

Punch, or the London Charivari, Vol. 158, January 21st, 1920 eBook

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CHARIVARIA.

We understand that the Frenchman who lost his temper so completely during a duel with pistols that he threatened to shoot his opponent will be suspended from taking part in similar encounters for the next six months.

* * *

A man who had half a ton of coal delivered to him without warning has been removed to an asylum, where he is being treated for coal-shock.

* * *

Wrexham Education Committee has decided not to have Welsh taught in the elementary schools. Doubts have recently arisen, it appears, as to whether it will ever be the chosen medium of communication in the League of Nations.

* * *

"There is a movement on foot," says *The Daily Mail*, "to brighten the dress of boys." Smith Tertius writes to say that, according to the best opinion in his set, the waist should be worn fuller and less attention paid to the "sit" of the shirt.

* * *

A man recently arrested in Dublin was found to have in his possession a loaded revolver, three sticks of gelignite, four lengths of fuse, a number of detonators and a jemmy. It is thought that he may have been dabbling in politics.

* * *

"Demobilised men are doing such execution at the London World's Fair Shooting Galleries," says a news item, "that the supply of bottles is running short." Nothing, however, can be done about it till the *Prime minister* returns from Paris.

* * *

"There is a proper time for the last meal of the day," says a medical writer. We have always been of the opinion that supper should not be taken between meals.

* * *

After addressing a meeting for two hours, says a contemporary, *Trotsky* fainted. A more humane man would have fainted first.

* * *

We feel very jealous of the suburban gentleman who wrote last week asking what an O.B.E. was, and whether, if it was a bird, it should be fed on hemp-seed or ants' eggs.

* * *

With reference to the wooden house which fell down last week, the builder is of the opinion that a sparrow must have accidentally stepped on it.

* * *

Lord *Birkenhead* describes the Coalition as an "invertebrate and undefined body." Meaning that they have rather more wishbone than backbone.

* * *

An Indian native was recently sentenced to write a poem. In other countries of course you commit a poem first and are sentenced afterwards.

* * *

Mr. F.H. *Rose*, M.P., writing in *The Sunday Pictorial*, refers to the Ministry of Munitions as "a veritable monument of superfluous futility." For ourselves we don't mind futility so long as it isn't superfluous.

* * *

Will the lady who, during the Winter Sales' scramble, inadvertently went off with two husbands please return the other one to his rightful owner?

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* * *

Mr. J.H. *Symons*, the Weymouth draper novelist, has told a *Star* reporter that he only writes novels for a hobby. This sets him apart from the many who do it with malicious intent.

* * *

A referee has lodged a complaint against the Football Club on whose ground he was assaulted by several spectators who disagreed with his decisions. Although sympathising with him we fear his attempt to rob our national game of its most sporting element will not meet with general approval.

* * *

It is generally expected that, owing to the number of deaths from whisky poisoning which have occurred of late, America may decide to go dry again.

* * *

It is reported on good authority that Mr. C.B. *Cochran* will visit America daily until the signature of DEMPSEY'S manager is obtained.

* * *

Lenin, says a contemporary, has completed his plans for the overthrow of civilisation. It seems that all our efforts to conceal from him its presence in our midst are doomed to failure.

* * *

"A search for combined beauty and brains," says *The Daily Mail*, "has been instituted by *The Weekly Dispatch*." We gather, however, that a good circulation will also be taken into consideration.

* * *

According to the Technical Secretary of the Civil Aviation Committee a vehicle has been designed which is equally at home in the air, on land, on the water and under it. It is said to be distinguishable from Mr. *Winston Churchill* only by the latter's eloquence.

* * *

We understand that certain members of the betting classes have demanded that the starting price for coal should be published each day in the early evening papers.



* * * * *

[Illustration: *Scene.—Miles from anywhere.*

Tammas. “*Could Ye oblige me WI’ A match, sir?*”

Stranger. “*I’m afraid I’ve only got one.*”

Tammas. “*Ay—she’ll do.*”]

* * * * *

A triumph of realism.

From a publisher’s advertisement:—

“*“Falling Waters.’ ‘Not a dry page in it.’”*

* * * * *

The new polygamy.

“The bride... carried a handsome bouquet of harem lilies.”—*Local Paper.*

* * * * *

THE BENEFITS OF PEACE

(as they appear to be viewed by certain unofficial guardians of public morality).

When Peace superseded the strife and the stress
Which the public regard as a gift for the Press,
It was feared in the quiet that followed the storm,
With nothing to do but retrench and reform,
That the Town would be painted a colourless tint
And the printers have nothing exciting to print.

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That fear was unfounded, I'm happy to say,
And red is the dominant tone of to-day;
So far from incurring a shortage of news
While the place is made fit for our heroes to use,
We cannot remember a rosier time;
We have rarely enjoyed such an orgy of crime.

There are scandals as nice for the reader to nose
As any old garbage of carrion crows;
Our mystery-mongers are full of resource;
There's a bigamy boom and a vogue of divorce;
To the licence of flappers we freely allude,
And we do what we can with the cult of the nude.

No, the War isn't missed; there's a murrain of strikes
Where a paper can take any side that it likes;
We are done with denouncing the filth of the Bosch,
But we still have our own dirty linen to wash;
Though we trade with the brute as a man and a brother,
Our Warriors still can abuse one another.

And if spicier features incline to be slack
There is always the Chief of the State to attack;
We have standing instructions to cake him with mud
And a couple of columns reserved for his blood.
Oh, yes, there is Peace, but our property thrives—
We are having, I tell you, the time of our lives.

O.S.

* * * * *

[Illustration: "WANTED."

HOLLAND. "SO YOU SAY YOU'D LIKE ME TO SURRENDER THE EX-KAISER?"

ENTENTE POLICEMAN. "WELL, MA'AM, I DIDN'T GO SO FAR AS THAT. I ONLY
ASKED
YOU FOR HIM."]

* * * * *

OUR BALLYBUN LOTTERY.

[*A propos* of Premium Bonds it has been recalled that in his evidence, given some years ago before a Select Committee, the then Under- Secretary for Ireland stated that in that distressful country “lotteries are very much used for religious purposes by people of all denominations,” and that “it would be flying in the face of public opinion, especially of the great religious bodies, to interfere with them.”]

Murphy has given up charity for ever. He was perhaps fuller of this virtue than any other body in Ballybun, and his house was packed with things he had won at raffles. When a brick tore a hole in the Orange drum our Presbyterian pastor at once got up a bazaar for repairs to the chapel, and Murphy won the finest silver tea-service this side of the Aran Islands. Murphy knew no distinctions of race, creed or sex in the holy cause of charity. When our Methodist minister, who is universally popular, as his knowledge of a horse would be a credit to any denomination, got up an Auction Bridge Drive in aid of the Anti-Gambling League, Murphy came home with three pink antimacassars, a discourse by JEREMY TAYLOR and two months' pay out of the pocket of McDougal, the organist, who seems to play cards by ear. But Nemesis was lying in ambush for Murphy.

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Three old ladies in Trim decided to get up a Tombola for the poor this winter, and of course they sent Murphy a sheaf of tickets. As lotteries are illegal they, being pious, hated them; anyway they decided to call it a Tombola. They got the whole of Ireland to send them prizes, articles of vertu and bric-a-brac, and any other old things that are of no use to anybody, The carriage on the stuff and the printer's bill nearly ruined the charitable ladies, but, as they said, the Tombola would pay all the expenses, and if they could knock any more out of it the poor should have it.

