

Punch, or the London Charivari, Vol. 158, February 18th, 1920 eBook

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CHARIVARIA.

Writing in the *Echo de Paris* "PERTINAX" asks Mr. *Lloyd George* to make some quite clear statement regarding his advice to electors. There is more innocence in Paris than you might suppose.

* * *

Professor *Waller* has demonstrated by experiment that emotion can be measured. At the same time he discouraged the man who asked for a couple of yards of Mr. CHURCHILL'S feelings when reading *The Morning Post*.

* * *

Sir *Thomas* LIPTON'S challenge for the America Cup has been accepted by the New York Yacht Club. It appears that neither Mr. Secretary *Daniels* nor "President" *De Valera* was consulted.

* * *

Widespread alarm has been caused in London by the report that a certain famous artist has threatened to paint a Futurist picture of a typical O.B.E.

* * *

A Dutch paper reminds us that the ex-*Crown-Prince* has taken a Berlin University degree. We can only suppose that nobody saw him take it.

* * *

In the case of a will recently admitted to probate it was stated that the testator had disposed of over seven hundred thousand pounds in less than a hundred words. It is not expected that the Ministry of Munitions will take this lying down.

* * *

It is said that unless the new Unemployment Insurance is an improvement on the present rates quite a number of deserving people will be thrown into work.

* * *

Much sympathy is felt for the burglars who broke into a house at Herne Hill last week. Unfortunately for them the grocer's bill had been paid the previous day.

* * *

We gather that, if *Dempsey* still refuses to come to London to fight *Carpentier*, Mr. *Cochran* will arrange to take London out to him.

* * *

The Lobby Correspondent of *The Daily Express* states that it has been suggested that the *premier* should take a long voyage round the world. It would be interesting to know whether the proposal comes from England or the world.

* * *

"The honest man in Germany," says Herr *Haase*, "will not agree to hand over the German officers to the British." We think it would be only fair if Germany would send us the name and address of this honest man.

* * *

Leather is being used in the new Spring suits, says a daily newspaper. Smith Minor informs us that he always derives greater protection from the use of a piece of stout tin.

* * *

The collecting of moleskins has been forbidden by the Belgian Government except in gardens. Lure the beast into the strawberry bed by imitating the bark of the wild slug and the rest is mere spade-work.

* * *

We understand that there is some talk of Lord *Fisher* giving up work and retiring into politics.

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* * * * *

[Illustration: *The crime Wave*.

ALI BABA repeating itself. Forty thieves discovered at A London railway station.]

* * * * *

Matrimonial economy.

“Travelling in a becoming suit of Copenhagen blue with hat to match the newly weds left on the Duluth train.”—*Canadian Paper*.

* * * * *

“She looked as Eurydice when her captor-King carried her away from earth and gave her instead the queenship of Hell.”—*“Daily Mail” Feuilleton*.

Presumably Persephone had secured a decree *nisi*.

* * * * *

“These cowardly murders and attempted assassinations are abhorrent to the national mind, whatever its political views may be, and it will not seek to exterminate in any way the position of those who have any share in them.”—*Provincial Paper*.

We still think extermination is the best thing for them.

* * * * *

A selfless party.

[“They (the electorate) know that we (the Labour Party) are not, and never will be, merely concerned in the interests of one particular class.”—Mr. THOMAS in *“The Sunday Times”*.

“Nationalization was proposed not to gain increased wages for workers, but in the national interest.... They were prepared to produce to the last ounce of their capacity to give to the nation and to humanity all the coal they required. If he thought that this scheme was intended to or would give the miners an advantage at the expense of the State he would oppose it.”—Mr. BRACE, in *the House of Commons*.]

Though Comrade *Smillie* keeps a private passion
That yearns to see Sinn Fein upon its own,



Clearly we cannot put our Unions' cash on
Men with a motto like "*Ourselves alone*;"
To us all folk are brothers
And on our bunting runs the rede, "*For others*."

Our hearts are ever with the poor consumer;
We long to give his sky a touch of blue;
To doubt this fact is to commit a bloomer,
To falsify our record, misconstrue
The ends we struggle for,
As illustrated in the recent War.

We struck from time to time, but not at Caesar,
Not to secure the highest pay we could;
Our loyalty kept gushing like a geyser;
We had for single aim the common good;
Who treads the path of duty
May well ignore the cry of "*Et tu, Brute!*"

Humanity's the cause for which we labour;
The hope that spurs us on to do our best
Is "O that I may truly serve my neighbour,
And prove the love that burns within my breast,
And save his precious soul
By a reduction in the cost of coal!"

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Nationalize the mines, and there will follow
More zeal (if possible) in him that delves;
Our eager altruists will simply wallow
In work pursued for others (not themselves),
Thrilled with the noble thought—
“My Country’s all to me and Class is naught!”

O.S.

* * * * *

A STORY WITH A POINT.

(With Mr. Punch’s apologies for not having sent it on to “The Spectator.”)

Geoffrey has an Irish terrier that he swears by. I don’t mean by this that he invokes it when he becomes portentous, but he is always annoying me with tales, usually untruthful, of the wonderful things this dog has done.

Now I have a pointer, Leopold, who really is a marvellous animal, and I work off tales of his doings on Geoffrey when he is more than usually unbearable.

Until a day or two ago we were about level.

Although Geoffrey knows far more dog stories than I do, and has what must be a unique memory, I have a very fair power of invention, and by working this gift to its utmost capacity I have usually been able to keep pace with him.

As I said, the score up to a few days ago was about even; yesterday, however, was a red-letter day and I scored an overwhelming victory. Bear with me while I tell you the whole story.

I was struggling through the porridge of a late breakfast when Geoffrey strolled in. I gave him a cigarette and went on eating. He wandered round the room in a restless sort of way and I could see he was thinking out an ending for his latest lie. I was well away with the toast and marmalade when he started.

“You know that dog of mine, Rupert? Well, yesterday—”

I let him talk; I could afford to be generous this morning. He had hashed up an old story of how this regrettable hound of his had saved the household from being burnt to death in their beds the night before.



I did not listen very attentively, but I gathered it had smelt smoke, and, going into the dining-room, had found the place on fire and had promptly gone round to the police-station.

When he had finished I got up and lit a pipe.

“Not one of your best, Geoffrey, I’m afraid—not so good, for instance, as that one about the coastguard and the sea-gulls; still, I could see you were trying. Now I’ll tell you about Leopold’s extraordinary acuteness yesterday afternoon.

“We—he and I—were out on the parade, taking a little gentle after-luncheon exercise, when I saw him suddenly stop and start to point at a man sitting on one of the benches a hundred yards in front of us; but not in his usual rigid fashion; he seemed to be puzzled and uncertain whether, after all, he wasn’t making a mistake.”

Here Geoffrey was unable to contain himself, as I knew he would be.

“Lord! That chestnut! You went and asked the man his name and he told you that it was Partridge.”

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"No," I said, "you are wrong, Geoffrey; his name, on inquiry, proved to be Quail. But that was only half the problem solved. Why, I thought, should Leopold have been so puzzled? And then an idea struck me. I went back to the man on the bench and, with renewed apologies, asked him if he would mind telling me how he spelt his name. He put his hand into his pocket and produced a card. On it was engraved, 'J.M. QUAYLE.' Then I understood. It was the spelling that puzzled Leopold."

* * * * *

THE NEW APPEAL.

We observe with interest the latest development in the London Press—the appearance of the new Labour journal, *The Daily Nail*.

In the past, attempts to found a daily newspaper for the propagation of Labour views have not always met with success. Possibly the fault has been that they made their appeal too exclusively to the Labour public. We understand that every care will be taken that our contemporary shall under no circumstances be a financial failure.

