

# **Punch, or the London Charivari, Vol. 158, June 30th, 1920 eBook**

## **Punch, or the London Charivari, Vol. 158, June 30th, 1920**

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# Page 1

## CHARIVARIA.

Fewer births are recorded in Ireland during the past seven months. No surprise can be felt, for we cannot imagine anybody being born in Ireland on purpose just now.

\* \* \*

A London firm are now manufacturing what they call the smallest motor-car on the market. How great a boon this will be to the general public will be gathered from the report that one of these cars has been knocked down by a pedestrian.

\* \* \*

According to a Sunday paper MUSTAPHA *kemal* wants as soldiers only those who will die for their belief in his cause. Previous experience is not essential.

\* \* \*

Citizens of Ealing have protested against Sunday concerts unless Sunday bathing is also permitted. The pre-war custom of merely sponging the ears after attending a recital was never wholly satisfactory.

\* \* \*

According to an inscription on the score card of the North Berwick Club, "golf is a science in which you may exhaust yourself but never your subject." Several clubs, however, claim to possess colonels who can say practically all that is worth saying about the game without stopping to get their second wind.

\* \* \*

Girls have broadened out a lot, declared a speaker at the annual conference of the Head-mistresses' Association. The home-made jumper, it appears, has been coming in for a good deal of unmerited blame.

\* \* \*

A middle-aged man was charged at the Thames Police Court the other day with having an altercation with a lamp-post. It appears that the man called the lamp-post "Pussyfoot," and the latter promptly knocked him down.

\* \* \*



Special courts, it is stated, are to be set up for the trial of Irish criminals. The need, we gather, is for some machinery by which the trial can be conducted in the absence of the prisoner.

\* \* \*

"I have put in a good three months in the garden," Mr. *Smillie* told a reporter, on his return to London, "and have coaxed some nice red roses out." Coaxing the nice red miners out is comparatively easy work.

\* \* \*

On a question of equipment Ashford Fire Brigade has resigned. It is not known yet whether local fires will go out in sympathy with the Brigade.

\* \* \*

Letchworth, the first Garden City, has voted itself dry by a majority of sixty-five. There seems to be a lack of hospitality in this attempt to discourage American visitors.

\* \* \*

The latest news from Turkey, Russia and Ireland sets us wondering what the War made the world safe for.

\* \* \*

Ants, we are informed, will not come near the hands of a person if well rubbed with a raw onion. The last time we attempted to rub an ant with a raw onion he broke away and made a dash for the hills.

\* \* \*

*The Chicago Tribune* points out that two attempts have been made on the life of the ex-Kaiser. It is hoped that he will realise that it would be a breach of etiquette to get assassinated before the Allies have decided what is to be done with him.

## Page 2

\* \* \*

We understand that one of the New Poor who recently found a burglar in his house searching for money immediately offered the intruder ten per cent. if he proved successful.

\* \* \*

Referring to the report in these columns last week that two bricklayers were seen to remove their coats at Finsbury Park, we now hear that it was simply done to oblige a photographer who was understood to have been sent down by Dr. *Addison*.

\* \* \*

Among the articles left in trains on a South Coast railway is a sandwich. Unless claimed within three days we understand that it will be broken up and sold to defray expenses.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Important notice.*

Mr. Punch begs leave to draw the attention of the Intelligent Public to the fact that on Monday next, July 5th, he proposes to publish a Special Summer Number. All his previous Summer Numbers have appeared in the form of an ordinary weekly issue, with additional holiday and other matter. This is a Special Summer Number, altogether distinct from the weekly issue. It will contain thirty-six pages, almost entirely made up of drawings, and including several pages of illustrations in three colours. Mr. Punch has great pleasure in inviting his friends to encourage him in this new venture.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: *The gorgeous uniforms of the past may be re-introduced into the army; but, if so, the cinema attendant will not give in without A struggle.*]

\* \* \* \* \*

*Our enterprising contemporaries.*

*"News by Wire and air.*

To-day is the longest day."—"Daily Mail," June 21st.

\* \* \* \* \*

*The Expansion of Scotland.*



"The most interesting features of the vital statistics of Scotland....  
The girth-rate was higher than those of all first quarters since 1891.  
—*Daily Paper*.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Our Merry municipalities.*

"——*Town council.*

*Minutes for Monday's meeting.*

*More increases of wags.*"—*Provincial Paper*.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Threatened unrest at the zoo.*

"Mr. Churchill has made up his mind, but if he gets his way every  
tadpole and tapir will take it as a precedent."—*Daily News*.

\* \* \* \* \*



## Page 3

"In a driving competition Ray drove 723 yards, one inch."—*South African Paper*.

Another inch, and we should have refused to believe it.

\* \* \* \* \*

*"Wilson would take mandate over America.*

*Washington, May 25.—President Wilson Monday asked authority from Congress for the United States to accept a mandate over Armenia.—Canadian Paper.*

But there is no reason to believe that the headline is inaccurate.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Holiday anticipations.*

[Now that holiday-planning is in season we have pleasure in announcing a few proposed schemes for the recreation of some of the mighty brains that shape our destinies and guide our groping intelligences. But it must be clearly understood that in these inconstant times we cannot vouch for their authenticity or guarantee fulfilment.]

Mr. ASQUITH'S recent success in spotting the winner of the Derby is believed to have inspired Mr. *Lloyd George* with an idea of combining his present policy of always going one, if not two or three, better than the Old Man with a public demonstration of the extent to which the crude Puritanism of his youth has been mellowed by sympathies more in keeping with his later political alliances. He is credited with the intention of putting to appropriate use his peculiar gifts of non-committal prophecy and persuasive casuistry, and at the same time making sure of a profitable holiday in the open air by "doing" the Sussex Fortnight, beginning with the Goodwood meeting, in the capacity of Downy Dave, a race-course tipster.

\* \* \* \* \*

There is reason to believe that, if the Recess should afford Sir *William Sutherland* an opportunity to indulge his craving for the Simple Life, he will proceed to Italy to join the coterie of ascetics known as the Assisi Set. His conspicuous ability in telling the tale to the London Pressmen encourages expectations that he will be no less successful as a preacher to the birds, after the manner of St. *Francis*, the founder of the cult.

\* \* \* \* \*

In financial circles it is expected that Mr. *Chamberlain* will spend the vacation *incognito* in the neighbourhood of Blackpool, partly for the sake of the invigorating air, but mainly, in view of the abnormal prosperity of Lancashire, for the purpose of considering on the spot the possibilities of a levy on capital as a local experiment.

\* \* \* \* \*

A rumour is current in Whitehall, and gains colour from the activity in certain seaports, that, in consequence of Earl CURZON'S having been informed that the number of Channel-swimmers is likely to be unusually large this summer, his lordship has decided to take command of a fleet of Foreign Office launches, which will patrol the coast to make sure that none of these persons is unprovided with a passport.

## Page 4

\* \* \* \* \*

At Unity House a suspicion is entertained that Sir *Eric Geddes* contemplates utilising the holidays for the double purpose of working off superfluous steam and familiarizing himself with the true attitude of the railwaymen by working as a stoker on one of the great main lines. Should this scheme be carried into effect arrangements are in readiness to compel him to become a member of the N.U.R.

\* \* \* \* \*

It is hoped that Mr. *Augustus John* will be able to accompany Lord *Beaverbrook* to Canada this summer, so that his lordship may gratify his lifelong ambition to be painted by Mr. *John*, with the primeval backwoods for a setting, in the character of a *coureur-des-bois*, of the type immortalized by Sir *Gilbert Parker* in *Pierre*.