If you sold a dozen tickets you could keep the thirteenth for yourself, and as Murphy, on account of his charity, was so popular he must have sold hundreds. People seemed to have an idea that the raffle was for a gondola, and they thought it would look beautiful on the pond in front of the Town Hall. Unfortunately our local poetess confirmed this error by writing a poem about it called "Italy in Ireland," which was produced in *The Ballybun Binnacle*, with a misprint about the gondolier's "untanned sole," which caused a fracas in the editorial office.

Murphy explained to all concerned that perhaps his Italian was rusty, and anyway his time was so taken up reading lottery-tickets and other charitable literature that he never knew what it was all for. It was a Tombola, however, this time, and not a gondola, they were subscribing for. It was a kind of Italian lottery which the police didn't mind because the prizes were not in money or anything of value, but just Old Masters and brick-bracks. Murphy has such a way with him that the editor and the poetess each took a dozen tickets.

When the result of the draw was published Murphy won six prizes, but no one grudged him them as he had taken so much trouble. The Grand Prize, a "statue carved by an Italian artist, the finest bit of sculpture ever seen in Ireland," was won by our popular grocer, Mr. McAroon. We were all delighted. People trooped in crowds to McAroon's back-door after closing-time to toll him so. The police took their names, but the magistrates, who have a great respect for the fine arts, said that this was a day in the artistic development of the Cinderella of the West which automatically and *prima facie* regularised an extension of closing-hours.

McAroon said that his religion did not run much to statues, but that, to show his tolerance to all denominations, especially to those on his books, he would have it unveiled by his Minister. He would invite the Bishop and all men of goodwill to be present at the ceremony. He would place it in the corner of his garden overlooking the esplanade, where it would cheer the simple mariners coming home after their arduous fishing toils, and perhaps remind one or two of them (but he would mention no names) of a dozen or so of porter that had been left unpaid for after a recent wedding.

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The Ballybun express carries no goods whatever, except with the connivance of the guard and driver, who are both very decent Ballybun boys, and will bring anything down from Dublin for anyone. They promised to carry the statue themselves from the railway station up to McAroon's house. If the express was less than three hours late, which it was sure to be if it was running smoothly, they could just beam-end the statue on its pedestal and the presiding elder could unveil it with a hammer.

The train was not too late, just punctually late, and the guard had time to hurry the statue along through the biggest crowd we have had for years in Ballybun.

The Minister said that he would not open the case with prayer, because it might give offence to friends of other Christian denominations; he would just knock the front off and let this matchless piece of statuary from the blue skies of Italy dazzle them with its beauty. It needed no words from him, but he would just like to remind any of his flock present that the collection next Sunday was for the heathen both at home and abroad.

The statue then flashed out on us and left us breathless.

It was the most scandalous thing ever seen in Ballybun; it was Venus rising from the sea without a stitch. There she stood with one hand raised toward the sky and the other pointing at the backs of all the pious people in Ballybun as they hurried indignantly home. Some of them blamed McAroon, while others said that Murphy knew all the time what a Tombola really was and that he ought to be ashamed of himself.

The Bishop ordered his people not to deal at McAroon's until Murphy had removed the scandalous object. So many bitter things were said that McAroon, who is obstinate when roused, vowed that as long as the sun shone in heaven the lady should add lustre to his back-yard. The Minister however tried to move him to a more prayerful spirit.

McAroon said it wouldn't be right to smash up for firewood a marble statue that had cost five hundred pounds if a penny. The clergyman said that if everybody stopped away from his store he would lose more than that in a year, and that in any case, if McAroon suffered, he would suffer in the holy cause of charity.

McAroon's piety was touched, and he said that in the interests of peace and holy charity he would agree on a compromise. He had forsooth to keep his vow and let the lady stop, but she had two outstretched arms and there was always abundance of family washing on hand in the daytime at all events. The clergy of all denominations agreed that his decision was in keeping with the best traditions of a Family Grocer.

Murphy and McAroon made it up publicly. Murphy asked how anyone in Ballybun could possibly know the Italian bathing regulations. Italy was a godless country; but "anyway," said he, "hear you me. I have suffered so much in mind from this that I have done with charity for ever."

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Christian peace and friendship reign once more in Ballybun; but any visitor who desires to see the beauties of Spagnoletti's famous masterpiece (what McAroon calls his "Anna Dryomyeny") without the washing to serve as a veil must come by night and bring his own matches.

* * * * *

[Illustration: A MINISTERIAL ATTITUDE.

Wife (to amateur politician). "NAH THEN—WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? IN THE 'OUSE O' COMMONS?"]

* * * * *

SO LONG.

All coiled down, and it's time for us to go,
Every sail's furled in a smart harbour stow,
Another ship for us an' for her another crew;
An' so long, sailorman. Good luck to you!

Fun an' friends I wish you till the pay's all gone,
Pleasure while you spend it an' content when it's done,
An' a chest that's not empty when you go back to sea,
An' a better ship than she's been an' a truer pal than me.

A good berth I wish you in a ship that's well-found,
With a decent crowd forrard an' her gear all sound,
Spars a man can trust to when it comes on to blow,
An' no bo'sun bawlin' when it's your watch below.

A good Trade I wish you an' a fair landfall,
Neither fog nor iceberg, nor long calm nor squall,
A pleasant port to come to when the work's all through...
An' so long, sailorman. Good luck to you!

C.F.S.

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE NEW POOR.

"GOOD MORNING, MADAM. I DEAL IN CAST-OFF CLOTHING."

“OH, HOW LUCKY! DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE ANYTHING THAT WOULD SUIT MY HUSBAND?”]

* * * * *

THE SMUGGLER.

(With the British Army in France.)

“If I am to be a bold bad smuggler, old scream,” said Percival, packing pyjamas and parcels into his bag, “I demand the proper costume and accessories of the craft. No self-respecting smuggler can be expected to run a cargo in a British warm and field-boots.”

“Of course, my swaggering buccaneer, if you want to do it in the grand manner,” answered Frederick, “I’ll arrange for the saucy little cutter, the sequestered cove an’ the hard-riding exciseman with a cocked hat and cutlass. But the simpler if less picturesque way is to dump your bag on the counter at the Customs House and be taken with a fit of sneezing when the Grand Inquisitor asks you if you have anything to declare.”

“Whereupon he’ll hand me a quinine tablet and, when I show signs of convalescence, repeat the question in a loud voice. And if I don’t know the correct answer I’ll find myself meditating in Portland or Pentonville. That’s what I’m exposing myself to by obliging corrupt an’ unscrupulous friends,” continued Percival bitterly.

“Hang it!” expostulated Frederick, “the potty little bottle of scent I’m asking you to deliver to my cousin Julia won’t get you more than a seven-days’ stretch. And you’ve got *fourteen* days’ leave.”

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"Well, I won't grumble about that, although I'd arranged my programme differently. But what about the box of Flor Fantomas I'm taking for the Major, and the bottle of whisky with which the skipper has entrusted me for the purpose of propitiating his projected father-in-law, to say nothing of the piece of Brussels lace which Binnie says is for his aunt. Their combined weight will just about earn me a lifer. I can see me wiring the War Office for an extension of leave on urgent business grounds—nature of business, to enable applicant to complete term of penal servitude."