The Daily Nail is a bright little sheet, giving well-selected news, popular "magazine" and "home" features, and, on the back page, a number of pictures. It has a strong financial section, a well-informed Society column, and a catholic and plentiful display of advertisements, including announcements of many of those costly luxuries which Labour to-day is able to afford.

While in its editorial comments it suggests emphatically that the Government of the day is not and never can be satisfactory, it refrains from embarrassing our statesmen with too many concrete proposals for alternative methods.

We learn that the new Labour daily is substantially backed by a nobleman of pronounced democratic ideals. From his Lordship down to the humblest employee there exists among the staff a beautiful spirit of fellowship unmarked by social distinction.

"Good morning, comrade," is the daily greeting of his Lordship to the lift-boy, who replies with the same greeting, untarnished by servility.

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE NEW COALITION.

Mr. ASQUITH (*to Viscount CHAPLIN and Lord ROBERT CECIL*). "THANKS, MY FRIENDS—THANKS FOR YOUR LOYAL SUPPORT. DO MY EYES DECEIVE ME, OR DO I SEE BIG BEN?"]

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Son of House* (entertaining famous explorer and distinguished professor).
“IT WOULD ASTONISH YOU FELLOWS IF I TOLD YOU SOME OF THE THINGS I’VE
SEEN AND HEARD—THOUGH I’M, COMPARATIVELY SPEAKING, A YOUNG MAN—
TWENTY-TWO, TO BE EXACT.”]

* * * * *

THE INSOMNIAC.

Miss Brown announced her intention of retiring to roost. Not that she was likely to sleep a blink, she said; but she thought all early-Victorian old ladies should act accordingly.

She asked Aunt Angela what she took for her insomnia. Aunt Angela said she fed it exclusively on bromides. Edward said he gave his veronal and SCHOPENHAUER, five grains of the former or a chapter of the latter.

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They prattled of the dietary and idiosyncrasies of their several insomnias as though they had been so many exacting pet animals. Miss Brown then asked me what I did for mine.

Edward spluttered merrily. "He rises with the nightingale, comes bounding downstairs some time after tea and wants to know why breakfast isn't ready. Only last week I heard him exhorting Harriet to call him early next day as he was going to a dance."

They all looked reproachfully at me because I didn't keep a pet insomnia too. I spoke up for myself. I admitted I hadn't got one, and what was more was proud of it. All healthy massive thinkers are heavy sleepers, I insisted. They must sleep heavily to recuperate the enormous amount of vitality expended by them in their waking hours. Sleep, I informed my audience, is Nature's reward to the blameless and energetic liver. If they could not sleep now they were but paying for past years of idleness and excess, and they had only themselves to blame. I was going on to tell them that an easy conscience is the best anodyne, *etc.*, but they snatched up their candles and went to bed. I went thither myself shortly afterwards.

I was awakened in the dead of night by a rapping at my door.

"Who's there?" I growled.

"I—Jane Brown," said a hollow voice.

"What's the matter?"

"Hush, there are men in the house."

"If they're burglars tell 'em the silver's in the sideboard."

"It's the police."

I sat up in bed. "The police!—why?—what?"

"Shissh! come quickly and don't make a noise," breathed Miss Brown.

I hurried into a shooting-jacket and slippers and joined the lady on the landing. She carried a candle and was adequately if somewhat grotesquely clad in a dressing-gown and an eider-down quilt secured about her waist by a knotted bath-towel. On her head she wore a large black hat. She put her finger to her lips and led the way downstairs. The hall was empty.

"That's curious," said Miss Brown. "There were eighteen mounted policemen in here just now. I was talking to the Inspector—such a nice young man, an intimate friend of

the late Sir CHRISTOPHER WREN, who, he informs me privately, did *not* kill Cock Robin.”

She paused, winked and then suddenly dealt me three hearty smacks—one on the shoulder, one on the arm and one in the small of the back. I removed myself hastily out of range.

“Tarantulas, or Peruvian ant-bears, crawling all over you,” Miss Brown explained. “Fortunate I saw them in time, as their suck is fatal in ninety-nine cases out of a million, or so GARIBALDI says in the *Origin of Species*.” She sniffed. “Tell me, do you smell blood?”

I told her that I did not.

“I do,” she said, “quite close at hand too. Yum-yum, I like warm blood.” She looked at me through half-closed eyelids. “I should think you’d bleed very prettily, very prettily.”

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I removed myself still further out of range, assuring her that in spite of my complexion I was in reality anaemic.

She pointed a finger at me. "I know where those policemen are. They're in the garden digging for the body."

"What body?" I gasped.

"Why, EINSTEIN'S, of course," said Miss Brown. "Edward murdered him last night for his theory. Didn't you suspect?"

I confessed that I had not.

"Oh, yes," she said; "smothered him with a pen-wiper. I saw him do it, but I said nothing for Angela's sake, she's so refined."

She darted from me into the drawing-room. I followed and found her standing before the fireplace waving the candle wildly in one hand, a poker in the other and sniffing loudly.

"We must save Edward," she said; "we must find the body and hide it before they can bring in a writ of *Habeas Corpus*. It is here. I can smell blood. Look under the sofa."

She made a flourish at me with her weapon and I at once dived under the sofa. I am a brave man, but I know better than to withstand people in Miss Brown's state of mind.

"Is it there?" she inquired.

"No."

"Then search under the carpet—quickly!"

She swung the poker round her head and I searched quickly under the carpet. During the next hour, at the dictates of her and her poker, I burrowed under a score of carpets, swarmed numerous book-cases, explored a host of cupboards, dived under a multitude of furniture and even climbed into the open chimney-place of the study, because Miss Brown's nose imagined it smelt roasting flesh up there. These people must be humoured. When I came down (accompanied by a heavy fall of soot) the lady had vanished. I rushed into the hall. She was mounting the stairs.

"Where are you going now?" I demanded.

She leaned over the balustrade and nodded to me, yawning broadly: "To Edward's room. He must have taken the corpse to bed with him."



“Stop! Hold on! Come back,” I implored, panic-stricken. Miss Brown held imperviously on. I sped after her, but mercifully she had got the rooms mixed in her decomposed brain and, instead of turning into Edward’s, walked straight into her own and shut the door behind her. I wedged a chair against the handle to prevent any further excursions for the night and crept softly away.

As I went I heard a soft chuckle from within, the senseless laughter, as I diagnosed it, of a raving maniac.

* * * * *

I got down to breakfast early next morning, determined to tell the whole sad story and have Miss Brown put under restraint without further ado.

Before I could get a word out, however, the lunatic herself appeared, looking, I thought, absolutely full of beans. She and Aunt Angela exchanged salutations.

“I hope you slept better last night, Jane.”

“Splendidly, thank you, Angela, except for an hour or so; but I got up and walked it off.”

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"Walked it off! Where?"

"All over the house. Most exciting."

"Do you mean to say you were walking about the house last night all by yourself?" Aunt Angela exclaimed in horror.

Miss Brown shook her grey head. "Oh, no, not by myself. Our sympathetic young friend had a touch of insomnia himself for once and was good enough to keep me company." She smiled sweetly in my direction. "He was *most* entertaining. I've been chuckling ever since."

PATLANDER.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Urchin (who has been "moved on" by emaciated policeman)*. "AIN'T YER GOT A COOK ON YOUR BEAT?"]

* * * * *

OUR SPARTAN EDITORS.

"WANTED: THE CAT. By Horatio Bottomley."—*John Bull*.

* * * * *

MARDI GRAS.