\* \* \* \* \*

As far as can be ascertained, Mr. BERNARD SHAW intends to devote the holidays to verifying the report of his namesake, Mr. TOM SHAW (with whom he has been stupidly confused), on the Bolshevik *regime*. He will probably enter Russia secretly, accompanied by a mixed party of vegetarian Fabians disguised as Muscovites, so that in the event of being denounced as Boorjoos they may hope to pass for returning Dukhobors, or, in case of detection, for an amateur theatrical company touring with *Labour's Love's Lost*.

\* \* \* \* \*

We understand that Lords LONSDALE and BIRKENHEAD are making arrangements for a joint trip to Cuba, in order to investigate personally the condition and prospects of the Havana leaf industry. It will not be surprising if this visit bears fruit in the shape of the eighteen-inch super-cigar which sporting men have been for so long demanding.

\* \* \* \* \*

### ON THE EATING OF ASPARAGUS.

There were twenty-three ways of eating asparagus known to the ancients. Of these the best known method was to suspend it on pulleys about three feet from the ground and "approach the green" on one's back along the floor; but it was discontinued about the middle of the fourth century, and no new method worthy of serious consideration was subsequently evolved, till the August or September of 1875, when a Mr. Gunter-Brown wrote a letter to the *A.A.R.* (*The Asparagus Absorbers' Review and Gross Feeders' Gazette*), saying that he had patented a scheme more cleanly and less unsightly than the practice of tilting the head backward at an angle of forty-five degrees and lowering

the asparagus into the expectant face, which is shown by statistics to have been the mode usually adopted at that time.

Mr. Gunter-Brown's apparatus, necessary to the method he advocated, consisted of a silver or plated tube, into which each branch of asparagus, except the last inch, was placed, and so drawn into the mouth by suction, the eater grasping the last uneatable inch, together with the butt end of the tube, in the palm of his hand. Asparagus branches being of variable girth, a rubber washer inserted in the end of the tube furthest from the eater's mouth helped to cause a vacuum.

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The inventor claimed that the edible portion of the delicacy became detached if the intake of the eater was strong enough, but he overlooked the fact that the necessary force caused the asparagus to pass through the epiglottis into the oesophagus before the eater had time to enjoy the taste (as was proved by experiment) and so all sense of pleasure was lost.

More prospective marriages have been marred through the abuse of asparagus at table than through mixed bathing at Tunbridge Wells. For instance, though the matter was hushed up at the time, it is an open secret among their friends that Miss Gladys Devereux broke off her engagement to young Percy Gore-Mont on account of his *gaucherie* when assimilating this weed at a dinner-party. It seems that he simply threw himself at the stuff, and that one of the servants had to comb the melted butter out of his hair before he could appear in the drawing-room.

The case of the Timminses, too, presents very sad features, though the marriage was not in this case abandoned, the high contracting parties not having once encountered a dish of asparagus simultaneously during the engagement. Yet it is more than rumoured that when, at the end of the close season, asparagus may be hunted, there is considerable friction in the Timminses' household, because Mrs. Timmins plays with a straight fork, while Timmins affects the crouching style.

Happily, however, a light at last appears to be shining through the darkness. Under the auspices of the Vegetable Growers Association (Luxury Trades section) an asparagus eating contest has been arranged to take place in the Floral Hall early in July. As the entrants to date include a contortionist and at least three well-known war-profiteers it is confidently expected that some startling methods will be exhibited which may revolutionise asparagus-eating in this country.

\* \* \* \* \*

"DUNOON.—Sitting room and two bedrooms to let for month of Dunoon."—  
*Scotch Paper.*

We welcome the introduction of "rhyming slang" to brighten up the advertisement columns.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: PARADISE LOST AGAIN?

MR. ASQUITH (*to John Bull*). "OF COURSE MESOPOTAMIA IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE,  
AND NO ONE HAS EVER BEEN ANXIOUS TO VACATE THE GARDEN OF EDEN;  
BUT YOU MUST

REFLECT THAT THE COST OF ITS UPKEEP HAS INCREASED ENORMOUSLY  
SINCE ADAM'S  
TIME.”]

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: *Lady of the Manor*. “HOWDY, BO? SIT RIGHT DOWN. I SURE HOPE  
YOU’RE FEELING FULL OF PEP! EXCUSE ME, VICAR, BUT I’M PRACTISING A  
FEW PHRASES SO THAT IN CASE I MEET ANY OF THIS AMERICAN INVASION I  
CAN MAKE THEM FEEL AT HOME.”]

\* \* \* \* \*

A NOTE ON CHESTERFIELDS.

## Page 6

In the Soviet Republic of Russia, I am told, no one can lay claim to the title of worker unless his hands are hardened and roughened by toil, and LENIN and TROTSKY have to take their turns at the rack, like the commonest executioner. In England we are not nearly so particular about the manual test, and, besides feeling quite kindly disposed towards professional footballers, tea-tasters and the men who stand on Cornish cliffs and shout when they see the pilchard shoals come in, we still give a certain amount of credit to mere brain-work as well.

There is, however, a poisonous idea prevalent, especially amongst the women of this country, that a fellow is not working with his brain unless he is walking rapidly up and down the room with wrinkles on his forehead, or sitting on a hard chair at a table with a file of papers in front of him. But there is no rule of this sort about the birth of great and beautiful ideas in the human brain. It is all a matter of individual taste and habit. I know a man, a poet, who thinks best on the Underground Railway, and that is the reason why he said the other day, "Give me to gaze once more on the blue hills," to the girl in the booking-office, when what he really wanted was a ticket (of a light heliotrope colour) to St. James's Park. Lord BYRON, on the other hand, composed a sorrowful ditty on the decadence of the Isles of Greece whilst shaving; but the invention of the safety-razor and the energetic action of M. VENIZELOS will most likely render it unnecessary for anyone to repeat such a performance. As for the people who have a sudden bright idea whilst they are dressing for dinner, they may be dismissed at once, for they nearly always go to bed by mistake and, when they wake up again extremely hungry, they have forgotten what it was.

Most experts are really agreed that a recumbent or semi-recumbent position is the best for creative thought, and another friend of mine, also a maker of verses, has patented the very ingenious device of a pair of stirrups just under the mantelshelf, so that, when he sits back in his armchair, he can manage his Pegasus without having his feet continually slipping off the marble surface into the fender.

Much may be said too for a seat in a first-class railway carriage, when you have the compartment all to yourself and the train is going at sixty miles an hour or more. But England is hardly spacious enough for a really sustained inspiration; and the result of being turned out suddenly at Thurso, N.B., or Penzance is that some opening flower of the human intellect fails to achieve its perfect bloom, and as likely as not your golf clubs are left in the rack.

There is also, of course, an influential school which believes strongly in the early morning tea hour, and people who ought to know tell me that Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL plans new uniforms for the Guards as well as the campaign in Mesopotamia with pink pyjamas on, and that the PRIME MINISTER can never be persuaded to get up for breakfast until he has hit on a few of those striking repartees which are subsequently translated by his posse of interpreters into Russian, Italian, Bohemian and Erse.

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For my part, however, I swear by a Chesterfield sofa, a large one, on which you can lie at full length, as I am lying now; the most comfortable thing there is on earth, I think, except perhaps a truss of hay, when one has been riding for about six consecutive hours in an army saddle. But there are disadvantages even about a Chesterfield sofa. It is, to begin with, in the drawing-room and in the drawing-room one is not so entirely immune from the trivial incidents of everyday life as I like to be when I am having brain-waves. Doors are opened and this creates a draught, and it is not the slightest use attempting a real work of imagination when people will come in and ask if I am lying on *The Literary Supplement* of *The Times* (as if it were likely), or the anti-aircraft gun that the children were playing with after lunch. For this reason I have had to invent an even better thing than the ordinary Chesterfield sofa, and since it will be, when made, the noblest piece of scientific upholstery in the world I will ask the printer to write the next sentence in italics, please.

