

Punch, or the London Charivari, Vol. 158, March 10th, 1920 eBook

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Page 1

CHARIVARIA.

There are one hundred thousand more people living in London than in New York. But they are only just living.

* * *

“The Home Rule Bill,” says *The Irish Unionist Alliance*, “would, if put into operation, cause friction in Ireland.” We are sorry to hear this, for friction is the last thing we want to see in Ireland.

* * *

M. *Grabski*, who has just asked for the loan of three thousand million francs, is the Polish Minister of Finance. Yet people say there is nothing in a name.

* * *

A Welsh Prohibition Bill is suggested. We think it should be pointed out that the Welsh language is natural and not due to over-indulgence.

* * *

Dempsey, the American Boxer, is to be charged with “draft-dodging.” The other charge of *Cochran*-dodging will not be proceeded with.

* * *

Gold in the mouth, says the American Academy of Dental Science, is out of date. Much the same applies to gold in the pocket.

* * *

We understand that an American syndicate has been formed for the purpose of acquiring the sole rights in a suit of clothes by a London tailor.

* * *

American whisky is said to create in consumers a desire to climb trees. British whisky, on the other hand, seems to create in the Americans a desire to cross the Atlantic.

* * *



With reference to the road-mender who fell down last week and injured himself an explanation has now been given. It appears that the colleague next to him must have moved.

* * *

No fewer than twenty-seven poems on Spring have been received by one weekly paper editor. Yet there are people who still maintain that the crime wave is on the wane.

* * *

“The Irish swear by two staple beverages,” says *The Daily Mail*. We feel, however, that an Irishman who was really trying could swear by more than this.

* * *

We understand that the Foreign Office takes a serious view of the large number of public-houses which have been burgled during the last few weeks. It is feared that it may be the work of a foreign spy who is endeavouring to secure the recipe of British Government ale.

* * *

“A large number of army tanks have been sent to Africa,” announces an article in a daily paper. However, as the brontosaurus is supposed to devour four of these delicacies at every meal, it is feared that unless a great many more are sent out immediately this dainty animal may be faced with extermination.

* * *

A morning paper announces that all airships of “R 34” type are now obsolete. We have decided to stick a pin in each of ours.

* * *

From Ireland comes the pleasing news that the wife of a well-known Sinn Feiner has just presented her husband with a little bomberette.



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* * *

Since the publication of Professor KEITH'S statistics of efficiency, showing the superiority of the physical condition of miners over that of almost every other class of worker, the argument, so popular with the advocates of nationalisation, that a miner's occupation is a most unhealthy one, has been given a rest.

* * *

"I doubt if even the youngest child to-day will live to see the real fruits of the War," said the Bishop of Lincoln last week. Another unmerited slight on the O.B.E.

* * *

"Visitors to the Zoo," says *The Daily Mail*, "should not miss the rare spectacle of the highest five animals under one roof—the gorilla, the chimpanzee, the orang-outang, the gibbon and man." Naturally everybody is asking, "Who is the lucky man?"

* * *

A merciless campaign against rats is to be waged by the inhabitants of a large Yorkshire town. This is supposed to be the outcome of the continued indifference with which these rodents have treated the many propaganda campaigns which the town has organised.

* * *

Liverpool City Council is to consider the appointment of women park-keepers. In support it is urged that when it comes to persuading a paper bag to go along quietly the superior tact of a woman is bound to tell.

* * *

Arrangements for the continuation of the Food Ministry, it is stated, are still incomplete. It would be a thousand pities if a mere abundance of food should lead to the disappearance of this valuable department.

* * *

"Will the gentlemen on the Allied Surrender List," says the *Berlin Official Gazette*, "inform the German authorities of their address?" This is a typical piece of Teutonic duplicity. There are, of course, no gentlemen on the List.

* * *



The chiffchaff has been heard in Hampshire and a couple of road-peckers were observed last week hovering in the neighbourhood of Wellington Street.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Holiday-maker (in difficulties.)* “Oh, Dash it! There Goes that letter my wife gave me to post A week ago.”]

* * * * *

Another impending apology.

“Principal —— said there was a historical connection between the Royal Asylum for the Insane and the University of Edinburgh.”—*Scots Paper.*

* * * * *

“The British rule in India is as savage as that of the Turk in Armenia.”—*Washington Times.*

Not the “*George Washington Times,*” you’ll note.

* * * * *

Men and things of the moment.

Page 3

[Mr. Punch cannot hold himself responsible for the views expressed in the following correspondence.]

The MALLABY-Deeley Emporium.

Dear Mr. Punch,—I want you to use your influence with that great philanthropist, Mr. MALLABY-Deeley. I know that he is too modest to claim to be a benefactor of the race, but I am at least right in calling him “Mr.,” for that is how he describes himself on his shop-window, and he would never have done that if he had not desired to avoid confusion with the common tradesman. Well, I want you to enlist his powerful sympathy in the cause of the struggling middle classes, to which body I belong. I refer particularly to our crying need for dinner-jackets at reasonable prices. I am one of those who spend their holidays at seaside hotels, where people make a point of dressing for dinner in the hope of giving their fellow-guests the impression that this is their daily habit in the home circle. In view of the early advent of Spring I approached my tailor, the other day, with inquiries as to the cost of an abbreviated dinner-suit. His prices were as follows:—jacket L10 10s. 0d.; waistcoat L3 3s. 0d.; trousers L4 10s. 0d.; total L18 3s. 0d. I am old enough to recall the time when the most *elite* tailors of Savile Row charged no more than L10 10s. 0d. for a complete evening costume, uncurtailed.

I am all for the cheap supply of “gentlemen’s lounge-suits” for the so-called working-classes to lounge in. I know of no surer antidote to the spirit of Bolshevism. But let us not forget the claims of the middle classes, who are the backbone of the Empire. If Mr. MALLABY-Deeley cannot help us in the direction I have indicated, then let Mr. *Kennedy Jones*, on behalf of the Middle Class Union, put a hyphen to his name and open a shop for the sale of evening wear at demi-popular prices.

Yours faithfully,
SURBITONIAN.

* * * * *

Dear Mr. Punch,—It would be a thousand pities if Mr. MALLABY-DEELEY’S beneficent scheme should fail for lack of advertisement. Could you not persuade your colleagues of the Press to publish from day to day the route of his car’s progress from his private residence (or the terminus from which he debouches) to his place of business, as in the case of the new Member for Paisley? My only fear is that the Coalition Government might be suspected of adopting the Wee Free methods of publicity for political ends; but this would surely be an unworthy suspicion in the case of a movement designed for the benefit not of a party, but of mankind.

Yours faithfully,
stage manager.

The decline of learning.



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Dear sir,—I look for your sympathy when I say that I regard the abolition of compulsory Greek at Oxford as tantamount to the collapse of the last bulwark of British Culture. It is idle for the advocates of this act of vandalism to protest that the spirit of Ancient Hellas can be adequately conveyed in the form of translations, and to illustrate this futile argument by reference to the authorised version of the Hebrew Scriptures. Admirable as that version may be, is it for a moment to be supposed that it can take the place of the original as a source of spiritual education? or that our appreciation of Holy Writ would not be a hundred-fold increased if it were fortified by a knowledge of the first principles of Hebraic syntax and by an elementary acquaintance with Hebraic composition. It is impossible to estimate the influence of such knowledge in tending to endear the Bible to our youth. To me indeed it has always been incomprehensible that our Prelates, who presumably have the welfare of the Church at heart, have never insisted on making Hebrew a compulsory subject for Responsions.

And now Greek has gone and Oxford is the home of one more lost cause. The gods (of the gallery) may be with the winners, but it is the losing side that still appeals to

Yours incorruptibly,
Cato.