(*With the British Army in France.*)

"Have you reflected, *mon chou*," said M'sieur Bonneton, complacently regarding the green carnations on his carpet-slippers, "that to-morrow is Mardi Gras?"

"I have," replied Madame shortly.

"One may expect then, *ma petite*, that there will be *crepes* for dinner?"

"With eggs at twelve francs the dozen?" said Madame decidedly. "One may not."

On any other matter M'sieur would probably have taken his wife's decision as final, but he had a consuming passion for *crepes*, and was moreover a diplomat.

"*La vie chere!*" he said sadly; "it cuts at the very vitals of hospitality. With what pleasure I could have presented myself to our amiable neighbours, the Sergeant-Major Coghlan and his estimable wife, and said, 'It is the custom in France for all the world to eat

crepes on Mardi Gras. Accept these, then, made by Madame Bonneton herself, who in the making of this national delicacy is an incomparable artist.' But when eggs are twelve francs the dozen"—he shook his head gloomily—"generous sentiments must perish."

Madame perceptibly softened.

"Perhaps, after all, I might persuade that miser Dobelle to sell me a few at ten francs the dozen," she murmured; and M'sieur knew that diplomacy had won another notable victory.

Curiously enough, at this precise moment the tenants of the *premier etage* of 10 *bis*, rue de la Republique, were also engaged in a gastronomic discussion.

"If almanacs in France count as they do in Aldershot," said Mrs. Coghlan, "to-morrow will be Shrove Tuesday."

"An' what av it?" demanded Sergeant-Major Coghlan of the British Army.

"What of it? As though ye'd not been dreaming of pancakes this fortnight an' more past—fearful to mention thim an' fearful lest I should forget. Well, well, if ye'll bring a good flour ration in the marning I'll do me best."

"I've been thinking, Peggy lass," said the gratified Sergeant-Major, "it wud be the polite thing to make a few for thim dacent people on the ground-flure. I'll wager they've niver seen th' taste av' a pancake in this country."

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Thus it was that when Hippolyte Lariviere, the cornet-player of the Palais de Cinema, ascended the stairs to his eerie on the top-floor of 10 *bis* the following evening the appetising odour of frying batter enveloped him as a garment. He sniffed appreciatively.

“*Le gros Bonneton* can eat *crepes* freely without considering the effect on his temperament,” he said. “One sometimes regrets the demands of Art.”

Outside the Coghlan’s door another idea struck him. “The essence of a present lies not in its value but its appropriateness. A few *crepes* on Mardi Gras would be a novel acknowledgment to the Sergeant-Major of his liberality in the way of cigarettes. At present my case is empty.”

Retracing his steps he went to the Cafe aux Gourmets and persuaded the *proprietaire* to prepare half-a-dozen *crepes* with all possible speed and send them piping-hot to his room in exchange for a promise of his influence in getting her on the free list of the Cinema. Then, in a glow of virtue, he returned to prepare his toilette for the evening performance.

It was while Hippolyte was dabbing his cheeks with a damp towel that M’sieur Bonneton and Sergeant-Major Coghlan, having comfortably satisfied their respective appetites with *crepes* and pancakes, proceeded to call upon each other, bearing gifts. The dignity of the presentations was impaired by the fact that they almost collided on the stairs.

“Mrs. Coghlan wud like your opinion on these pancakes,” said the Sergeant-Major, dexterously fielding one that was sliding from the plate.

“And permit me to beg your acceptance of these *crepes*, a dish peculiar to France and eaten as a matter of custom on Mardi Gras,” said M’sieur in his most correct English, producing his plate with a flourish worthy of a head-waiter.

“’Tis with all the pleasure in life we’ll be tasting thim—” commenced Coghlan. Then his eye fell on the dish and his voice dropped. M’sieur was also showing signs of embarrassment.

“It seems *crepes* is but another name for pancakes,” said the Sergeant-Major heavily, after a pause.

“But yes—and I am already filled to repletion.”

“We’ve aiten our fill too, Peggy an’ me, an’ they’re spoilt whin they’re cowl’d. It’s severely disappointed Peggy will be to find thim wasted.”

“And Madame will be desolated to despair.”

They stared blankly at each other for a few minutes. Then M'sieur took a heroic resolve.

"We must not hurt the feelings of those excellent women," he said firmly. "There is but one course open to us."

Coghlan nodded assent. Solemnly and without enthusiasm they sat on the stairs and consumed the pancakes to the last crumb. Then, leaden-eyed and breathing hard, they took their empty plates and entered their respective flats.

A few minutes later they again encountered on the stairs. Once more they were laden with comestibles.

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"For Monsieur Lariviere," explained M'sieur. "Madame insisted. She has a heart of gold, that woman."

"Peggy's sending these up too," said the Sergeant-Major. "I towld her thim pancakes was the greatest surprise you iver tasted."

M'sieur nodded. In response to Hippolyte's invitation they entered the room, and M'sieur took command of the conversation. The Sergeant-Major stood stiffly to attention, feeling that the occasion demanded it.

"Two little gifts," said M'sieur, "of epicurean distinction. The *crepes* of Madame Bonneton are an achievement, but the pancakes of Madame Coghlan are irresistible."

"I thank you from the recesses of my heart," said Hippolyte with emotion; "but—you understand me—as the slave of Art I am compelled to forgo such pleasures."

"My friend," said M'sieur sternly, to refuse them would be an affront to the cooking of these excellent ladies. A true housewife esteems her cooking only next to her virtue. You must *eat* them—while they are hot."

"But my *tremolo*—my *sostenuto* will be ruined," said Hippolyte wildly.

"What is your *tremolo* to a woman's tears?" said M'sieur, with an elegance born of a fear that he might be compelled to eat the pancakes himself. "The laws of hospitality—chivalry—*l'entente cordiale* itself—demand that you finish them."

When Hippolyte finally yielded, his rapid and efficient despatch of the dainties excited the admiration of his hosts. They had collected their plates and were taking their departure, with expressions of regard, when a knock announced the arrival of a *garcon* from the Cafe aux Gourmets, bearing a dish of crisp hot *crepes*.

"One moment, Messieurs," said Hippolyte dramatically to his departing visitors. "It must not be said that Hippolyte Lariviere lacks in neighbourly feeling. Behold my seasonable gift!"

M'sieur groaned. The Sergeant-Major, being a soldier, concealed his apprehensions. Wild thoughts of surreptitiously disposing of them in a coal-bin whirled through their minds, but Hippolyte apparently divined their thoughts.

"I regret that I must forgo the pleasure I promised myself of asking the ladies to take *crepes* with me," he said. "To offer these would be a poor compliment to their superlative efforts. But there is no reason why *you* should not eat them here."

"I have an excellent reason," said M'sieur, stroking his waistcoat. "And the gallant Sergeant-Major, I imagine, has another."

“Bah! what is a little digestive inconvenience to a breach of courtesy?” cried Hippolyte maliciously. “You must eat them. *The law of hospitality demands it.*”

When M’sieur and the Sergeant-Major stumbled unsteadily downstairs ten minutes later their eyes bulged with the expression of those whose cup of suffering is filled to overflowing.

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“But after all,” as M'sieur remarked, placing his hand on his heart, whence it insensibly wandered to a point lower down, “it is some satisfaction to know that the feelings of our excellent wives remain unlacerated.”

* * * * *

[Illustration: MANNERS AND MODES.

THE NEW POOR MAKE GOOD.]

* * * * *

[Illustration: BEHIND THE SCENES IN CINEMA-LAND.

HE SWORE TO BECOME A CINEMA-ACTOR.

AND HE DID.]