"Don't, Percival, old crumpet," murmured Frederick, visibly affected; "the thought of you languishing in a felon's cell, without cigarettes, gives me a pain in my heart. Let me see what I can do for you."

In a few minutes he was back, beaming. "I've fixed it all right, *mon lapin*," he said; "if the worst comes to the worst they'll bail you out with the Mess funds. But they won't accept further responsibility. The Major says, if a fellow who's spent his whole career dodging duties can't dodge the duty on a box of cigars he doesn't deserve sympathy."

So Percival proceeded on leave with a heavy bag and a heavier conscience. On the boat he was greeted hilariously by Gillow the gunner and Sparkes the sapper, who invited him below to drink success to the voyage. In order to give the voyage no chance of failure they continued to drink success to it until the vessel backed into Folkestone Harbour, when they felt their precautions might be relaxed.

"Thanks to our efforts we've arrived safely," said Gillow as they strolled up on deck; "but the sight of jolly old England doesn't seem to be moving you to mirth and song, Percival. Why this outward-bound expression when we're on the homeward tack, my hearty?"

"It's the gnawing molar of conscience," said Percival ruefully; "I've got a consignment of pink-ribboned parcels in my bag which I know to contain contraband and which I also suspect—Frederick's and Binnie's anyway—to contain amorous missives not meant for vulgar eyes. If I deliver the parcels with the seals broken I shall get the glacial glare from the damsels concerned, and when I get back scorpions and poisoned bill-hooks will be too good for poor Percival."

"Phew!" whistled Sparkes. "They go through your baggage with a fine toothcomb nowadays. Couldn't you drop over the side with your bag and drift ashore on a deserted beach, disguised as a floating mine?"

"I've cut impersonations of hardware out of my *repertoire* since the day I failed to get past an R.T.O. disguised as a brass-hat," said Percival sadly. "I suppose I must fall back on direct action. I've a feeling that England expects every man this day to pay his duty."

On the quay there was the usual mad charge of porters. Percival indicated his bag to one of them with a distracted air, and followed him to the Customs House guiltily. The porter dumped the bag before an official, who had a piece of chalk hopefully poised between his fingers.

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“Nything t’ ’clare?” he asked, preparing to affix the sign which spelt freedom.

Percival blew his nose violently, hoping the chalk would descend to save him the necessity of answering, but it remained poised in mid-air.

“Anything to declare?” repeated the official, with emphasis.

“Er,” said Percival weakly—“nothing that you need worry about—only a few presents.”

“I’ll have to trouble you for your keys, then,” said the incorruptible.

Percival sighed dismally and produced them. Suddenly he noticed Gillow declaring his baggage, and became so interested that he failed to perceive that the official was in difficulties with the lock of his bag.

“This the right key, Sir?” demanded the latter at length.

“Oh, yes,” said Percival absently. “But perhaps the bag isn’t locked.”

The bag wasn’t. It opened easily, and the official plunged into a welter of articles of personal use; but no parcels or dutiable goods came to light.

“P’raps you think it’s a joke, wasting my time like this,” snorted the official indignantly. “All I can say is, it’s an infernal bad one.”

“Awf’lly sorry,” said Percival sweetly, as his eye followed Gillow, who had emerged unchallenged. “I must have forgotten to bring the parcels I spoke about.”

Smiling cheerfully, he directed the porter to place his bag by the side of Gillow’s in a Pullman, and took his seat with an expression of complete content.

“How fares the master criminal?” asked Sparkes.

“A sympathetic friend took my troubles on his shoulders,” said Percival, “and got the parcels through with an effrontery which amazed me. I always took him for an upright youth, too.”

“Who was it?” asked Gillow.

“You! Didn’t you notice you took my bag by mistake? But don’t let it weigh unduly on your conscience. Mine’s clear anyway, and I feel that my troubles are over.”

But it was not till he got home and opened his own bag that he discovered a quantity of broken glass, a pungent odour of whisky and Cologne water, a discoloured parcel of lace and a box of sodden cigars.

"I was never meant for a smuggler," he groaned.

* * * * *

THE BOOK OF ADVENTURE.

Oh the glory of the trappers!
Oh to be as in this book,
Chasing things in furry wrappers,
Poking from their crevice-nook
Loudly though they squeak and grumble,
Squirrel fitch and Arctic cat
(*Editor*: "I do not tumble;
Will you please explain this jumble?"
Author: "I shall come to that").

Oh! (as I was just remarking
When you interrupted me)
Where the marabouts are barking
It is there that I would be;
Where on promontories stony
All the loud Atlantic raves
And the, if not very tony,
Still quite practical seal coney
Plunges in the wind-whipt waves.

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Where the graceful skunk opossum
And the stylish leopard mink
Scamper as you come across 'em,
Climb upon the canon's brink,
Gambol with the pony musquash,
Claimed not for a collar yet—
Far away from London's bus-squash
And advertisements of tusk-wash
Are my yearning visions set.

If such dreams and such romances,
Editor and reader mine,
Have not filled your heart with fancies—
Silence and the lonely pine,
Distant snows that cool the fever
Of a weary world-worn soul,
There where life is no deceiver
And the wallaby-dyed-beaver
Makes a very natural mole—

If you have not heard the calling
Of the lone, lone trail and far,
Where the animals enthralling
I have lately mentioned are,
Nature splendid and full-blooded,
Just a gun and pipe and dog
(How those avalanches thudded!)—
No? Why, then you can't have studied
Perkins' Bargain Catalogue.

EVOE.

* * * * *

[Illustration: MANNERS AND MODES.

DYSPEPSIA DE LUXE.]

* * * * *

BILLIARDS.

HERBERT V. JAMES.

This match of a hundred up was played in the handsome saloon of the “Leadswingers’ Arms” yesterday afternoon before an unusually dense crowd, who both came in just too late to secure the table. It is understood that the game was arranged as the result of a heated discussion during lunch the same day, in the course of which Herbert had the effrontery to tell me—I mean, to tell James—that what I—that is, he—knew about billiards wouldn’t cover the pyramid-spot. James, who some hours later thought of a perfectly priceless repartee, which he has since forgotten, replied with dignity by challenging the other to an immediate game. Herbert accepted and, hastily finishing their lunch, the two repaired to the nearest billiard-room.

“I’m not due back at the office for another twenty minutes, so we’ve tons of time,” observed Herbert airily as they entered.

James looked at him, but said nothing. He had the better of the opening manoeuvres, however, for he secured the only cue that possessed a non-flexible tip; Herbert’s was at the best of the semi-rigid type, a fact which impelled him to declare that the place would soon resemble a popular tea-shop. Not being pressed for an elucidation of this remark, he volunteered one. “No tips,” he explained as he tenderly chalked his.

Herbert won the toss and elected to break with spot, which appeared to be a rounder ball than its fellow. Taking a careful and protracted aim at the red, he only missed the object-ball by inches, his own travelling twice round the table before finally coming to rest in baulk.

“Now then, Inman,” he said, with a poor attempt at jauntiness, “score off that if you can.”

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James's reply was a calculated safety-miss, which only failed of its intention in that it left his ball about an inch away from the middle pocket. The closeness of the contest may be gauged from the fact that at this stage the game was called (or would have been called if the marker had not gone out to his dinner) at one all.

"In off the white," declared Herbert, and promptly potted it. "Sorry," he added almost before the ball was in the pocket.

