearted man. I presented him on his marriage with a set of garnet studs. Ever after when I dined at his house he wore them. Nothing was ever said between us, but we both knew, and I shall never forget.

III.

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My old friend, Lemmens Porter, whose name I deeply regret not to have read in the Honours List, reminds me of the painful story of SWINBURNE, who, in a fit of temper, hurled two poached eggs at GEORGE MEREDITH for speaking disrespectfully of VICTOR HUGO. The incident is suppressed in Mr. GOSSE'S tactful life, but Mr. Porter had it direct from MEREDITH, whose bath-chair he frequently pulled at Dorking. SWINBURNE was, I regret to say, pagan in his views, but, unlike some pagans, he was incapable of adhering to the golden mean. ARISTOTLE, I feel certain, would never have condescended to the use of such a missile, and it is beyond "imagination's widest stretch" to picture, say, the late Dr. JOSEPH COOK, of Boston, the present Lord ABERDEEN, or the Rev. Dr. Donald McGuffin acting in such a wild and tempestuous manner.

IV.

Still we must admit the existence of high temper even in men of high souls, high aims and high achievements. Everyone may improve his temper. We cannot all emulate the patience of JOB, but we can at least set before us the noble example of Professor Cawker, who redeemed the angular exuberance of his youth by the mellow and mollifying kindness of his maturity. Even if Mr. GLADSTONE *did* break chairs, we should not lightly condemn him. You cannot make omelettes without breaking eggs. Besides, chairs cannot retaliate.

MARCUS MULL.

* * * * *

A CYNICAL HEADLINE.

"NEW BRITISH BLOW.—BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST."—*Daily Mirror*.

We congratulate our contemporary on its terseness. *The Times* took nearly a column to say the same thing.

* * * * *

BALLADE OF INCIPIENT LUNACY.

Scene.—A Battalion "Orderly" Room in France during a period of "Rest." Runners arrive breathlessly from all directions bearing illegible chits, and tear off in the same directions with illegible answers or no answer at all. Motor-bicycles snort up to the door and arrogant despatch-riders enter with enormous envelopes containing leagues of correspondence, orders, minutes, circulars, maps, signals, lists, schedules, summaries and all sorts. The tables are stacked with papers; the floor is littered with papers;



papers fly through the air. Two type-writers click with maddening insistence in one corner. A signaller buzzes tenaciously at the telephone, talking in a strange language apparently to himself, as he never seems to be connected with anyone else. A stream of miscellaneous persons—quarter-masters, chaplains, generals, batmen, D.A.D.O.S.'s, sergeant-majors, staff-officers, buglers, Maires, officers just arriving, officers just going away, gas experts, bombing experts, interpreters, doctors—drifts in, wastes time, and drifts out again.

Clerks scribble ceaselessly, rolls and nominal rolls, nominal lists and lists. By the time they have finished one list it is long out-of-date. Then they start the next. Everything happens at the same time; nobody has time to finish a sentence. Only a military mind, with a very limited descriptive vocabulary and a chronic habit of self-deception, would call the place orderly.

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The Adjutant speaks, hoarsely; while he speaks he writes about something quite different. In the middle of each sentence his pipe goes out; at the end of each sentence he lights a match. He may or may not light his pipe; anyhow he speaks:—

“Where is that list of Wesleyans I made?
And what are all those people on the stair?
Is that my pencil? Well, they *can’t* be paid.
Tell the Marines we have no forms to spare.
I cannot get these Ration States to square.
The Brigadier is coming round, they say.
The Colonel wants a man to cut his hair.
I think I *must* be going mad to-day.

“These silly questions! I shall tell Brigade
This office is now closing for repair.
They want to know what Mr. Johnstone weighed,
And if the Armourer is dark, or fair?
I do not know; I cannot say I care.
Tell that Interpreter to go away.
Where is my signal-pad? I left it there.
I think I *must* be going mad to-day.

“Perhaps I should appear upon parade.
Where is my pencil? Ring up Captain Eyre;
Say I regret our tools have been mislaid.
These companies would make Sir DOUGLAS swear.
A is the worst. Oh, damn, is this the *Maire*?
I’m sorry, Monsieur—*je suis desole*—
But no one’s pinched your miserable chair.
I think I *must* be going mad to-day.

ENVOI.

“Prince, I perceive what CAIN’S temptations were,
And how attractive it must be to slay.
O Lord, the General! This is hard to bear.
I think I *must* be going mad to-day.”

* * * * *

THE MUD LARKS.

If there is one man in France whom I do not envy it is the G.H.Q. Weather Prophet. I can picture the unfortunate wizard sitting in his bureau, gazing into a crystal, *Old*



Moore's Almanack in one hand, a piece of seaweed in the other, trying to guess what tricks the weather will be up to next.

For there is nothing this climate cannot do. As a quick-change artist it stands *sanspareil* (French) and *nulli secundus* (Latin).