*It is a Chesterfield sofa enclosed on all four sides.* Thank you.

The marvels of this receptacle for human thought will dawn upon the reader by slow degrees. Try to imagine yourself ensconced there, having climbed up by the short flight of steps which will be attached to it, enisled and remote amidst the surging traffic that sweeps through a drawing-room. Instead of making a rapid bolt to escape from callers and probably meeting them full tilt in the hall, you simply stay on, thinking. You have nothing to fear from them, unless they are so inquisitive and ill-mannered as to come and peep over the edge. With plenty of tobacco, a writing tablet and a fountain-pen, you can stare at the anaglypta ceiling and dream noble thoughts and put them down when you like without interruption. On sunny days the apparatus can be wheeled on to the balcony, where the sapphire sky will be exchanged for the anaglypta ceiling; and for winter use a metal base will be supplied, under which you can place either an oil-stove or an electric radiator.

I should like to see this four-sided Chesterfield in offices also. The master-strokes of commercial and administrative skill would be much more masterly with most people if they did not have to proceed from a hard office chair. You can easily dictate to a typist from the interior of a Chesterfield, and, though I know that business men and Government officials are often subjected to deputations, during which they have to look their persecutors in the face, this difficulty could be overcome by means of a sliding panel, through which the face of the recumbent administrator could be poked when necessary, wearing the proper expression of shrewdness, terror, conciliation or rage. I should like Sir ERIC GEDDES to have one of my four-sided Chesterfields.



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With his usual sagacity the reader will probably remark here that the four-sided Chesterfield can be procured ready-made at any moment by turning the usual article round and pushing it up against the wall. This point has not escaped notice, my friend. But you can hardly imagine the objections that will be urged by the female members of your household against adopting such a course in the drawing-room. They will assert, amongst other things, that Mrs. Ponsonby-Smith is on the point of arriving and that she will think you've done it on purpose.

I shall have the upholsterer in to-morrow.

EVOE.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: *Gladys*. "HAVE YOU ANY INTERESTING CASES COMING ON, SIR CHARLES?"

*Eminent K.C.* "WE HAVE A VERY INTRICATE AND TECHNICAL CASE COMING ON—MOST INTERESTING. IT TURNS ON THE QUESTION WHETHER A CERTAIN SUBTERRANEAN CONDUIT SHOULD BE CLASSIFIED AS A DRAIN OR A SEWER."

*Gladys*. "OH, BUT WHY NOT ASK A PLUMBER?"]

\* \* \* \* \*

DEDICATIONS.

MR. COMPTON MACKENZIE has found it necessary to state publicly in a dedication that his books have not been written by his sister.

The following extracts are taken from possible future dedications by various authors:—

*Mr. H.G. WELLS to the Bishop of LONDON.*

As I have seen it stated in various journals that you are the author of my book, *The Soul of a Bishop*, I hereby take the opportunity of informing your Lordship most definitely and emphatically that you are *not*. That book and also *The Passionate Friends* were written without any assistance from the episcopal bench. To avoid future misunderstanding I may say that all my books are written by myself. If at any time it is suggested that any publication of your Lordship has been written by me, I shall be glad if you will immediately issue a contradiction.

*Mr. BERNARD SHAW to the Editor of "The Morning Post."*

You have not written my books. You have not written my plays. Any statement to the contrary is an infamous falsehood. No one else, dead or alive, could ever have written anything which I have written. When I have become an imbecile, which is not likely to happen yet, as I am a vegetarian and do not read your rag, it will be time enough for other people to lay claim to my work. Nor have I ever assisted you in conducting that which you call a paper, nor have I ever written an editorial for its columns. Please let this matter have your futile attention.

*Miss DAISY ASHFORD to Lord HALDANE.*

If I did not believe your Lordship to be really innocent I should be very vexed with you. But let me explain. I have heard it said in reliable quarters that you are the author of *The Young Visitors*. Oh, my Lord! my Lord! I thought everybody knew by now that no one helped me even to spell a word. I have read your Lordship's books with pleasure and of course realise their promise. But it is all very different stuff from *The Young Visitors*. Please in the future disclaim all credit for giving me my ideas, and in return I can assure you that your schemes for the better education of the people shall have my enthusiastic support.

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*Mr. ARNOLD BENNETT to The Man in the Street.*

The last thing that I wish is that you should be misunderstood; all my life I have laboured to explain you to yourself. That my explanation has pleased you is shown by the fact that you buy my books. But you have commenced to give yourself airs, my man, and it is time you were put in your place. My books are so much to your taste that you have been led to believe yourself the author. Now please understand my books are written *for* you and not *by* you. You merely exist—thanks to me—and pay. I have been told that I once wrote a book called *The Old Wives' Tale*. If so, that was in earlier days, and you have long since forgiven me. And do you not owe me something for *The Pretty Lady*? Have I not shown you that your love is both sacred and profane? As I have enough to contend with from those who care for literature I hope any further word from me on this subject will be unnecessary.

*Mrs. FLORENCE BARCLAY to Lord FISHER.*

The phenomenal success of our recent volumes has, I understand, led a certain section of our public to believe that you are the author of several of my books. In particular it has been stated that *The Rosary* was written by your Lordship. As you know, I have a great respect for the aristocracy, and I do not suggest that you have deliberately put yourself forward as the author of my books. You will, however, understand me when I say that only your Lordship could express all that I feel about the matter. The mixing up of our identities is probably explained by the fact that we are both stylists and seekers for the *mot juste*. Will you please assist me in making it clear that we work independently? As I am staying in a country parsonage and it is our custom to read one another's letters over the breakfast-table, I shall be glad if any reply you may wish to make should be sent to the Editor of *The Times*.

*Sir ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE to Sir OLIVER LODGE.*

Our common concern with the life beyond has become so well known that our interests in this present life are in danger of becoming involved. In a volume of *Sherlock Holmes* stories recently purchased abroad I find you described as the author, and another book assures me that I have written extensively on the Atomic Theory. You will, I am sure, see the harm which I am likely to suffer through such mistakes. Nor does the confusion end here. I find that my novel, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, is now stated to be by Sir CONAN LODGE, and another book of mine, *The Lost World*, to be by Sir OLIVER DOYLE. Also I have seen myself described as "The Principal of Birmingham University," and yourself as the well-known detective of Baker Street. May I solicit your aid in helping me to suppress any further confusion of our respective genii? My best wishes to you and the good work.

\* \* \* \* \*



## Page 10

LABOUR-SAVING.

["Electric bore, one man, portable."—*Trade Journal*.]

Though not a scientific bean  
I am occasionally seen  
Scanning a technic magazine.

I love to learn of any wheeze  
Wherewith to win by quick degrees  
A rich sufficiency of ease.

And so it thrilled me to the core  
To read the phrase, "Electric bore,"  
And think of happy days in store.

In former times I'd often start  
Abroad with eagerness of heart  
To patronise dramatic art;

Only at curtain's fall to come  
Homeward again, dejected, glum,  
And overwhelmed by tedium.

With *ennui* verging on distress  
I'd witnessed from the circle (dress)  
Some transatlantic HUGE SUCCESS;

Or else some play of Irish life,  
Ending with father, son and wife  
Impaled upon a single knife;

Or haply I had chanced to choose  
Some even surer source of blues,  
One of the things they call revues.

