

# **Punch, or the London Charivari, Vol. 159, July 21, 1920 eBook**

## **Punch, or the London Charivari, Vol. 159, July 21, 1920**

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# Page 1

## Title: **Punch, or the London Charivari, Vol. 159, July 21, 1920**

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## **PUNCH OR THE LONDON CHARIVARIA.**

*Vol.* 159.

## **JULY 21, 1920**

### **CHARIVARIA.**

To judge by the Spa Conference it looks as if we might be going to have a peace to end peace.

\*\*\*

It will soon be necessary for the Government to arrange an old-age pension scheme for Peace Conference delegates.

\*\*\*

It is difficult to know whom or what to blame for the exceptionally wet weather we have been having, says an evening paper. Pending a denial from Mr. Lloyd George, *The Times* has its own opinion as to who is at the bottom of it.

\*\*\*



Mr. Stanton pointed out in the House of Commons that, unless increased salaries are given to Members, there will be a strike. Fears are entertained, however, that a settlement will be reached.

\*\*\*

"The Derry shirt-cutters," says a news item, "have decided to continue to strike." The Derry throat-cutters, on the other hand, have postponed striking to a more favourable opportunity.

\*\*\*

The way to bring down the price of home-killed meat, the Ministry of Food announces officially, is for the public not to buy it. You can't have your cheap food and eat it.

\*\*\*

Harborough Rocks, one of the few Druid Circles in the kingdom, has been sold. Heading-for-the-Rocks, the famous Druid Circle at Westminster, has also been sold on several occasions by the Chief Wizard.

\*\*\*

A gossip writer states that he saw a man carrying two artificial legs while travelling in a Tube train. There is nothing like being prepared for all emergencies while travelling.

\*\*\*

"The ex-Kaiser," says an American journal, "makes his own clothes to pass the time away." This is better than his old hobby of making wars to pass other people's time away.

\*\*\*

"Danger of infection from Treasury notes," says *The Weekly Dispatch*, "has been exaggerated." Whenever we see a germ on one of our notes we pat it on the back and tell it to lie down.

\*\*\*

A West Riding paper states that a postman picked up a pound Treasury note last week. It is said that he intends to have it valued by an expert.

\*\*\*

An engineer suggests that all roads might be made of rubber. For pedestrians who are knocked down by motor-cars the resilience of this material would be a great boon.

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\*\*\*

According to *The Evening News* a bishop was seen the other day passing the House of Commons smoking a briar pipe. We can only suppose that he did not recognise the House of Commons.

\*\*\*

"We can find work for everybody and everything," says a Chicago journal. But what about corkscrews?

\*\*\*

How strong is the force of habit was illustrated at Liverpool Docks the other day when two Americans, on reaching our shores, immediately fainted, and only recovered when it was explained that spirits were not sold here solely for medical purposes.

\*\*\*

"Watches are often affected by electrical storms such as we have experienced of late," states a science journal. Only yesterday we heard of a plumber and his mate who arrived at a job simultaneously.

\*\*\*

We sympathise with the unfortunate housewife who cannot obtain a servant because her reference is considered unsatisfactory. It appears she was only six weeks with her last maid.

\*\*\*

A pedestrian knocked down by a taxi in Oxford Street last Tuesday managed to regain his feet only to be again bowled over by a motor-bus. Luckily, however, noticing a third vehicle standing by to complete the job, the unfortunate fellow had the presence of mind to remain on the ground.

\*\*\*

According to a local paper cat-skins are worth about 51/2\_d.\_ each. Of course it must be plainly understood that the accuracy of this estimate is not admitted by the cats themselves.

\*\*\*



“Too much room is taken up by motor-vehicles when turning corners,” declares a weekly journal. This is a most unfair charge against those self-respecting motorists who negotiate all corners on the two inside wheels only.

\*\*\*

An American named J. Thomas Looney has written a book to prove that Shakspeare was really the Earl of Oxford. We cannot help thinking that Shakspeare, who went out of his way to prove that *Ophelia* was one of the original Looneys, has brought this on himself.

\*\*\*

Fashionable Parisians, says a correspondent, have decided that the correct thing this year is to be invited to Scotland for July. It may be correct, but it won't be an easy matter if we know our Scotland.

\*\*\*

American women-bathers with an inclination to embonpoint, it is stated, have taken to painting dimples on their knees. The report that a fashionable New Yorker who does not care for the water has created the necessary illusion by having a lobster painted on her toe is probably premature.

\*\*\*

A Bridgewater, Somerset, man of eighty (or octogeranium) has cancelled his wedding on the morning of the ceremony. A few more exhibitions of that kind and he will end up by being a bachelor.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: *First Indian Chief (of travelling show)*. “Brother Bellowing-Papoose, which is the way back to the circus?”



## Page 3

*Second Ditto.* "I know not. Let us ask this paleface."]

\* \* \* \* \*

There was a young lady of Beccles  
Whose face was infested with freckles,  
But nobody saw  
Any facial flaw,  
For she had an abundance of shekels.

\* \* \* \* \*

*The grasshopper.*

The Animal Kingdom may be divided into creatures which one can feed and creatures which one cannot feed. Animals which one cannot feed are nearly always unsatisfactory; and the grasshopper is no exception. Anyone who has tried feeding a grasshopper will agree with me.

Yet he is one of the most interesting of British creatures. *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* is as terse and simple as ever about him. "Grasshoppers," it says, "are specially remarkable for their saltatory powers, due to the great development of the hind legs; and also for their stridulation, which is not always an attribute of the male only." To translate, grasshoppers have a habit of hopping ("saltatory powers") and chirping ("stridulation").

It is commonly supposed that the grasshopper stridulates by rubbing his back legs together; but this is not the case. For one thing I have tried it myself and failed to make any kind of noise; and for another, after exhaustive observations, I have established the fact that, though he does move his back legs every time he stridulates, *his back legs do not touch each other*. Now it is a law of friction that you cannot have friction between two back legs if the back legs are not touching; in other words the grasshopper does not rub his back legs together to produce stridulation, or, to put it quite shortly, he does not rub his back legs together *at all*. I hope I have made this point quite clear. If not, a more detailed treatment will be found in the Paper which I read to the Royal Society in 1912.

Nevertheless I have always felt that there was something fishy about the grasshopper's back legs. I mean, *why should* he wave his back legs about when he is stridulating? My own theory is that it is purely due to the nervous excitement produced by the act of singing. The same phenomenon can be observed in many singers and public speakers. I do not think myself that we need seek for a more elaborate hypothesis. *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, of course, says that "the stridulation or song in the *Acridiidae* is produced by friction of the hind legs against portions of the wings or wing-covers," but

that is just the sort of statement which the scientific man thinks he can pass off on the public with impunity. Considering that stridulation takes place about every ten seconds, I calculate that the grasshopper must require a new set of wings every ten days. It would be more in keeping with the traditions of our public life if the scientific man simply confessed that he was baffled by this problem of the grasshopper's back legs. Yet, as I have said, if a public speaker may fidget with his back legs while he is stridulating, why not a public grasshopper? The more I see of science the more it strikes me as one large mystification.

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But I ought to have mentioned that “the *Acridiidae* have the auditory organs on the first abdominal segment,” while “the *Locustidae* have the auditory organ on the *tibia* of the first leg.” In other words one kind of grasshopper hears with its stomach and the other kind listens with its leg. When a scientific man has committed himself to that kind of statement he would hardly have qualms about a little invention like the back-legs legend.

With this scientific preliminary we now come to the really intriguing part of our subject, and that is the place of the grasshopper in modern politics. And the first question is, Why did Mr. Lloyd George call Lord Northcliffe a grasshopper? I think it was in a speech about Russia that Mr. Lloyd George said, in terms, that Lord Northcliffe was a grasshopper. And he didn't leave it at that. He said that Lord Northcliffe was not only a grasshopper but a something something grasshopper, grasshopping here and grasshopping there—that sort of thing. There was nothing much in the accusation, of course, and Lord Northcliffe made no reply at the time; in fact, so far as I know, he has never publicly stated that he is *not* a grasshopper; for all we know it may be true. But I know a man whose wife's sister was in service at a place where there was a kitchen-maid whose young man was once a gardener at Lord Northcliffe's, and this man told me—the first man, I mean—that Lord Northcliffe took it to heart terribly. No grasshoppers were allowed in the garden from that day forth; no green that was at all like grasshopper-green was tolerated in the house, and the gardener used to come upon his Lordship muttering in the West Walk: “A grasshopper! He called me a grasshopper—me—a Grasshopper!” The gardener said that his Lordship used to finish up with, “I'll teach him;” but that is hardly the kind of thing a lord would say, and I don't believe it. In fact I don't believe any of it. It is a stupid story.