* * * * *

SHATTERED ROMANCES.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—I read in a weekly paper that “plans are well in hand for putting up other Government Department buildings at Acton, which looks to have a future of its own, that of a sort of suburban Whitehall.”

Have you considered what this new departure means for those who, like myself, are the writers of political romance? To all intents we have lost the Ball-platz; we have lost the Wilhelmstrasse, and now here is Whitehall going out into the suburbs.... No doubt our leading Ministers, attracted by the more salubrious air, will establish themselves in the environs of the Metropolis, leaving behind them only the lower class of civil servant. Have you considered the devastating effect of this change?

Think what we used to give our readers: “A heavy mist lay over Whitehall. High above the seething traffic the busy wires hummed with the fate of Empires.” How, I ask you, will it look when they read: “The busy wires above Lewisham High Street hummed with the fate of Empires”?

Or think of the thrill that was conveyed by this (it comes in three of my most recent books): “He looked, with a little catch in the throat, and read the number, ‘Ten’—No. 10, Downing Street, where the finger of fate writes its decrees while a trembling continent waits, where empires are made and unmade—the hub of the universe....” Doesn’t that make even *your* heart beat faster? But who will thrill at this: “He waited for a moment before the bijou semi-detached villa (bath h. and c.), known as Bella Vista, in Rule Britannia Road, Willesden Junction; then with a swift glance up and down he stealthily

approached. When the neat maid opened the door, 'Is the Prime Minister in?' he asked?" (He did not hiss. Who could hiss in that atmosphere?)

Or take this from my last book (shall I ever write its like again?): "Men, bent with the weight of secrets which, if known, would send a shiver through the Chancelleries of Europe, could be seen hurrying across the Mall in the pale light and going towards the great building in which England's foreign policy is shaped and formulated." But the Foreign Office at Swiss Cottage, or Wandsworth—I could not write of it. And there will be the India Office at Tooting, or Ponder's End, or at—But how can your "dusky Sphinx-like faces, wrapt in the mystery of the East, be seen passing the purlieu of"—the Ilford Cinema?

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But enough, Sir. Let me subscribe myself

A RUINED MAN.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Teacher*. "WHAT ARE ELEPHANTS TUSKS MADE OF?"

Smart Boy. "PLEASE, TEACHER, IT USED TO BE IVORY; BUT NOW IT'S
GENERALLY BONZOLINE."]

* * * * *

A STORM IN A TEA-SHOP.

A NEW TALE OF A GRANDFATHER.

You ask me, Tommy, to tell you the really bravest deed
That was ever yet accomplished by one of the bull-dog breed,
And, although the hero was never so much as an O.B.E.,
I think I can safely pronounce it the bravest known to me.

It was not done in the trenches, nor yet in a submarine,
Mine-sweeper or battle-cruiser; it was not filmed on the screen;
For, though the man who performed it had three gold stripes on his
sleeve,
It happened in Nineteen-Twenty, when he was in town on leave.

He was strolling along the pavement, a pavement packed to the kerb,
When he felt a sudden craving for China's fragrant herb,
So he turned into a tea-shop—as he said, "like a silly fool"—
Which was patronised by the leaders of the ultra-Georgian school.

He ordered his tea and muffin, and, as he munched and sipped,
Strange scraps of conversation his errant fancy gripped,
Strange talk of form and metre, of "Wheels" and of SHERARD VINES,
And scorn of TENNYSON, BROWNING and SWINBURNE (of The Pines).

He listened awhile in silence, but at last the fire grew hot,
When he heard "The Lotus-Eaters" described as "luscious rot";
And he shouted out in the madness that is one of Truth's allies,
"Old TENNYSON'S little finger is thicker than all your thighs."

A hush fell on the tea-shop, and then the storm arose
As a chunk of old dry seed-cake took him plumb upon the nose,

And a cup, a generous jorum, of boiling cocoa nibs,
Hurled by a brawny Georgian, struck squarely on his ribs.

For several hectic minutes the air was thick with buns,
It was almost as bad, so he told me, as the shelling of the Huns,
But our gallant Tennysonian held on until a clout
In the eye from a metal teapot knocked him ultimately out.

A sympathetic waitress fled off to fetch the police,
Whose opportune arrival caused hostilities to cease,
And they carefully conveyed him to a hospital hard by
Where a skilful surgeon managed to preserve his wounded eye.

It was from the self-same surgeon that I subsequently learned
The first remark of the victim when his consciousness returned:—
“The Georgians may shine at shying the crumpet and the scone,
But as poets they’re just No Earthly compared with TENNYSON.”

He never got a medal for his exploit, or a star,
And his only decoration was an ugly frontal scar;
But still I hold him highest among heroic men,
This lone Victorian champion in the Georgian lions’ den.

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[Illustration: "BED, SIR? HERE IS A GENUINE JACOBEOAN, FOR WHICH WE ARE ASKING ONLY TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY GUINEAS."

"WELL, TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH I WASN'T WANTING TO *BUY* ONE. BUT I CAN'T GET A BED ANYWHERE IN LONDON, AND I WAS JUST WONDERING IF YOU COULD LET ME SLEEP IN IT TO-NIGHT."]

* * * * *

DOMESTIC STRATEGY.

I will admit that it was I who gave Mrs. Brackett the idea. But to blame me for the very unfortunate *denouement* is ridiculous.

I met Mrs. Blackett in Sloane Street.

"I'm on my way to a registry-office," she said. "No, not that kind of registry-office; I'm not about to commit bigamy. I mean the kind where domestic assistants are sought, but mostly in vain. I suppose you don't know of a cook, a kitchenmaid, a housemaid, a parlourmaid and a tweeny?"

I confessed that I did not. But I told her the story of some friends of mine who had been in a similar position and had succeeded in reorganising their establishment by an ingenious strategy.

"The wife went away to stay with friends in the country," I said, "and the husband went to the registry-office, representing himself to be a bachelor, a rather easy-going bachelor. It seems that such establishments are popular with the few domestic servants still at large. After a short time he let it be known that he was really married, but separated from his wife; and after a further interval he called his household together and with tears in his voice informed them that he and his wife had composed their differences and that she was returning to him on the morrow. I understand that it was a complete success."

Mrs. Brackett was very much impressed by this story.

"If I don't find anyone to-day I shall try it," she said as we parted.

She did not find anyone, and, she did try it. She left home the following day, as I learnt from Brackett when I met him a week later.

“Your tip’s come off absolutely A 1,” he said, “and I’m most awfully obliged. The worry was getting on my wife’s nerves. As it is I filled up my establishment a couple of days ago and, as everything is going well, I’ve wired my wife to come home to-morrow.”

“Have you broken it to the maids?” I asked doubtfully.

“Oh, no; but I shall just tell ’em in the morning,” said Brackett. “That’ll be all right.”

I felt at the time that he was being far too precipitate, but he seemed so confident that I didn’t interfere. The sequel was disastrous.

In the first place Brackett, in his casual way, omitted to say anything about his being married until Mrs. Brackett was actually in the house. Even then he seems to have been rather ambiguous in his explanations. Anyway the new maids were, or affected to be, profoundly shocked. They intimated that they would never have entered so irregular an establishment had they known, and departed *en masse* after spreading a scandal among the tradespeople which will take the Bracketts twenty years to live down.

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THE ARRESTING POWER OF BEAUTY.

“You dreamed of someone with whiskers who made your heart stop beating in your tiny waist every time he looked at you.”—*Home Notes*.

* * * * *

“General, good plain cook; L45; flat, Maida Vale; constant hot water.”
—*Times*.

But why tell the poor woman beforehand?

* * * * *

“It recalls the distressing aphorism:

‘Life is real, life is earnest,
And things are not what they seem.’”