* * * * *

“*THE TIMES’ FLIGHT.*”

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—His many friends (among whom I take leave to count myself) will heartily sympathise with Dr. CHALMERS MITCHELL on the engine troubles he has passed through, culminating in the enforced curtailment of his scientific expedition. It is gratifying to think that the pure and lofty spirit of research which animated the great newspaper-proprietor who sent him forth on this mission has been vindicated by the Doctor’s discovery of an unmapped volcano. Regrettably the conditions under which he observed it precluded him from making an expert survey of it, and even from securing specimens of its geological structure. The possibility of such an unfortunate contingency, which may have escaped the consideration of the promoter of the expedition, was recognised by other scientists. But it was confidently expected by his Zoological *confreres* that his voyage of exploration would add largely to our knowledge of the habits and customs of the fauna of Africa, and notably of the giraffe, as coming, by the exceptional development of its neck, within closest range of his vision as he flew through the vast inane.

Even better opportunities for the observation of animal life would, it was thought, occur during the occasional intervals spent on *terra firma* for purposes of repose or repair. And indeed one is greatly intrigued by the following terse and airmanlike entry in the log for February 20th: “Much disturbed by lions.” Nothing is said of the actual capture of one of these interesting denizens of the jungle, but reference to such a feat might well

have been omitted out of regard for brevity. Is it too much to hope that the enterprise of *The Times* may yet be rewarded by the addition of a live lion to the Zoological Gardens?



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In any case, by the exceptional opportunities he enjoyed for a careful study of leaking cylinder jackets, insulating tape, red-leaded joints and missing engines the intrepid Doctor must have added largely to his knowledge of mechanical science, to say nothing of the botanical discoveries he made when his machine came within a few inches of contact with a banana-tree.

I, for one, look forward eagerly to his return, when he will be able to narrate his experience with a fulness and freedom of language impossible in cabled despatches.

Yours faithfully,
STANLEY LIVINGSTONE JONES.

* * * * *

A "MALADE IMAGINAIRE"?

"Bath-chair wanted, small lady good condition."—*Ladies' Paper*.

* * * * *

A CHOICE OF SINECURES.

"LADY-NURSE-HELP; three girls (12, 10, eight); two maids kept; month's holiday (fortnightly); salary L40."—*Daily Paper*.

"WANTED, a Housemaid, wages 27s. 6d., no duties."—*New Zealand Paper*.

* * * * *

"Lady would like to Join jolly Family for Dinner every night."—*Advt. in Daily Paper*.

Yes, but how long would they remain jolly?

* * * * *

"Windsor Castle Niggers, from His Majesty's Chapel Royal, gave an excellent programme."—*Local Paper*.

The programme merely announced them as "Windsor Castle Singers," but this no doubt was to give the audience a greater surprise.

* * * * *



“The revival of the Hunt Ball, and the intelligence that the Race Ball is also to be re-introduced next month, has restored the — dance season to its pre-war brilliance. The Hunt event passed off with *eclair*.”—*Local Paper*.

Supper seems to have been all right, anyhow.

* * * * *

[Illustration: A CONVERTED SPIRIT.

GENIUS OF ALCOHOL. “AND TO THINK THAT I WAS ONCE REGARDED AS AN IMPEDIMENT TO LOCOMOTION!”]

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Mayfair Copper*. “NOW THEN, GET A MOVE ON, TARZAN. THIS AIN’T A MONKEY NEIGHBOURHOOD.”]

* * * * *

WON ON THE POSTS.

(*With the British Army in France.*)

The decisive victory of the Racing Club de Petiteville—late the *deuxieme equipage* of the Sportif Club de Petiteville—over the *troisieme equipage* of the Societe Athletique de Pont Neuf would not appear to have any bearing on the washing of Percival’s collars and pyjamas; but, according to Elfred Fry, there was a poignant connection between the two.



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When the Sportif Club received the challenge they doubted whether to accept it, as the Societe Athletique was rumoured to include several veterans approaching fifteen years of age and of tremendous physique. On being conceded the choice of ground, however, they took up the gage and trained and practised with such vigour that two days before the date of the match Georges Darre, right back, punted his toe through a previously suspected weak spot in the ball and irreparably ruined it. The Societe Athletique was informed of the disaster and asked to supply a ball, but they answered that no known authority or precedent existed for visiting teams providing the accessories. There was also an insinuation that the story of the burst ball was a fabrication, designed to give the Sportif Club a loophole of escape from a contest that spelt certain defeat.

Stung to the quick, the *deuxieme equipage* made an urgent appeal to the *premier equipage* of the Sportif Club, who replied that this was the first intimation they had had of the existence of a *deuxieme equipage*, and recommended a tourney at marbles or a combat of peg-tops as being more suitable to their tender years.

Naturally this insult could not be brooked, and it was decided to break away from the parent body and reorganise under the title of the Racing Club de Petiteville; but this did not help them to solve the question of a new ball. Then it was that Theo Navet, left half, and son of the *blanchisseuse* in the rue Napoleon, had an inspiration, and Percival's pyjamas became linked up with the destinies of the club.

* * * * *

"It wouldn't surprise me, Sir," said Alfred on the evening when Petiteville was ringing with the news of the Racing Club's victory by 4 *buts* to 2, "if you are the only officer in Mess to-night with a reelly clean collar."

"And why am I singled out for so much honour?" asked Percival, taking the slacks which Alfred produced from between the mattresses. "Has the Washer-women's Union handed in notices and made a complimentary exception in my case?"

"Well, Sir, you 'ave been favoured, but it weren't a strike," explained Alfred. "You know, Sir, there's been an alarming short ration of coal an' fuel down in the village for a long time, an' two days ago Madame Navet, who does the orficers' washing, came up an' said she was bokoo fashay but the washing was napood for the week, becoss she couldn't buy, beg, borry nor steal enough fuel to keep her copper biling.... Do we wear the yaller boots to-night, Sir, or the very yaller ones?"

"The light pair," said Percival, "to give tone to the clean collar. But go on."

"Well, I put it to Madame as my orficer was a very partickler gent, an' she'd gotter do our washing even if she 'ad to light 'er fire with the family dresser. She said she was



desolated; she 'adn't sufficient coal to take the chill off a mouchoir. I thought of trying to borrar a sack for 'er from the quarter bloke, but our relations 'ave never been the same since the time I took my weekly ration of 'Pink Princesses' back an' arsked 'im to change 'em for cigarettes with a bit o' tobacco in.



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“After she’d gone I took a kit inventory ’an found we was down to our last clean collar, an’ we looked like bein’ a bit grubby in the matter of pyjamas. I went a walk to the canteen to think it over, an’ on my way Madame’s lad came up an’ said ’is team ’ad an important match for two days later an’ could I possibly oblige ’em with a football. Being a sportsman—I take a franc chance in the camp football sweep every week—I said I’d try what I could do, knowin’ of a ball which me an’ the other batmen punt about in our rare hintervals of leisure. But then the thought of that washing that wasn’t washed came into my mind.

“‘See ’ere, Meredith,’ I says. ‘Je voo donneray a ball si votre mere does our washing toot sweet.’”

“‘E looked blue at this an’ said they couldn’t get fuel nohow.

“‘Compree scrounge?’ says I.

“It seems ’e did. It seems scrounging for fuel ’ad reached such a pitch in the village that people took their backyard fences in at night, ’an they ’ad posted a policeman on the station to prevent ’em sawing away the waiting-room. But our washing ’ad to be done, ’an I thought if I got the whole of this football team scrounging they might find something as everyone else ’ad overlooked. So I pretended to be indifferink.

“‘Very well,’ says I. ‘San fairy ann. Napoo washing—napoo ball.’

“That set ’em to work. Next day little boys were scraping the village over like fowls in a farmyard, getting a chip ’ere an’ a shaving there, an’ making themselves such a nuisance that there was talk of calling the gendarmerie out. They would ’ave done, too, only he’d laid down for a nap an’ left strict orders ’e wasn’t to be disturbed. Then they slipped into the Camp, trying to lay nefarious ’ands on empty ration boxes, but the Camp police spotted ’em an’ chivied them off. I never seen our police so exhausted as they were at the end of that day.

“‘I can’t think what’s taken the little varmint,’ said the Provost-Sergeant. ‘It ain’t the Fifth of November.’