But now those times are passed away;  
Electric bores have come to stay;  
I mean to purchase one to-day.

I don't know how it works, but an  
Authority declares it can  
Be guided by a single man.

I have in mind a little niche  
Beside my study window which  
Will just accommodate the switch.

Henceforth abroad no more I'll roam,  
But turn it on at evening's gloam  
And yawn my time away at home.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### OUR GO-AHEAD MUNICIPALITIES.

"Visitors to —— this summer need not fear want of recreation, for the Urban Council on Wednesday granted an application by Mr. —— for leave to place an additional donkey on the beach."—*Provincial Paper*.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Mr. Taylor, who had relieved Mr. Higgins, here had the misfortune to see Seymour badly hit over the right eye on attempting to hook one of his rising deliveries."—*Daily Paper*.

SEYMOUR, we understand, sympathised warmly with Mr. TAYLOR over this piece of bad luck.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: MANNERS AND MODES.

DARBY AND JOAN (FOR THE PREVAILING EPIDEMIC SPARES NEITHER AGE NOR VIRTUE)  
FAIL TO FIND THE WINNER OF THE 2.30.]

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: AT WIMBLEDON.

*Umpire*. "FORTY, THIRTY, SLASHER."

*Diana (fresh from Ascot)*. "PUT ME THIRTY SHILLINGS ON.]"

\* \* \* \* \*

A DOG'S LIFE.

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The life of a public man is a dog's life. I don't know why a dog's life should be the type and summit of unpleasantness in lives; for myself I should have thought it was rather a good life; no clothes to buy and no shortage of smells; but there it is. The reason is perhaps that a dog spends most of his day just finding a really good smell and being diverted from it by something else, a loud whistle in front or a motor-bicycle or another smell. He rushes off then after the whistler or the motor-bicycle or the new smell, missing all kinds of good smells on the way and never getting the cream of the old one. And that is like the day of the public man.

He sits up in bed in the morning, having his breakfast and thinking over the smells he is going to have during the day. There is an enormous choice. The whole of the bed is covered with papers; there are tables on either side of the bed covered with papers, letters and memoranda, and agenda and minutes and constituents' grievances, and charitable appeals and ordinary begs. When he moves his foot there is a great crackling, and the surface papers float off into the air and are wafted about the room. Each paper represents a different smell. He is going to make a speech to the Bottle-Washers' Union at 11 A.M. and he is reading the notes of his speech; but before that he has got to introduce a deputation of Fish-Friers to the HOME SECRETARY at ten and he is trying to find out what the Fish-Friers are after. But the telephone-bell keeps on ringing and the papers keep on floating away, and the papers about the Fish-Friers keep mixing themselves up with the papers about the Bottle-Washers, and the valet keeps coming in to say that the bath is prepared or the hosier has come, so that it is all very difficult.

All his family ring him up, and all the people who were at the meeting last night and were not quite satisfied with the terms of the Resolution, and all the people who are interested in Fish-Frying and Bottle-Washing, and all the people who want him to make a speech at Cardiff next year, and several newspapers who would like to interview him about the Sewers and Drains Bill, and a man whose uncle has not yet been demobilised, and a lady whose first-born son would like to be President of the Board of Trade as soon as it can be arranged. Meanwhile people begin to drift into the room. The Private Secretary drifts in with a despatch-case, full of new smells and some old ones; and the valet drifts in to say that the bath is still prepared, and a haircutter and a man from the shirt-makers, and the Secretary of the Fish-Friers, who has looked in for a quiet talk about the situation.

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When they are all ready for their quiet talks the public man decides that it is time he got up; he leaps out of bed and rushes out of the room and shaves and baths and does his exercises very very quickly. Then he rushes back and has a talk with the HOME SECRETARY on the telephone while he is drying his ears. When his ears are nice and dry he rings off and ties his tie, meanwhile dictating a nasty letter to *The Times* about the Scavengers (Minimum Wage) (Scotland) No. 2 Bill. In the middle of this letter two new crises arise—(1) The HOME SECRETARY'S Private Secretary's Secretary rings up and says that the Fish-Friers' deputation is postponed till 11 A.M. because of a Cabinet Meeting about the new war. (2) The Assistant-Secretary to the PRIME MINISTER'S Principal Secretary's Secretary rings up and says that the PRIME MINISTER can see the public man for ten seconds at one minute past eleven. It is now clear that the Bottle-Washers and the Fish-Friers and the PRIME MINISTER are going to clash pretty badly, and a scene of intense confusion takes place. The public man runs about the room in his shirt-sleeves smelling distractedly at the papers on the floor and on the bed and everywhere else. Some of the papers he throws at the Private Secretary and tells him to write a memorandum about them, and go and see the War Office about them and have six copies made of them. Most of them, however, he just throws on the floor or hides away in a dressing-gown where the Private Secretary won't find them; this is the only way of making sure of a permanent supply of good crises. A crisis about a lost document is far and away the most fruitful kind of crisis.

Meanwhile the valet pursues the public man about the room with spats and tries to attach them to his person. If he can attach both spats before the Fish-Friers' man really gets hold of him he has won the game. The Fish-Friers' man keeps clearing his throat and beginning, "The position is this—"; and the Private Secretary keeps saying in a cold dispassionate voice, "Are you going to the Lord Mayor's lunch?" or "How much will you give to the Dyspeptic Postmen's Association?" or "What about this letter from Bunt?"

The public man takes no notice of any one of them, but says rapidly over and over again, "Where are my spectacles?" or "What have you done with the brown socks?" He is playing for time. If he can put them off for a little more, some new crisis may occur and he will be able to say that he is too busy to deal with them now.

The Private Secretary knows this and continues to say, "Are you going to the Lord Mayor's lunch?" The Fish-Friers' man doesn't know it, and crawls about excitedly on the floor looking for the spectacles under the bed. When he is well under the bed the public man tells the Private Secretary to ring up the Bottle-Washers and the Fish-Friers and the PRIME MINISTER and arrange things somehow, and rushes out of the room. He is hotly pursued

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by the valet and the hosier and the hairdresser, but there's a taxi at the door and with any luck he will now get clear away. In the hall, however, the cook meets him in order to give notice, and by the time he has dealt with that crisis the Private Secretary has had three wrong numbers and given it up, and the Fish-Friers' man has bumped his head and given it up. They give chase together and catch the public man just as he is escaping from the front-door. The Private Secretary starts again about the Lord Mayor's lunch, and the Fish-Friers' man starts again about the position.

The public man knows now that he is done, so he drives them into the taxi and says he will talk to them on the way to the PRIME MINISTER. The taxi dashes off, leaving the hosier and the hairdresser and the valet wringing their hands in the hall.

The only thing the public man can do now is to invent a new crisis for the Private Secretary, who is still saying in a cold dispassionate voice, "Are you going to the Lord Mayor's lunch?"

So he thinks of one of the letters he has hidden in his dressing-gown and tells the Private Secretary that he must have that letter for the Bottle-Washers' meeting. Then he stops the taxi at a place where there is no Underground and no 'bus, and pushes the Private Secretary out. He has disposed of the Private Secretary for the day.

But the Fish-Friers' man's throat is practically clear by now and he gets to work at once. The public man pays no attention but prepares in his mind his opening sentences to the PRIME MINISTER. In the Park he sees two other public men walking and he takes them into the cab. Each of them has discovered some entirely new smells and starts talking about them at once very fast. The public man promises to go and try them all immediately. When he gets to the PRIME MINISTER'S he rings up and cancels the Fish-Friers and the Bottle-Washers. When he has done that the Assistant-Secretary to the PRIME MINISTER'S Principal Private Secretary's Secretary comes out and says that the PRIME MINISTER has been called away suddenly to Geneva.