But this crisis we keep having with France owing to Mr. Lloyd George's infamous conduct does make the story interesting. The suggestion is, you see, that Lord Northcliffe lay low for a long time, till everybody had forgotten about the grasshopper and Mr. Lloyd George thought that Lord Northcliffe had forgotten about the grasshopper, and then, when Mr. Lloyd George was in a hole, Lord Northcliffe said, “Now we'll see if I am a grasshopper or not,” and started stridulating at high speed about Mr. Lloyd George. A crude suggestion. But if it were true it would mean that the grasshopper had become a figure of national and international importance. It is wonderful to think that we might stop being friends with France just because of a grasshopper; and, if Lord Northcliffe arranged for a new Government to come in, it might very well be called “The Grasshopper Government.” That would look fine in the margins of the history-books.

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Yes, it is all very “dramatic.” It is exciting to think of an English lord nursing a grievance about a grasshopper for months and months, seeing grasshoppers in every corner, dreaming about grasshoppers.... But we must not waste time over the fantastic tale. We have not yet solved our principal problem. Why did Mr. Lloyd George call him a grasshopper—a modest friendly little grasshopper? Did he mean to suggest that Lord Northcliffe hears with his stomach or stridulates with his back legs?

Why not an earwig, or a black-beetle, or a wood-louse, or a centipede? There are lots of insects more offensive than the grasshopper, and personally I would much rather be called a grasshopper than an earwig, which gets into people’s sponges and frightens them to death.

Perhaps he had been reading that nice passage in the Prophet Nahum: “Thy captains are as the great grasshoppers, which camp in the hedges in the cold day, but when the sun ariseth they flee away, and their place is not known where they are.” I do not know. But *The Encyclopaedia* has a suggestive sentence: “All grasshoppers are vegetable feeders and have an incomplete metamorphosis, so that *their destructive powers are continuous from the moment of emergence from the egg until death.*”

A.P.H.

\* \* \* \* \*

“The Mayor gave details showing how the Engineer’s salary had increased from L285 when he was appointed in 1811 to L600 at the present time.”—*Local Paper*.

And think what he must have saved the ratepayers by not taking a pension years ago.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Mr. —— thought that the whole Committee would wish to associate themselves with the Cemeteries Sub-Committee in their congratulations to Alderman —— upon his marriage.”—*Local Paper*.

We do not quite see why this particular sub-committee should have taken the initiative.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: EVIL COMMUNICATIONS.

The Telephone. “I’M GOING TO COST YOU MORE.”

Householder. “WHY?”

The Telephone. “OH, THE USUAL REASON—INCREASING INEFFICIENCY.”]

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: A QUESTION OF TASTE.

*The Wife*. “You Must Get Yourself a Straw ’at, George. A bowler don’t seem to go with a camembert.”]

\* \* \* \* \*

AT THE PLAY.

“French Leave.”

The Mandarins of the Theatre, who are no wiser than other mandarins (on the contrary), have been long repeating the formula that the public won’t look at a War play. If I’m not mistaken it will for many moons be looking at Captain Reginald Berkeley’s *French Leave*. He labels it a “light comedy.” That’s an understatement. It is, as a matter of fact, a very skilful, uproarious and plausible farce, almost

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too successful in that you can't hear one-third of the jokes because of the laughter at the other two-thirds (and a little because of the indistinct articulation of one or two of the players). Of course when I say "plausible" I don't exactly mean that any Brigade Headquarters was run on the sketchy lines of *General Archibald Root's*, or that the gallant author or anybody else who was in the beastly thing ever thought of the Great War as a devastating joke, but rather that if it be true, as has been rumoured, that not all generals were miracles of wisdom and forbearance; that British subalterns and privates sometimes put on the mask of humour; that *Venus* did wander, as the observatories punctually reported she did occasionally wander, into the orbit of *Mars*—then *French Leave* is a piece of artistically justifiable selection. Its absurdity seems the most natural thing in the world and its machinery (rare virtue!) does not creak.

*Rooty Tooty's* brigade then was resting—if in the circumstances you can call it resting. The rather stodgy Brigade-Major's leave being due, his wife has come over to Paris to wait for him. The leave being cancelled (and you could see how desperately overworked Headquarters was) there suddenly appears what purports to be a niece of the billet landlady's, a *Mdlle. Juliette*, of the Paris stage, with a distinctly coming-on disposition (and frock). The uxorious Brigade-Major, weakly consenting to the deception, suffers the tortures of the damned by reason of the gallantries of the precocious Staff-Captain and the old-enough-to-know-better Brigadier. There is marching and counter-marching of detached units in the small hours; arrival of the Brigade Interpreter with Intelligence's reports; sorrowful conviction in the Brigadier's mind that *Juliette* is *Olga*—*Olga Thingummy*, the famous German spy. Confusions; explosions; solutions.

That's a dull account of a bright matter. The players were not, with the exception of Miss Renee Kelly, of the star class and (I don't necessarily say therefore) were almost uniformly admirable. I suppose the honours must go to Mr. M.R. Morand's excellently studied *Brigadier*—the most laughter-compelling performance I have seen on the "legitimate" for some years. But the *Mess Corporal* (Mr. Charles Groves), the *Staff-Captain* (Mr. Henry Kendall), the *Brigade-Major* (Mr. Hylton Allen), the *Interpreter* (Mr. George de Warfaz) and the *Mess Waiter* (Mr. Arthur Riscoe)—all deserve mention in despatches. As for the "business" it was positively inspired at times, as when the *Mess Corporal* retrieved the red-hat (which the passionate *Brigade-Major* had kicked in his jealous fury) with an address which would have done credit to the admirable Grock. Miss Renee Kelly had her pretty and effective moments, but somebody should ask her (no doubt in vain) to be less tearful in the tearful and just a little less bright in the bright parts—a little less fidgetty and fidgeting and out of key, in fact.

## Page 7

I should say in general that author and producer (Mr. Eille Norwood) would do well to watch the serious passages—always the danger-points in farce. As nobody on our side of the footlights takes these seriously the folk on the other side must substantially dilute the seriousness. The tragically uttered, “O God!” at the end of the Second Act ruined an otherwise excellent curtain. But I must not end on a note of censure. I was much too thoroughly entertained for that. Here’s a quite first-rate piece of fooling, with dialogue of humorous rather than smart sayings. And humour’s a much rarer and less cheap a gift than smartness.

T.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: *First Newly-Rich*. “It’s a great secret, but I must tell you. My husband has been offered a peerage.”]

*Second ditto*. “Really! That’s rather interesting. We thought of having one, but they’re so expensive and we are economising just now.”]

\* \* \* \* \*

Our Considerate Scribes.

“Presumptuous is a hard word that I would not readily apply to any man.”—*Daily Paper*.

\* \* \* \* \*

“PASSIVE PESSIMISM.

BERLIN’S ATTITUDE TO THE SPAR CONDITIONS.”

*Sunday Paper*.

But, after all, Berlin does not seem to have taken them lying down.

\* \* \* \* \*

“At the start he made most of his runs by clever strokes on the leg side, but, once settled down, he drove with fin power.”  
*Sunday Paper*.

Cricketers need to be amphibious in these days.

\* \* \* \* \*



SONGS OF AN OVALITE.

There was a young man who said, "Hobbs  
Should never be tempted with lobs;  
He would knock them about  
Till the bowlers gave out  
And watered the pitch with their sobs."

There is no one so dreadful as Fender  
For batmen whose bodies are tender;  
He gets on their nerves  
With his murderous swerves  
That insist upon death or surrender.

When people try googlies on Sandham,  
You can see he will soon understand 'em;  
With a laugh at their slows  
He will murmur, "Here goes,"  
And over the railings will land 'em.

I am always attracted by Harrison  
When arrayed in his batting caparison;  
If others look worried  
He never gets flurried,  
But quite unconcernedly carries on.

All classes of bowlers have stuck at  
Their efforts to dislocate Ducat;  
Their wiliest tricks  
He despatches for six,  
Which is what they decidedly buck at.

You should never be down in the dumps  
When Strudwick is guarding the stumps;  
His opponents depart  
One by one at the start,  
But later in twos or in *clumps*.



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"Like father like son," says the fable,  
And is justified clearly in Abel;  
    No bowling he fears  
    And his surname appears  
An extremely appropriate label.

If I were tremendously rich  
I would buy a cathedral in which  
    I would build me a shrine  
    Of a noble design  
And worship a statue of Hitch.

\* \* \* \* \*

Our Sleuths Again.

"His wrists were tied together with a piece of webbing, two bricks were in his coat pockets, and, most remarkable of all, the soles of his boots were found to be nailed to his toes.... The police theory is that somebody 'owed the dead man a grudge.'"—*Provincial Paper*.