“On the whole it wasn’t a good day’s ’unting, but this morning I was waited on by a deputation wearing striped jerseys, which they appeared to ’ave put on at early dawn. They said the fire was lit under the copper, ’an could they ’ave the ball?

“‘Doucemong!’ says I. ‘Allay along, an’ let’s see the fire first.’

“Yes, it were lit, but only just. The water was lukewarm an’ the fuel ’ad nearly all burned away, an’ Madame was standing looking at it hopelessly.

“‘Pas bong,’ says I to the lads. ‘Pas assay chaud. Voo scroungerez ongcore.’



“They was frantic, becous it was nearly match time. I felt inclined to give ’em the ball, but the thought of you, Sir, in a dirty collar—”

“You may keep the pair of old riding-breeches you borrowed without permission,” interrupted Percy.

“Thank you, Sir. Then all at once the lads ‘ad a confab an’ went away, an’ in a few minutes they was back with some lovely straight planed props of timber, an’ they chopped ’em up in a jiffy ’an got the fire roaring ’ot, an’ I gave ’em the ball, an’ your collars is done an’ the rest of your things is out drying an’ will be finished to-morrow.”



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“Of course I’m grateful,” said Percival. “You might tell your young friends I’m willing to be a vice-president of their club—on the usual terms. What’s the name of it?”

“They tell me it’s called ‘The Racing Club,’” said Elfred. “But I think, Sir, you’d better give your subscription to the other club in the village—‘The Sportif Club.’ You see, Sir, they ’ad a match on to-day as well, an’ when they arrived on the ground they found someone ’ad been and scrounged their goal-posts!”

* * * * *

[Illustration: “I SAY, EXCUSE ME, DEAR OLD TOP, BUT YOU MUSTN’T WEAR THAT GUNNER TIE NOW YOU’RE DEMOBBED. IT SIMPLY ISN’T DONE!”]

* * * * *

THE ANNIVERSARY.

Having unexpectedly retained possession of my seat in the Tube the other evening I over-read myself and ran past my station, so it was rather late when I reached home.

“Hullo!” I called out cheerily.

“Hullo!” echoed Margaret in a flat sort of voice; “you back?”

I refrained from facetiousness and told her that I was.

“Oh!” she said.

“Well, well, Margaret,” I said in a bright and bustling manner, “we haven’t got on very well so far, have we? Can’t you think of some subject on which we can conduct a conversation in words of more than one syllable? The skilful hostess should so frame her questions that not even the shyest visitor can fall back on a simple Yes or No. Now,” I continued, spreading myself luxuriously over the chesterfield, “you know how shy I am. Try to draw me out, dear. I’m waiting.”

I lit a cigarette. Margaret looked reproachfully at me.

“What was yesterday?” she said.

“Tuesday, my dear. We will now have a little chat about Tuesday. Coming as it does so soon after Monday, it not unnaturally exhibits—”

“Tuesday the 25th of February,” said Margaret solemnly.



“Possibly, my dear, possibly. But I cannot say that I find your remarks very interesting. They may be true, or they may not, but they certainly seem to me to lack that agreeable whimsicality usually so characteristic of you.”

“Our wedding-day,” said Margaret impressively.

“Was it really?” I said in a whisper. “And you let it pass without reminding me. Oh, how could you?”

Margaret smiled.

“I didn’t think of it till this morning—after you had gone,” she said.

We both smiled. Then we laughed.

“You know, we really are a dreadful couple.” I said. “Your fault is greater than mine, though. I’ll tell you why. Everyone knows that a man—especially a manly man—” I tugged my moustache and let my biceps out for a run— “never remembers anniversaries, whereas a woman—a womanly woman—does.” Here I plucked a daffodil from a bowl near by and tucked it coyly behind her ear.

“It really is rather awful of us.” Margaret restored the daffodil to its young companions. “We’ve only been married three years, too, and yet already—” She threw out her arms in a hopeless gesture.



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“Still,” I said presently, with my hand full of her hand—“still I daresay we shall get used to it in time—forgetting the day, I mean. After about the fourth lapse there will be hardly any sting in our little piece of annual forgetfulness.”

“We mustn’t forget to remember we’ve forgotten it, though, Gerald, so that we can test the waning powers of the sting.”

“I can see this habit growing on us,” I said dreamily; “a few more years and we shall forget we are married even. I shall come home one day— provided I remember where we live—and be horrified to find *you* established in my house and using my sealing-wax. Or maybe I shall arrive with some little offering of early rhubarb or forced artichokes only to be sternly ordered away by a wife who does not recognise me. ‘Please take your greens round to the tradesmen’s entrance,’ you will say coldly.”

“I think,” said Margaret, “that we ought to be extra nice to each other now, seeing how short our married life may be. Let’s begin at once. You let me tidy your desk every day for you and—”

“Won’t twice a week satisfy you?” I asked desperately.

“Perhaps; and anyway”—she put a little packet into my hand—“here’s *my* present to you, even though you did forget yesterday.”

“You are a dear, Margaret. And now I’ll tell you something. It was—”

Just then James came in and announced dinner. James is all our staff; but her other name is Keziah, so we had no choice.

As we sat down I took a small box out of my pocket.

“Give this to your mistress, please,” I said to James.

“O-o-o. How ripping of you, Gerald! So you did remember, after all.”

“As soon as I got to the station this morning,” I said, “I remembered that our wedding-day was to-day.”

Margaret lifted her eyebrows at me. “To-day?”

“Yes. You are a little behind—or in front of—the times, I’m afraid. The twenty-fifth was a Tuesday last year, but it’s trying Wednesday for a change now. Many Happy Returns of the Day, dear.”

We both laughed.



“Now let’s look at our presents,” said Margaret happily.

* * * * *

DORA AT THE PLAY.

[“You cannot buy a cigarette, or an ice, or a box of chocolates in a theatre after eight o’clock—by order of D.O.R.A.”—*Advt. passim.*]

Attentive swain, whose lady has commanded you to be at her
Disposal as an escort on a visit to the theatre,
I give you precious doctrine that is certainly worth sticking to,
At least as long as Dora is alive on earth and kicking too.

If you would keep your fair companion satisfied and cheery, some
Provision must be made to fill the intervals so wearisome,
For many a gallant fellow has discovered with a shock o’ late
That after 8 P.M. it’s still a crime to sell a chocolate.



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Though you may haunt the bar till ten and confidently mutter "Scotch," *She* may not even clamour for a humble slab of butterscotch, And should the heat suggest an ice—may I be rolled out flat if I Distort the truth—it's courting gaol that harmless wish to gratify.

As for yourself, if you should yearn for blest tobacco's medium
In those long waits between the Acts to while away the tedium,
And find you're out of cigarettes, remember that to sell any
A minute past the fatal hour is counted as a felony.

Unless the pair of you affect the life ascetic, you'll
Be well advised to carry in a hamper or a reticule
A goodly store of provender, both smokeable and eatable,
For Dora's in the saddle yet and seemingly unseatable.

* * * * *

BROODY.

"Will the Imperial Government hen proceed to a new conquest of Southern Ireland?"—*Daily Paper*.

No, we expect it will be left sitting.

* * * * *

"HIDDEN MUMMIES.

The Museum authorities are receiving numerous inquiries when the mummies will be on view, particularly for school children."—*Daily Paper*.

We hope that the N.S.P.C.C. will see to it that all mummies are allowed to return to their families without further delay.

* * * * *

[Illustration: MANNERS AND MODES.

THEN AND NOW.

[*From an Early-Victorian pocket "Etiquette for Gentlemen":—"If you so far forget what is elegant as to smoke in the street or park, at least never omit to fling away your cigar if you speak to a lady."*]]



* * * * *

[Illustration: BEHIND THE SCENES IN CINEMA-LAND.

IT IS A TERRIBLE MOMENT FOR THE FILM ACTOR WHEN HE REALISES THAT HE IS GETTING TOO FAT TO PLAY HERO, AND NOT FAT ENOUGH TO BE FUNNY.]