Liverpool Post and Mercury.

For example, this may seem like a quotation from the “Psalm of Life,” but it isn’t.

* * * * *

[Illustration: A TEST OF SAGACITY.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE. “LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WITH THE LETTERS I HAVE PLACED BEFORE HIM OUR LEARNED FRIEND WILL NOW SPELL OUT SOMETHING THAT SIGNIFIES THE GREATEST HAPPINESS FOR IRELAND.”

THE PIG. “/ CAN’T MAKE THE BEASTLY THING SPELL ‘REPUBLIC.’”]

* * * * *

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

Tuesday, February 10th.—As HIS MAJESTY read his gracious speech to the assembled Lords and Commons did his thoughts flow back for a moment to the last time he opened Parliament in person? It was on another February 10th, in 1914, and so little was the coming storm foreseen that the customary announcement, “My relations with Foreign Powers continue to be friendly,” was followed by a special reference to the satisfactory progress of “my negotiations with the German Government and the Ottoman Government” regarding—Mesopotamia, of all places.

[Illustration: I AM AFRAID I AM GETTING CONTROVERSIAL.”—*Mr. Lloyd George.*]

Since then everything has changed—save one. Ireland remains the skeleton at the feast. The condition of that unhappy country still causes HIS MAJESTY “grave concern,” to be removed, let us piously hope, by the promised Home Rule Bill. It is true that, as Lord DUFFERIN said when moving the Address in the Lords, no one in Ireland appears to want the Bill; but then, as Colonel SIDNEY PEEL, the Mover in the Commons, remarked with equal truth, the ordinary rules of thought do not apply to the Irish Question.

The PRIME MINISTER has lately been advised by a candid friend to take a six months’ holiday “to recover his resilience.” Mr. ADAMSON and Sir DONALD MACLEAN found him nowise lacking in that quality when he came to reply to their criticisms of the King’s Speech. The Labour leader, convinced by a fortnight in Ireland that the present Administration was all wrong, and that the Government’s Bill would do nothing to improve it, was bluntly asked, “Are we to withdraw the troops and leave the assassins in charge?” while the “Wee Free” champion, who had interpreted the recent by-elections

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as a sign that the time for the Coalition was past, was unkindly reminded that, at any rate, the results of these contests had furnished no encouragement to the party that he adorns. "But I am afraid I am getting controversial," said Mr. LLLOYD GEORGE, to the amusement of the House, which had enjoyed his sword-play for half-an-hour; and with that he turned to the task of defending the new policy in Russia. Having failed to subdue the Bolsheviks by force, we are now going to try the effect of commerce—a modern reading of "Trade Follows the Flag." The Labour Party cheered the new departure vociferously, but the rest of the House seemed a little chilly, and Mr. CHURCHILL, at the PRIME MINISTER'S elbow, looked about as happy as NAPOLEON on the return from Moscow.

[Illustration: HILARITY OF MR. CHURCHILL ON HEARING HIS CHIEF'S VIEWS ABOUT RUSSIA.]

Lord HUGH CECIL raised the standard of economy, and complained that the legislative programme was extravagantly long. "A large number of Bills generally meant a large amount of expenditure." I have myself observed this phenomenon.

Wednesday, February 11th.—The Lords, having disposed of the Address with their usual celerity, welcomed Baron RIDDELL of Walton Heath (and, perhaps I may add, Bouverie Street) to their ranks, and then adjourned for a week.

If all Labour Members possessed the sweet reasonableness of Mr. BRACE we should view the advent of a Labour Government without any of Mr. CHURCHILL'S misgivings. The Member for Abertillery argued the case for the nationalisation of mines so gently and genially that before he sat down I am sure that a good half of his hearers began to think that, after all, there was "something in it." Visions of a carboniferous millennium, when there would be no more strikes and hardly any accidents, and altruistic colliers would hew their hardest to get cheap and abundant coal for the community, floated before the mind's eye as Mr. BRACE purred persuasively along.

[Illustration: THE PIED PIPER OF ABERTILLERY

(MR. W. BRACE).

"FOR HE LED US, HE SAID, TO A JOYOUS LAND

WHERE WATERS GUSHED AND FRUIT-TREES GREW,

AND FLOWERS PUT FORTH A FAIRER HUE,

AND EVERYTHING WAS STRANGE AND NEW."]

Unfortunately for the Nationalisers Mr. LUNN thought it necessary later to make a blood-and-thunder oration, threatening all sorts of dreadful things (including a boycott of the newspapers) if the Miners' demands were refused. Moreover, he made it clear that coal was only a beginning and that the Labour Party's ultimate objective was nationalisation all round, and wound up by reminding the House that "we are many and ye are few."

The PRIME MINISTER is not the man either to miss a chance or refuse a challenge. The tone of his reply was set by Mr. LUNN, not by Mr. BRACE; and though he had plenty of solid arguments to advance against the motion the most telling passage in his speech was a quotation from "Comrade TROTSKY," showing what Nationalisation had spelt in Soviet Russia—labour conscription in its most drastic shape. The nation, he declared, that had fought for liberty throughout the world would stand to the death against this new bondage.

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Result: Amendment defeated by 329 to 64.

Thursday, February 12th.—This was the first Question-day of the new Session, and the House was flattered to see Mr. LLOYD GEORGE in his place, despite the counter-claims of the Peace Conference at St. James's Palace. Evidently he means this year to "stick to the shop" more closely, in view, perhaps, of the possible return from Paisley of the old proprietor.

To a Labour Member's complaint that several ex-Generals had been appointed as divisional Food officers, Mr. MCCURDY replied that no preference was given to military candidates. But why not? Where will you find more competent judges of alimentary questions than in the higher ranks of His Majesty's Forces?

In attacking the provisions of the Peace Treaty with Germany as "impracticable," Sir DONALD MACLEAN revealed himself as a diligent student of a recent notorious book. Most of his observations—excepting, perhaps, the statement that he had "no sentimental tenderness for the Germans"—were marked with the brand of KEYNES, and his assertion that the utmost Germany could pay was two thousand millions came bodily from that eminent statistician. To the same inspiration was possibly due the unhappy suggestion that our chief Ally was pursuing a policy of revenge.

For this he was promptly pulled up by Lord ROBERT CECIL, who warned him not to judge the policy of France by the utterances of certain French newspapers. Lord ROBERT had, however, his own quarrel with the Government, who, according to his account, had done nothing to set Central Europe on its legs again, except to send it a certain amount of food—not, one would have thought, an altogether bad preliminary.

It was a pity that Mr. BALFOUR had not a stronger indictment to answer, for he was dialectically at his best. After complimenting the Opposition leader on his "charming tones and anodyne temper" he proceeded to take up his challenge—"if I may call it a challenge." If Germany was in doubt as to the amount she might be called upon to pay, she had her remedy, for the Peace Treaty especially provided that she might offer a "lump sum." The list of war-criminals was long, no doubt, but we had limited our own demands to those who were guilty of gratuitous brutality. As for the condition of Central Europe, that was not the fault of the Peace Treaty, it was the fault of the War, and this country had done all it reasonably could to remedy it.

The Opposition insisted on taking a division, and were beaten by 254 to 60. So far the "doomed Coalition" seems to be doing rather well.

* * * * *

A SINGLE HOUND.



When the opal lights in the West had died
And night was wrapping the red ferns round,
As I came home by the woodland side
I heard the cry of a single hound.

The huntsman had gathered his pack and gone;
The last late hoof had echoed away;
The horn was twanging a long way on
For the only hound that was still astray.

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While, heedless of all but the work in hand,
Up through the brake where the brambles twine,
Crying his joy to the drowsy land
Javelin drove on a burning line.