\* \* \* \* \*

AUTHORSHIP FOR ALL.

[Being specimens of the work of Mr. Punch's newly-established Literary Ghost Bureau, which supplies appropriate Press contributions on any subject and over any signature.]

III.—Are we going to the Dogs?

*By Vice-Admiral (Retd.) Sir Boniface Bludger, K.C.B.*

I was standing the other day at the window of the only Club in London where they understand (or used to understand) what devilled kidneys really are, musing in post-prandial gloom on the vanished glories of this England of ours. "*Ichabod!*" I cried aloud to the unheeding stream of Piccadilly wayfarers; and echo answered, "*Bod.*"

What is wrong with us? Or what is wrong with me? Are we actually going to the dogs, or is it merely that the Club kidneys are going to the devil? Jeremiah or *Mrs. Gummidge*—which am I? Let the facts attest and let posterity decide; thank Heaven I shall not be there to hear the verdict.

After our half-baked victory over the Hun the popular watchword was "Reconstruction." We have now enjoyed a year and more of this "building-up" process, and the net result

is that houses for those that lack them are as scarce as iced soda-fountains in the Sahara.

In this work of restoration, we were told, our women voters and legislators would play a leading part. What part are they in truth playing? Their main object apparently is still further to embitter the Drink question, although if they would only put a little more bitter into our national beverage they might help to lubricate matters. Is it not a significant fact that the slackness evidenced in every phase of industry manifests itself at a time when it becomes more and more difficult to get a decent drink? In this respect our progress is not so much to the dogs as to the cats, who sneak along on the padded paws of Prohibition.

The crazy conditions to be observed in the industrial world are well matched by the state of anarchy that prevails in the sphere of the arts. Take music, for example. I do not lay claim to more than a nodding acquaintance with Euterpe, and at a classical concert, I am afraid, the nodding character of the relation becomes especially marked. To me the sweetest music in the world is the roar of a fifteen-inch gun on a day when the visibility is good and plentiful. But I do know enough to be able to say that the wild asses who with their jazz-bands "stamp o'er our heads and will not let us sleep" (slightly to amend my old friend FitzGerald) are nothing less than musical Trotskys.

## Page 9

Music was once regarded as the staple nourishment of the tender passion, and in my younger days the haunting strains of “The Blue Danube” assisted many a budding love-affair to blossom. But these non-stop stridencies of the modern ballroom, even if they left a man with breath enough to propose, would effectually prevent the girl from catching the drift of the avowal. You can’t roar, “Will you be mine?” into a maiden’s ear as if you were conversing from the quarterdeck, and if you did she’d only think you were ecstatically emulating the coloured gentleman in the orchestra with the implements of torture and the misguided voice.

I will pass over in the silence of despair such other symptoms of national decadence as zigzag painting, whirlpool poetry, cinema star-gazing and the impossibility of procuring a self-respecting Stilton (which assuredly is not “living at this hour”). Nor can I trust myself to speak of the spirit of Bolshevism that seems to animate our so-called Labour Party, though I comfort myself with the conviction that this doctrine will not wash, any more than will its authors.

I will conclude these few reflections by drawing attention to the manners of the modern girl, who is so busily engaged in kicking over the traces that formerly kept her in her proper place. Nowadays flappers who should still be in the schoolroom consider themselves called upon to teach their grandmothers how to conduct their lives; and, to complete the chaos, the grandmothers are eagerly lapping it up, and in the matter of dress and deportment are even bettering the instruction. *Si vieillesse savait!*

Oh for a prophet’s tongue to lash our visionless leaders into a realisation of the rocks on to which we are drifting! We need the scourge of a Savonarola, but all we get is the boom of a Bottomley.

“Gone are our country’s glories.  
*O tempora, O mores!*”

\* \* \* \* \*

ALL SORTS.

It takes all sorts to make the world, an’ the same to make a crew;  
It takes the good an’ middlin’ an’ the rotten bad uns too;  
The same’s there are on land (says Bill) you’ll find ’em all at sea—  
The freaks an’ fads an’ crooks an’ cads an’ ornery chaps like me.

It takes a man for all the jobs—the skippers and the mates,  
A chap to give the orders an’ a chap to chip the plates;  
It takes the brass-bound ‘prentices—an’ ruddy plagues they be—  
An’ chaps as shirk an’ chaps as work—just ornery chaps like me.

It takes the stiffs an' deadbeats an' the decent shell-backs too,  
The chaps as always pull their weight an' them as never do;  
The sort the Lord 'as made 'em knows what bloomin' use they be,  
An' crazy folks an' musical blokes an' ornery chaps like me.

It takes a deal o' fancy breeds—the Dagoes an' the Dutch,  
The Lascars an' calashees an' the seedy boys an' such;  
It takes the greasers an' the Chinks, the Jap and Portugee,  
The blacks an' yellers an' half-bred fellers and ornery folk like me.

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It takes all sorts to make the world an' the same to make a crew,  
It takes more kinds o' people than there's creeters in the Zoo;  
You meet 'em all ashore (says Bill) an' you find 'em all at sea—  
But do me proud if most o' the crowd ain't ornery chaps like me!  
C.F.S.

\* \* \* \* \*

“—UNITED FREE CHURCH.

Evening—Monthly Sermon for Young Men and Women.

'Love, Courtship, and Marriage.'

Anthem—'And it shall come to pass.'”

*Scotch Paper.*

The organist seems to be a sympathetic soul.

\* \* \* \* \*

“The fees for Burial will in the future be doubled, in order to meet the increased cost of present-day living.”—*Parish Magazine.*

At this rate we shall soon be unable to afford either to live or to die, and must try a state of suspended animation.

\* \* \* \* \*

“As Lady — was stepping aboard she dropped a waterproof satchel containing a pair of the Queen's shoes, and Their Majesties laughed heartily at her Ladyship's discomfiture. One of the sailors adroitly recovered the satchel with the aid of a boot-hook.” *Scotch Paper.*

The handy-man! Prepared for all eventualities.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE HOUSE THAT JACK WANTS BUILT.

[Illustration: This is the house that Jack wants built.]

[Illustration: This is the landowner who (if the talk of a railway being made over this bit of land doesn't come to anything, and the corporation cannot, after all, be induced to

buy it as a recreation-ground, and no one makes a better offer) is willing to sell the ground to carry the house that Jack wants built.]

[Illustration: This is the architect and surveyor who (as soon as he has finished his designs for the new Town Hall, the proposed County Hospital, the Cathedral Extension, the Borough power station and the drinking-fountain, and provided that no more important commission turns up) is going to design the house to go on the ground of the landowner who ...]

[Illustration: This is the local authority who (if he can obtain details of the several requirements of the County Council, Parish Council, Central Housing Authority, Ministry Of Health, Board Of Agriculture, Ministry of Transport, Congested Districts Board, and any other departments interested, either now in existence or contemplated for the future) is going to inspect, revise, amend, and positively finally approve the designs of the architect and surveyor who ...]

[Illustration: This is the building contractor who (provided that pressure of work allows him, and that he can get the materials, which is doubtful, and the men, which is hardly probable, and the price, which is practically out of the question) is going to carry out the designs, as finally approved by the local authority who ...]

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[Illustration: This is the railway official who (on the supposition that the congestion on the line will possibly be easier later, and that the supply of goods wagons is very considerably augmented, and that new loops and sidings not yet suggested will be constructed to relieve the pressure, and that a reorganisation of the railway staff does not move him elsewhere, as will almost certainly happen) has promised to do his best to expedite the transport of the necessary materials to the building contractor who ...]

[Illustration: This is the merchant who (if prices are left entirely to his discretion and time is of no importance, and if he finds that, after all, it is to his advantage to sell in this country rather than to export, and if he doesn't retire in the meantime, as he is thinking of doing) has consented to try to send materials through the medium of the railway official who ...]

[Illustration: These are the representatives of the building trades who (if all matters in dispute are satisfactorily settled by that time, and provided that they can all get their own houses sited, designed, passed, contracted for, supplied and built first) are going to erect the materials provided by the merchant who ...]

[Illustration: And this? This, incidentally, is Jack.]

\* \* \* \* \*

### CONVERTED CASTLES.

Rural England, I learn, is rapidly changing hands—not for the first time, by the way, but we cannot go into that just now. Excellent treatises on feudal tenure, wapentake, the dissolution of the monasteries and the enclosure of common lands may be picked up dirt cheap at any second-hand bookshop in the Charing Cross Road with the words “Presentation Copy” erased from the flyleaf by a special and ingenious process. What is happening now is that farmers are buying up the big estates in pieces, and Norman piles or Elizabethan manors are beginning to be too expensive to maintain, what with coal and the rise in the minimum wage of vassals and one thing and another.