* * * * *

GOLF NOTES.

(With acknowledgments to Mr. A.C.M. Croome.)

APPROACHING.

TAYLOR—or was it JAMES BRAID?—begins one of his classic and illuminating chapters with the quotation “*Ex pede Herculem,*” nor can even we of the Oxford and Cambridge Golfing Society venture to differ from so eminent an authority or grudge him so apt a phrase. *Verb. sap.* and, let me add, *sat.* To those, few perhaps in actual reckoning (though I, wearing of right the wine-dark vesture—were there half Blues in HOMER’S time?—cannot compete with JOHN LOW *et hoc genus omne*, Cantabs confessed, in the prestidigitation of numerals and weird signs of values)—to those, then, few, but of many parts appreciative, who followed a certain foursome at Addington last week, my premiss should be intrinsically incontrovertible. Partner, whom I had “made” with a drive well and truly apportioned—ex



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carne ictum—partner, after much self-searching and mental recursion to the maxims of TOM MORRIS and LA ROUCHEFOUCAULD, took his ball on the—*O horribile dictu* (or shall I say *horresco referens*?)—well, to be meticulously exact, partner shanked it. And it is just here that those who have also enjoyed a University education will pick up—even as partner failed to do—what I, who write, am driving at.

Remembering how dear old W.G.—in those halcyon days when Gloucester was worthy of the cheese whereof she is now so chary a producer—used to score with that heavy cut between point and cover, I too, greatly daring, cut it and laid it (the ball, not the cheese) dead. *De mortuis* ... For assuredly it was good.

The one adornment of this episode should have been a quotation from ARISTOPHANES. It is not, however, given to all men always to remember. *Non cuivis*, in fact.

OF IMPACT.

It was at the ensuing consumption of Bohea, or of its substitute as provided by a paternal Government, that one of the party, with the rashness of a *d'Artagnan*, reverted to the question of weight of clubs. ABE MITCHELL'S driver, of course, gave him a handle; but himself he, unaided, gave away. For it is not to be boasted by every man that he has been blessed with an *Alma Mater*, and that consequently logic is to him even as hair and teeth—save only that these twain be not false. For, said this unhappy wight, increase the weight and the corollary is length increased.

Then arose a certain justly eminent author, whose list of tales is equalled only by the tale of his handicap, and demonstrably discounted weight without pace.

It was then agreed that a test *ad hominem* should be applied, and that the result of such test should determine the individuality of him who should settle with our Ganymede. Partner and I pushed—*gemitu et fremitu*—a bulky sideboard against a paper ball. The inertia of the object was barely overcome.

Then the man of letters flicked it across the room with finger and thumb. And the original theorist became the poorer by the commercial estimate of four teas and jam.

PUTTING.

It has been said elsewhere, yet may not therefore be wholly lacking in elemental veracity, that putting is the devil. Systems more numerous than dactyls and spondees in Classic verse, patent putters outnumbered only by howlers in Oxford responses, bear witness to this graceless statement. Quite lately in these columns have I confessed—*pulvere cineribusque*—that our side had twice failed at the inconsiderable distance of two yards, even after discarding the small thirty-two. But that further



confession will be forthcoming is now wildly and preposterously problematical. For I have discovered the true exorcism for demoniac influence in putting. It is this: First catch your putter. Put the whole length of the shaft up your sleeve. Then—but I must retain something for next Saturday's notes, and, besides, I fancy the secretary of the Club where I am inditing these words has his frugal eye on the consumption of the note-paper. But what I have written I have written. *Litera scripta manet.*



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* * * * *

[Illustration: *Eminent London Architect (submitting his designs to our Village Victory Memorial Committee and warming to his work)*. "...AND, SURMOUNTING THE WHOLE, A GRACEFUL FIGURE OF VICTORY, WITH WREATH—SO."]

* * * * *

THE COALITION OF 1950.

"Aren't you being rather badly hit by the price of tobacco?" I asked Charles, whose pipe is a kind of extra limb to him.

"I have just been composing the plot of a novel," he replied with apparent irrelevance. "It begins something like this:—

"Slowly and softly the violet dusk set in. The beautiful young Premiere stood at the window of her yellow-and-black boudoir, gazing a little wistfully at the almost deserted pavements of Downing Street. A white pigeon perched—"

"They aren't white," I said; "they're a sort of purply pinky grey."

"All right," said Charles, unmoved, "only it rather spoils the sentence. 'A sort of purply pinky grey pigeon perched pompously—'"

"Never mind the pigeon," I said, "tell me what was the trouble with the B.Y.P."

"A change in the leadership of the Opposition. The old leaderess had just retired and her place had been taken by a new one, a man this time, young and handsome as Apollo, who had thrown up the Chair of Cinematography at the London University to plunge on to a political platform."

"What was the programme," I inquired, "of this—er—furniture-remover?"

"He was a reactionary," said Charles. "The Premiere's party had won a not too sweeping victory at the polls on prohibition (not of alcohol, of course—that had been done long ago—but of tobacco)."

"How on earth did she do it?"

"National economy, mostly," answered Charles. "She had the wives' vote solid, and they carried the more docile of the husbands with them. She had to throw out bribes to the unmarried electorate of both sexes, of course, bribes which she had since been attempting to pay. Powder and chocolates had been made cheaper. There was the Endowment of Cinemas Act of 1948, and the Subsidized Football Bill of '49. But all



these extravagances had largely ruined the effect of the abolition of tobacco. At the beginning of that year she had been obliged to cancel the State holiday on Mondays—”

“Why Mondays?” I inquired.

“Everyone feels beastly on Monday.”

“But I don’t see why they should feel any better on Tuesday.”

“It was twenty-four hours nearer Saturday,” he replied, “and Saturday was also a State holiday. Labour, of course, was infuriated, and unrest was every day becoming more apparent. The by-elections were going against the Premiere. And now this new handsome young hero had arisen not only to crystallise the support of his own sex, but capture the hearts of all the female electorate under twenty.”



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“Twenty!” I gasped.

“Everyone over fifteen had the franchise,” said Charles calmly. “Now mark you, the programme of the Opposition was very cunning. They only proposed to reintroduce cigar and cigarette smoking. Edward Oburn, the young leader, being a film actor, naturally smoked nothing but exquisite Havanas. In this he had the support of the wealthier employers, but the enormous army of cigarette-suckers, male and female, was with him.

“But I don’t see how he proposed to cut down expenses,” I objected.

“He was going to tax the printing of all words over two syllables in length,” replied Charles. “The Press of those days was not affected by the proposal, but a considerable revenue was expected from scientific books, high-brow novels and Socialistic publications. Well, the Premiere, as I say, was a prey to sad reflections, when suddenly the chur-chur of a taxi—”

“Aren’t you thinking of night-jars?” I said.

“Possibly I am,” he admitted; “it may have been a chug-chug. Anyway, it threw a wide arc of light into the gloom and stopped at the door of No. 10. A few moments later the door of the boudoir was flung open and the Chancellor of the Exchequer was announced.”

“What did *she* want?”

“She was a he this time, and had come to announce the inevitable—the very thing that the Premiere was thinking about and fearing. ‘We must have the Bachelor Tax,’” he said.

“Now, the Bachelor Tax had been tried some twenty years before, but had failed, partly owing to the number of passive resisters who had had to be forcibly fed, and partly owing to the number of men who had shown substantial proof of recurrent rejections. How were they to bring in a reasonable and satisfactory Bill? After a long consultation, lasting several hours beyond midnight—”

“Did the taxi go on chugging?” I asked.

“Shut up. They decided eventually that if a bachelor made a written proposal and was rejected he was entitled to have his case tried before a jury of women, who should decide whether it was a reasonable offer and one that should normally have been accepted. If they found that it was, he was to be exempt from further efforts. The Bill was accordingly drafted, and carried easily, and the sequel no doubt you have guessed. On the day after it became law the beautiful young Premiere received a neatly-typed offer of marriage from Edward Oburn. They met; there was a scene of the



utmost beauty and pathos; they became engaged, and the Coalition Government of the middle of 1950 began.”