[Illustration: A MASTERLY TEN-SHOT, WHICH COLLECTED ALL THREE BALLS IN THE BOTTOM RIGHT-HAND POCKET.

[The continuous line shows the path of the striker's ball and the dotted lines those of the object balls.]]

For some time after this episode, which chilled the atmosphere a trifle, the exchanges were uneventful. A slight tendency towards "barracking" on the part of the crowd was quickly stifled, however, by a brilliant effort from James, who by means of all-round play built up an attractive break of 5.

Herbert at once responded by taking off his coat, but for several innings contributed nothing else of note except a powerful shot which pocketed the red ball in the fireplace. After an agreement had at last been reached about the rule governing this particular class of stroke, both players settled down to their work and put in some useful breaks, runs of 3, 7 and 4 by James being countered by 2, 5, 6 and 3 (twice) by Herbert. The latter was the first to reach the 50-mark, an event which the crowd signalled by hanging up their hats and advancing to the table. When they were informed that the game was one of a hundred up, they seemed disposed to argue the matter, and from this stage their attitude towards the players became openly and impartially critical.

The latter half of the match was marked by a somewhat peculiar incident. With the game standing at 75 all Herbert made a stroke that left the red hovering on the brink of a pocket. He waited anxiously, but with no result. At this point one of the crowd emitted a prodigious yawn, and it was the intense vibration set up from this act, so James declared, that induced the ball to topple over into the pocket. In support of his contention that no score should ensue he pointed to a framed copy of the Rules of Billiards on the wall that balanced a coloured advertisement of Tommy Dodd whisky, and recited the rule on vibration. Herbert strenuously denied that any such phenomenon had taken place, and when James appealed to its author he was met with such an outburst of elephantine sarcasm that he refrained from further contesting the point.

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After this the luck of the play went against James, and when, the marker having by now finished his meal, the score was actually called at 90-99 in his opponent's favour, he might have been excused for giving up the game as lost. With dogged determination, however, he faced the situation. His own ball was somewhere near the centre, the red about eighteen inches from the top left-hand pocket, and the white midway between the right-hand cushion and the D. With an almost superhuman stroke (but *not*, as was subsequently averred, with his eyes shut) he smote the red, and his ball travelled rapidly up and down the table. On the down journey it glanced off the white, after which, still going at a tremendous pace, it made a complete tour of the table and concluded its meteoric career in the bottom right-hand pocket. Meanwhile the red and the white had both departed on voyages of their own, the terminus in each case being the self-same pocket. (See *diagram*.) After the balls had been taken out, examined and counted, and James's person had been searched to see if he were concealing any, the marker pronounced this to be a 10-shot, and the game was thus strikingly ended in James's favour.

* * * * *

[Illustration: BEHIND THE SCENES IN CINEMA-LAND.

"HOP IT, LEANDER! THE HELLESPONT'S DOWN AT THE OTHER END OF THE TANK. THIS END'S 'FUN AT FLOUNDER BEACH.'"]

* * * * *

COMMERCIAL CANDOUR.

"The Great Song of a Britisher is—

'There's No Place Like Home.'

STAY AT ——'S HOTEL,

And you'll Sing it and Realise it."—*South African Paper*.

"The mere selling of an article is a simple matter, but keeping the customer sold is our principal aim."—*Advt. in West Indian Paper*.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *First Novice*. "WOULD YOU MIND MY PASSING, PLEASE?"

Second ditto. "NOT AT ALL—NOT AT ALL—IF YOU DON'T MIND USING ME AS THE HANDRAIL."]

* * * * *

MY DEBUT IN "PUNCH."

I am, I hope, decently modest. When I said so once to Margery she remarked that there was no need to make a virtue of necessity. But younger sisters, of course...

I came down to breakfast at my usual time—as the others were finishing— and found a letter awaiting me. I opened it under the usual fire of insults from Margery and John. To-day I ignored them, however, and my young heart gave a small jump. I am a modest young man.

“What’s the matter with you, little Sunbeam?” asked John (he is Cecilia’s husband, through no fault of mine). “Is the tailor more rude than usual, or has she found out your address?”

“The Vicar has asked him to sing at the Band of Hope,” suggested Margery.

I commenced my breakfast.

“What is it, Alan?” asked Cecilia.

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"Oh, nothing," I said easily. "The proof of a thing of mine that *Punch* has accepted."

They hadn't a word to say for a few seconds, then Margery began:—

"Poor old dear, it must be some awful mistake."

I ignored Margery.

"But, Alan darling, how beautiful! You've been trying for years and years and now at last it has happened. I *do* hope it isn't a mistake," said Cecilia anxiously. She was trying to be nice, you know. I'm sure she was. I went on with my breakfast.

"Well, John," said Cecilia, "can't you congratulate him, or are you too jealous?"

John sighed deeply and pondered.

"Terrible how *Punch* has gone down since our young days, isn't it?" he said heavily.

* * * * *

I spent a miserable time until it appeared. Somehow or other Cecilia let the great glad news get about the village. Farley, our newsagent and tobacconist, held me when I went in for an ounce of the usual mild.

"So I 'ear you've 'ad a article printed by this 'ere *Punch*, Sir," he said. "Somethink laughable it'd be, I suppose like, eh?"

"Not half," I said, striving hard to impersonate a successful humourist.

"Ah, well, it's all good for business," he said, as one who sees the silver lining. "I've 'ad quite a number of orders for the paper for the next two or three weeks."

I crept from the shop, only to meet an atrocious woman from "The Gables," who stopped me with a little shriek of joy.

"Oh, Mr. Jarvis, I've been dying to meet you, do you know. I always have thought you so funny, ever since that little sketch you got up for the Bazaar last summer. I said to my husband when I heard of your success, '*I'm not surprised. After that sketch, I knew.*' Do tell me when it's appearing. I'm sure I shall simply scream at it."

I escaped after a time and wondered whether it was too late to stop publication of the horrible thing.

* * * * *

I came down to breakfast and found John with a copy beside him. I looked at him.

“Yes,” he said, “the worst has happened. It is in print. We have been waiting for you to appear.”

He turned the pages and cleared his throat.

“I shall now read the article aloud,” he said. “Each time I raise my hand the audience will please burst into hearty laughter.”

Margery giggled.

“Cecilia,” I said, rising, “if you don’t control this reptile that you have married, if you don’t force him to hold his peace, if you allow him to read one word, I’ll throw the bread-knife at him and ... and pour my coffee all over the tablecloth.”

“John,” said Cecilia, “have a little thought for others and read it quietly to yourself.”

Cecilia meant well, of course, but Margery giggled again.

John read it to himself in a dead silence, sighed heavily and passed it to Margery.

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"We shall never live it down," he said, putting his head into his hands and gazing moodily at the marmalade.

Margery read it and giggled three or four times; but Margery giggles at anything.

Cecilia read it and beamed.

"Alan, dear," she said, "it's lovely! Of *course* they accepted it. John, you wretch, say you liked it." (Cecilia can be a dear.)

"Well, if I must tell the truth," said John, "it isn't quite so bad as I expected. In fact I very much doubt whether he wrote it at all. If he did—well, it's a marvellous fluke, that's all."

I smiled.

"You may smile, swelled-head," said John; "but I'll bet you five golden guineas to a bad tanner you couldn't do it again."

"Done," I said.