The public man then goes off after the new smells. A dog's life.

A.P.H.

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[Illustration: *Visitor (to actor friend)*. "Y'KNOW, I WAS GOIN' ON THE STAGE MYSELF ONCE, BUT MY PEOPLE DINE SO LATE."]

\* \* \* \* \*

A SPORTING OFFER.





“Rabbit trapper would take so much the couple or rent them, or give so much the couple and kill them.”—*Scotch Paper*.

\* \* \* \* \*

A CORNISH LULLABY.

A.D. 1760.

Sleep, my little ugling,  
Daddy's gone a-smuggling,  
Daddy's gone to Roscoff in the *Mevagissey Maid*,  
A sloop of ninety tons  
With ten brass-carriage guns,  
To teach the King's ships manners and respect for honest trade.

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Hush, my joy and sorrow,  
Daddy'll come to-morrow  
Bringing baccy, tea and snuff and brandy home from France;  
And he'll run the goods ashore  
While the old Collectors snore  
And the wicked troopers gamble in the dens of Penzance.

Rock-a-bye, my honey,  
Daddy's making money;  
You shall be a gentleman and sail with privateers,  
With a silver cup for sack  
And a blue coat on your back,  
With diamonds on your finger-bones and gold rings in your ears.

PATLANDER.

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[Illustration: *Motorist*. "THAT REMINDS ME—I NEVER POSTED THAT LETTER."]

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POPULAR CRICKET.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—I enclose a cut from *Le Radical*, one of the leading Mauritius papers, and on behalf of the lovers of our national game in the island venture to ask for information regarding the last match recorded:—

"Londres, 14 mai, 4 hres P.M.—Mary-le-bone a battu Nottingham par 5 wickets; Lancashire a battu Leichester; Sussex a battu Warrick. En second lieu un joueur du Sussex a abattu H. Wilson par 187 wickets."

We are much perturbed at the strange developments that are evidently taking place in the game at home. Was this match, we want to know, a single-wicket game between the Sussex player and H. WILSON? If so how did he beat him by 187 wickets?

An ex-captain of the Cambridge eleven living here is of the opinion that, in order to make cricket more popular, the numbers of the opposing sides are being increased, and that this match must have been between a team of, say, a couple of hundred Sussex players and one of a like number captained by H. WILSON, and that only some dozen wickets had fallen in the second innings when the match ended. If this is the correct interpretation we should be very grateful for the rules, plan of the field, *etc.*, as we are most anxious to move with the times in this little outpost of Empire.

I fear however that we shall have some difficulty here in raising two teams of more than a hundred-a-side.

We presume that, as a match of eleven-a-side takes two or three days to finish, about six or eight weeks are allotted to this new game.

Any help that you can give us, Sir, will be much appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

M.C.C.

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FROM THE FILM WORLD.

As an interesting supplement to the announcement that Sir THOMAS LIPTON has kindly placed his bungalows and estates in Ceylon at the disposal of the East and West Films, Limited, for the filming of The Life of BUDDHA, we are glad to learn that preparations are already well advanced for the presentation of the Life of HANNIBAL on the screen.

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Messrs. Sowerly and Bitterton, the well-known vinegar manufacturers, have undertaken to provide the necessary plant for illustration of the famous exploit of splitting the rocks with that disintegrating condiment, and Messrs. Rappin and Jebb, the famous cutlers, have been approached with a view to furnish the necessary implements for the portrayal of the tragedy of the Caudine Forks. Professor Chollop, who is superintending the taking of the pictures of the battle of Cannae and the subsequent period of repose at Capua in their proper atmosphere, states that he is receiving every support from the local condottieri, pifferari, banditti and lazzaroni, and expects to be able to complete his task by the late autumn.

A certain amount of antagonism, on humanitarian grounds, has been shown by the Italian Government to the importation of a herd of elephants, which were essential to the realistic depiction of the passage of the Alps by the Carthaginian army; but it is hoped that by the use of skis the transit may be effected without undue casualties among the elephantine fraternity.

Lord FISHER has been invited to impersonate SCIPIO, and the *role* of FABIVS, the originator of the "Wait and See" policy, has been offered to Mr. ASQUITH, but authentic details are as yet lacking as to their decision.

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[Illustration: THE BLAMELESS ACCOMPLICE.

IRISH RAILWAYMAN (*to Sinn Fein Assassin*). "YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT. DETESTING MURDER, AS MR. THOMAS SAYS I DO, I'VE TAKEN CARE THAT THAT FELLOW SHOULD HAVE NO AMMUNITION."

["The Irish members of the N.U.R. expressed publicly their feeling of disgust at murder and outrage."—*Mr. J.H. THOMAS.*]

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ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

*Monday, June 21st.*—While the PRIME MINISTER was celebrating the longest—and pretty nearly the hottest—day by a *vin d'honneur* at Boulogne Mr. BONAR LAW had to content himself with small beer in the Commons.

The Government, it seems, is to offer its services to effect a peaceful settlement between the Imam YAHYA and the Said IDRISI, who are rival rulers in Arabia. There is believed to be a possibility that in return the said Said will offer his services to effect a peaceful settlement in Hibernia Infelix.

The Government is not so indifferent to economy as is sometimes suggested. The PRIME MINISTER'S famous letter to the Departments was only written in August last, yet already, Mr. BONAR LAW assured the House, some progress has been made in reducing redundant staffs, and the Government has appointed—no, I beg pardon, “decided to appoint”—independent Committees to carry out investigations. The hustlers!

[Illustration: DO YOU EXPECT ME TO SEND THE SERGEANT-AT-ARMS TO FETCH THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT?—*The SPEAKER.*]

The Member for Wood Green, who urged that the Treasury should prepare an estimate of the national income, with the view of limiting the national expenditure to a definite proportion of that amount, displayed, it seems to me, amazing temerity. The course of taxation in recent years encourages the belief that the only thing that restrains the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER from taking our little all is that he does not know how much it is.

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Capt. WEDGEWOOD BENN'S complaint that the MINISTER OF TRANSPORT habitually absented himself from the House met with little encouragement from the SPEAKER, who sarcastically inquired if he should send the SERJEANT-AT-ARMS to fetch the delinquent. Capt. BENN then dropped the subject, and Sir COLIN KEPPEL looked relieved.

The Government insisted on taking the Report stage and Third Reading of the Rent (Restrictions) Bill at one sitting, and kept the House up till half-past three in order to do it. Dr. ADDISON had need of what the IRON DUKE called "two o'clock in the morning courage" to ward off attacks. Once, when Sir ARTHUR FELL was depicting the desperate plight of the landladies of Yarmouth, forbidden under a penalty of a hundred pounds to charge more than twenty-five per cent. in excess of their pre-war prices, it looked as if the Minister must give way; but with some difficulty he convinced his critics that the clause in question had nothing to do with seaside landladies.

*Tuesday, June 22nd.*—In the Lords the Bishops, reinforced by the ecclesiastically-minded lay Peers, made a last attempt to throw out the Matrimonial Causes Bill. Lord BRAYE moved its rejection, and was supported by Lord HALIFAX in a speech whose pathos was even stronger than its argument, and by the Archbishop of CANTERBURY, who admitted that reform of the marriage laws was required, but considered that the Bill went a great deal further than was necessary. The LORD CHANCELLOR thereupon restated the case for the measure, for which he believed the Government were prepared to give facilities in the other House, and Lord BUCKMASTER repeated his exegesis of the vexed passage in St. MATTHEW'S Gospel, on which the whole theological controversy turns. The Third Reading was carried by 154 votes to 107.