And now it seems to have mislaid the Spring altogether. Summer has come at one stride. Yesterday the staff-cars smothered one with mud as they whirled past; to-day they choke one with dust. Yesterday the authorities were issuing precautions against frostbite; to-day they are issuing precautions against sunstroke. Nevertheless we are not complaining. It will take a lot of sunshine to kill us; we like it, and we don't mind saying so.

The B.E.F. has cast from it its mitts and jerkins and whale-oil, emerged from its subterranean burrows into the open, and in every wood a mushroom town of bivouacs has sprung up over-night. Here and there amateur gardeners have planted flower-beds before their tents; one of my corporals is nursing some radishes in an ammunition-box and talks crop prospects by the hour. My troop-sergeant found two palm-plants in the ruins of a chateau glass-house, and now has them standing sentry at his bivouac entrance. He sits between them after evening stables, smoking his pipe and fancying himself back in Zanzibar; he expects the coker-nuts along about August, he tells me.

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Summer has come, and on every slope graze herds of winter-worn gun-horses and transport mules. The new grass has gone to the heads of the latter and they make continuous exhibitions of themselves, gambolling about like ungainly lambkins and roaring with unholy laughter. Summer has come, and my groom and countryman has started to whistle again, sure sign that Winter is over, for it is only during the Summer that he reconciles himself to the War. War, he admits, serves very well as a light gentlemanly diversion for the idle months, but with the first yellow leaf he grows restless and hints indirectly that both ourselves and the horses would be much better employed in the really serious business of showing the little foxes some sport back in our own green isle. "That Paddy," says he, slapping the bay with a hay wisp, "he wishes he was back in the county Kildare, he does so, the dear knows. Pegeen, too, if she would be hearin' the houn's shoutin' out on her from the kennels beyond in Jigginstown she'd dhróp down dead wid the pleasure wid'in her, an' that's the thrue word," says he, presenting the chestnut lady with a grimy army biscuit. "Och musha, the poor foolish cratures," he says and sighs.

However, Summer has arrived, and by the sound of his cheery whistle at early stables shrilling "Flannigan's Wedding," I understand that the horses are settling down once more and we can proceed with the battle.

If my groom and countryman is not an advocate of war as a winter sport our Mr. MacTavish, on the other hand, is of the directly opposite opinion. "War," he murmured dreamily to me yesterday as we lay on our backs beneath a spreading parasol of apple-blossom and watched our troop-horses making pigs of themselves in the young clover—"war! don't mention the word to me. Maidenhead, Canader, cushions, cigarettes, only girl in the world doing all the heavy paddle-work—that's the game in the good ole summertime. Call round again about October and I'll attend to your old war." It is fortunate that these gentlemen do not adorn any higher positions than those of private soldier and second-lieutenant, else, between them, they would stop the War altogether and we should all be out of jobs.

PATLANDER.

* * * * *

COMMERCIAL CANDOUR.

"——& Co.

The Leading Jewellery House.
Grand Assortment of Cut Glass."
Advt. in Chinese Paper.

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[Illustration: THE ROAD TO RUIN.]

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[Illustration: SIDELIGHTS ON THE GREAT FOOD PROBLEM.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE DISCOVERY OF NEW WAR FOODS TEST THEIR LATEST
DISH.]

* * * * *

PICCADILLY.

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Gay shops, stately palaces, bustle and breeze, The whirring of wheels and the murmur of trees; By night or by day, whether noisy or still, Whatever my mood is—I love Piccadilly.

Thus carolled FRED LOCKER, just sixty years back,
In a year ('57) when the outlook was black,
And even to-day the war-weariest Willie
Recovers his spirits in dear Piccadilly.

We haven't the belles with their Gainsborough hats,
Or the Regency bucks with their wondrous cravats,
But now that the weather no longer is chilly;
There's much to enchant us in New Piccadilly.

As I sit in my club and partake of my "ration"
No longer I'm vexed by the follies of fashion;
The dandified Johnnies so precious and silly—
You seek them in vain in the New Piccadilly.

The men are alert and upstanding and fit,
They've most of them done or they're doing their bit;
With the eye of a hawk and the stride of a gillie
They add a new lustre to Old Piccadilly.

And the crippled but gay-hearted heroes in blue
Are a far finer product than wicked "old Q,"
Who ought to have lived in a prison on skilly
Instead of a palace in mid Piccadilly.

The women are splendid, so quiet and strong,
As with resolute purpose they hurry along—
Excepting the flappers, who chatter as shrilly
As parrots let loose to distract Piccadilly.

Thus I muse as I watch with a reverent eye
The New Generation sweep steadily by,
And judge him an ass or a born Silly Billy
Who'd barter the New for the Old Piccadilly.

* * * * *

A CLEARANCE.

“WANTED.—Lady shortly leaving the Colony is desirous of recommending her baby and wash Amahs, also Houseboy.”—*South China Morning Post*.

* * * * *

“Though the King’s birthday was officially celebrated yesterday, there were no official celebrations.”—*Daily Express*.

It seems to have been a case of unconscious celebration.

* * * * *

“We shall want a name for the American ‘Tommies’ when they come; but do not call them ‘Yankees.’ They none of them like it.”—*Daily News*.