“How long did it go on?” I inquired.

“Until the day of revolution,” said Charles pleasantly, refilling his foul old briar—“the great day when Fleet Street ran with blood and the pipe-smokers put up barricades in the Strand, and Piccadilly became a reeking shambles. Have you got a match?”

EVOE.

* * * * *



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[Illustration: *Knowledgeable Female (interpreting costumes to the crowd)*. “AND ‘IM— ‘E’S A ESQUIMOKE.”]

* * * * *

“The chauffeur, who sprang into the vehicle as it started off, was injured when it collided with a lamppost. Both were removed to hospital.—*Daily Paper*.

It is hoped that when the lamp-post has recovered it may throw some light on the accident.

* * * * *

“In a few more fleeting years’

The — will still be Earning Money for its owner when other cars have caused their owners to become but a memory.”—*Provincial Paper*.

The advertiser ought not, we think, to have suppressed the names of these murderous machines.

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE KINDEST CUT OF ALL.

WELSH WIZARD. “I NOW PROCEED TO CUT THIS MAP INTO TWO PARTS AND PLACE THEM IN THE HAT. AFTER A SUITABLE INTERVAL THEY WILL BE FOUND TO HAVE COME TOGETHER OF THEIR OWN ACCORD—(ASIDE)—AT LEAST LET’S HOPE SO; I’VE NEVER DONE THIS TRICK BEFORE.”]

* * * * *

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

[Illustration: MR. ASQUITH SITS UP AND TAKES NOTICE.

“THE MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF POLITICS IS DEAD AND THERE IS NO GOING BACK TO IT.”—*Mr. NEIL MACLEAN*.]

Monday, March 1st.—Calendar note (extracted from *The Wee Free Almanack*): “Asquith comes in like a lion.”



Everybody wanted to see the victor of Paisley make his *rentree*. The Peers' Gallery was so crowded with his former colleagues that Lord ROTHERMERE had scarcely room for the big stick which typifies his present attitude towards the Government. Poor Lord BEAVERBROOK was quite in the background; but I am told that on historic occasions he always prefers, with characteristic modesty, to be behind the scenes.

As the hero of the hour walked up the floor, escorted by Sir DONALD MACLEAN and Mr. THORNE, his supporters did their best to give him a rousing welcome. But they were too few to produce much effect, and a moment or two later, when Mr. LLOYD GEORGE left the Treasury Bench to greet his old chief behind the SPEAKER'S Chair, they were compelled to hear the young bloods of the Coalition "give a louder roar."

Finding the traditional seat of the Leader of the Opposition still in the occupation of Mr. ADAMSON, Mr. ASQUITH bestowed himself between the Labour Leader and Mr. NEIL MACLEAN, with whom he entered into conversation. If he was endeavouring to expound for his benefit the moral of Paisley I am afraid he had but a poor success, for in the ensuing debate on food-control the Member for Govan shocked Liberal hearers by declaring that "the Manchester School is dead and there is no going back to it." In opposing the continuance of D.O.R.A. Captain ELLIOT was again in good form. His best *mot*, "With the Cabinet a thing is always either *sub judice* or *chose jugee*," will take a good deal of beating as a summary of the Ministerial method of answering Questions.



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[Illustration: SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS ON THE CLOTHING DIFFICULTY.

MR. G.R. THORNE TO ASK MR. MALLABY-DEELEY (CONTROLLER OF SUITINGS) WHAT IS THE PRICE OF HIS LATEST CUT.

LT.-COL. WILL THORNE TO ASK WHETHER ANY REDUCTION IS MADE IN PROPORTION TO QUANTITY OF CLOTH PURCHASED.]

I understand that Mr. MALLABY-DEELEY disclaims being the customer to whom the Disposals Board sold 577,000 suits of Government clothing. He makes a point of never being over-dressed.

A suggestion that in view of the difficulty of filling diplomatic vacancies the Government should appoint suitable women to some of these posts was declined by the PRIME MINISTER on the ground that it was not practicable at present. I doubt if he would have had the hardihood to make this avowal but that Lady ASTOR had been ousted from her usual seat by Mr. PEMBERTON BILLING.

Tuesday, March 2nd.—Lieut.-Commander KENWORTHY might be described as a pacifist who conducts a persistent offensive. He accused the WAR MINISTER of having made a false statement about Conscription in America, and later on made an allusion to General DENIKIN which Mr. CHURCHILL, to the satisfaction of the House, which does not exactly love the Central Hullaballoonist, described as “a singularly ill-conditioned sneer.”

Lord WINTERTON, once the “baby” of the House, is still one of its most popular figures. Members were quite interested as he proceeded to explain, with an engaging blush, that a “hard case” which he had brought to the notice of the WAR MINISTER was his own, and sorry when the SPEAKER brought the narrative to a sudden stop by observing, “This is not the moment for autobiography.”

The FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS was roundly abused for having spent L3,250 on tapestry for Hampton Court Palace. But when it turned out that the panel in question was the long-missing number of a set belonging to Cardinal WOLSEY, and that its recovery was largely due to the enterprise and munificence of the right hon. gentleman himself, the House agreed that his completion of “Seven Deadly Sins” was a venial offence.

[Illustration: THE HULLABALLOONIST.

LIEUT.-COMMANDER KENWORTHY.]

Other Estimates evoked more healthy criticism. Sir FREDERICK BANBURY was eloquent upon what he called a “hotel for gardeners” at Kew. Mr. HOGGE was for rooting up the Royal Botanical Gardens, since they were hardly ever visited by



Scotsmen, and Captain STANLEY WILSON inveighed against the extravagance with which the British delegates were housed in Paris. Sir ALFRED MOND admitted that they “did themselves very well,” but pleaded that they could hardly be expected to go to Montmartre—at least not collectively—and pointed out that some of the criticisms should be addressed to other Departments. He was not responsible, for example, for “clothes of typists.”

Wednesday, March 3rd.—Among the things that they do better in France, according to Lord SUDELEY, is the popularisation of picture-galleries and museums. He instanced the pictures on French match-boxes. But were they always confined to reproductions of Louvre masterpieces? My recollection is that at one time they took a wider range and were distinctly more striking than the matches.



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One was reminded of PRAED'S lines—

“Hume, no doubt, will be taking the sense
Of the House on a question of thirteen-pence”—

when the Government very nearly came to grief to-night over a question of five pounds for the Inland Revenue offices in Manchester. In vain Mr. BALDWIN pointed out the desirability of giving proper accommodation to the gentlemen who pick our pockets in the interest of the State. The House was still obstinate, until Mr. BONAR LAW declared that the Government would resign if they did not get their “fiver.” As he undertook, however, not to spend it without further leave, the vote at last went through.

Thursday, March 4th.—Lord BUCKMASTER'S scheme for preventing the bankruptcy of the State is to make everybody invest a portion of his capital in Government securities and to withhold the interest until such time as the State should find it convenient to pay. This, he explained to his own satisfaction, was quite different from that dangerous expedient, a levy on capital. Lord PEEL took a more cheerful view of the situation, and indicated that it was quite unnecessary for noble lords to get the wind up, since the Government would have no difficulty in raising it.

Even the most rigid economists will not cavil at the latest addition to our financial burdens. The PENSIONS MINISTER announced an addition of close on two millions a year to the annual charge. The increase is chiefly for a much-needed improvement in the allowances made to disabled officers, who have hitherto been but scurvily treated.

Mr. HIGHAM objected to receiving an answer about the telephones from Mr. PIKE PEASE. He demanded a reply from the PRIME MINISTER, not from a representative of the department impugned. The SPEAKER, however, pointed out that there were limits to the PREMIER'S responsibilities: “He does not run the whole show.” After this descent into the vernacular I half-expected that Mr. LOWTHER would dam the stream of Supplementaries that followed with, “Oh, ring off!” but he contented himself with calling the next Question.