The air was sharp with a touch of frost;
The moon came up like a wheel of gold;
The wall at the end of the woods he crossed
And flung away on the open wold.

And long as I listened beside the stile
The larches echoed that eerie sound,
Steady and tireless, mile on mile,
The hunting cry of a single hound.

W.H.O.

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“FAMILIES SUPPLIED.”

“Village General Stores Wanted for dis. soldier: also widow and daughter; price no object if genuine.”—*Daily Paper*.

* * * * *

“H.B. Playford is 6 feet 5 inches, or thereabouts, in height, has a fabulous reach, and weighs 13-1/2 stone. He rowed No. 8 in the Jesus four, beaten by Leander at Henley.”—*Times*.

A fabulous reach indeed! So fabulous that it made the four look as long as an eight.

* * * * *

THE AMALGAMATED SOCIETY OF PASSENGERS.

“I’ve hit on something at last,” cried Charles exultantly, throwing himself down on my second-best armchair.

“I wish you wouldn’t hit on it so hard,” I complained; “the springs are half-broken already. What’s the trouble?”

“Have you ever heard,” he inquired, “of the black-coated salariat?”

“The egg of the greater green-backed woodpecker—”

"It isn't a bird," he said; "it's a class of people that works with its brains. And the hand of Labour, according to my evening paper, is being held out to it."

"But suppose one wears a pepper-and-salt suit," I said, "and writes 'Society Gossip.' What about that?"

"That's just my point. All these accepted lines of distinction are absolutely wrong. It isn't what people work at that divides them, it's the way they travel to their work. Sir THOMAS MALORY knew that. When *Lancelot* was going to rescue *Guinevere* he had his white horse badly punctured by a bushment of archers and had to finish the journey in a woodcutter's cart. And that was a great disgrace to him and made the *Queen's* ladies laugh. It would be just the same with the typists of a rich employer if his motor-car broke down and he had to arrive in a bus. How do you get to town in the morning yourself?"

"I am a Tuber," I said sadly. "Every bright morning I say I will go by bus, but when I reach the Tube station the draught sucks me in through the door, the man grabs me by the collar, throws me into the sink, lifts up the plug and down we go into the drain-pipe together. I think I have the brand of Tubal Cain on my brow. It is a kind of perpetual crease—"

"I too Tube," said Charles; "but I know many eminently respectable bus people as well. Especially bus-women. They ride about, they tell me, on the most fantastically labelled vehicles and are always seeing new suburbs swim into their ken, and gazing—"

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'Out over London with a wild surmise,
Silent upon a seat of No. 10,'

or whatever the bally thing may be. But I never join their rash adventures. I belong to a different *milieu*. I move in a sort of social underworld. Not that I can deny, of course, that there is a certain amount of overlapping."

"I overlapped twice to-day myself," I said, "and as the second one was knitting a jumper —"

"And then there are the Tram-ites," he went on. "I don't understand their world either. The tram, I am told, suddenly plunges with a loud roar like a walrus under the streets of Holborn and emerges on the Embankment. The hansom cabs were called the gondolas of London. The trams, I suppose, are the submarines. But they are not of my life. I do not mingle with them."

"I mingled with a tram once," I said. "I clasped it warmly by the rail as it was going by, but I missed the step with my foot. It spurned me rather badly. But kindly explain what you're driving at."

"All these classes," said Charles, "have their own friendships, their own jolts and jars, their own way of being bullied by conductors and thrown into the mud and squeezed into cages and arranged upon straps. But they have one great thing in common, distinct though they may be. They are all passengers, all takers of tickets. There is going to be a Bus Union, a Tube Union, and a Tram Union, and when necessary they will combine."

"Against what?"

"Against the motorists, first and foremost," said Charles. "The opulent people who ride a-wallop to their offices in cars. Suppose that Ethelinda Bellairs, who is a trifle absent-minded, has got the sack for typing a letter like this: 'I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 25th ult., and ask you to note that a sudden sense of indefinable yearning seized Hephzibah. She closed her eyes and slowly swayed towards him. Awaiting the favour of an early reply, etc.'—what happens? There is an immediate strike of the Bus Union until she is reinstated. If necessary the two other branches of the Amalgamated Society of Passengers are called out. No case of hardship will be too insignificant for the A.S.P. We shall all carry a symbol in the shape of a secret season ticket. When the strike occurs nobody will go to work in the morning. All the stations and starting-places will be picketed; business will be paralysed."

"Except for the stout fellows who walk," I suggested.

“They will find it very lonely at their offices,” said Charles. “Nobody wants to work if there’s any excuse to avoid it, and the beauty of the thing is that we can strike not only against ordinary employers, but against the raising of fares, and against the N.U.R. or the Vehicle and Transport Workers Union itself. That will be the quickest strike that has ever been struck. You can’t go on banging lifts and gates and rushing about in empty buses without anybody to shove into the dirt or any thumbs to snip bits out of. It takes all the enjoyment out of life.”

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"And where exactly do you come in?" I asked.

"I intend to be the Organising Secretary of the A.S.P.," he said. "It will be hard work, but very meritorious."

"Rather a nuisance won't it be on strike days," I inquired, "going round and visiting a few thousand pickets on foot in your black coat, with the brain waves working on top?"

"The O.S. of the A.S.P.," answered Charles magnificently, "will not move about on foot. He will be provided with a handsome motor-car."

EVOE.

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[Illustration: *Constable*. "NOW THEN, WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' UP HERE?"

Burglar. "WOTCHER S'POSE I'M DOIN'? FEEDIN' THE PUSSY-CATS?"]

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"A van containing L3,000 worth of woollen goods has been stolen from Broad-street, Bloomsbury. It was left unattended by the driver, who went into a restaurant for dinner and later was found empty at Holloway."—*Provincial Paper*.

We know that kind of restaurant.

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"ACCOUNTING FOR WOMEN."—*American Paper*.

We had always been told there was no accounting for them.

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AT THE PLAY.

"CARNIVAL."

Those who imagined that they were to be given a dramatic version of Mr. COMPTON MACKENZIE'S romance must have been shocked to find that the entertainment provided at the New Theatre was just a variation, from an Italian source, of the general idea of *Pagliacci*. But it was the only palpable shock they sustained, for never did a play run a more obvious course from start to finish. When you have for your leading character an actor-manager, who plays the part of *Othello*, with his wife as *Desdemona* (how well we know to our cost this conjugal form of nepotism), and discusses in private



life the character of the Moor—whether a man would be likely to indulge his jealousy on grounds so inadequate—speaking with the detached air of one who is absolutely confident of his own wife’s fidelity, you don’t need much intelligence to foresee what the envy of the gods is preparing for him. The remainder is only a matter of detail—what particular excuse, for instance, the lady will find for a diversion, and to what lengths she will go.

[Illustration: *Simonetta* (Miss HILDA BAYLEY). “ARE YOU PLEASED WITH MY FANCY DRESS? IT WAS TO BE A GREAT SURPRISE.”

Count Andrea (Mr. NEILSON-TERRY). “NOTHING SURPRISES ME IN THIS PLAY.”]

In the present case her only excuse was the old one, that she was “treated like a child.” Certainly she deserved to be, for her behaviour was of the most wilful and wayward; but she was the mother of a strapping boy, and a woman who is thought old enough to play, in the premier Italian company, the part of *Desdemona* (with the accent, too, on the second syllable) could hardly justify her complaint that she was regarded as a juvenile.