As a term of distinction and endearment Mr. Punch suggests “Sammies”—after their uncle.

* * * * *

“Petrograd.

The local Committee of the Soldiers’ and Workmen’s Delegates announces that it will take into its hands effective power at Cronstadt. and that it will not recognise the Provisional Government, and will remove all Government representatives.

This fateful decision was adopted by 21 votes to 40, with eight abstentions.”—*Provincial Paper*.

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The trouble in Russia just now is the tyranny of the minority.

* * * * *

[Illustration: A WORD OF ILL OMEN.

CROWN PRINCE (*to KAISER, drafting his next speech*). “FOR GOTT’S SAKE, FATHER, BE CAREFUL THIS TIME, AND DON’T CALL THE AMERICAN ARMY ‘CONTEMPTIBLE.’”]

* * * * *

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

Tuesday, June 5th.—In listless and dejected mood the House of Commons reassembled after its all-too-brief recess. Members collectively missed their MARK, for Colonel LOCKWOOD, the only popular Food Controller in history, had been summoned upstairs and left the Kitchen Committee to its fate. The shower of Privy Councillorships, baronetcies and knighthoods which had simultaneously descended upon the faithful Commons afforded little compensation for this irreparable loss; and even the sight of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL’S immaculate spats appearing over the edge of the Table was insufficient to dispel the prevailing gloom.

Mr. PEMBERTON-BILLING made a gallant effort to galvanize his colleagues into life. Remembering that it was an air-raid that got him into the House—some people will never forgive the Germans for this—he seldom allows a similar incident to pass without endeavouring to improve the occasion. As his policy of “two bombs to one” failed to intrigue Mr. BONAR LAW he sought to move the adjournment, but when the Question was put only five Members, instead of the necessary forty, rose in its support.

If Sir H. DALZIEL has his way, and the consumer is allowed to purchase his sugar unrefined, the British breakfast will become a most exciting meal. Lice, beetles and, on one occasion, a live lizard have been found in the bags arriving from Cuba. Even with meat at its present price, Captain BATHURST doubts whether such additions to our dietary would be really welcome.

In the pre-historic times before August, 1914, the POSTMASTER-GENERAL was wont to give on the Vote for his department a long and discursive account of its multifarious activities, and to enliven the figures with anecdotes and even with jokes. Mr. ILLINGWORTH knows a better way. With deliberate monotony he reeled off his statistics to a steadily diminishing audience. Only once did he evoke a sign of animation. He has abolished the absurd rule that the person presenting a five-pound note at a post-office should be required to endorse it; and, in defending this momentous change, he remarked that he himself had endorsed many such notes, “but never with



my own name.” For a moment Members were startled by this cynical admission of something which seemed to their half-awakened intelligence very like a confession of forgery. But the POSTMASTER-GENERAL soon put them to sleep again, and by nine o’clock had got his vote safely through.

[Illustration: COLONEL LOCKWOOD’S FAREWELL TO THE KITCHEN ON HIS ELEVATION TO THE UPPER HOUSE.]

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Wednesday, June 6th.—Nothing short of a revolution, it was supposed, would cause Whitehall to empty its precious pigeon-holes, in which so many millions of pious aspirations and abortive complaints sleep their last sleep. But the War has penetrated even here, and Mr. BALDWIN was able to announce, with a cheerfulness that some of the older officials probably regard as almost indecent, that already a vast quantity of material has gone to the pulping-mill.

[Illustration: *Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL (with eye on the Air Board).* “ANY UNIFORM SUITS ME, THANK YOU.”]

In the course of the debate on the Representation of the People Bill, Sir FREDERICK BANBURY explained that he resigned his membership of the SPEAKER'S Conference because he found that he and his party were expected to give up everything and to get nothing in return. If so the Liberals on the Conference were very short-sighted, for a little concession then would have saved them a lot of trouble now. What Sir FREDERICK does not know about the art of Parliamentary obstruction is not worth knowing, and he evidently means to use his knowledge for all it is worth. He even succeeded—a rare triumph—in drafting an instruction to the Committee which passed the SPEAKER'S scrutiny and took a good hour to debate. In vain Sir GEORGE CAVE and Mr. LONG reminded the House that it had already approved the main principles of the Bill. You can't ride a cock-horse when BANBURY'S cross.

Another old hand at the game is Lord HUGH CECIL. His particular grievance against the Bill is, I fancy, that it alters the character of his constituency, and, should it pass, will oblige him to appeal for the votes of callow young Bachelors with horrid Radical notions instead of being able to repose in confidence upon the support of a solid phalanx of clerical M.A.'s. He possesses also an hereditary antipathy to extensions of the franchise. Lord CLAUD HAMILTON must have thought himself back in 1867, listening to Lord CRANBORNE attacking the Reform Bill wherewith DIZZY dished the Whigs. Lord HUGH, like his father, is a master of gibes and flouts and jeers, and used most of the weapons from a well-stocked armoury in an endeavour to drill a fatal hole in the Bill.