After a few days, however, I realised that I had made a mistake. Even a bad sixpence is worth something nowadays.

Cecilia and Margery vied with each other in offering me the feeblest suggestions for articles that they felt sure would reduce a rhinoceros to hysterics. John presented me with a copy of *A Thousand and One Jokes and Anecdotes* "to prove he was a sportsman," he said. I started to look for a bad sixpence.

Then Margery said to me:—

"Why don't you write and explain the whole thing to the Editor and offer to go halves if he prints it?"

I looked at her in amazement.

"You horrible little cheat!" I said.

* * * * *

However, on thinking it over carefully there seems a lot to say for the idea and it's really quite fair. Anyhow I can't possibly let John win. So here's the story, and with any luck it will cost John five golden guineas. But I shan't give the Editor half.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Little Girl* (rather sceptical about what she regards as her new toy). "PUT HIM ON THE FLOOR, MUMMY, AND SEE IF HE'LL GO."]

* * * * *

THE PERILS OF HUMOUR.

From *Punch*:—

"THE PROFITEER'S ANTHEM.

The hymns to be sung will be (1) "All people that on earth do well."—*Rangoon Times*."

From *The Manchester Evening Chronicle*:—

"THE PROFITEER'S ANTHEM.

The hymns to be sung will be (1) "All people that on earth do dwell."

Rangoon Times, quoted in *Punch*."

* * * * *

"It was reported to the Sanitary Committee yesterday that the Inspector of Nuisances had made arrangements for the repair of the meteorological instruments."—*Local Paper*.

Judging by our recent weather, quite the right man to look after it.

* * * * *

From a money-lender's circular:—

"Having been, perhaps, the richest nation in the world before the war, and wealth being only comparative, it is our empirical duty to achieve a like position again."

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So that's why they are "trying it on."

* * * * *

"The news, says the Paris correspondent of *The Times*, in itself is serious enough as showing the dangers of letting the Adriatic settlement continue to be at the mercy of a coup de theatre or coup de d'etat, whichever one may like to call it."—*Evening Paper*.

We fancy the Paris correspondent of *The Times* would prefer the former.

* * * * *

[Illustration: EVEN-HANDED JUSTICE

(*As dispensed by the LORD CHANCELLOR and a predecessor*).

INJURED PARTIES (*simultaneously*).

"OH! TO BE SMACKED BY THOSE WE LOVE DOTH WORK LIKE MADNESS IN THE BRAIN."]

* * * * *

[Illustration: FRENZIED BOXING FINANCE.

Master of the Ceremonies. "LOOK 'ERE! 'FORE MY MAN FIGHTS HE WANTS TWO POTTIES, THREE GLASSIES AN' A BLOOD-ALLEY; AN' I WANTS A PACKET O' FAGS FOR MESELF."]

* * * * *

THE BURIAL OF DUNDEE.

"Dundee is dead," said my wife, returning from her morning visit to the kitchen.

"I am very sorry to hear it," I replied, laying down the newspaper on the breakfast-table, at which I still lingered; and indeed I was sorry. Dundee had been our household cat from the earliest days of our married life, from the time when he was a tiny kitten the colour of marmalade, which had earned him his name.

"Cook is very much upset," my wife continued.

"Her distress does her credit," I answered.

"She talks of leaving."

I must confess with shame that a pang acuter than the first went through me at the news, for Cook was one of those rare artists who understands the value of surprise and never rides success to death.

"Ask her to reconsider her decision," I said.

"I have," said my wife, "and she remained immovable."

"Perhaps when the first shock has worn off?"

"There is just a chance."

"Yes, I am sure you can persuade her," I concluded, preparing to leave for my office.

"Before you go," interrupted my wife, "what are we going to do about the burial?"

"How does one usually dispose of dead cats?" I asked. "I thought the dustman—"

"Out of the question."

"I know it is forbidden by the by-laws of the Corporation, but a shilling ——"

"How stupid you are! If anything were to decide Cook to go it would be handing over Dundee's remains to the dustman. You know how particular Cook is about funerals."

I knew indeed. The rate of mortality among her friends and relations was abnormally high, and on account, as I suspect, of her skill in cookery she was in frequent demand as a mourner. By continual attendance she had cultivated a nice sense of what was fitting on these occasions and posed as an authority on the subject.

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"Very well, then, let's have him buried," I said.

"Where?"

"In our garden."

"Who by?"

"Palmer or Emily."

Palmer and Emily are respectively the parlour- and house-maid.

"Both would say it was not the work for which they were engaged. They would leave at the same time as Cook, if I asked them."

"Who else can we get?" I asked.

"Yourself," my wife made answer.

"Me? But I can't be seen by all the street burying a cat." I should explain that our only garden is in front of the house.

"If you wait till it is dark you needn't be afraid of anyone seeing you," protested my wife.

"And run the risk of being detected by some suspicious policeman. No, thank you."

"Then if you won't do it yourself you must find someone who will. It is our last hope of persuading Cook to stay."

"By heaven!" I cried, looking at my watch, I am a quarter-of-an-hour late. I must run."

This was my customary device to evade the embarrassing dilemmas which my wife not infrequently thrust upon me at this hour. So for the moment I escaped. All day in the office I was fully occupied. From time to time the memory of Dundee lying stark in the basement obtruded itself upon my thoughts, but I dismissed the vision as one does a problem one has not the courage to face.

The problem remained unsolved when I stepped out of the train on my return from the City. To gain time for reflection I resolved to make a detour. As I struck into an unfamiliar side street, I looked up, and there in front of me stood an undertaker's shop.

The inspiration! I entered. From the back premises advanced to meet me the undertaker, with a visage tentatively wobegone, not yet knowing whether I was widower, orphan, businesslike executor or merely the busybody family friend. I unfolded my

difficulty. Beneath the outer crust of professional melancholy there evidently seethed within the undertaker a lava of joviality.

“Certainly, Sir, certainly,” he said. “It is not perhaps strictly in my line, but one of my assistants will be delighted to earn an extra shilling or so by obliging you. What name and address?”

I joyfully gave both and made my way home.

Midway through dinner came a ring at the front-door bell. Palmer interrupted her service to answer, and returned to me with a card on a salver.

“A gentleman to see you, Sir,” she announced.

“How strange, at this hour! Who can it be?” asked my wife.

“The gentleman to bury Dundee,” I explained in a lowered voice, as I passed the visiting-card, deeply edged with black, across the table to her.

Next morning my wife was able to announce that Cook had consented to stay. The burial of Dundee by a real undertaker had gratified her sense of the correct. I departed to the City filled with self-complacency.

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For a month I dwelt in this fool's paradise. Then one evening my wife gently broke the news.

"I have something serious to tell you. Cook has given notice."

"Who is dead now?" I asked.

"No one. She is engaged to be married."

"Married?"

"Yes, to the young undertaker."

"What young undertaker?"

"The one who buried Dundee."

It was too true. At supper, after the inhumation, a mutual esteem had sprung up that rapidly ripened into love. The enterprising young journeyman, so enamoured of his calling that he consented to inter dumb creatures in his leisure time, had evidently discerned in Cook, with her wealth of funeral lore, a helpmeet worthy of himself; while Cook on her side, conquered by his diligence and discretion, considered she had secured a respectable settlement for life, with the prospect of obsequies of the highest class for herself.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Cheery Member (to Club pessimist)*. "HULLO, OLD CHAP! HAVING A BAD CROSSING?"]