[Illustration: *MENS AEQUA REBUS IN ARDUIS.*

MR. DENIS HENRY ON THE IRISH SITUATION.]

The Commons in the course of the Irish Debate discussed the failure of the Government to prevent the regrettable incidents in Derry and Dublin. Colonel ASHLEY demanded martial law; Major O'NEILL was for organising the loyal population; Sir KEITH FRASER approved both courses and advanced the amazing proposition that the trouble in Ireland was entirely due to the religious question, and that even the Sinn Feiners were loyal to the Empire.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND pointed out that faction-fighting in Derry was endemic, and drew an amusing picture of the old city, where everyone had some kind of rabbit-hole from which he could emerge to fire a revolver. As regards the general question he denied that the Constabulary had been instructed not to shoot. On the contrary they had been told to treat attackers as "enemies in the field," and to call upon suspected persons to hold up their hands.

Lord ROBERT CECIL was at a loss to understand the Government that applied coercion to the very people to whom it was preparing to hand over the government of Southern Ireland, and Mr. INSKIP was equally at a loss to understand the policy of the noble lord, who seemed to think that conciliation was incompatible with putting down crime.

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*Wednesday, June 23rd.*—A large company, including the QUEEN and Princess MARY, attended the House of Lords to see Prince ALBERT take his seat as Duke of YORK. It was unfortunate that the new peer was unable to wait for the ensuing debate, for Lord NEWTON was in his best form. His theme was the absurdity of the present Parliamentary arrangement under which the Peers were kept kicking their heels in London for the best months of the year, then overwhelmed with business for a week or two, and finally despatched to the country in time for the hunting season, which nowadays most of them were too much impoverished to enjoy. Lord CURZON condescended a little from his usual Olympian heights, and declared that one of the drawbacks to conducting business in that House was the difficulty of inducing noble Lords to attend it after dinner.

[Illustration: THE YOUNG UNIONIST MOVEMENT.

“IF THEY WERE TO HAVE HOME RULE AT ALL THEY MUST ‘GO THE WHOLE HOG.’”—*Mr. ORMSBY GORE.*]

To judge by Mr. ASQUITH’S recent speeches outside he meant to have delivered a thundering philippic against our continued occupation of Mesopotamia. Some of the sting was taken out of the indictment by the publication of an official statement showing that Great Britain was remaining there at the request of the Allies. After all, as Mr. LLOYD GEORGE observed in his reply, it would not be an economical policy to withdraw to Basra if we were to be immediately requested to return to Baghdad.

The rest of the evening was devoted to a renewal of the protests against Mr. CHURCHILL’S “Red Army.” Among the critics were Mr. ESMOND HARMSWORTH and Mr. OSWALD MOSLEY, the two “babies” of the House, and the MINISTER adopted quite a fatherly tone in recalling his own callow youth, when he too, just after the Boer War, denounced “the folly of gaudy and tinselled uniforms.”

*Thursday, June 24th.*—On behalf of the Government Lord ONSLOW gave a rather chilly welcome to Lord BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH’S Bill for the regulation of advertisements. It is true that the noble author had explained that his object was to secure “publicity without offence,” but I believe he had no desire to cramp the PRIME MINISTER’S style.

Sir ERIC GEDDES belongs to that wicked species of *fauna* that defends itself when attacked. He complained this afternoon that Mr. ASQUITH had in his recent speeches “trounced a beginner,” but Sir ERIC showed, for a novice, considerable aggressive power. He claimed that the Ministry of Transport had already saved a cool million by securing the abrogation of an extravagant contract entered into by Mr. ASQUITH’S Government. The EX PREMIER, however, insisted that if a mistake had been made the Railway Department of the Board of Trade could have corrected it just as well as its grandiose successor and at an infinitely smaller cost.



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[Illustration: *Naturalised Alien*. "VY DOND YOU GED OUD OF MY VAY? DOND YOU KNOW DER RULE OF DER RIVER?"

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*Bargeman.* "WHICH? THE RHINE?"]

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THE NEW COURTiership.

*(With profound acknowledgment to the writer of the article on "Heroine Worship" in "The Times" of June 24th.)*

While thrones and dynasties have rocked or fallen in the great world upheaval of the last six years, there remains one form of monarchy which has proved impervious to all the shocks of circumstance—the monarchy of genius. If proof be demanded of this assertion we need only point to the wonderful manifestations of loyalty evoked in the last week by the advent of the Queen of the Film World and her admirable consort. The adoration of MARY PICKFORD has been compared with that of MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS, and not without some show of reason, for the appeal which her acting, makes is always to the sense of chivalry which, in however sentimental a form, is characteristic of our race.

But the noble adulation which the latest of our royal visitors inspires is deeper and more universal than that prompted by the charm and the misfortunes of her namesake. MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS, as the evidence of contemporary portraits conclusively establishes, was not conspicuous for her personal beauty. In the "Queen business" she was a failure, and her prestige is largely if not entirely posthumous. Her character has been impugned by historians; even her most faithful champions have not pronounced her impeccable.

Centuries were necessary to raise MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS to her somewhat insecure pinnacle of devotion; by the alchemy of a machine centuries have been shortened to days and nights in the meteoric career of Miss PICKFORD. Yet merit has joined fortune in high cabal. Handicapped by a somewhat uneuphonious patronymic, MARY PICKFORD has established her rule without recourse to any of the disputable methods adopted by her predecessor. At home in all the "palaces" of both hemispheres, she owes her triumphs to the triple endowment of genius, loveliness and gentleness. Moreover, in the highest sense she is truly an ambassadress of our race, for the kiss which she so graciously bestowed on *Mlle.* SUZANNE LENGLEN at Wimbledon on Wednesday last has probably done even more to heal the wounds inflicted on our gallant Allies by the disastrous policy of Mr. LLOYD GEORGE than the heroic efforts of *The Times* to maintain the Entente in its integrity.

The parallels and contrasts with MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS need not be further laboured. But far too little stress has been laid on the rare felicity of a union which links the name of Mary with that of Douglas. The annals of British chivalry contain no more romantic or splendid entries than those associated with Sir JAMES DOUGLAS,

alternately styled the “Good” and the “Black,” hero of seventy battles and the victor in fifty-seven, peerless as a raider, who crowned a glorious career by his mission to Palestine with the embalmed heart of BRUCE, and his death in action against the Moors. His illustrious namesake is now conducting a “raid” on our shores of a purely educational and humanitarian nature, and our welcome, while it expresses the rare and momentous influence of the film, is no mere gratitude for pleasure afforded; it is rather the recognition of a human touch tending to make the whole English-speaking world kin.

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The visit is not unattended by risks, for the ardour of enthusiasm imposes a corresponding strain on the endurance of this august and inimitable pair. But there can be no doubt as to the absolute sincerity and spontaneity of these marvellous demonstrations of loyal affection. We can only hope that, to borrow the noble phrase of the Roman Senate in their address to NERO on the death of AGRIPPINA, Queen PICKFORD the First may “endure her felicity with fortitude.” Conspicuous grandeur has its penalties as well as its privileges, but the chivalric instinct is still alive in our midst; and all of us who are not perverted or debased by the malign “wizardry” of the PRIME MINISTER will spring to the defence of MARY “the Sweetheart of the World,” and DOUGLAS “tender and true,” in their hours of peril. In that high emprise the gentlemen of the world, however humble, stand, as of old time, side by side and shoulder to shoulder.