At one moment he chaffed the HOME SECRETARY for seeking to turn the House into a Trappist monastery, where Ministers alone might talk and Members must obey; at the next he was reminding the House, on a proposal to raise the age of voters, that a great many of the persons who took part in the massacre of St. Bartholomew were under twenty-two years of age. But though Members listened and laughed they refused, for the most part, to vote with him. The Bill came almost unscathed through the first day of its ordeal in Committee.

Thursday, June 7th.—If all the hundred and sixty-eight Questions on the Order Paper had been fully answered the German Government would have learned quite a number of things that it is most anxious to know, for the Pacifist group were full of curiosity regarding the war-aims of the Allies. Several of the most searching inquiries had to be

met by such discouraging *formulae* as “I have nothing to add to my previous reply,” or “The matter is still under consideration.”

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Mr. SNOWDEN, however, learned from the HOME SECRETARY that the Government, the House and the Country were in full sympathy with the war-policy laid down by the French Government, and that we were prepared to go on fighting until it was achieved. Here is something for his colleagues to tell the Stockholm Conference, if they can get there.

For some occult reason the word “cheese” always excites Parliamentary merriment. Mr. GEORGE ROBERTS’S announcement that the Board of Trade had made arrangements by which a quantity of this commodity would be available for public use next week was greeted with the customary laughter. Upon Army requirements, he added, would depend the quantity to be “released.” Colonel YATE was perturbed by this Gorgonzolaesque phrase, and anxiously inquired to what species of cheese it referred.

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE COMFORTER.

Lance-Corporal (in charge of footsore Tommy who has fallen out on the march).
“YOU’VE NOTHING TO GROUSE ABOUT. YOU’RE GETTIN’ YOUR OWN BACK FROM THE GOVERNMENT. AIN’T YOU WEARIN’ OUT THEIR BLINKIN’ BOOTS?”]

* * * * *

CAUTIONARY TALES FOR THE ARMY.

III.

(Private Whidden, who ate his Iron Rations and came to an untimely end.)

Private Tom Whidden had a passion
For eating of his iron ration—
A thing, you know, which isn’t *done*
(Except, just now and then, for fun),
Because there is a rule about it
And decent people rarely flout it.
But Tom was greedy and each day
He’d put a tin or two away,
Though duty told him, clear and plain,
To keep them safe as brewers’ grain,
For eating *as a last resort*
When eatables were running short.
His Corporal said, “My lad, don’t do it!”
His Sergeant groaned, “I’m *sure* you’ll rue it!”
But still he never stopped. At last



His Captain heard and stood aghast....
Then he said sternly, "Private Whidden,
Really, you know, this is forbidden.
Some day, Sir, if you *will* devour
Your ration thus from hour to hour,
You'll find yourself in No Man's Land
With neither bite nor sup at hand.
Yes, when it *is* your proper fare,
Your iron ration won't be there;
Then in your hour of bitter need
You will be sorry for your greed."

He ceased. But Private Thomas Whidden,
Being thus seriously chidden,
Said simply (with a Devon burr),
"Law bless us! do 'ee zay zo, Zur?"
Then with an uncontrolled passion
He went and ate his iron ration.

So, since he chose, from day to-day,
Persistently to disobey,
As you'd expect, the man is dead,
Though not the way his Captain said.
The fate of starving out of hand,
Or nearly so, in No Man's Land—
Alas! it never came in question.
He died of chronic indigestion.

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WITH OR WITHOUT A MEDIUM.

"William Henry Gadd, said to have left Middlesex in 1812 for South America, or anyone acquainted with his whereabouts, will oblige by communicating at first opportunity with H.M. Consul-General, 25 de Mayo 611, this city."—*The Standard* (Buenos Aires).

* * * * *

A correspondent informs us that the male gasworker is familiarly known as "Cokey," and asks us whether the ladies who have recently entered the business ought to be described as "Cokettes." We think it very probable.

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[Illustration: *British Officer (interrupting carousal in Bosch dug-out).* "TIME, GENTLEMEN, PLEASE!"]

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THE GOD-MAKERS.

The financial success of Mr. H.G. WELLS' punctuality and enterprise in looking into the vexed question of the Deity, even in war time, has had the usual effect, and many literary men are feverishly pursuing similar studies. In due course some of these will no doubt take practical shape. Meanwhile it has seemed desirable for a *Punch* man to make a few inquiries among our leading philosophers and readers of the future with regard to the same engrossing topic. For England will ever be the wonder and despair of other nations in its capacity, no matter with what seriousness its hands are filled, for pursuing controversial distractions.

To run Mr. ARNOLD BENNETT to earth was no easy matter, for in these days he is behind every scene, and no statesman, however new, can get along without his counsel or correction. But, since to the good *Punch* man difficulties exist only as obstacles of which the circumvention acts as intellectual cocktails or stimuli, the task was accomplished. Mr. BENNETT agreed that the book of the other famous Essex fictionist was a meritorious and ingenious work, but he found it far from exhaustive. The idea of God, he held, still needed handling in a capable efficient way. What was wrong with religion was, he said, its mystery; if only it could be pruned of nonsense and made practical for the man in the street, it might become really useful. He personally had not yet thought finally on the subject of God, having just now more tasks on hand (including a new play and universal supervision) than he could count on the Five Fingers, but directly he had time he meant to attend to the matter and polish it off. It was a case

where his intervention was clearly called for, since omniscience could be handled only by omniscience.