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The choice of the Alfieri Theatre for the scene of the culmination of the domestic drama seemed to touch the extreme of improbability. The actors were not a poor travelling company of mummers, as in *Pagliacci*, with no decent private accommodation for this kind of thing. The protagonist of *Carnival* was lodged in a perfectly good Venetian palace, where there was every convenience for having the matter out with his wife and her lover. For the rest the plot was commonplace to the verge of banality.

As *Silvio Steno*, in his home life, Mr. MATHESON LANG was excellently natural, but as *Othello* his make-up spoilt his nice face and tended to alienate me. As *Simonetta* (I got very sick of the name) Miss HILDA BAYLEY had a difficult part, and failed, from no great fault of her own, to attach our sympathies, till in the end she explained her rather inscrutable conduct in a defence which gave us for the first time a sense of sincerity in her character. There was too much play with her Carnival dress of a Bacchante, which, perhaps, was less intriguing than we were given to understand. Mr. DENNIS NEILSON-TERRY has a certain distinction, but he did not make a very perfect military paramour. His intonation seemed to lack control, and he has a curious habit of baring his upper teeth when he is getting ready to make a forcible remark.

As for the scenes, they were alleged to be Venice (where the Doges wedded the sea), but there was no visible sign of water. You called for a gondola, which always sounds better than a taxi, but it never appeared. Perhaps, however, for one has not always been very happy in one's experiences of stage navigation, this was just as well.

O.S.

* * * * *

"PETER IBBETSON."

That incorrigible romanticist, GEORGE DU MAURIER of happy memory, was so transparently sincere as to be disarming. No use telling him "life's not like that." "That's just it," he'd say, and get on with his pleasant illusions. *Peter Ibbetson* is certainly not tuned to the moods of this decade, but it would be a pity if we all became too sophisticated to enjoy such occasional excursions into the land of almost-grown-up make-believe.

If life doesn't give you what you want, then "cross your legs, put your hands behind your head," go to sleep and live a dream-life of your own devising—that is the theme. The bare essentials of the story are that the beloved *Mimsy* of *Peter's* happy childhood becomes the wife of a distinctly unfaithful duke; while *Peter* finds himself in prison for killing his quite gratuitously wicked uncle, and for forty years reprieved convict and deceived duchess meet in dreams till her death divides and his again unites them.

It is a considerable tribute to both author and adapter (the late JOHN RAPHAEL) that their work should, at the height of the barking season, hold an audience silent and apparently enthralled, in spite of the handicap that, in order to make the story in any degree intelligible, much time had to be given to more or less tedious explanations.

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I will not pretend that the motives of the characters were clear or that (for me) the phantasy quite passed the test of being translated from the medium of the written word into that of canvas, gauze and costumed players, with those scufflings of dim figures in the semi-darkness and that furtive and by no means noiseless zeal of scene-shifters; or, again, that I was much attracted by a picture of the life after death, in which opera-going (please cf. Mr. VALE OWEN) figured so prominently. Indeed I think that the play would be better if it ended with the death of the dreamers and did not attempt that hazardous last passage.

But certainly there were quite admirable tableaux and some very intelligent individual playing—in contrast with the team-work of (particularly) the First Act, which was ragged and amateurish.

Mr. BASIL RATHBONE'S *Peter* was an effective study, avoiding Scylla of the commonplace and Charybdis of the mawkish—no mean feat. A young man with a future, I dare hazard; with a gift of clear utterance, and sensibility and a useful figure.

It is a good deal to say that Miss CONSTANCE COLLIER so contrived her *Duchess of Towers* as to make us understand *Peter's* worship.

Miss JESSIE BATEMAN'S *Mrs. Deane* seemed to me an exceedingly competent piece of work, and Mr. GILBERT HARE thoroughly enjoyed every mouthful of *Colonel Ibbetson's* wickedness, and made us share his appreciation. And you couldn't accuse him of over-playing, though he certainly looked too bad to be true.

Mr. WILLIAM BURCHILL'S little sketch of an old French officer was almost too poignant.

Why the landlord of the *Tete Noir* was got up to resemble Mr. WILL EVANS so closely is a deep matter I could not fathom, and, if ever I kill my uncle, may Fate send me a less rhetorical chaplain than Mr. CYRIL SWORDER!

T.

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[Illustration: THE INTRUDER.]

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THE ORDER OF THE B.S.O.

One of the oldest of Mr. Punch's young men thought he would like to hear some orchestral music on Monday week last, so he dropped in at the Queen's Hall to assist at a concert of the new British Symphony Orchestra. The name of the founder and conductor, Mr. RAYMOND ROZE, was already familiar, for Mr. Punch's young man was

old enough to remember Mr. ROZE'S mother, MARIE ROZE, in her brilliant prime as *prima donna* of the Carl Rosa Company; and he is glad to know that she is still living in her beloved Paris, where she was decorated by M. THIERS for her gallant conduct during the siege of 1870. So it is pleasant to find her son so actively associated in the good work of finding permanent musical engagements for demobilised soldiers in the British Symphony Orchestra.

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The B.S.O. men are not home-keeping soldiers. Every one of them has served overseas, and it was a pity that their names and the record of their services were not printed in the programme, for it is a fine and inspiring list, and a striking disproof of the old tradition that musicians must needs be long-haired, sallow and unathletic. Alert and young and vigorous they appealed to the eye as well as to the ear, and they played, as they fought, gloriously, these minstrel boys who had all gone to the War. Strings and woodwind, brass and percussion, all are up to the best professional level.

There is no movement which has a stronger claim on all men and women of goodwill than that for providing employment for demobilized soldiers, and the British Symphony Orchestra is a first-rate contribution to that desirable end. The *personnel* of the orchestra is all that can be desired. It was bad luck that Mr. RAYMOND ROZE was prevented by illness from conducting last week, but the band was fortunate in securing an admirable substitute in Mr. FRANK BRIDGE. Mr. Punch gives the scheme his blessing without reserve, but with a word of advice. To win for the B.S.O. the success it deserves will need good judgment as well as energy and efficiency. The art of programme-framing has to be studied with especial care in view of the powerful but, we believe, perfectly friendly competition of other established organizations. Last week's programme had its *beaux moments*, but it had also at least two *mauvais quarts d'heure*. The men, however, were splendid.

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

P.W.S. (who has taken a Spring fishing). "AND THIS IS WHAT I'VE PAID THREE 'UNDRED QUID FOR!"]

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THE NEW COLOUR: ASQUITHIAN ROSE.

"To-day everything Asquithian has a rosy hue. To begin with, there arrived a horseshoe of white chrysanthemums with the words 'Good luck' worked in green."—*Daily Paper*.

* * * * *

"Shakespeare's 'Otehllo' has fallen upon evil days."—*Evening Paper*.

It certainly seems to be having a bad spell.

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“The vexed question, ‘What is a new-laid egg?’ is at present confronting a committee of poultry experts.”—*Daily Telegraph*.

The Committee should invite a hen to sit on it.

* * * * *

An “under-cut”:—

“Earl Beatty is setting an example in hustle at the Admiralty. Photographed yesterday hurrying to lunch.”—*Daily Paper*.

His Lordship’s example is superfluous. The Admiralty has nothing to learn about hurrying to lunch.

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[Illustration: *Mistress*. “CAN YOU EXPLAIN HOW IT IS, JANE, THAT WHENEVER I COME INTO THE KITCHEN I ALWAYS FIND YOU READING?”

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Jane. "I THINK IT MUST BE THEM RUBBER 'EELS YOU WEARS, MA'AM."]