* * * * *

CLERICAL EDUCATION.

[The Rev. KENNEDY BELL, in *The Daily Sketch*, deplores the dreariness of parish magazines and suggests, with a view to brighten their contents, that clergymen should serve an apprenticeship on the daily Press.]

The Reverend Mr. KENNEDY BELL
Is wholly unable to say all's well
With the state of our parish magazines,
And is moved to indicate the means
Of making their pages bright and snappy
And bored subscribers cheerful and happy.
Now the most original of his hints



For galvanizing these dreary prints
Is this: That every parson, before
He aspires to be parish editor,
Should join the staff of a leading daily
And learn to write genially and gaily.
It may be a counsel of sheer perfection,
And yet, perhaps, on further reflection,
We may admit that something is gained
By the plan of having clergymen trained
In the very heart of the Street of Ink
To paint their parish magazines pink.
So generous laymen may haply decide
That it *may* be worth their while to provide
Each KENNEDY BELL with stepping-stones
To rise to the height of a KENNEDY JONES.
But others, a small and dwindling crew,
Possibly fit, but certainly few,
And cursed with a most pronounced capacity
For suffering from inept vivacity,
Would gladly be reckoned as unenlightened
Could they keep one class of journal un-"brightened."

* * * * *

[Illustration: "MY DEAR, YOU ARE NOT DANCING."

"NO—MOST PROVOKING. I MISLAID MY PARTNER AT PADDINGTON, AND HE
HASN'T THE FAINTEST IDEA WHERE THE DANCE IS."]

* * * * *

THE PASSING OF THE LITTER.

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It happened only a couple of weeks ago, but the horrible memory comes back to me as if it only happened yesterday. It was my own fault, because with a telephone loose about the place one ought not to encourage other pets.

“Well,” I said to Sibyl, “there we are, and we must make the best of them.”

Sibyl sniffed as she usually does when these periodical occurrences happen in our house.

“Which of them are you going to keep?” she asked, “and is it really necessary to keep any of them?”

“Well,” I said; “but——”

“What I mean to say,” said Sibyl, “better do away with them when they are quite young. It would be far more humane.”

“I am with you up to a point,” I said; “I admit they are not a very prepossessing lot.”

“How they came to be born at all is what I cannot understand,” said Sibyl, who is always like that when trying to be serious.

“Well,” I said, “I have decided to keep one of them—No. 1.”

“But surely,” said Sibyl, “that the most delicate one of the lot.”

That, I well knew, was quite true. Whether I should ever rear No. 1 was a matter for time to prove. It was so delicate that once or twice already it had been on the verge of collapse, but I had rallied it each time.

“As for the others,” I said, “we shall have to get rid of them.”

I need not go into painful details, but the thing was easily done. That very evening, unfortunately, through an oversight, No. 1 perished also.

For this I blame McWhirter.

“The number of my bus is 21,” he said in the theatre buffet that night; “by the way what’s yours?”

“Whisky,” I said absent-mindedly, “and not much soda.”

And it was only after I had drunk it that I realised my error. It was then too late.

And that is how New Year Resolution No. 1—the most delicate of the litter—passed away at the early age of one week.

* * * * *

OUR PLUTOCRATIC SPORTSMEN AGAIN.

“Wanted, set of gold clubs, with bag, for lady.”—*Local Paper*.

* * * * *

LIFE.

A MODERN NOVEL—SPASMODIC SCHOOL.

I.

Her parents were hygienic, so they never let a germ intrude
Within the cells and tissues of the girl they christened Ermyntude;
They bathed her body every hour and all internal harm allayed
By pouring Condyl's Fluid on her butter and her marmalade;
And when they dressed her took good care to tuck her chest-protector in—
Result, she grew up strong and fair as any peach or nectarine.

II.

She had no fear of lion or of tiger (in imprisonment)
And in an awful storm at sea she asked the mate what mizzen meant;
It was a plucky act; if I'd neglected to report it you'd
Never have known the depth and true dimensions of her fortitude.
If you remain agnostic, if you hold it still not proven, I'll
Give fifty more examples of her courage when a juvenile;
They lie in my portfolio, all printed, filed and docketed,
Including one in which a stick of dynamite she pocketed.

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III.

She also painted: one could tell her pictures mid a billion,
So daubed were they with ochre blots and splashes of vermilion;
She claimed to be a connoisseur of *objets d'art* and curios,
But what attracted notice was her openwork and lury hose,
Fashioned in every colour from magenta down to cinnabar,
Suggestive of a rainbow or the various liquors *in* a bar.

IV.

So when she came to twenty-one, the age they call discretional,
The trooping of her followers was, in a word, processional.

V.

But she disdained flamboyant types and snubbed the gay and gildy brand;
Instead she loved a decadent whose pagan name was Hildebrand,
Until that sad occasion when she met him coming back o' night,
His system loaded up with bhang and opium and aconite.

VI.

An artist next attracted her; she turned on her cajoleries,
And soon in unison they laughed at other people's drolleries;
His speech was polychromous (as the speech of many a carman is);
He mostly talked of masses, lights, half-tones and colour-harmonies;
That was his doom, for one fine day he went to his sarcophagus,
The word "*chiaroscuro*" stuck deep down in his oesophagus.

VII.

I do not know; it may have been her hose that took poor Rendall in,
Who previously had flirted with her elder sister, Gwendoline.
This Rendall was a wholesale dealer, very rich and large in all
His habits, though he always said his profits were but marginal.
Well, Rendall kept on waddling round her, like a tired and tardy yak;
His movements showed beyond a doubt that his disease was cardiac;
He took her on the river; after thinking for a time, aloud
He said, "I will propose to you; that is, of course, if I'm allowed."

VIII.

And she replied, "If I were going to propose, I'm blest if I
Would personate an elder who is just about to testify.



Now first of all I must remark that Love has come to grip you late
In life, but, passing over that, I've certain things to stipulate:
You must exhibit interest, as even Goth or Vandal would,
In curios and bric-a-brac, in ivories and sandalwood;
And you must cope with cameo, veneer, relief and lacquer (Ah!
And, parenthetically, pay my debts at bridge and baccarat).
I dote on Futurism, and so a mate would give me little ease
Whose views were strictly orthodox on MYRON and PRAXITELES.
You do not understand," she sneered, "so gross is your fatuity;
Well then, I answer 'No,' without a trace of ambiguity."

IX.

And Rendall turned back sad at heart; but in a stride his honey-bee
Was in his arms exclaiming, "Then would wasted all your money be.
Come, I will take you with your faults and try to make the best of you;
Your purse is good; perhaps in time I may improve the rest of you."

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[*Publishers' Note.*

Readers who are not sated yet and still for more are hungering
Will find Vol. II. describe how E. gave cause for scandal-mongering.
Vol. III. narrates how R. became enamoured of a fairy at
A ball, was robbed of all his wealth and joined the proletariat.
How E. washed clothes to earn her bread, while R. reclined in beery ease
Upon his bed, will be exposed in Vol. IV. of this series.
And further volumes show exactly what was worst and best in E.,
And how at last, aged eighty-four, she found her life's true destiny.]

* * * * *

A SIDE-SLIP.