The *Punch* man has, however, to admit himself beaten in the matter of Sir OLIVER LODGE. On inquiring at Birmingham University he was told that the illustrious Principal was absent, no one knew where, but it was believed that he was visiting the higher slopes of Mount Sinai. All that the *Punch* man could obtain was one of the black velvet skull-caps which the seer wears, but, as it refused to give up any of its secrets, he must confess to failure—at any rate until Sir OLIVER returns.

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Being in Brummagem (as it has been wittily called), the *Punch* man bethought him of the Rev. R.J. CAMPBELL, once the very darling of the new gods—in fact the arch neo-theologian. But Mr. CAMPBELL, erstwhile so articulate and confident, had nothing to say. All he could do was to lock himself for safety in his church and look through the keyhole with his beautiful troubled wistful orbs.

Mr. G.K. CHESTERTON loomed up to a dizzy height amid a cloud of new witnesses. Greeting the *Punch* man, he laid aside his proofs.

“I was just deleting the abusive epithet ‘Lloyd’ from all the references to the PREMIER,” he said, “but I have a moment for you. I find a moment sufficient time for the assumption of any conviction however lifelong.”

The *Punch* man asked if he had read the Dunmow evangel.

“I have read Mr. WELLS’S book, *God, the Invisible Man*, with the greatest interest,” said Mr. CHESTERTON.

The *Punch* man ventured to correct him. “*God, the Invisible King*,” he interposed.

“Very likely,” replied the anti-Marconi Colossus. “But what’s in a title anyway? Books should not have titles at all, but be numbered, like a composer’s operas, Op. 1, Op. 2, and so on.”

“Whether or not the opping comes, some of them,” said the *Punch* man, “are certain to be skipped.”

The giant was visibly annoyed. “You’re not playing the game,” he said. “It’s I who ought to have said that. Not you. You’re only the interviewer. You’d better give it to me anyway.”

“And what,” the *Punch* man asked, “are your views respecting God?”

“I consider,” he said instantly, “that an honest god’s the noblest work of man.”

“I felt sure you would,” the *Punch* man replied. “In fact, I had a bet on it.”

The Rev. Sir WILLIAM ROBERTSON NICOLL, Editor of *The British Weekly*, said that for many years his paper had supported Providence, to, he believed, their mutual advantage, and it would continue to do so. He personally recognised no need for change. Still, no one welcomed honest analysis more warmly than himself, and he had read Mr. WELLS’S masterpiece with all his habitual avidity and delight.

The *Punch* man, passing on to the office of *The Times*, craved permission to see the Editor, through smoked glass if necessary. Having complied with a thousand formalities

he was at last ushered into the presence. The great man was engaged in selecting the various types in which to-morrow's letters were to be set up—big for the whales and minion for the minnows. "I can give you just two minutes," he said, without looking up. "These are strenuous ti——, I should say days. Self-advertisement we leave to the lower branches of the family."

"All I want to know," said the *Punch* man, "is what is your idea of God? The feeling is very general that God should be more clearly defined and, if possible, personified. One of your own Republican correspondents, who not only got large type but a nasty leader, has said so. How do you yourself view Him?"

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"I have a god of my own," said the Editor, watch in hand, "and I see him very distinctly. Powerfully built, with a boyish face and a wealth of fairish hair over one side of the noble brow. Aloof but vigilant. Restive but determined. Quick to praise but quicker to blame. Adaptive, volcanic, relentless and terribly immanent—terribly. That is my god. A king, no doubt, but"—here he sighed—"by no means invisible. Good day."

Nothing but the absence of Mr. FRANK HARRIS in what is not only his spiritual but his actual home, America, prevents the publication of his definitive and epoch-making views on this suggestive theme.

Meanwhile things go on much as usual.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Officer (superintending party that is trying to extinguish a fire at French farm).* "GOOD HEAVENS, CORPORAL, WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP THERE?"

Irish Corporal. "I'M WATCHIN' THE STRAW DOESN'T CATCH A-FIRE, SOR."

Officer. "WELL, TAKE CARE. IS IT AN EASY PLACE TO GET OUT OF?"

Corporal. "IT IS THAT. YOU MIGHT GO THROUGH THE FLOOR ANNYWHERE, SOR.]"

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MORE SUBSTITUTION.

From a Stores circular:—

"Members who like a very delicately Smoked Bacon or Ham will appreciate the valuable new line recently added to our Stock, namely;—

—— MILD CURED SALMON."

* * * * *

"From Switzerland comes a report of a noiseless machine gun, operated by electricity."—*Yorkshire Evening Post.*

Another invention gone wrong.