The debate on the Third Reading of the War Emergency Laws (Continuance) Bill was chiefly devoted to Ireland. Captain WEDGWOOD BENN, after spending a whole week in that country, is convinced that all the trouble is due to the Government's reliance upon D.O.R.A., and declared that the only people who were not in gaol were the murderers. That would mean that there are some four million assassins in Ireland; which I feel sure is an exaggeration. The two hundred thousand mentioned by the CHIEF SECRETARY would seem to be ample for any country save Russia.

Scarcely was this gloomy episode over than the House was called upon to pass a Supplementary Estimate of L860 for “Peace Celebrations in Ireland.” As L500 of this

sum was for flags and decorations, which, in Mr. BALDWIN'S phrase, "remain for future use," the Irish outlook may, after all, be not quite so black as it is painted.



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[Illustration: *Hawker (to lady who is in bitter need of fuel)*. “EAGER AS I AM, MADAM, TO EXPLAIN THE MERITS OF THESE LOGS AT FOURTEEN SHILLINGS A HUNDRED, I CANNOT IGNORE THE NOTICE EMBLAZONED ON YOUR GATE, AND THEREFORE WISH YOU A VERY GOOD DAY.”]

* * * * *

A BUY ELECTION.

[The excellent precedent set by Mr. MALLABY-DEELEY in supplying needed goods at cheap rates may prove a little awkward if adopted by Parliamentary Candidates, as shown in the following anticipatory report.]

Quiet confidence reigned in the ranks of the Muddleboro Labour Party. The action of their Candidate, Mr. Dulham, in arranging for a co-operative milk supply at sixpence per quart, was supposed to have won the hearts of all householders. They had no fear of Mr. Coddem, the representative of the great BOTTOMLEY party. It was true that Mr. Coddem had taken over a local brewery and was supplying beer at threepence per pint. But the Labour stalwarts argued that, in the first place, this would lose him the women's and temperance vote, and, in the second place, the electors would drink the brewery dry in double-quick time. All those who failed to get cheap beer would revenge themselves on the Candidate who had failed to keep his promise.

The Wee Free cause was nearly hopeless. Their candidate, Mr. Guff, had made a desperate bid for popularity by offering, in conjunction with *The Daily News*, cocoa at reduced rates. But the Labour Candidate had put the pointed question, “Who made cocoa dear in the first place?” and Mr. Guff had evaded the question.

When Mr. Stilts, the National Party Candidate, promised the public cheaper honours—urging that, if he were returned, it would be unnecessary to subscribe to party funds to get a title—the voters were quite unmoved. Perhaps they knew that they could get the O.B.E. for nothing, anyhow, and had no higher ambitions.

The Coalition Candidate, Mr. Jenkins, alone said nothing. *The Star*, that famous organ of the Anti-Gambling Party, proclaimed triumphantly that the odds offered in the constituency were ten to one against Jenkins. But Mr. Jenkins lay low and said nothing. Or rather he achieved the not impossible feat in a Parliamentary contest of saying nothing and saying a good deal.

But the day before the poll Mr. Jenkins's polling cards were delivered. They were headed, “Vote for Jenkins and Kill Profiteering. Give up this card at your polling-station for free samples of silks in my great blouse offer. I sell for 9s. 11-3/4d. a blouse usually



priced at two guineas. Not more than six sold to any one voter. OUT SIZES NO EXTRA CHARGE.”

A quarter-mile queue of lady-voters was standing outside the polling booths at eight o'clock. Hundreds of them had their husbands in custody with them. In vain were representations of the Full Milk Jug and the Flowing Pint Pot paraded before them. The Wee Free procession, headed by a Brimming Cocoa Cup, was received with jeers.



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When the poll was declared the figures ran—

- Jenkins (Coalition) ... 20,428
- Coddem (Bottomley) ... 9,344
- Dulham (Labour) ... 9,028
- Guff (Wee Free) ... 2,008
- Stilts (National Party) ... 49

And *The Daily News*' headline the next day was—

“CORRUPT MINORITY CANDIDATE CARRIES MUDDLEBORO.”

* * * * *

[Illustration: DEMODE.

She. “SOMEWHAT ARCHAIC—WHAT?”

He. “YE—ES. ALL RIGHT SIX WEEKS AGO. *QUITE* ACADEMICAL NOW.”]

* * * * *

COMMERCIAL CANDOUR.

From a poultry-breeder's advertisement:—

“My strains of Rhodes are only too well known.”

* * * * *

“Miss Winnie ——, the charming and talented actress, writes:—‘I am quite positive—I owe my present health and spirits to ——.’”—*Advt. in Daily Paper.*

“Poor Miss Winnie —— has had to retire suddenly from the revue—doctor's orders.”—*Same paper, same day.*

We should have liked to hear the Advertisement Manager's view of the News Editor.

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[Illustration: “OO, LUMME! WOT PRICE REGINALD IN 'IS MALLABY-DEELEYS?”]

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FREUD AND JUNG.



[A reviewer in a recent issue of *The Times Literary Supplement* asks, “Why should the characters in the psychological novel be invariably horrid?” and is inclined to explain this state of affairs by the indiscriminating study of “the theories of two very estimable gentlemen, the sound of whose names one is beginning to dislike— Messrs. Freud and Jung.”]

In QUEEN VICTORIA’S placid reign, the novelists of note
In one respect, at any rate, were all in the same boat;
Alike in *Richard Feverel* and in *Aurora Floyd*
You’ll seek in vain for any trace of Messrs. JUNG and FREUD.

They did not fail in colour, for they had their PEACOCK’S tales;
Their heroines, I must admit, ran seldom off the rails;
They had their apes and angels, but they never once employed
The psycho-analytic rules devised by JUNG and FREUD.

They ran a tilt at fraud and guilt, at snobbery and shams;
They had no lack of Meredithyrambic epigrams;
The types that most appealed to them were not neurasthenoid;
They lived, you see, before the day of Messrs. JUNG and FREUD.

(I’ve searched the last edition of the famous *Ency. Brit.*
And neither of this noble pair is even named in it;
Only the men since Nineteen-Ten have properly enjoyed
The privilege of studying the works of JUNG and FREUD.)

Their characters, I grieve to say, were never more unclean
Than those of ordinary life, in morals or in mien;
They had not slummed or fully plumbed with rapture unalloyed
The unconscious mind as now defined by Messrs. JUNG and FREUD.

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The spiritual shell-shock which these scientists impart
Had not enlarged or cleared the dim horizons of their art;
They had not learned that mutual love by wedlock is destroyed,
As proved by the disciples of the school of JUNG and FREUD.

The hierophants of pure romance, ev'n in its recent mood,
From STEVENSON to CONRAD, such excesses have eschewed;
But the psycho-pathologic route was neither mapped nor buoyed
Until the new discoveries of Messrs. JUNG and FREUD.

That fiction should be tonic all may readily agree;
That its function is emetic I, for one, could never see;
And so I'm glad to find *The Times Lit. Supp.* has grown annoyed
At the indiscriminating cult of Messrs. JUNG and FREUD.

Let earnest "educationists" assiduously preach
The value of psychology in training those who teach;
Let publicists who speak of Mr. GEORGE, without the LLOYD,
Confound him with quotations from the works of JUNG and FREUD—

But I, were I a despot, quite benevolent, of course,
Armed with the last developments of high-explosive force,
I'd build a bigger "Bertha," and discharge it in the void
Crammed with the novelists who brood on Messrs. JUNG and FREUD.

* * * * *

[Illustration: "I S'POSE I MUSTN'T GO IN THE GARDEN WHILE YOU'RE RESTING,
MUMMY?"

"NO, DEAR—IT'S TOO DAMP."

"IF I *DID* GO IN THE GARDEN WHILE YOU'RE RESTING, MUMMY, WOULD YOU
PUNISH ME OR REASON WITH ME?"]

* * * * *

OPERATICS.

It has been suggested before now that Opera might be improved if the singing were done behind the scenes and the performance on the stage were carried out in dumb show by competent actors who looked their parts. But the idea that the movements on the stage would correspond with the utterances off it is not encouraged by the present lack of collusion between singers and orchestra—I refer to cases where a performer is required to simulate music on a dummy instrument.