"Just before the war we were in danger of having the ugly and even abominable word 'aviator' fostered upon us. Just as that word seemed victorious, *The Times* suddenly announced that it had decided once and for all to use 'airman' instead, and there can be no doubt that the example there set, which was copied by journalists on other papers, secured the predominance of a good new English word over a deformed importation."—*Times Literary Supplement*.

"The volume contains some 500 portraits of New England aviators."—
Same paper, same date, same page.

* * * * *

"QUARTER MILE CHAMPIONSHIP.—Record, Sgt. Smith (North Staffords), 5
2-5secs.

Wilkinson..... 1
Goddard..... 2
Worsley..... 3

An excellent win, Wilkinson putting in a wonderful spurt in the last 30 years."—*Indian Paper*.

From which we infer that he did not succeed in lowering Sergeant Smith's remarkable record.

* * * * *

THE MAN WHO COULD DO IT HIMSELF.

[Illustration: “HORACE, THERE’S SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE BOILER. SHALL I GET THE PLUMBER?”]

[Illustration: “PLUMBER? OF COURSE NOT—]

[Illustration: I’LL PUT IT RIGHT.]

[Illustration: JUST GET ME A SPANNER—]

[Illustration: AND A HAMMER—]

[Illustration: AND A LADDER—]

[Illustration: AND SOME STRING—]

[Illustration: AND A WOODEN PLUG OR TWO—]

[Illustration: AND AS MANY TOWELS AS YOU CAN FIND—]

[Illustration: AND ALL THE BLANKETS IN THE HOUSE—]

[Illustration: AND—]

[Illustration: THE DOCTOR.”]

* * * * *

SHAKSPEARE THE TRADUCER.

The members of the League of Scottish Veterans of the World War met recently in New York, and after “due deliberation” (*Query*, Can Scotchmen deliberate “duly” in New York now?) passed a resolution demanding that SHAKSPEARE’S tragedy, *Macbeth*, be removed from the curriculum of English literature studies in American schools.

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Apparently this was an example of “dry” Scotch humour. A neighbouring city had previously banned *The Merchant of Venice* from its schools on the ground that the character of *Shylock* was a libel on the Jewish race. If Jewish children no longer had to pay for school editions of *The Merchant of Venice* should Scottish infants still have to squander their bawbees on a play that insulted their forbears? Perish the thought! “We consider,” they declared, “that if a Jewish gabardine is to be cleaned by American Boards of Education the stain should likewise be removed from the Scottish kilt.” And if there are no reliable cleaners in the U.S.A. it should be sent to Perth.

The example thus nobly set is being widely followed. The members of the Southern Jazz-band Union met yesterday way down in Tennessee, and passed a resolution demanding the elimination of *Othello* from the educational curriculum. The proposer declared with some heat that “no coloured gentleman would spifflicate his missus wid a bolster on de word of a mean white thief like dat *Iago*.” The mere suggestion was dam foolishness and an insult to the most prominent section of the freeborn citizens of the U.S.A. “If dey gwine whitewash de Scotchman, why not de man ob colour too?”

At a representative meeting of Welshmen Mr. Jones ap Jones moved that, as a protest against SHAKSPEARE’S treatment of *Fluellen* and the Cymric vegetable symbol, *Henry V*. “be no longer taught in Welsh schools or read at Jesus College, Oxford, whateffer.”

At a recent meeting of the S.P.R. it was proposed by Sir A. CONAN DOYLE, of Oliver Lodge, Ether, Surrey, “that the Board of Education be asked, in the interests of scientific truth, to suspend the teaching of *Hamlet* until the scenes in which the *Ghost* appears shall have been emended in the light of modern research by a committee of psychical experts appointed for the purpose. The proposer quoted the line spoken by *Hamlet* to the apparition:—

“Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn’d,”

and said he would like to substitute for it, “Be thou a subjective hallucination arising from an uprush of inhibited emotional disturbance from the subliminal consciousness, or the objectivisation of a telepathic communication from the extra-corporeal sphere of being, or, finally, a manifestation to sensory perception of some supra-normal undulatory movement of the ether.”

He had always deprecated, he said, the meddling of untrained amateurs with the details of psychic phenomena, and felt that the rule should be made retrospective. An amendment was carried to add *Julius Caesar* and *Richard III*. to the motion for similar reasons.

The Labour Party have decided to ask Mr. FISHER to ban *Coriolanus* on the ground that many of the speeches of the chief character betray an anti-democratic bias, out of keeping with the ideals that should be set before the rising generation. Phrases like

“The mutable rank-scented many,” applied to the proletariat, could only foster the bourgeois prejudices of jaundiced reactionaries and teach the young scions of the capitalist classes to look down upon the manual worker.

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* * * * *

“For Sale Black Ebony Gentleman’s Shaving Outfit.”—*Local Paper*.

We gather that our coloured brother is about to grow a beard.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Lady (buying music)*. “OH, AND HAVE YOU GOT ‘A LOVER IN DAMASCUS’?”

New Girl. “WELL, MA’AM, MY FIANCE WAS IN MESPOT, BUT HE’S BACK IN BRIXTON NOW.”]

* * * * *

MODERN MOON-RAKERS.

PORTA, the once notorious Michigander,
Who launched the now exploded solar slander,
Whereat ten thousand negroes stood aghast,
In one short month into oblivion passed,
But PICKERING’S momentous lunar screed
Proves the persistence of this wondrous breed.
Yet this in PICKERING’S favour let us state:
He has no scare or scandal to relate—
Nothing in any way that may impugn
The credit or the morals of the moon;
And on the other hand it does attract us
To learn that she is growing sage and cactus.
Hardly romantic vegetables, these,
And not so edible as good green cheese
Which nursery rhymers (banned by MONTESSORI)
Associated with the lunar story.
Still PICKERING’S vegetable views are tame
Contrasted with Professor GODDARD’S aim;
For he, as from the daily Press we learn,
An obvious plagiarist of good JULES VERNE,
Would have us build a Bertha fat enough
To send a charge of high explosive stuff
Across the intervening seas of space
Bang into Luna’s unoffending face.
Meanwhile our own alert star-gazing chief,
DYSON (Sir FRANK), is rather moved to grief



Than anger by the astronomic pranks
Played by unbalanced professorial cranks,
Who study science in the wild-cat vein
And “ruin along the illimitable inane.”

* * * * *

THE NEW NAVAL UNIFORM.

“FOR SALE, NAVAL CADET’S (R.N.) MESS-DRESS; 39 inches side seam; pair cricket boots, purple velour hat, grey chiffon velvet dress.”—*Daily Paper*.

* * * * *

“SUEDE TURNIP, best varieties.”—*Advt. in Tasmanian Paper*.

No kid about this offer.

* * * * *

“Wanted, at once, respectable Man for Polishing Porter.”—*Daily Paper*.

The manners of some of our porters notoriously leave much to be desired.

* * * * *

[Illustration: MORE ADVENTURES OF A POST-WAR SPORTSMAN.

A SLIGHT ACCIDENT SECURES HIM A PERSONAL INTRODUCTION TO THE MASTER.]