* * * * *

NEW LIGHTS ON ANCIENT HISTORY.

“Senor Aladro Castriota, the wealthy wine merchant of Xerxes.”—*Daily News*.

HERODOTUS omits this detail.

* * * * *

“Mrs. — thoroughly recommends her Russian Nursery Governess; speaks fluent French, German; will answer any question.”—*Daily Paper*.

There are a lot of questions we should like to ask her about Russia.

* * * * *

“The jury found the prisoner guilty of man-slaughter, and was sentenced to 18 months’ hard labour.”—*Provincial Paper*.

No wonder there is a scarcity of jurymen.

* * * * *

AT THE PLAY.

“SHEILA.”

Mark Holdsworth, a bachelor of middle age, is bored with commercial success and seeks a diversion. He would like to have a son. And his attractive typist, *Sheila*, strikes his fancy as a suitable medium. On her side the girl (obviously recognisable by her innocence as a pre-war flapper) is sick of drudgery, longs very simply for the joys of life, as she imagines them, meaning freedom and pretty dresses

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and money to spend and piles of invitation cards, and so forth. His proposal of marriage, practically the first word he has ever said to her outside their business relations, seems to her too good to be true. There is no question of a grand passion, not even a question of every-day romance. It is just a fair exchange, though she is too young to appreciate the man's motives and is content with the pride of being his choice and the prospects of the wonderful life that opens before her.

Three months later (they are married and in their different ways have grown to care for one another) we find her discontented. Her social blunders and the attitude of his people have set her on edge, and we are further to understand that she is not very responsive to the strength of his feelings for her. A bad shock comes when she hears, through a jealous woman-friend of his bachelor days, that he has married her for the sake of a son. This poisons for her the memory of their first union and she refuses to be his wife again.

An old obligation, entered into before his marriage, compels him to go abroad on business where she cannot accompany him. He does not know that she is to have a child, and in his absence she keeps the knowledge from him. Her boy is born and dies. The news, reaching *Holdsworth* through a brother, brings him home, and husband and wife are reconciled. Such is the plot, told crudely enough.

Now, if Miss SOWERBY meant deliberately to create a woman who does not really know what she wants—a creature of moods without assignable motives—then I am not ashamed of failing to understand her *Sheila*, since her *Sheila* did not understand herself. But if she is designed to illustrate the eternal feminine (always supposing that there is such a thing) then I protest that her chief claim to be representative of her sex is her unreasonableness. Of course I should never pretend to say of a woman in drama or fiction that she has not been drawn true to nature. To know one man is, in most essentials, to know all men; to know fifty women (though this may be a liberal education) does not advance you very far in knowledge of a sex that has never been standardized.

When we first meet *Sheila* her idea of happiness is to spend an evening (innocent of escort) at the picture-palace; take this from her and her heart threatens to break. Three short months and she has developed to the point of breaking off relations with a husband who has given her all the picture-palaces she wanted, but has also committed the unpardonable indecency of marrying her with the object of getting a son!

[Illustration: THE VICE OF INCONSTANCY.

Sheila. "BEFORE YOU MARRIED ME YOU WEREN'T NEARLY SO NICE TO ME. IT'S HORRID OF YOU TO CHANGE."

Mark Holdsworth.. MR. C. AUBREY SMITH.

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Sheila..... MISS FAY COMPTON.]

Here, if she approves the attitude of her heroine, I am tempted to argue, in my dull way, with the charming author of *Sheila*. You must always remember that there was no love—not even courtship—before this betrothal. The girl was swept off her feet by the honour done to her and by the chance of seeing “life” as she had never hoped to see it. The man, on his side, wanted a son. Was his object so very contemptible in comparison with hers? Women marry by the myriad for the mere sake of having children, and nobody blames them. Indeed, we call it, very reverentially, the maternal instinct. Well, what is the matter with the paternal instinct?

However, I am not going to set my opinion up against Miss SOWERBY’S. Where I can follow her I find so much clear insight and observation that I must needs have faith in her good judgment where I cannot understand. This arrangement still leaves me free to prefer her in her less serious moments. Here she is irresistible with that delicate humour of hers that is always in the picture and never has to resort to the device of manufactured epigram. There is true artistry in her lightest touch. Her people are not galvanised puppets; they simply draw their breath and there they are. And she has the particular quality of charm that makes you yield your heart to her, even when your head remains your own.

How much she owes to Miss FAY COMPTON’S interpretation of *Sheila* she would be the first to make generous acknowledgment. It was an astonishingly sensitive performance. Miss COMPTON can be eloquent with a single word or none at all. By a turn of her eyes or lips she can make you free of her inarticulate thoughts. I must go again just to hear her say “Yes,” and give that sigh of content at the end of the First Act.