This reflection was forced upon me at a recent performance of *Tannhaeuser*. It is true that Miss LILLIAN STANFORD as the *Shepherd* fingered her pipe in precise accord with the gentleman who played the music for her. But Mr. MULLINGS, as *Tannhaeuser*, took the greatest liberties with his harp. He just slapped it whenever he liked, without any regard to the motions of his collaborator. As for Mr. MICHAEL, who played *Wolfram*, he was content to fill in the vocal pauses with a little suitable strumming; but when he sang he was so distracted by his own voice that he left his harp to play the accompaniment without visible assistance from his hand.

For the fine performance which Mr. ALBERT COATES conducted I have no word but of praise, except that I could have wished that Miss ELSA STRALIA had borne a closer resemblance to what is expected of *Elisabeth*. She seemed to want to look as much as possible like *Venus*, whose very opposite she should have been in type as in nature. Her colouring upset the whole scheme of contrast, and one never began to believe in the sincerity of her spiritual ideals or that her death from a broken heart was anything but an affectation.



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O.S.

* * * * *

A LEONINE REVIVAL.

Amongst the dead lions of the past, some of us have prematurely reckoned those of Peterborough Court. MATT. ARNOLD was supposed to have administered, if not the *coup de grace*, at any rate a serious blow to their gambollings in *Friendship's Garland*.

It is therefore a matter for unfeigned rejoicing to find that they are not only alive but rampant, with all their old splendid command of polysyllabic periphrasis. One need only turn to the notice of "The John Exhibition" in last Thursday's *Daily Telegraph*, from which we select the following page:—

"It [the exhibition] is a display of purposeful portraiture that helps one to realise the effect which Theotokopoulos produced upon his watchful contemporaries, and to understand why the Cretan continued to walk alone on his way. If some insist on finding modern El Greco versions of Inspectors and Inquisitors-general in this John gathering, compounded of comparatively innocuous personalities, the privilege is, of course, permissible, and incidentally brightens conversation in irresponsible circles."

But a higher level of full-throated *bravura* is attained later on:—

"If reiteration may also be the mark of the best portraiture, *pace* Lord Fisher, commendation should be given to Mr. John for continuing to visualize the great seaman as Jupiter Tonans flashing in gold lace."

How delightful it is, after the arid methods of the modern critics, bred up on BENEDETTO CROCE, to hear the old authentic leonine ecstasy of SALA, "monarch of the florid quill!" Mr. Punch, once hailed by the *D.T.* as "the Democritus of Fleet Street," on the strength of his "memorable monosyllabic monition," in turn salutes the immortal protagonist of the purple polysyllable.

* * * * *

WITCHCRAFT.

(*A Mediaeval Tragedy.*)

"I want," said the maiden, glancing round her with tremulous distaste at the stuffed crocodile, the black cat and the cauldron simmering on the hearth, "to see some of your complexion specialities."



“You want nothing of the kind,” retorted the witch. “Why prevaricate? A maid with your colour hath small need even of my triple extract of toads’ livers. What you have really come for is either a love-potion—” she paused and glanced keenly at her visitor—“or the means to avenge love unrequited.”

The maiden had flushed crimson. “I wish he were dead!” she whispered.

“Now you are talking. That wish is, of course, the simplest thing in the world to gratify, if only you are prepared to pay for it. I presume Moddam would not desire anything too easy?”

“He had promised,” broke out the maiden uncontrollably, “to take me to the charity bear-baiting matinee in aid of unemployed ex-Crusaders. The whole thing was arranged. And then at the last moment—”

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“Precisely as I had supposed. A case for one of our superior wax images, made to model, with pins complete. Melted before a slow fire ensures the gradual wasting of the original with pangs corresponding to the insertion of each pin.”

The customer’s fine eyes gleamed. “Give me one.”

“I will sell you one,” corrected the witch. “But I should warn you. They are not cheap.”

“No matter.”

“Good. I was about to observe that since our sovereign liege KING RICHARD granted peace to the Saracen the cost both of material and labour hath so parlously risen that I am unable to supply a really reliable article under fifty golden angels.”

“I have them here.”

“With special pins, of course, extra.”

“Take what you will.” The maiden flung down a leathern wallet that chinked pleasingly. The witch, having transferred the contents of this to her own pocket, proceeded to fashion the required charm, watched by her client with half-repelled eagerness.

“Hawk’s eye, falcon’s nose, raven’s lock, peacock’s clothes,” chanted the crone, following the words with her cunning fingers.

“How—how know you him?” Panic was in the voice.

The other laughed unpleasantly. “Doth not the whole district know the Lord Oeil-de-Veau by reputation?” She held out the image. “Handle him carefully and use a fresh pin for each record.”

The maid snatched it from her hands and was turning towards the door of the hut when a low tap on its outer surface caused her to shrink back alarmed. The witch had again been watching her with an ambiguous smile. “Should Moddam wish to avoid observation,” she suggested, “the side exit behind yonder curtain—” In an instant she was alone. Flinging the empty wallet into the darkest corner the witch (not without sundry chuckles) slowly unbarred the entrance.

On the threshold stood a slim female figure enveloped in a cloak. “The love potion I had here last week,” began a timid voice, “seems hardly satisfactory. If you stock a stronger quality, no matter how expensive—”

“Step inside,” said the witch.

* * * * *



Some couple of months later the ladies of the house-party assembled at Sangazure Castle for the Victory jousts were gathered in the great hall, exchanging gossip and serf-stories in the firelight while awaiting the return of their menkind.

“Hath any heard,” lisped one fair young thing, “how fareth the Lord Oeil-de-Veau? They tell me that some mysterious ailment hath him in thrall.”

At the words the Lady Yolande Sangazure (whom we have met before) was aware of a crimson flood mounting swiftly to her exquisite temples. Strange to add, the same phenomenon might have been observed in a score of damosels belonging to the best families in the district. The hall seemed suffused in a ruddy glow that was certainly not reflected from the exiguous pile of post-Crusading fuel smouldering on the great hearth.



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“Tush!” broke in the cracked voice of a withered old dame, “your news is old. Not only hath the so-called fever vanished but my lord himself hath followed it.”

“Gone!” The cry was echoed by twenty voices; twenty embroidery-frames fell from forty arrested hands, while nine-and-thirty dismayed eyes fixed themselves upon the maliciously-amused countenance of the speaker. Only one, belonging to the Lady Beauregarde, who squinted slightly, remained as though unmoved by the general commotion.

“Moreover,” continued the old dame, “report saith that with him went his leman, who, having some art in necromancy, transformed her beauty to the semblance of a witch and provided her own dowry by the sale, to certain addle-pated wenches, of charms for which her lover himself prepared the market.”

“But—his fever?” an impetuous voice broke in.

“Cozening, no doubt. Of course the tale may be but idle babble; still, if true, one would admit that such credulous fools got no more than they deserved.”

She ceased, well satisfied. “I fancy,” observed the Lady Yolande coldly, “that I hear our lords returning.” And in the eloquent silence a score of fair young minds slowly assimilated the profound truth (as fresh to-day as eight hundred years ago) that Satan finds some mischief still for the impecunious demobilised.

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TO JESSIE

(“one of the Zoo’s most popular elephants,” now deceased).

Jessie of the melting eye,
Wreathed trunk and horny tegum-
Ent, whom I have joyed to ply
With the fugitive mince-pie
And the seasonable legume,
Youth has left me; fortune too
Flounts my efforts to annex it;
Still, I occupy the view,
Bored but loath to leave, while you
Make the inevitable exit.

Ne'er again for blissful rides
Shall our shouting offspring clamber
Up your broad and beetling sides;



Ne'er again, when eventide's
Coming turns the skies to amber
And the fluting blackbirds call,
Poised above a bale of fodder
In your well-appointed stall
Will you muse upon it all,
Patient introspective plodder.