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[Illustration: THE IRRESISTIBLE MEETS THE IMMOVABLE.

SCENE: *Exclusive West-End Square, with passing procession of “Reds.”*

*The Flag-bearer.* “COMRADE, THE REVOLUTION IS ‘ERE!”

*The Complete Butler.* “AR! WILL YOU KINDLY DELIVER IT AT THE HAREA HENTRANCE?”]

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THE BATTLE OF THE MOTHERS.

We were sitting in the smoking-room when the Venerable Archdeacon entered. He had been so long absent that we asked him the reason.

Had he been ill?

Ill? Not he. He never was better in his life. He had merely been on a motor tour with his mother.

“Do you mean to say,” someone inquired—an equally elderly member—almost with anger, certainly with a kind of outraged surprise, “that you have a mother still living?”

“Of course I have,” said the Man of God. “My mother is not only living but is in the pink of condition.”

“And how old is she?” the questioner continued.

“She is ninety-one,” said the Archdeacon proudly.

Most of us looked at him with wonder and respect—even a touch of awe.

“And still motoring!” I commented.

“She delights in motoring.”

“Well,” said the angry man, “you needn’t be so conceited about it. You are not the only person with an aged mother. I have a mother too.”

We switched round to this new centre of surprise. It was more incredible that this man should have a mother even than the Archdeacon. No one had ever suspected him of anything so extreme, for he had a long white beard and hobbled with a stick.

“And how old may your mother be?” the Archdeacon inquired.

“My mother is ninety-two.”

“And is she well and hearty?”

“My mother,” he replied, “is in rude health—or, as you would say, full of beans.”

The Archdeacon made a deprecatory movement, repudiating the metaphor.

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"She not only motors," the layman pursued, "but she can walk. Can your mother walk?"

"I am sorry to say," said the Archdeacon, "that my mother has to be helped a good deal."

"Ha!" said the layman.

"But," the Archdeacon continued, "she has all her other faculties. Can your mother still read?"

"My mother is a most accomplished and assiduous knitter," said the bearded man.

"No doubt, no doubt," the Archdeacon agreed; "but my question was, Can she still read?"

"With glasses—yes," said the other.

"Ha!" exclaimed the Archdeacon, "I thought so. Now my dear mother can still read the smallest print without glasses."

We murmured our approval.

"And more," the Archdeacon went on, "she can thread her own needle."

We approved again.

"That's all very well," said the other, "but sight is not everything. Can your mother hear?"

"She can hear all that I say to her," replied the Archdeacon.

"Ah! but you probably raise your voice, and she is accustomed to it. Could she hear a stranger? Could she hear me?"

Remembering the tone of some of his after-lunch conversations I suggested that perhaps it would be well if on occasions she could not. He glowered down such frivolousness and proceeded with his cross-examination. "Are you trying to assure us that your mother is not in the least bit deaf?"

"Well," the Archdeacon conceded, "I could not go so far as to say that her hearing is still perfect."

The layman smiled his satisfaction. "In other words," he said, "she uses a trumpet?"

The Archdeacon was silent.

"She uses a trumpet, Sir? Admit it."

“Now and then,” said the Archdeacon, “my dear mother has recourse to that aid.”

“I knew it!” exclaimed the other. “My mother can hear every word. She goes to the theatre too. Now your mother would have to go to the cinema if she wished to be entertained.”

“My mother,” said the Archdeacon, “would not be interested in the cinema” (he pronounced it ki-neema); “her mind is of a more serious turn.”

“My mother is young enough to be interested in anything,” said the other. “And there is not one of her thirty-eight grandchildren of whose progress she is not kept closely informed.”

He leaned back with a gesture of triumph.

“How many grandchildren did you say?” the Archdeacon inquired. “I didn’t quite catch.”

“Thirty-eight,” the other man replied.

Across the cleric’s ascetic features a happy smile slowly and conqueringly spread. “My mother,” he said, “has fifty-two grandchildren. And now,” he turned to me, “which of us would you say has won this entertaining contest?”

“I should not like to decide,” I said. “I am—fortunately perhaps for your mothers—no Solomon. My verdict is that both of you are wonderfully lucky men.”

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E.V.L.

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[Illustration: *Valetudinarian*. "I'VE GOT CIRRHOSIS OF THE LIVER, AN INCIPIENT CARBUNCLE ON MY NECK, INFLAMMATION OF THE DUODENUM, SEPTIC SORE THROAT AND GENERAL PROSTRATION."

*Sympathetic Friend*. "WELL, AND HOW ARE YOU?"]

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A KNOWING OLD BIRD.

"Grey African Parrot ... every question fully answered; L10 or offers."  
—*Weekly Paper*.

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OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

We have had to wait four years for the concluding volumes of *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli* (MURRAY), but, as the engaged couple said of the tunnel, "it was worth it," for in the interval Mr. BUCKLE has been able to enrich his work with a wealth of new material. This includes DISRAELI'S correspondence with QUEEN VICTORIA during his two Premierships, and the still more remarkable letters that he wrote to the two favoured sisters, ANNE, Lady CHESTERFIELD, and SELINA, Lady BRADFORD, during the last eight years of his life. To one or other of them he wrote almost every day, and from the sixteen hundred letters that have been preserved Mr. BUCKLE has selected with happy discretion a multitude of passages which throw a vivid light upon the political events of the time and upon DISRAELI'S own character. Whereas the first four volumes of the biography might be likened to a good sound Burgundy, thanks to these letters the last two sparkle and stimulate like a vintage champagne. As we read them we seem to be present at the scenes described, to overhear the discussions at the Cabinet, to catch a glimpse of the actors *en deshabille*. Mr. BUCKLE says that "Disraeli, from first to last, regarded his life as a brightly tinted romance, with himself as hero." In one of his letters to Lady BRADFORD he says, "I live for Power and the Affections." A poseur, no doubt, he was, but not a charlatan. His industry was amazing and his insight almost uncanny. "I know not why Japan should not become the Sardinia of the Mongolian East," he writes in 1875. To the political student these Volumes will be almost as fruitful a field as BURKE; for myself, I have found them more fascinating than any novel.

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It seems a great pity that Mr. KIPLING'S *Letters of Travel* (MACMILLAN) contains nothing later than 1913. It would have been particularly interesting to see how far the events of the great tragedy might have modified or aggravated his scorn against those who do not see eye to eye with him. In the pre-war KIPLING, as we have him here, "Labour" is always the enemy, "Democracy" the hypocritical cant of cranks and slackers. What do they know of England who only KIPLING know? Well, they know one side of it, and a fine side. The first sheaf of letters—"From Tideway to Tideway

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(1892)"—describes a tour through America and Canada, with a rather too obvious bias against the habits and institutions of the former, but with so eloquent a presentation of the dream and fact of imperial pioneering service that it might draw even from a Little Englander, "Almost thou persuadest me!" "Letters to the Family" deals with the Canada of 1907, a very different entity from the Canada of to-day after the later Imperial Conferences and five years' trial of war, but none the less interesting to hear about. A voyage in 1913, undertaken "for no other reason but to discover the sun," is the begetter of the third group, "Egypt and the Egyptians," the first letter of which will not, I imagine, be reprinted and framed by the P. and O. Brilliant word-pictures of things seen, thumbnail sketches of odd characters, clever records of remembered speech, intelligent comment from a well-defined point of view—these you will have expected, and will get.