“The stately homes of England  
How beautiful they stood  
Before their recent owners  
Relinquished them for good,”

as the poet justly observes. And even if there is enough money to keep up the castle without the broad acres (though as a matter of fact an acre is not any broader than it is long) there is no fun in having a castle at all when the deer park has been divided into allotments and the Dutch garden is under swedes.

The question is then what is going to happen to Montmorency (pronounced “Mumsie”) Castle, and The Towers at Barley Melling?



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In London the difficulty of dealing with huge houses has been solved in a very subtle manner by turning them into a couple of maisonettes apiece, so that under the portico of what used to be 105 Myrtle Crescent you discover two perfectly good doors, marked 105a and 105b. Into the letter-box of the door marked 105a the postman invariably puts the letters intended for 105b, and *vice versa*, but, as these are always letters addressed to the last tenant but two, it does not really very much matter. Both are desirable maisonettes, though the tenants of 105a have the sole enjoyment of the lincrusta dadoes in the original dining-room. In some cases there are as many as three maisonettes, and the notice on the area gate says, "105c. *Mrs. Orlando Smith*," where it used to say simply "No bottles." I never really understood that notice myself, for whenever I am walking along with an empty bottle that I want to get rid of I do not throw it down into an area, where it would make a most horrible crash, but softly into the thick shrubs of the Crescent Gardens.

This brings me back to the country again.

There will not be enough of the new rich to purchase a castellated mansion apiece, partly because of the Excess Profits Duty, which is crippling this kind of enterprise, and partly because so many baronial seats, romantic and picturesque in their way, are terribly under-garaged. On the other hand you cannot expect a farmer who happens to be buying the fields round Badgery Mortimer to have any use for a dungeon keep or the haunted picture-gallery in the west wing. No, there is only one thing to do and that is to break these places up into a number of self-contained homes.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: MODERN AND ANCIENT.

*Young Cricketer*. "Yes, I cocked one off the splice in the gully and the blighter gathered it."

*Father*. "Yes, but how did you get out? Were you caught, stumped or bowled, or what?"]

\* \* \* \* \*

## HISTORIC FLATS TO LET

is the house-agents' advertisement which I seem to see, and what you will actually find will be a sort of concentrated hamlet where modern improvements are mixed with ancient grandeur and the white-haired seneschal is kept on to operate the electric lift.

Let us take, for instance, the case of Soping Hall. There will be none of that untidy straggling arrangement about it which detracts so largely from the beauty of Soping

Barnet, Little Soping and Soping Monachorum. In Soping Hall the billiard-room will be the village club, the armoury the blacksmith's shop, the housekeeper's room the place where you buy buttons and balls of string and barley-sugar, the cellars the village tavern, and very nice too. In the state-saloon, with a few trifling alterations, such as the introduction of a geyser and a sink, will live Mrs. Ponsonby-Smith,

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who will sniff a little at the Jeffries in their attic suite and the Mutts who live in the moat. But Mrs. Jeffries will have compensations, because the air is really so much more bracing, my dear, on the higher ground, and on fine days one can walk about the roof and peep through the boiling-oil holes, while as for the Mutts they are protected, at any rate, from those bitterly piercing east winds and have an excellent view of the draw-bridge.

A further advantage of residing at Soping Hall will be that you can do all your shopping and pay your calls without going out-of-doors on a wet day, and, if you like, have a communal dining-room or restaurant, where only those who have been recognised by the county should sit above the salt. And if your friends come to visit you in expensive motor-cars they will have the privilege of passing through the great iron gates on the main road and up the large gravel drive planted on each side with the cedars of Lebanon which Roger de Soping brought back in his haversack from the Second Crusade.

I am quite aware that when federal devolution becomes really infectious and every county insists on a legislative assembly of its own it may be necessary to turn some of these great houses into Parliament chambers, and the rural civil service will also no doubt insist on having offices comparable with the vast hotels which their parent bodies occupy in London. But this will not account for nearly all the ancestral seats, and, in calling the attention of the Minister of Health and Housing to this little memorandum of mine, I would specially urge him to note how it will solve some of the most difficult problems which confront him to-day.

There will be a rush upon these potted villages, and that will ease the situation in towns and free a number of cottages for agricultural labourers too. There will be a rush, not only because of the advantages which I have already enumerated, but because all the people who live in Soping Hall will be able to put "Soping Hall" on their notepaper, and, if they like to pay for it, two *wyverns rampant* as well, and everyone outside the circle of their immediate friends will imagine that they have not only bought the whole place but even become the possessors of the flock of wyverns that used to be pastured on the Home Farm.

Three acres and a cow was all very well in its way, but what about two wyverns and a flat? Evoe.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: *Dame (seeing the signpost)*. "Stop, Jenkins—stop! I think it would be safer to turn back. They may have catapults or something dangerous."]

\* \* \* \* \*

TIPS FOR UNCLES.

## Page 14

Dear Mr. Punch,—I am writing to you about uncles because you are in a way a kind of general uncle. Uncles are much more useful than aunts, because uncles always give money and aunts mostly give advice. Only, as the Head always says when he jaws our form, “I regret to see in this form a serious deterioration”—I mean in uncles. They come down here and trot us round and say what a luxurious place it is compared with the stern old Spartan days. They know something, though. They ask us to have meals with them at an hotel. They take care not to face a luxurious house-dinner. And while we dine they tell yarns about the hardness of the old days and how it toughened a fellow. And then, because about 1870 it was the custom to tip a boy five bob, they fork out five bob and tell you not to waste it.

If the Head had any sense—only you can’t expect sense from Heads—he’d put up a notice at the school gates: “Parents, Uncles and Friends are respectfully reminded that the cost of tuck has increased three hundred per cent. since 1914.” Why, old Badham, my bedroom prefect, who was a fag in 1914, turned up the other day and declared that then he could buy four pounds of strawberries for a bob, and that a fag could get enough chocolate for two bob to give him a week in the sick-room.

Yet we have uncles coming down in trains (fare fifty per cent. extra), smoking cigars (costing two hundred per cent. extra), cabbng it up to school (a hundred-and-fifty per cent. extra) and then tipping as if the old Kaiser was still swanking in Potsdam.

Now Sutton minor, who has a positive beast of a house-master and is practically a Bolshevik, says that we ought to go on strike against the tipping system and demand a regular living wage from relations. He says that if a scavenger gets four quid a week a fellow who has to tackle Greek aorists ought to get eight quid a week.

But I’m afraid a strike might aggravate uncles. It’s no use upsetting the goose that lays the silver eggs, so I thought it better to write to you, pointing out that there was one luxury still at pre-war prices and that uncles should never miss a chance of indulging in it, and whenever high prices bothered them they should write us a bright cheerful letter enclosing a postal order—they’re still quite cheap.

Chalmers major, who has read this and leads a sad life, having only aunts, says that the only hope for him is in fixing a standard tip of 9\_s.\_ 113/4\_d.\_ or, better still, 19\_s.\_ 113/4\_d.\_, that women couldn’t help giving.

So hoping that all uncles will put their hands to the plough—I mean in their pockets—and then the bitter cry of the New Poor will cease in our public schools,

Yours respectfully, Bruce Tertius.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Notice.

My wife, Roxie M. —, having left my bed and board, I will not be responsible for any bills contracted after this date, June 21, 1920. Fred —.” *American Paper*.

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"Notice.

The undersigned wishes to state I had just cause to leave, but I left neither bed nor board as I furnished my own board, and the bed being mine I took it. Roxie ——."

*Same Paper, following day.*

A good example of what *Touchstone* calls "The lie with circumstance."

\* \* \* \* \*

"To-Night at 9.30. NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH. For the first time in Calcutta." *Indian Paper.*

Where was the Censor?

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: *Bridegroom-Elect.*—"and we wants to have the hymn, 'The flag that waved o'er Eden.'"]

\* \* \* \* \*

THE STATE AND THE SCREEN.

*(By a Student of Film Politics.)*

Great satisfaction has been evinced in film circles over the conferment of a signal honour on Signor Pavanelli, the outstanding Italian screen luminary. The rank of Chevalier of the Crown of Italy is equivalent to a knighthood in this country, and Pavanelli's elevation is a gratifying proof of the paramount position which the cinema is assuming in Italian national affairs. But gratification is sadly tempered by the deplorable lack of State recognition from which film-artists suffer in this country. The joint co-starring Sovereigns of the Screen, though acclaimed by the populace with an enthusiasm unparalleled in the annals of adoration, were allowed to depart from our shores without a single official acknowledgment of their services to humanity. No vote of congratulation was passed by the Houses of Parliament; no honorary degree was conferred on them by any University; no ode of welcome was forthcoming from the pen of the Poet Laureate.