Once, an anxious mother's care,
Day by day you roamed the jungle,
Felt the sunshine, sniffed the air;
Life, methinks, was passing fair;
But of that no mortal tongue'll
Tell. Perhaps you never thought
If it bored you or enraptured
Till the wily hunter caught
You and all your friends and brought
Home to England, bound and captured.

Jessie, fairest of your race,
Now you're gone and few will miss you;
There will come to take your place
Creatures less replete with grace;
Elephants of grosser tissue
Will intrigue the public sight;
That, old girl, 's the common attitude.
Still, these few poor lines I write
May preserve your memory bright,
Since the pen is dipped in gratitude.



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ALGOL.

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

P.-W.S. (having struggled over many ploughed fields). "NOW THEN, MY LAD, FETCH 'IM OVER 'ERE AND I'LL GIVE YOU A TANNER."

Bucolic Profiteer. "NOA, YE DOAN'T! GIVE OI TEN BOB OR OI LETS HE GO AGAIN."]

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OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

We are apt to think of Lord NORTHCLIFFE as the "onlie begetter" of the New Journalism. But here comes Mr. KENNEDY JONES, M.P., to remind us, in *Fleet Street and Downing Street* (HUTCHINSON), that he too had a very large share in its parentage. And up to a point he is a proud father. Circulations reckoned in millions instead of thousands, journalistic salaries raised from hundreds to thousands, advertisement-revenues multiplied many-fold— these are some of the outward signs of the success of a policy which the author summarised when he told Lord MORLEY, "You left journalism as a profession; we have made it a branch of commerce." But there is another side to the medal. *Frankenstein's* monster was perfect in everything save that it lacked a soul. In all material things the New Journalism is a long way ahead of the Old; and yet, after chronicling its many triumphs— culminating in the capture of *The Times*—its part-creator is fain to admit that "public distrust of news is the most notable feature in journalism of recent years," and that the influence of the daily Press on the public mind has hardly ever been at a lower ebb. This frankness is characteristic of a book which on nearly every page contains something to startle or amuse. The author's experiences on his first day in London, including an encounter with a sausage-seller (more friendly than CLEON'S rival); his negotiations for the purchase of *The Times*, and his offer of the editorship to Lord CURZON, who unfortunately refused it; the *provenance* of "The Pekin Massacre," which originated, it appears, not with a "stunt" journalist, but with a Chinese statesman wishing to pull the Occidental leg—these and many other incidents are admirably described by a writer who, though he long ago doffed his journalistic harness, has not forgotten how to write up a "good story." Be your opinion of the New Journalism what it may I guarantee that you will find its champion an agreeable companion.

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There are parts of Mr. W.J. LOCKE'S latest novel, *The House of Baltazar* (LANE), which will, I fear, make almost prohibitive demands upon the faith (considered as belief in the incredible) of his vast following. To begin with, he introduces us to that problematical personage, whose possibility used to be so much debated, the Man Who Didn't Know There Was A War On. *John Baltazar* had preserved this unique ignorance, first by bolting from

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a Cambridge professorship through amorous complications, next by living many years in the Far East, and finally by settling upon a remote moorland farm (locality unspecified) with a taciturn Chinaman and an Airedale for his only companions. This and other contributory circumstances, for which I lack space, just enabled me to admit the situation as possible. Naturally, therefore, when a befogged Zeppelin laid a couple of bombs plonk into the homestead, the ex-professor experienced a mental as well as a bodily shake-up. I had no complaint either with the transformation that developed *John Baltazar* from the only outsider to apparently the big boss of the War; while the scenes between him and the son of whose existence he had been unaware (a situation not precisely new to fiction) are presented with a sincere and moving simplicity. So far so good, even if hardly equal to the author's best. But the catastrophe and the melodramatics about War-Office secrets, preposterously put on paper, and still more preposterously preserved, simply knocked the wind of reality out of the whole affair. A pity, since Mr. LOCKE (though I prefer him in more fantastic vein) has clearly spent much care upon a tale that, till its final plunge, is at least lively and entertaining.

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The amateur of lace, whether as expert or owner, will be pleasantly stirred by learning that another book has been added to the already large bibliography of a fascinating subject in *The Romance of the Lace Pillow* (H.H. ARMSTRONG), published at Olney from the pen of Mr. THOMAS WRIGHT. Olney, of course, has two claims on our regard—COWPER and Lace, and it is now evident that Mr. WRIGHT has kept as attentive an eye on the one as on the other. His book makes no pretence to be more than a brief and frankly popular survey of the art of lace-making chiefly in Northamptonshire and Bucks, and to it he has brought a wealth of various information (which the average reader must take on trust) and an enthusiasm that can be judged by his opening statement that "lace ... is the expression of the most rapturous moments of whole dynasties of men of genius." So now you know. Even those of us who regard it with a calmer pulse can take pleasure in the many excellent photographs of lace-work of different periods and schools that adorn Mr. WRIGHT'S volume. As for the letter-press, though I will not call the writer's style wholly equal to his zeal, his chapters are full of interesting gossip, ranging from the late KATHERINE OF ARAGON (the originator, according to one theory, of English lace-making), to some jolly stuff on the literature of Bobbins and the old Tells, or working-songs, sung by "the spinners and the knitters in the sun, and the free maids that weave their threads with bones." I have a fancy that the whole volume has been more or less a labour of love (never certainly did I meet an author with such a list of helpers to thank), so I am glad to think that its reward in one sense is already assured.



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In *The Fairy Man* (DENT), a most engrossing phantasy, Mr. L. COPE CORNFORD takes for raw material a family of Maida Vale, victims of all those petty, sordid, but deadly troubles known only to the middle class. Without warrant, explanation, or excuse he introduces into their routine a sudden touch of magic; the tired City man, the acid foster-mother, the children (mercifully devoid of any priggishness), and the pre-eminently human housemaid and cook are transplanted for a moment into the age of the knights-errant. Thither also are transplanted their special friends and enemies, all retaining their modern identities and their current troubles, and all getting unpleasantly involved in the troubles of the ancients, to boot. Eventually the interlude is found to have provided the solution of the difficulties, pecuniary and other, of the home in Maida Vale; and I will say no more than that a very telling story ends well and naturally. No reader should imagine he has read all this before; the admixture of fairy imagination with the intensely practical things of life is something new, and there is a definite purpose in it all. The book may be labelled intellectual, but the characters always remain very human; thus *George*, finding himself back in the times of a thousand years ago, says critically, "It looks old, but it feels just the same;" and his father, seeing him engaged in an assault on the castle, shouts, "George! put that sword down instantly." Mr. CORNFORD makes his points with such discretion and understanding that even the most solid materialist must, after reading, feel a little less sure of himself.

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I rather think that if I had the opportunity of discussing with ELINOR MORDAUNT her *Old Wine in New Bottles* (HUTCHINSON) and had the courage to say what was in my mind: "Don't you think perhaps that your vigorous and unexpected characters are out of story-land rather than out of life?" and if she riposted, "But is it necessary they should be like life if they are life-like?" I should be left with no more effective retort than "Quite," or something just as futile. For there's no doubt that these queer villains, Chinese dealers, bold sailormen, travellers, rapt lovers, do get over the footlights in an effective way. They do the things that are only done in magazines, but they do them with a gusto which engages the attention. Perhaps indeed that's what the author meant by her ingenious title; though I suppose her device of setting before each story a longer or shorter, more or less relevant, passage from the Old Testament gives a clearer clue to the precise way in which she interprets "nothing new under the sun." I cheerfully prescribe of this old wine one or two bottles at bedtime. Better not, I think, the whole case at a sitting.

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[Illustration: *Tramp*. "YES, MUM, I'M AN OLD SOLDIER; FOUGHT IN THE—"]



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Mrs. Tommy Atkins. "D'YOU STILL REMEMBER THE ARMY TRAINING?"

Tramp. "THAT I DO, MUM. HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN A SINGLE WORD O' COMMAND."

Mrs. T.A. "THEN, ABOUT—TURN! QUICK—MARCH!"]