\* \* \* \* \*

Lady DOROTHY MILLS, who has already made some success as a holder of the mirror up to a certain section of ultra-smart society, continues this benevolent work in her new novel, *The Laughter of Fools* (DUCKWORTH). It is a clever tale, almost horribly well told, about the war-time behaviour of the rottenest idle-rich element, in the disorganised and hectic London of 1917-18. Perhaps the observation is superficial; but, just so far as it pretends to go, Lady DOROTHY'S method does undoubtedly get home. Her heroine, *Louise*, is a detestable little egoist, whose vanity and entire lack of *moral* render her an easy victim to the vampire crowd into which she drifts. The "sensation" scenes, night club orgies, dope parties and the like will probably bring the book a boom of curiosity; but there are not wanting signs, in the author's easy unforced method, that with a larger theme she may one day write a considerably bigger book. *The Laughter of Fools*, one may say, ends tragically; *Louise*, after exhausting all her other activities, being left about to join a nursing expedition to Northern Russia. Which, judging by previous revelations of her general incompetence, is where the tragedy comes in—for the prospective patients. A moral rather carefully unmoralised is how I should sum up an unpleasant but shrewdly written tale.

\* \* \* \* \*

To *The Diary of a U-Boat Commander* (HUTCHINSON) "ETIENNE" adds an introduction and some explanatory notes. In one of these notes we are told that the Diary was left in a locker when the Commander handed over his boat to the British. We are all at liberty to form any opinion we like on the use made of this Diary and I am not going to reveal mine. For, after all, it is the book itself—however produced—that matters, and even those of us who are getting a little shy of literature connected with the War will find something original and intriguing

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in this Diary. With what seems to me unnecessary frankness the publisher refers to the Commander's "incredible exploits and adventures on the high seas." For my own part my powers of belief in regard to the War are almost unlimited, and the only thing that really staggers me here is the mentality of the diarist. From the record of his purely private life, which is also exposed in these pages, I gather that he was as unfortunate in love as in war; but he seems to have loved with a whole-hearted passion that goes far to redeem him. I must add a word of praise for Mr. FRANK MASON'S illustrations, which contributed generously to my entertainment.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: *Alexander (bored)*. "LIFE IS VERY DULL, MY DEAR ROX. NO MORE WORLDS TO—"

*Roxana*. "OH, NONSENSE, ALEC! THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING TO DO. I WISH YOU'D GO INTO THE KITCHEN AND DISCHARGE THAT CAPPADOCIAN COOK. SHE DRINKS."]

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: Epilogue]

AN OPEN LETTER TO FRANCE.

Mr. Punch had kissed the lady's hand and she had smiled upon him very graciously, for they were old friends.

"I have brought you a letter from myself," he said.

"Shall I read it while you wait?" said Madame la France.

"Please, no. I never read my contributors' compositions in their presence. It is embarrassing to both sides. And I want you to take your time over this one, and consider carefully whether it is suitable for publication in your Press. I have enclosed a stamped and addressed envelope, to be utilized in the event of your deciding to return my communication with regrets. In any case I propose to publish it in my own paper, *The London Charivari*."

[*Here begins the letter:—*

"NEAREST AND DEAREST OF ALLIES.—You and I (I speak for my country, though I have not been asked to do so) have gone through so much together that it would be an infinite pity if any misunderstanding were suffered to cloud our friendship for want of a

little candour on my part. No *Entente* can retain its cordiality without mutual candour; and hitherto the reticence has been all on our side.

“Not when your splendid courage and your noble sacrifices gave us a theme; then we were always frankly loud in our admiration; but when we reflected upon what I may venture to call your faults and failings. Whatever we may have thought about them during all those terrible years, you will find in our public statements no note of criticism and not a single word that did not breathe a true loyalty. You too were generous in your praise of us when we won battles; and at the end, with your own FOCH for witness, you were quick to recognise what part we played in those great Autumn days that brought the crowning victory. But it almost looks as if your memory of our brotherhood in arms were beginning to fail; as if we, who were then hailed as your ‘glorious Ally,’ were about to resume our old name—it has already been revived in some quarters—of ‘Perfide Albion.’

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“Oh, I know that the best of France is loyal to us; that her true chivalry understands. But what of your public that is all ear for the so-called *Echo de Paris*, with its constant incitement to jealousy and suspicion of England? What of your second-rate Press and its pin-pricking policy, connived at, if not actually encouraged, by your Government?

“Of course I recognise that you never really liked the idea of all those British soldiers making themselves at home in your country, though they did it as nicely as it could be done, and made hosts of friends in the process. I can believe that we should not have been too well pleased at having a like number of French troops established between Dover and London. I don’t say we should have charged you rent for every yard of their trenches or claimed heavy damages for any injury they might have done to our roads in the course of defending the Metropolis from our common enemy. But we certainly should not have been depressed when we found that they needn’t stay any longer. Still I hope we should have registered on the tablets of our hearts a permanent record indicating that we appreciated their friendliness in coming to our support.

“But I am told that the secret of the present attitude of our French critics is that they cannot forgive us for having used the soil of France in order to defend our own. Is this quite fair or even decent? Let me refresh their memory of the motive that brought us into this War. The true motive was not to be found in the duty imposed upon us by Germany’s breach of the Belgian Treaty, though that in itself furnished us with an unanswerable reason. The true motive was our desire to help you. We had nothing in those days to fear for ourselves. We knew that our Fleet was strong enough to protect our own shores. We had not yet appreciated the submarine menace; we did not recognise what your loss of the Channel ports might mean for us. We entered the War because we could not look on and see you overwhelmed.

“You complain, again, that, in contrast to yourselves, we have got all we wanted out of the War. As a fact we wanted nothing; but let that pass. You point to the destruction of the German Fleet as if it were a private gain for us and us alone, and not the removal of a danger to the whole world. And what of the German armies—now in process of reduction to a mere police force? Did you derive no advantage from the overthrow of a system which was always a greater menace to you than the German Fleet ever was to us? And, though we did not pretend to be a military nation, had we not some little share in that achievement?

“And what of your *revanche*? How do the German Colonies, which we have freed and now hold in trust—how do these compare with your solid recovery of Alsace-Lorraine? No, you have not come badly out of Armageddon.

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“Oh, you have suffered, that we know; you have suffered even more than we, who at least were spared the ravaging of our lands. And never for a moment do we forget this. But you too must not forget that where the soil of France suffered most there thickest lie our English dead, who fought for England’s freedom, yes, but for your freedom too. And it is we who stand by you still, pledged to be once more at your side if the same peril ever come again; though America, for whom nothing was once too good, should fail you in your need.

“There, I have said what I wanted to say; what your best friends here have been thinking this many a day. For your best friends are not, as you might imagine, to be found in a certain section of our Press who for their own political or private ends are prepared to encourage all your suspicions if so they may injure the good name of our statesmen who meet you in council for the common cause. Your best friends are the men who deplore those suspicions; who beg you, as I do here, to get them swept away as being unworthy of a great nation and a great alliance.

“For this end, Believe me, dear Madame, to be at your service as always,

“PUNCH.”

*Here ends the letter.]*

“And now, dear lady,” said Mr. Punch, “let me say that, if there is anything in this letter which seems—but only on the surface—to be inconsistent with my profound devotion to your person, it is the first word of the kind that I have put on paper since our friendship began. All through the War and the hardly less trying times of Peace that have followed it I have not once swerved from my loyalty to you. Accept, I beg of you, the renewed assurance of my affection the most sincere, and, for token, this latest of a series in which you will find many proofs of the love I bear you—my

ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-EIGHTH VOLUME.”

[Illustration]

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[Illustration: FINIS]