The discontent caused by the indifference of the Government to the wishes of the people is fraught with formidable possibilities. Already there are serious rumours of the summoning of a Special Trade Union Congress to discuss the desirability of direct action as a means of compelling the Government to abandon their attitude of hostility to

the only form of monarchy which the working-classes can conscientiously support. It is further reported that Lieutenant-Commander Kenworthy, M.P., will seize the first opportunity to move the impeachment of Dr. Bridges. The indignation in Printing House Square has reached boiling-point, and it is reported that the authorities are only awaiting the delivery of a huge consignment of small pica type to launch a fresh and final onslaught on the Coalition.

[Illustration: BAD FOR THE BULL.]



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The provocation has undoubtedly been intense. It was proved in an article of studied moderation and exquisite taste that the time had come to revise our estimates of bygone grandeur and substitute for the devotion to a Queen of tarnished fame and disastrous tendencies the spontaneous and chivalrous worship of her beneficent and prosperous namesake. Yet in spite of this dignified and convincing appeal no invitation was sent to the one person whose presence at the recent proceedings at Holyrood would have lent them a crowning lustre. The action or inaction of the Lord Chamberlain is inexplicable, except on the assumption that Queen Pickford's engagement to attend the Spa Conference would have rendered it impossible for her to accept the invitation to Edinburgh. None the less the invitation should have been sent. Besides, the resources of aviation might have surmounted the difficulty. In any case this deplorable oversight has knocked one more nail in the coffin of the Prime Minister.

\* \* \* \* \*

"At the fifth each played a magnificent tea shot. Hodgson again used his favourite spoon."—*Provincial Paper*.

Obviously the right club for the purpose.

\* \* \* \* \*

"'The Tongue Can no Man Tame.'  
*St. Peter*."  
*Heading in Daily Paper*.

A clear case of robbing James to pay Peter.

\* \* \* \* \*

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

*Monday, July 12th.*—Viscount Curzon's complaint about "crawling" taxi-cabs was ostensibly based upon the obstruction thus caused to more rapidly moving traffic. But I fancy that it was really due to an inherent belief that the motor-car is a noble creature, only happy when exceeding the speed-limit and dashing through police-controls, and that to compel the poor thing to crawl is "agin natur'" and ought to be dealt with by the R.S.P.C.A.

As usual much of Question-time was devoted to Russian affairs. Colonel Wedgwood wanted to know whether the Cabinet had approved a message from Mr. Churchill to the late Admiral Kolchak, advising him how to commend his Administration to the Prime Minister, who was described in the telegram as "all-powerful, a convinced democrat and particularly devoted to advanced views on the land question." Mr. Law, while

provisionally promising a Blue-book on Siberia, declined to pick out a single message from a whole bunch.

The news that the Soviet Government had accepted the British conditions with regard to the resumption of trade and had thereupon been requested to conclude an armistice with Poland did not seem particularly welcome to any section of the House. Those whom Mr. Stanton in stentorian whispers daily describes as the “Bolshies” evidently feared that the request had been accompanied by a threat, while others were horrified at the idea of recognising the present *regime* in Russia, and drew from Mr. Law a hasty disclaimer. The House as a whole would, I think, have liked to learn how you can do business with a person whom you do not recognise?

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The Chancellor of the Exchequer refused to accept Mr. George Terrell's proposal to reduce the Excess Profits Tax from sixty per cent. to forty, but, in reply to Sir G. Younger—who “has such a way wid him”—promised that next year he would make the reduction. He admitted that it was in many ways an unsatisfactory tax, but the Government could not afford to part with it unless a substitute was provided. Somebody suggested “Economy,” and Sir F. Banbury proved to his own satisfaction that the present estimates could be reduced by a hundred-and-fifty millions. But unexpected support for the Government came from Mr. Asquith, who as the original sponsor of the tax felt it his duty to support it.

[Illustration: SIR FREDERICK BANBURY SHOWS HOW IT'S DONE. “To produce a saving of one hundred-and-fifty millions you merely have to hold the hat firmly in the left hand—thus.”]

There was a perfect E.P.D.mic of criticism, but it was brilliantly countered by Mr. Baldwin, who declared that the Chancellor, far from leading the country down the rapids, “was the one man who had seized a rock in mid-stream and was hanging on to it with hands and feet.” The Amendment was rejected by 289 to 117, and the clause as a whole was passed by 202 to 16.

[Illustration: THE LIMPET OF THE EXCHEQUER. Mr. Baldwin portrays his chief “hanging to a rock with hands and feet.”]

*Tuesday, July 13th.*—Lord O'Hagan was one of the Peers who helped to outvote the Government a few days ago on a motion excusing them of extravagance. Yet that did not prevent him to-day from saying that the War Office should be more generous in their financial treatment of the Territorial Force, and particularly of the Cadet Corps. Naturally Lord Peel did not refrain from calling attention to this inconsistency—common to most of the financial critics of the Administration—but nevertheless he made a reply indicating that the grants for the Territorial Force were being revised, presumably in an upward direction, since Lord O'Hagan expressed himself grateful.

The Commons, like the Lords, are all for economy collectively, if not individually. General cheers greeted Mr. Bonar Law's announcement that all war-subsidies—save that on wheat—were to be brought to an end as soon as possible, but then there were similar cheers for those Members who urged the substitution of ex-service men for the less highly-paid women in various Public Departments.

The House enjoyed the unusual experience of hearing from Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy an apology—and a very handsome one too—for something that he had said in debate about Colonel Croft. It was accompanied by a tribute to his military efficiency which made that gallant warrior blush. It only now remains for the Leader of the National Party to reciprocate by rescuing from the Naval archives some equally complimentary reference to the services of Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy.

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A new sport has been invented by Colonel Guinness. It consists in sending two telegrams simultaneously to Paris, one *via* London and the other *via* New York, and seeing which gets there first. At present New York wins by twenty minutes. Mr. Illingworth excused himself from giving an immediate explanation on the ground that he had not had time to check the facts. No doubt he hopes that in the interim other Members will follow Colonel Guinness's example and, by joining in the new pastime, bring grist to the Post-Office mill.

*Wednesday, July 14th.*—Lord Milner must have thought he was back in the era of “Chinese Slavery” when he found himself assailed on all sides because the Chief Native Commissioner in Kenya Colony (late British East Africa) had issued a circular instructing the chiefs to influence their followers in the direction of honest toil. Lord Islington described this as “perilously near forced labour;” His Grace of Canterbury facetiously suggested that the chiefs’ idea of influence would be the sjambok; and Lord Emmott talked of “Prussianism.”

Taught by past experience Lord Milner did not make light of the accusations, but set himself to show how little real substance they contained. The Chief Native Commissioner was “not a Prussian”; on the contrary the local white population thought him too great an upholder of native privileges. But he was very keen on getting the black man to work, and had therefore issued this circular, which was open to misinterpretation. An explanatory document would be issued shortly.

Echoes of the Dyer debate are still reverberating through the Commons, and Mr. Montagu was put through a searching cross-examination regarding his relations with Mr. Gandhi. Apparently that gentleman has a very simple plan of campaign. He agitates more and more dangerously until he is threatened with prosecution. Then he says “Sorry!” and Mr. Montagu begs him off. After a brief interval of quiescence he starts again. Just now he is once more nearing the imaginary line that separates proper from impropa-Gandhism.

[Illustration: B.C. 1920. *Sir Alfred Mond*. “What a topping idea! They’ll never get a more suitable design from the Office of Works—not if they wait 3840 Years.”]

The House was delighted to see Mr. Devlin and Mr. MacVeagh back in their places. A little honest Irish obstruction would be a refreshing change after the feeble imitations of the Kenworthies and Wedgwoods. But the Speaker could not accept the proposition that a speech delivered three weeks ago, in which an Irish official was alleged to have prophesied some dreadful things which as a matter of fact had not happened, could be regarded as “a definite matter of urgent public importance.”

It is unfortunate that the Prime Minister was unable to get back from Spa in order to assist in the final suppression of his famous land-duties. Most of the speeches delivered were made up of excerpts from his old orations of ten years ago—that almost

prehistoric era known as the Limehouse Period—and it would have been an object-lesson in political gymnastics to see him explaining himself away.

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The land-taxers made a gallant effort to frighten their opponents away by chanting the "Land Song" in the Lobby, but it is supposed that the Government supporters had copied Ulysses' method with the Sirens, for enough of them remained faithful to defeat the land-taxers by 190 to 68.

[Illustration: *Mr. Neal*. "Your fares will cost you more."]