* * * * *

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

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From Friend to Friend (MURRAY) is the name given, from the first of them, to a collection of eight fugitive papers, prepared for republication by the late Lady RITCHIE during the last months of her life, and now edited by her sister-in-law, Miss EMILY RITCHIE. Fugitive though they may have been in original intent, these pages are so filled with their writer's delicate and very personal charm that her lovers will be delighted to have their flight thus pleasantly arrested. Lady RITCHIE was above all else the perfect appreciator. *Horas non numerat nisi serenas*; the gaze that she turns smilingly upon old happy far-off days looks through spectacles rose-tinted both by the magic of retrospect and her own genius for admiration. London, Freshwater, Paris, Rome—these are the settings of her memories; and we see them all by a light that (perhaps) never was on land or sea, in whose radiance beauty and wit and genius move wonderfully to a perpetual music. In truth, however, these eminent Victorians of Lady RITCHIE'S circle must have been a rare company; I have no space for even a catalogue of them—Mrs. CAMERON, with her vague magnificence, pouring letters and an embarrassment of gifts upon her dear TENNYSONS; the KEMBLE sisters, LOCKHART, THACKERAY himself, a score of great and (to the kindly chronicler) gracious personalities live again in her pages. I should add that the volume is rounded off by a short story, a late addition to the *Miss Williamson* series, which might be called a pot-boiler, were it not somehow incongruous to associate so gentle a flame with any such activities. Slight as it is, *From Friend to Friend* forms an apt and graceful finish to the work of one whose life was given to the claims of friendship.

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Fanny goes to War (MURRAY) should be read by those who also went and those who didn't. It is a chronicle of the adventures of the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry in Belgium and France—vivid; inviting wonder, laughter and sometimes tears; fresh and delicious. The account of the first visit to the trenches awakens memories. Viewed from this distance it seems all to have been so picturesque, such fun! The humour of Thomas, the intelligence and tact of the good French *poilu*, the awful moments and the wild jests in between—these are all shown. The splendid humour with which “PAT BEAUCHAMP,” the author, bravely endured her own casualty with its distressing effects is typical in itself of that spirit in the Anglo-Saxon race which made the Teuton race wish it hadn't. In my view, the *obiter dictum* of an anonymous Colonel sums up the values of this ladies' contingent better than does the preface of the distinguished Major-General: “Neither fish, flesh nor fowl,” said the Colonel on having the constitution of this anomalous unit explained to him, “but thundering good red herring!” Time was, I believe and hope, when I myself, passing through the Base Port on leave and

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being full of life and daring, have sighted a lady-chauffeur of a motor-ambulance and have thrown a friendly glance, even a froward smile, at her. Waiving all questions of propriety, I hope that this was so, and that the lady-chauffeur was no less than "PAT BEAUCHAMP" herself, in the later stages of her career overseas. Though her only response may have been to splash mud over me, I should feel happy, now, thus to have paid my respects to this gallant and high-spirited lady. I count myself among the company, battalion, division, corps and army of her admirers.

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It certainly does not seem eight years, yet it must be fully that, since JOSEPH CONRAD in *The English Review* lifted a veil that lay between his admirers and an interesting personality with the pleasantly discursive papers which form the basis of the re-issued *A Personal Record* (DENT). Between then and now *Chance*, that masterly but difficult book, has by a curious freak of public taste given Mr. CONRAD, hitherto the well-loved favourite of the relatively few, a much wider constituency. To these late comers, rather than to the older (and of course superior) Conradists, who know it already, let me recommend this rambling, which is by no means to say aimless, account of the wanderings of the MS. of *Almayer's Folly*, some queer entertaining scraps of the author's family history, a description of the encounters with the original *Almayer*, and those vignettes of Marseilles which obviously were used as the background of *The Arrow of Gold*. This record is one of those quiet friendly books that flatter the devotee by a sense of peculiar intimacy with his hero. It is also engagingly characteristic. Mr. CONRAD here unravels the fine threads of his personal history and philosophy with the same artful reserve and exquisite elaboration with which he evolves the creatures of his resourceful imagination.

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The Life of Liza Lehmann (UNWIN), written by herself, and finished, as her husband tells in a pathetic foot-note, "scarcely two weeks before her death," is a book holding many special bonds of association with *Punch*, not least the fact that her father-in-law, Deputy J.T. BEDFORD, was the author of that *Robert, the City Waiter*, who was among the most famous and popular of Mr. Punch's early creations. The volume that the writer has put together is the record of a busy, successful and, on the whole, happy life, passed in the company of interesting people, about many of whom Madame LEHMANN has remembered some entertaining story. Chiefly, as is natural, the persons recorded are the musical folk of the last half-century, from JENNY LIND to Sir THOMAS BEECHAM; though in the allied Arts I was taken by a pleasing and new anecdote of ROBERT BROWNING reciting *How they Brought the Good News* into an Edison phonograph, and overcome

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by loss of memory halfway through the ordeal. One wonders if this rather surprising record exists to-day. I am not going to assert that the non-technical reader may not find the pages devoted to reprinted criticism rather over-numerous; old newspaper files, like old theatrical photographs, too quickly fade. But the author's humour endured; and I like to think that she could appreciate a joke made at her own expense; witness her quotation from the gushing friend who, at the moment of the first triumph of *The Persian Garden*, overwhelmed the composer with the tribute, "Do let me thank you! The local colour is *too* wonderful. I simply felt as if I was at Liberty's!"

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To the jaded reader I recommend *The Road to En-Dor* (LANE) as a book which should undoubtedly stir him up. It is the most extraordinary war-tale which has come my way. With such material as he had to his hand Lieutenant E.H. JONES would have been a sad muddler if he had not made his story intriguing; but, anyhow, he happens to be a sound craftsman with a considerable sense of style and construction. And he has a convincing way of handling his facts that compels belief in the most incredible of stories. Lieutenant JONES was a prisoner in the hands of the Turks at Zozgad, and to amuse himself and his fellow-prisoners he raised a "spook" which in time gained such a reputation that it had the Turkish officials almost hopelessly at its mercy. From being merely a joke his spook soon began to suggest, to him a way of escaping from the camp, and then, in conjunction with Lieutenant C.W. HILL, he worked it for all it was worth. His record of their adventures and of the sufferings, physical and mental, which they had to face is really astounding; but I fear it will be received coldly by the psychist. Spiritualism, indeed, is treated with scant respect, and whatever our own view of this vexed subject may be most of us will admit that Lieutenant JONES has considerable reason for his strong opinion.

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In *The Green Shoes of April* (HURST AND BLACKETT) Miss RACHEL SWETE MACNAMARA has got together quite a lot of people and situations that other novelists have used before. There is the fine young Irishman soldiering in India, the soulless actress who marries and leaves him, and the splendid Irish girl, his true mate, whom he weds in happy ignorance of his first partner's continued existence. But the hero has a maiden aunt, with a story of her own, and the heroine a terrific grandmother who are Miss MACNAMARA'S creations, and as she makes wife number one lie like a trooper in order to preserve the happiness of wife number two a *soupcou* of freshness is imparted to the *rechauffe*. Of course the well-meaning first wife is not allowed to succeed in her efforts, and *Beau* and *Perry* (you would never guess from that which was which, but in this case it doesn't matter) have a very bad time indeed until, reassured by a friendly barrister, they settle down again into wedded happiness. These are the confiding souls

whom novelists and lawyers love, and I can see Miss MACNAMARA, by-and-by, getting quite a nice story out of someone's attempt to oust their eldest son from his inheritance. I hope she will.

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[Illustration: FAIRY TALES REVISED.

Cassim Baba. “AH! NOW I HAVE IT—’OPEN SESAME!’ LUCKY THING I HAD THAT COURSE OF LESSONS IN MEMORY TRAINING.”]