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OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

Mr. JOHN HASTINGS TURNER, who had already to his credit a play, a novel and various successful revues, has now produced, in *A Place in the World* (CASSELL), what is, I understand, to some extent a fictional version of his play. How far this may be so I am uncertain (not having seen the play), but I am by no means uncertain that it makes here a wholly admirable story, one moreover that shows a notable advance in Mr. TURNER'S art as novelist, being firmer in touch and generally more matured than anything he has yet written. The plot concerns the adventures, spiritual and other, of *Madame Iris Iranovna*, pampered cosmopolitan beauty, when fate or her own egotistical whim had dumped her as a temporary dweller in the semi-detached villas of suburbia. The theme, you observe, is one that might excuse the wildest farce, since the effect of *Iris* upon her unfamiliar surroundings was naturally devastating. Mr. TURNER however has chosen the more ambitious path of high comedy. In *Iris* herself, and even more in the kindly old vicar who so unexpectedly confronts her with her own weapons of wit and worldly wisdom, he has drawn two characters of genuine and moving humanity. I shall not tell you how the conflict (essential to real comedy) works itself out, nor after what fashion the empty brilliance of *Iris* is humiliated and transformed. If I have a criticism of Mr. TURNER'S method, it is that, as with *Bunthorne*, a "tendency to soliloquy" is growing upon him which will need watching. But he clothes his reflections pleasantly enough. Already known as what the old lady called "an agreeable rattlesnake," he has now proved himself a story-teller of conspicuous promise.

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VON FALKENHAYN'S *General Headquarters 1914-1916 and its Critical Decisions* (HUTCHINSON) seems an honest book than LUDENDORFF'S; less political, less querulous, less egoistic. VON FALKENHAYN, who was War Minister when the War began and retained his office after he had superseded VON MOLTKE as Chief of the General Staff, shows himself incurably Prussian, refusing even to consider the possibility that any State which could wage war effectively would hesitate to do so from any ethical or humanitarian scruple. "Don't bother about a just cause, but see that it appears just before men," he seems to say. "The surprise effect of gas (at Ypres) was very great," is all the comment that tragic episode draws from him. He was a submarine campaign whole-hogger. But he has his own soldierly virtues of modesty and loyalty, and refuses to air his personal grievances in the matter of his supersession by the HINDENBURG-LUDENDORFF syndicate. If, as seems likely, he speaks the truth, as he had opportunity

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to see it, we must revise our too flattering estimates of the German superiority in numbers and attribute a good deal of the stubbornness of their defence to their quicker appreciation of the character of siege war. The holding of front-line trenches with few men and consequent immense saving of life was, according to the General, practised by the German Command long before we discovered its value. He gives a reasoned criticism, which has to the layman a plausible air, to the effect that the relative failure of Joffre's great combined Champagne-Flanders offensive of 1915 was due to the overcrowding of the attacking armies. General VON FALKENHAYN, though he has a prejudice for the German soldier, can bring himself to testify to the valour of his British and French opponent. A readable and conscientious account of a difficult stewardship.

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I wish I could feel as enthusiastic about *The Booming of Bunkie* (JENKINS) as *Mr. Peter McMunn*, who, falling off a motor-cycle, landed in that quiet Scots village and proceeded to turn it, by a series of stunts, into a well-known watering-place. He undertook the job, I gather, partly for a joke and partly for the bright eyes of *Evelyn Kirbet*, whose father put up the money for the purposes of publicity and propaganda. The transformation of a hamlet into a seaside resort has been treated as a sort of psychological romance by Mr. OLIVER ONIONS in *Mushroom Town*, where the human beings are a background as it were for the bricks and mortar; Mr. A.S. NEILL, having chosen to make a farce of it, has provided a hero who believes in humorous advertisements, and has evidently persuaded the author to take him at his own valuation. This is hardly to be wondered at, since *Mr. McMunn* seems always keener on popping his puns than on selling his goods. Specimens are given of speeches, press articles, posters and cinema productions, but the fun rages with the most furious intensity round the golf links, where eighteen holes have been compressed into the usual space of one and the winner stands to lose drinks. There are also some parodies of ROBERT BURNS, some jokes about bathing-machines and some digs at the Kirk. One has been, of course, before to seaside places that were a bit too bracing, and I am afraid that the air of Bunkie leaves me cold.

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I really think that *The World of Wonderful Reality* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON) may come to be something of a test for your true follower of Mr. E. TEMPLE THURSTON. You recall the ingredients that went towards the first, or *Beautiful Nonsense*, book? Sentiment in the slums, Venice with a very big V and poverty *passim* might be regarded as its composition. Well, here you have *John* and *Jill* home again; no more Venice, a palpably decreasing sentiment and only poverty to fill up with. I am bound to confess that I found *John's* protracted

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preparation for his nuptials rather less than enough as subject-matter for a whole book. Of course all this time there remained *Amber* (you recollect her; she “also ran” for the *John* stakes), and at the back of your mind a comfortable conviction that two strings are still better than one. Having censured the book for insufficient plot, I had better not proceed to give away what there is. I will content myself with a personal doubt as to whether *John* and *Jill* will quite reduplicate their former triumph—and that for various reasons, not least because (for purposes of sequel, I suppose) even *Jill* herself has been permitted so grave a lapse from the attitude of stand-anything-so-long-as-it’s-slummy-enough that so endeared her to her former public. Touch that and the bloom is indeed gone.

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With the Chinks (LANE), a volume of the “Active Service Series,” treats of the training of Chinese coolies for work with the Labour Corps in the B.E.F. The special interest of the racial type was, for me, exhausted by the charming photographs; the task remaining for Mr. DARYL KLEIN, Lieutenant in the Chinese Labour Corps, of so conveying the atmosphere as to absorb the reader’s attention, was not achieved. On the two main aspects of the topic, the origin in China and the result in France, he makes no serious attempt. I got no clear impression of the coolie at home or of why he took to being an ally, and I was left with but the vaguest conception of the unit in France, since the narrative ended at the disembarkation. Lastly, I have with regret to complain of one sentence in particular, where he tells us: “It is high time I said something about the officers.” He had, from the general reader’s point of view, already said too much. It is a pity to have to speak thus moderately of a war-book obviously written with care and treating of an enterprise which must have cost much labour in the achieving and, in the achievement, must have duly contributed to our victory. For those personally involved it will be a welcome memento. For the conscientious historian it will have a certain unique value. And in fairness it must be added that in the latter half there are touches of humour and humanity which make the reading easy and pleasant.

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It has been my lot, and I am far from complaining about it, to read many war-books, but never has my luck been more completely in than when *With the Persian Expedition* (ARNOLD) fell into my hands. Major DONOHOE, while never losing sight of his main object, finds time to tell us a number of entertaining stories with a sedate humour which is most attractive. Seldom has an expedition set out on a wilder errand than this of the “Hush-hush” Brigade, or, as it was officially known, the “Dunsterville” or “Bagdad Party.” It was commanded by General DUNSTERVILLE, and briefly its objects were

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to combat Bolshevism, train Persian levies, prevent the Huns and Turks from threatening India by way of the Caspian Sea, and a few other little things of the same nature. The men of this "party" were picked men, and it is enough to say that their courage was as high as their numbers were few. It is indeed a mystery why any of them escaped with their lives, for, as experience proved, it was one thing to train Persian levies and another to get them to fight when they were wanted to. And without the levies the "Hush-Hush" party was outnumbered again and again. I could have wished that the excellent map which is firmly embedded in the binding had been detachable, for the interest of the chronicle compelled me constantly to refer to it, and I suffered great distraction.

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[Illustration: "IS HE A SAILOR, MUM?"

"YES, DARLING."

"THEN WHERE'S HIS PARROT?"]

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Sidelights of Song (LONG), by Mr. GILBERT COLLINS, contains a few sets of verse which have appeared in *Punch*.