*Thursday, July 15th.*—Mr. Neal's announcement that the proposed increase in rail way fares had been postponed until August 5th, in order not to spoil the Bank Holiday, was far from satisfying the House. Mr. Clynes pointed out that large numbers of the working-classes now took their long holidays in August. Mr. Palmer was of opinion that the working-classes could pay well enough; it was the middle-class that would suffer most; and Mr. R. McNeill, following up this assertion, suggested (without success) that for the sake of poverty-stricken M.P.'s the House should adjourn before the fateful date.

Sir H. Greenwood gave particulars of the Sinn Fein raid on the Dublin Post-Office, but declined to give an opinion as to whether there had been any collusion with the staff inside. Judging by the promptitude and efficiency of the raiders' procedure it seems highly improbable that postal officials had anything to do with it.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Each day the barometer seems to drop a little lower, the rain seems to drop a little more persistent and wet."—*Provincial Paper*.

It is this persistent wetness that is so annoying. Nobody would mind a little dry rain.

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[Illustration: *Farmer*. "I wonder what some of these London folks 'ud say to this?"

*Farm-hand*. "Zay? They'd zay as we must be makin' our fortunes out o' mushrooms."]

\* \* \* \* \*

TWENTY YEARS ON.

We were sitting in the verandah, Ernest and I. On the greensward before us Ernest Junior and James Junior (I am James) disported themselves as became their years, which were respectively 1-3/4 and 1-5/8. In the middle distance, or as middle as the size of our lawn permits, might be seen the mothers of Ernest Junior and James Junior deep in conversation, discussing, perhaps, the military prowess of their lords, though I rather fear I caught the word "jumper" every now and then.

A loud difference of opinion between James II. and Ernest II. as to the possession of a wooden horse momentarily disturbed the peaceful scene. It was left to Ernest and myself to settle it, our incomparable wives being still completely engrossed with the subject of our military prowess (or of jumpers). When quiet reigned once more Ernest said, "Have you ever looked twenty years on?"

"Practically never," I answered. "It is too exhausting."

"It is exhausting, but with my usual energy I do it all the same," said Ernest, who is as a fact the world's champion lotus-eater. "Last night I was picturing a little scene in the year 1940. Shall I tell you of it?" And without waiting for my assent he proceeded:—

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"The scene is laid in an undergraduate's rooms. Ernest Junior and James Junior are discovered in *neglige* attitudes and the conversation proceeds something like this:—

"*Ernest Junior*. What are you going to do with yourself in the Vac.?

"*James Junior*. I shall go abroad, in spite of my choice of objectives being so terribly restricted.

"*Ernest Junior*. Why restricted?

"*James Junior*. Well, I wouldn't say this to anybody else, but to tell you the truth it is impossible for me to go to either France, Belgium or Italy. You see my dear old father was in these countries during the first Great War, and if I were so much as to mention them he'd never stop talking. If I were to say that I proposed spending a fortnight in the Ardennes it would let loose such a flood of reminiscence that I should hardly get away before next term begins.

"He gets a little confused too at times. He told me the other day a long story about the relief of Ypres, and he also boasted of having himself captured a large number of Turks on the Somme.

"And it isn't only that. My mother was a V.A.D. in France, you know. And when the old man had done talking of Ypres and the Somme she'd begin about Rouen and Etaples."

I laughed, but without mirth, for I did not really think this at all funny. And after all I might have said just the same about Ernest, if only I'd thought of it first.

\* \* \* \* \*

"CHAR-A"-VARIA.

[*The Manchester Daily Dispatch* gives a most distressing account of the bibulous hooliganism which is becoming more rampant week by week among char-a-bancs trippers.]

The patrons of the charabang  
Employ the most outrageous slang  
And talk with an appalling twang.  
Their manners ape the wild orang;  
They do not care a single hang  
For sober folk on foot who gang,  
But as they roll, with jolt and clang,  
For parasang on parasang,  
They cause a vulgar *Sturm und Drang*.  
They never heard of Andrew Lang,





Or even Mr. William Strang;  
They are, I say it with a pang,  
A most intolerable gang;  
In fact I wish them at Penang  
Or on the banks of Yang-tse-Kiang—  
*Some* folk who use the charabang.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Wanted, a good, clean General, for private.”—*Provincial Paper*.

Discipline is going to the dogs.

\* \* \* \* \*

POINTS OF VIEW.

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The manager had seen to it that the party of young men, being very obviously rich, at any rate for this night, had some of the best attendance in the restaurant. Several waiters had been told off specially to look after them, the least and busiest of whom was little more than a boy—a slender pale boy, who was working very hard to give satisfaction. The cynic might think—and say, for cynics always say what they think—that this zeal was the result of his youth; but the cynic for once would be only partly right. The zeal also had sartorial springs, this eventful day being the first on which the boy had been promoted to full waiter-hood, and the first therefore on which he had ever worn a suit of evening dress; which by dint of hard saving his family had been able to obtain for him. Wearing a uniform of such dignity and conscious that he was on the threshold of his career, he was trying very hard to make good and hoping very fervently that he would get through without any drops or splashes to impair the freshness of his new and wonderful attire.

The party of young men, who had been at a very illustrious English school together and now were either at a university or in the world, were celebrating an annual event and were very merry about it. For the most part they had, between the past and the present, as many topics of conversation as were needed, but now and then came a lull, during which some of them would look around at the other tables, note the prettier of the girls or the odder of the men and comment upon them; and it chanced that in such a pause one of the diners happened for the first time to notice with any attention the assiduous young waiter. Although not old enough to have given any thought to the anomaly of youth (though lowly) attending upon youth (though gilded) at its meals in this way—not old enough indeed to have pondered at all upon the relations of Capital and Labour or of the domineering and the servile—he had reflected a good deal upon the cut and fit of clothes, and there was something about the waiting-boy's evening coat that outraged his critical sense. Nor did the fact that the other's indifferent tailoring throw the perfection of his own into such brilliant contrast—the similarity between the livery of service and the male costume *de luxe* fostering such comparisons—make him any more lenient.

“Did you ever see,” he asked his neighbour, “such a coat-collar as that waiting Johnnie's? I ask you. How can anyone, even a waiter, wear a thing like that? Don't they ever see themselves in the glass, or if they do can't they see straight? Why, it covers his collar altogether.”

His companion agreed. “And the shoulders! You'd have thought that in a restaurant like this the management would be more particular. By George, that's a jolly pretty girl coming in! Look—over there, just under the clock, with the red hair.” And the waiter was forgotten. Only, however, by his table critics, for at that moment a little woman who had made friends with the hall-porter for this express purpose was peering through the window of the entrance, searching the room for her son. She had never yet seen him at his work at all, and certainly not in his grand waiting clothes, and naturally she wanted to.

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"Ah!" she said at last, pointing the boy out to the porter, "there he is! At that table with all the young gentlemen. Doesn't he look fine? And don't they fit him beautifully? Why, no one would know the difference if he were to sit down and one of those young gentlemen were to wait on him."

E.V.L.

\* \* \* \* \*

PIGLETS.

While waiting for proof-sheets of my book on *The Dynamic Force of Modern Art* I thought I might get a certain amount of amusement out of a little correspondence with my neighbour, Mr. Gibbs, small farmer and dairyman, between whom and myself letters had passed a short time ago on the subject of a noisy cow, since removed from the field below the study window of the house that has been lent me by my friend Hobson. With this end in view I wrote to Mr. Gibbs as follows:—

My dear Mr. Gibbs,—The field of the uproarious cow has, I notice, suddenly become tenanted again, this time by what appears to be a school, herd or murrain of swine. Their number seems to vary. Sometimes I count ten younglings, sometimes as many as thirteen, and once I made it as much as fourteen.

Did you know they were there, or are they a crop? Or is the field suffering from swine fever, of which they are the outward manifestation? Anyhow, whether they are friends of yours or have merely just happened, as it were, they are distinctly intriguing.

My wife was remarking to me only yesterday how nice some pork would be as a change from the eternal verities, beef and mutton, and I told her that if she would look out of my window she would see the pork running about, simply asking for it. There are so many of these piglets that I don't think the old sow would miss one. Swine can't count, can they?

But apart from food values they interest me as subjects for the Cubist, the Vorticist and other exploiters of dynamic force in the Art of to-day (I fancy I told you in a previous letter that I am engaged upon a tome on this subject).

Figure to yourself, *mon ami*, what delightful rhomboidal figures Wyndham Lewis and his school would make of these budding porkers with the sleek torso and the well-poised angular snout, and, having visualised their treatment of the theme, compare it with the painted effigies of such animals by George Morland, which were merely pigs, Sir, and nothing more. No symbolism, no force. You get me—what?

But looking at these piglets from a more intimate point of view, don't you think (if they should happen to be yours, and you have any influence with their parents) that

something should be done about their faces? They have such a pushed-in appearance. Can this be normal? If so, it must seriously interfere with their truffling. But perhaps this is not good truffle-hunting country. I'm sorry if this is so, as I could do with a nice brace of truffles now and again.