Mr. AUBREY SMITH as *Mark Holdsworth* had a much easier task, and did it with his habitual ease. Mr. WILLIAM FARREN—a very welcome return—was perfect as ever in a good grumpy part. It was strange to see the gentle Miss STELLA CAMPBELL playing the unsympathetic character of a jealous and rather cruel woman; but she took to it quite kindly. Mr. LANCE LISTER, as the boy *Geoffrey*, who kept intervening in the most sportsmanlike way on the weaker side and adjusting some very awkward complications with the gayest and most resolute tact, was extraordinarily good. Admirable, too, were Miss JOYCE CAREY as a shop-girl friend of *Sheila*’s boarding-house period, and Mr. HENRY OSCAR as her “fate,” whose line was shirts. The scene in which these two encounter the superior relatives of *Sheila*’s husband abounded in good fun, kept well within the limits of comedy. It was a pure joy to hear *Miss Hooker*’s garrulous efforts to carry off the situation with aggressive gentility; but even more fascinating was the abashed silence of her young man, broken only when he blurted out the word “shirts,” and gave the show away.

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The whole cast was excellent, and Sir GEORGE ALEXANDER must be felicitated on a very clever production. But it is to author and heroine that I beg to offer the best of my gratitude for a most refreshing evening.

O.S.

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“You will find that the men most likely to get off the note are those who never really got on to it.”—*Musical Times*.

The real question is how those who never got on to the note contrive to get off it.

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[Illustration: *Mother (reading paper)*. “I SEE A BAKER’S BEEN FINED TEN POUNDS FOR SELLING BREAD LESS THAN TWELVE HOURS OLD.”

Alan (who now goes to school by train—joining in). “OH, THINK! AND HE MIGHT HAVE PULLED THE CORD AND STOPPED THE TRAIN TWICE FOR THAT!”]

* * * * *

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(BY MR. PUNCH’S STAFF OF LEARNED CLERKS.)

When I first read the title of *Secret Bread* (HEINEMANN) my idea was—well, what would anyone naturally think but that here was a romance of food-hoarding, a tale of running the potato blockade and the final discovery of a hidden cellar full of fresh rolls? But of course I was quite wrong. The name has nothing to do with food, other than mental; it stands for the sustaining idea (whatever it is) that each one of us keeps locked in his heart as the motive of his existence. With *Ishmael Ruan*, the hero of Miss F. TENNYSON JESSE’S novel, this hidden motive was love of the old farm-house hall of Cloom, and a wish to hand it on, richer, to his son. *Ishmael* inherited Cloom himself because, though the youngest of a large family, he was the only one born in wedlock. Hence the second theme of the story, the jealousy between *Ishmael* and *Archelaus*, the elder illegitimate brother. How, through the long lives of both, this enmity is kept up, and the frightful vengeance that ends it, make an absorbing and powerful story. The pictures of Cornish farm-life also are admirably done—though I feel bound to repeat my conviction that the time is at hand when, for their own interest, our novelists will have to proclaim what one might call a close time for pilchards. Still, Miss JESSE has written an unusually clever book, full of vigour and passion, of which the interest never flags throughout the five-hundred-odd closely-printed pages that carry its protagonists from the early sixties almost to the present day. No small achievement.



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Mrs. SKRINE has collected some charming fragrant papers from various distinguished sources concerning the ever-recurring phenomenon of *The Devout Lady* (CONSTABLE), in order to inspire one JOAN, a V.A.D. heroine of the new order. I guess JOAN, of whom only a faint glimpse is vouchsafed, must be a nice person—the author’s affectionate interest in her is sufficient proof of that. I suppose we all know our Little Gidding out of SHORTHOUSE’S *John Inglesant*. Mrs. SKRINE deprecates the Inglesantian view and offers us a stricter portrait of MARY COLLET. “Madam” THORNTON, Yorkshire Royalist dame in the stormy days of the Irish Rebellion and the Second JAMES’S flight to St. Germain, is another portrait in the gallery; then there’s PATTY MORE, HANNAH’S less famous practical sister, of Barleywood and the Cheddar Cliff collieries; and a modern great lady of a lowly cottage, in receipt of an old-age pension and still alive in some dear corner of England—the best sketch of the series, because drawn from life and not from documents. If the author has a fault it is her detached allusiveness, her flattering but mystifying assumption that one can follow all her references, and her rather mannered idiom: “He proved a kind husband, but sadly a tiresome.” These, however, be trifles. Read this pleasant book, I beg you, and send it on to your own Joan.

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I have read with deep interest and appreciation and with a mournful pleasure the *Letters of Arthur George Heath* (BLACKWELL, Oxford). It is the record, in a series of letters mostly written to his parents, of the short fighting life of a singularly brave and devoted man. There is in addition a beautiful memoir by Professor GILBERT MURRAY, whose privilege it was to be ARTHUR HEATH’S friend. HEATH was not vowed to fighting from his boyhood onward. He was a brilliant scholar and afterwards a fellow of New College, Oxford. The photograph of him shows a very delicate and refined face, and his letters bear out the warrant of his face and prove that it was a true index to his character. Until the great summons came one might have set him down as destined to lead a quiet life amid the congenial surroundings of Oxford, but we know now that the real stuff of him was strong and stern. He joined the army a day or two after the outbreak of war, being assured that our cause was just and one that deserved to be fought for. He had no illusions as to the risk he ran, but that didn’t weigh with him for a moment. On July 11th, 1915, he writes to his mother from the Western Front: “Will you at least try, if I am killed, not to let the things I have loved cause you pain, but rather to get increased enjoyment from the Sussex Downs or from Janie (his youngest sister) singing Folk Songs, because I have found such joy in them, and in that way the joy I have found can continue to live?” Beautiful words these, and typical of the man who gave utterance