Remember me kindly to our mooing friend, and believe me, dear Mr. Gibbs,

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Yours sincerely,  
Arthur K. Wilkinson.

How this early touch of Spring has got into the blood, to be sure.

To this letter Mr. Gibbs replied thus:—

Dear Sir,—i cant make much of your letter except a ringlemerole about pigs and dinamite and pictures but what they have to do with one another i dont know if you want some pork why dont you say so strait out like mr Hobson does i shall be killing one this week shall i send you a nice leg and remain

Yours obedient  
Henry Gibbs.

My reply, given in the affirmative, resulted in the arrival of a succulent-looking joint with a bill for leg of pork special 51/2 lbs. at 2\_s.\_ per lb. 11\_s.\_

As the price too was rather special I returned the bill with the following:—

My dear Mr. Gibbs,—What a rapturous piece of pork! Lovely in life, and oh, how beautiful in death. I count the hours till 7.30 to-morrow.

I am truly sorry you couldn't read my letter with comfort. I have derived great pleasure from yours. You appear to have a strong leaning towards phonetic orthography which is very refreshing and seems to bear the same relation to the generally accepted rules of the art that the modern dynamic art (a favourite topic of mine, as you know) does to the academics of the late nineteenth century.

When the proof-sheets of my book arrive I should be glad of your assistance in going through them. My tendency, I think, is to over-punctuate, and your proclivity would, I believe, counteract this.

*Mais revenons a nos moutons (mutatis mutandis, of course).* The specialist who superintends my diet allows me to eat pork at 1\_s.\_ 9\_d.\_ per lb., but does not approve of my indulgence in it at a higher figure. If you will meet his views (and I am sure you will) I shall absorb my full share of the dainty you have provided. Otherwise I must return it with many exquisite regrets.

Anticipating your favourable recognition of my specialist's absurd prejudice, I enclose a cheque for 9\_s.\_ 8\_d.\_

Accept my word for it that I am  
Yours ever most truly,  
Arthur K. Wilkinson.

To this Mr. Gibbs offered the following reply:—

Deer Sir,—i thought being a friend of mr Hobson you was a gentleman as wouldn't mind paying a bit extra for something special like this pork which these pigs was by Barnsley Champion III i cant charge less. i dont know who your specialist is but he dont know much about pork the bests the safest. please send ballance and remain

Yours obedient,  
Henry Gibbs.

We were still in March and pork had not yet been decontrolled, so I returned the bill again with this brief but incisive note:—

My dear Mr. Gibbs,—I have never met your friend from Barnsley, but am surprised that you haven't come across my specialist, whose address is the Local Food Control Office at Harbury. Would you like to meet him? He is very interested in pigs, also in milk and other things in which you specialise expensively, so you would have lots to talk about, no doubt.

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Yours sincerely,  
Arthur K. Wilkinson.

The receipt in full, which reached me in reply, was very satisfactory. The pork was delicious.

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[Illustration: *Country Postman*. "I'm sorry, Ma'am, I seem to have lost your postcard; but it only said Muriel thanked you for the parcel, and so did John, and they were both very well and the children are happy and she'll give your message to Margery. That'll be your other daughter, I'm thinkin'?"]

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### FLOWERS' NAMES.

Lady's Bedstraw.

Under two secret arching hedges  
Masses of Bedstraw grow,  
Silvery-white among the sedges,  
Like drifts of fairy-snow;  
Deep's the middle, fringed the edges;  
Who sleeps there? Do you know?  
Do you? Or you?  
Hark! for the breezes know.

"Oh, there my Lady Summer lies  
Adream beneath cool April skies;  
About her blossoms fall  
On her long limbs and secret eyes.  
Still she sleeps, virginal;  
Then—hark! June's clarion call!  
She lifts her wistful wilful eyes,  
Sprints light afoot and away she flies.  
But her Bedstraw dies."

\* \* \* \* \*

"We have received from —— Manufacturing Company, New York, makers of Destructive Stationery for Social Correspondence, copies of their artistic Wall Calendars." *West Indian Paper*.

The calendars don't interest us, but a few samples of the "destructive stationery" would come in useful for answering bores.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### NOCTURNE.

Of course I suppose I ought to be grateful for the opportunity of having a front seat at one of Nature's romances, but I imagine she reaps more applause at matinees than at soirees. I know that I—But judge for yourself.

The *dramatis personae* were corncrakes, neighbours of mine. The heroine—a neat line in spring birdings—I labelled "Thisbe," and she had evidently inspired affection of no mean degree in the hearts of two enthusiastic swains, Strong-i'-th'-lung and Eugene. I know all this because Thisbe's home is a small tuft of grass not distant from my bedroom, and her admirers wooed her at long range from opposite corners of my field.

Now, as a cursory study of ornithology will tell you, the corncrake's method of attracting his bride is by song, and the criterion of excellence in C.C. circles is that the song shall be protracted, consistent and perfectly monotonous. To those who are unacquainted with his note I would describe it as rather similar to the intermittent buzzing noise which an inexperienced telephone operator lets loose when she can't think of a wrong number to give you. It has also points of resemblance to the periodic thud of the valve of a motor-tube when one is running on a deflated tyre. But there is no real standard of comparison. As a musical feat it is unique, and I for one am glad it is.



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It was night. Eugene was in possession of the stage when I began to take an interest in the romance. I cannot say for how long he had serenaded his divinity before I became conscious of his lay, but I do know that thereafter he put in one and a half hours of good solid craking before he desisted. I then felt grateful for the silence, rolled over and prepared to get on with my postponed slumber.

But Strong-i'-th'-lung decreed otherwise. With a contemptuous snort at his rival's performance he opened his epic. He was splendid. For one and three-ninths hours he descanted on the glories of field life, on the freshness of the night, on the brilliance of the June foliage; for the next two hours he ardently proclaimed the surpassing beauty of Thisbe's eye, the glossiness of her plumage, the neatness of her claw, and he wound up with a mad twenty minutes of piercing monotony as he depicted the depth of his devotion for her.

When he ceased, in a silence which was almost deafening, I could visualise Thisbe dimpling with satisfaction and undoubtedly filled with tenderness toward a lover capable of expressing himself so eloquently. I turned over with a sigh of relief and closed my eyes in pleasurable anticipation of rest.

But Eugene felt it necessary to reply. I think his intention was to crake disbelief of his rival's sincerity, to throw cold water on his burning professions, perhaps even to question the excellence of his intentions. But his nerve was obviously shaken by his competitor's undoubtedly fine performance, and he craked indecisively. At 4.30 a.m. I distinctly heard him utter a flat note. At 4.47 he missed the second part of a bar entirely. Thisbe's beak, I must believe, curled derisively; Strong-i'-th'-lung laughed contemptuously, and at 5.10 a.m. Eugene faltered, stammered and fled from the field defeated.

The sequel I have had to build up on rather fragmentary data, but it appears that Eugene fled as far as Pudberry Parva, and endeavoured to cool his discomfiture in a dewy hayfield.

To him there came an old crone, the "father and mother" of all corncrakes, who comforted him, cosseted him, and from a fund of deep experience offered him hints on voice production. She also gave him of a nostrum of toadwort and garlic, which mollified his lacerated chords, and she prescribed massage of the throat by rubbing against a young beech stem.

Within two days Eugene was back in my field. In tones that feigned to falter he craked a few bars to open the performance. Strong-i'-th'-lung at once rose full of pitying confidence and craked for two and a half hours the song of the practically accepted suitor. It was a good song, and Thisbe seemed pleased, though I fancy she rather resented the note of assurance which he imparted to his ballad.



Then Eugene came on. Bearing well in mind all the instruction of his recent benefactress, he commenced at 11.45 p.m. such a masterpiece as has never before been heard in the bird world. His consistency of period was masterly, his iteration superb and his even monotony incomparable. Crake succeeded crake with dull regular inevitability. So far as I know he carried his bat. He was still playing strongly when I fell on a troubled sleep about 5.30....

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The next day, walking through the field, I put up two birds which flew away together. One was Thisbe. And the other? Well, not Strong-i'-th'-lung. I stumbled across him a little later, dead without a wound.

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"Wanted Music Master for 2 girls; also Mincing Machine."—*Local Paper*.

One way or another they seem determined that the poor girls shall be "put through it."

\* \* \* \* \*

### SHOULD MILLIONAIRES READ HOMER?

The recent discovery of a London millionaire, who not only lives in a small suburban villa, where his wife dispenses with servants, goes to bed at 7.30 p.m. and rises at 3 a.m., but reads Homer in the Greek, has caused a sensation.