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to them. The end came to him on October 8th, his twenty-eighth birthday. His battalion of the Royal West Kent Regiment was engaged in making a series of bombing attacks. In one of these ARTHUR HEATH was shot through the neck and fell. "He spoke once," Professor MURRAY tells us, "to say, 'Don't trouble about me,' and died almost immediately." His Platoon Sergeant wrote to his parents, "A braver man never existed," and with that epitaph we may leave him.

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The scenes of *A Sheaf of Bluebells* (HUTCHINSON) are laid in Normandy, where they speak the French language. But the Baroness ORCZY does not take advantage of this local habit, and is careful not to put too heavy a strain upon the intelligence of those who do not enjoy the gift of tongues. "*Ma tante*," "*Mon cousin*," "*Enfin*"—these are well within the range of all of us. Indeed, though I shrink from boasting, I could easily have borne it if she had tried me a little higher. "*Ma tante*," for instance, got rather upon my nerves before the heroine had finished with it. The plot (early nineteenth century) is concerned with one *Ronnay de Maurel*, a soldier and admirer of NAPOLEON, and in consequence anathema to most of his own family. The heroine was betrothed to *Ronnay's* half-brother, as elegant and royalist as *Ronnay* was uncouth and Napoleonic. It is a tale of love and intrigue for idle hours, the kind of thing that the Baroness does well; and, though she has done better before in this vein, you will not lack for excitement here; and possibly, as I did, you will sometimes smile when strictly speaking you ought to have been serious.

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"Economy, I hate the word!" said a much-harassed housekeeper recently: echoing, I fear, the sentiments of the great majority of the British people. Nevertheless, let no one be deterred by a somewhat forbidding title from reading Mr. HENRY HIGGS'S *National Economy: An Outline of Public Administration* (MACMILLAN). Although written by a Treasury official—a being who in popular conception is compounded of red-tape and sealing-wax and spends his life in spoiling the Ship of State by saving halfpennyworths of tar—it is not a dry-as-dust treatise on the art of scientific parsimony, but a lively plea for wise expenditure. Mr. HIGGS is no believer in the dictum that the best thing to do with national resources is to leave them to fructify in the pockets of the taxpayers—"doubtful soil," in his opinion; nor is he afraid that heavy taxation will kill the goose with the golden eggs. It may be "one of those depraved birds which eat their own eggs, in which case, if its eggs cannot be trapped, killing is all it is fit for." The author is full of well-thought-out suggestions for saving waste and increasing efficiency in our national administration. The introduction of labour-saving machinery, the elimination of superfluous officials, the reduction of the necessary drudgery which too often blights the initiative and breaks the hearts of our young civil servants—all these and many other

reforms are advocated in Mr. HIGGS'S most entertaining pages. I cordially commend them to the attention of everyone who takes an intelligent interest in public affairs, not excluding Cabinet Ministers, Members of Parliament, and political journalists.

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Though already we have so portentous an array of books jostling each other upon the warshelf, there must be many people who will gladly find the little space into which they may slip a slender volume called *A General's Letters to His Son on Obtaining His Commission* (CASSELL). So slender indeed is the book that by the time you have read the disproportionate title you seem to be about halfway through it. But here is certainly a case of infinite riches in a little room. The anonymous writer is deserving of every praise for the mingled restraint and force of his method; you feel that, were the name less outworn, he might well have signed himself "One Who Knows," for practical experience sounds in every line. Greatest merit of all, the letters contrive to handle even the most delicate matters without a hint of preaching. But no words of mine could, in this association, add anything to the tribute paid in a brief preface by so qualified a critic as General Sir H.L. SMITH-DORRIEN: "If young officers will only study these letters carefully, and shape their conduct accordingly, they need have no fear of proving unworthy of His Majesty's Commission." This is high praise, but well deserved. Personally, my chief regret is that so valuable a collection of advice should have delayed its appearance so long: there would have been use and to spare for it these three years past.

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[Illustration: THE ARTS IN WAR-TIME.

First Tommy (watching artist engaged in protective colouring). "MARVELLOUS, AIN'T IT, BERT, 'OW TALENT WILL OUT, EVEN IN THE MOST ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES?"

Second Tommy. "YUS. WOT I LIKES BEST IS THE EXPRESSION ON THE DAWG."]

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"The Admiralty announce that several raids were carried out by naval aircraft from Dunkirk in the course of the night of May 21-June 1, the objectives being Ostend, Zeebrugge and Bruges. Many bombs were dropped on the objectives with good results."—*Cork Constitution*.

The Huns must have found it a very long night.