His endeavours to prove to a doubting world the truth of a favourite British adage is admirable; and his modest establishment only bears out what the millionaires keep on telling us, that, owing to high taxation and the abnormal cost of luxuries, they must really be reckoned as poor men. But his study of Homer provokes a difference of opinion.

Our representative, in interviewing a venerable sociologist on the subject, was told that the study of Greek for millionaires is, within proper limits, comparatively harmless, but that Homer contains the elements of danger.

"It is in Homer's apotheosis of heroism in human combat that the peril lies," he said. "Having regard to the part played in the past by financiers in the wars between civilised nations, the security of the League of Nations will be threatened if the millionaires of to-day come under the spell of that great poet, who, with all his excellent qualities, directed his genius so persistently to the praise of warfare."

One of the millionaire class was next approached, and was asked what he thought of millionaires reading Homer.

"Why not?" he asked. "Some millionaires are great readers. I am one myself. There are not half-a-dozen of Oppenheim's I haven't read; and I like Hall Caine—and Ethel Dell's not bad. Who is this Homer? If he's any good I may as well order him."

"Well, Homer was a poet, you know, a—"

"I've no use for poetry," said the millionaire.

“A Greek poet, who lived—”

“Greek. A Greek, did you say?” A shrewd look came into his eyes. “Some of the cutest devils I know are Greeks.” He pulled down a shirt-cuff and took a diamond-studded pencil from his waistcoat pocket. “How do you spell it? With an H?”

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“POULTRY AND EGGS.

Belfast or Neighbourhood.—Locum Tenency or Sunday duty wanted by well-known Rector during holiday.”—*Irish Paper*.

It looks as if he had been mistaken for a Lay-reader.

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“Nothing is left of the knave of the church, but the choir still remains.”—*Scotch Paper*.

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We are glad they discarded the knave.

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[Illustration: *Country Cousin* (who suffers from his wife's elbow at each crossing). "Oo! lawks, Maria! Next time we've to cross lemme be roon ower!"]

\* \* \* \* \*

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

*Double Life* (Grant Richards) is a story that unblushingly bases its appeal on the love of almost everyone for a fairy-tale of good fortune. The matter of it is to show how a lady amateur, wife of a novelist, herself hardly knowing one end of a horse from the other, might make forty thousand pounds in a year on the Turf, without even her own husband so much as suspecting her activities. The thing isn't likely, is indeed a fantasy of the wildest improbability; but, told with the zest imparted to it here by Mr. Grant Richards, it provides first-rate fun. Some danger of monotony there was bound to be in what is really a variation upon a single theme. Though the author cunningly avoids this, I think it might justly be observed that he has made *Olivia's* plunges almost too uniformly successful. But perhaps not; after all, while you are handling fairy-gold, why be niggardly of it? The heroine's introduction to horse-racing comes about through the unconscious agency of her husband, who takes her with him on a visit to Newmarket in search of local colour for a "sporting" novel. The resulting situation reaches its climax in what is the best scene of the book, when *Geoffrey*, returning from a race that he has visited alone, but upon which *Olivia*, unknown to him, has risked thousands, recounts its progress in the best manner of realistic fiction, wholly ignorant of the true cause of what seems such flattering agitation in the listener. Altogether a happy if not very subtle story which I am glad that Mr. Grant Richards could persuade himself to publish.

To write, as Mr. R.W. Chambers has written, fifty-two novels, many of them excellent and all readable, while still on the right side of sixty, is an achievement of intelligent industry that entitles any novelist, at the latter end, to take matters a little easily. *The Moonlit Way* (Appleton) has neither the imaginative qualities of *The King in Yellow*, the humour of *In Search of the Unknown*, nor the adventurous tang of *Ashes of Empire*, but it is a good live story that will carry the reader's interest to the last page. Mr. Chambers is at his best when dealing with spies and secret service agents and scheming chancellors and the other subterranean apparatus of war and diplomacy; at his least interesting when depicting affluent young America on its native heath of New York bricks and mortar. *The Moonlit Way* deals with all these things and more. We are whisked from the Bosphorus to the Welland Canal on the heels of Germany's "War in the United States," and French Secret Service officers, German saloon keepers and Sinn Fein

revolutionaries jostle one another for a place in our interest. The novel-reading public knows that it is quite safe in buying any story by Mr. Chambers, and, if it does not expect too much of *The Moonlit Way*, it will not be disappointed.

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Lately, volumes of individual memorial to dead youth seem to have become less frequent. Perhaps there was a suggestion that the making of them, or rather their publication for the eyes of strangers, was in danger of being overdone. However this may be, I think that, quite apart from the appeal of circumstance, there would always have been a welcome for such a bright-natured book as one that Father Ronald Knox has put together, mostly from diaries and letters, about *Patrick Shaw-Stewart* (Collins). Eton and Balliol will agree that there could be no biographer better fitted to record the life, as happy seemingly as it was fated to be short, of one who combined success with popularity at both these places, was caught by the War on the threshold of a wider career, served his country with very notable distinction and was killed in the winter of 1917. Though he met death in France, the most of Shaw-Stewart's war-service was on the Eastern front; in particular he saw more than most soldiers of the whole Gallipoli adventure, to which he went as a member of that amazing company—surely the very flower of this country's war contribution—the *Hood Battalion* of the R.N.V.R. Here he was the comrade of many of those whom England has especially delighted to honour: Rupert Brooke, Denis-Browne, Charles Lister and others, all of whom figure in these vivid and most attractive letters; from which also one gathers an engaging picture of Shaw-Stewart himself, a generously admiring, humorous and entirely independent young Tory in a band of brilliant revolutionaries. In fine a book (despite its theme of promise sacrificed) full of laughter and a singularly charming character-study of one who, in his biographer's phrase, was assuredly "not one of the passengers of his generation."

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[Illustration: THE SPECIALIST.

*Eminent Botanist on scientific expedition.* "Dear me! Why didn't I take up Zoology instead of Botany? This seems such an interesting specimen."]

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Miss Ella Sykes, after going with her brother and a camera on his special mission to Kashgar during the earlier days of the War, has detailed in charming fashion, under the title *Through Deserts and Oases of Central Asia* (Macmillan), their travels in lands still almost unknown. Sir Percy Sykes himself has added some chapters on the history and customs of the district in order to allow himself the pleasure of referring affectionately to his hunting of the giant sheep—the *Ovis poli*—of the Pamirs. Between them they have given me a good deal of information, with a lot of really capital photographs, about a country—Chinese Turkestan—that one may have just heard of before, though it is impossible to be sure. Resisting a burning desire to pass on newly-acquired learning to the first listener, I will be content to say that a more readable volume

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of its kind has not come my way for a long time, and incidentally the country itself seems surprisingly desirable. For one thing it is free from the mosquitoes that spoil so many books of travel, while the people are peaceful, reasonably contented and not liable to jar on the reader's nerves, in the time-honoured fashion, with spears and poisoned arrows. Even the yaks, that one had supposed to be fearsome beasts, are mild benevolent pacifists. The authors do not suggest that it is all Paradise, of course, though for the Moslem there may be something of that sort in it. "Praise be to Allah! I have four obedient wives, who spend all their days in trying to please me," said a Kirghiz farmer to Sir Percy. But even Paradise may be a matter of taste.

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If *War in the Garden of Eden* (Murray) cannot be numbered among the books which must be read by a serious war-student it is in its unassuming way very attractive. Captain Kermit Roosevelt made many friends while serving as a Captain with the Motor Machine-Gun Corps in Mesopotamia, and here he reveals himself as a keen soldier and a pleasant companion. In style he is perhaps a shade too jerky; his frequent failure to make his connections gives one a sense of being in the hands of a rather rambling guide. But the important points are that he is an engaging Rambler, and that he can describe his experiences both of war and peace with so clear a simplicity that they can be easily visualized. When the American Army arrived in France Captain Roosevelt naturally wished to join it, and his last chapter is called "With the First Division in France and Germany." But for us the main interest of his book lies in the work he did with the British in Mesopotamia, and to thank him for this would seem to be an impertinence.

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Mr. Arnold Bennett's *From the Log of the Velsa* (Chatto) deals with some vague period before the War (dates are most carefully concealed), when the versatile author undertook certain cruises up and down Dutch canals, the Baltic, French, Flemish and Danish coasts and East Anglian estuaries with companions about whom he preserves an equally mysterious silence. (Was it secret service, I wonder?) A delightful book, produced with something like pre-war attention to aesthetic appearance—a pleasant quarto with roomy pages faithfully printed in a fair type. You ought to enjoy the owner's evident enjoyment (he was never bored and therefore never boring), his charmingly ingenuous pride of possession, his shrewd, humorous and excessively didactic utterances about painters, pictures, architecture and female beauty, his zeal for water-colour sketching and his apparently profound contempt of other exponents of the craft. Nothing could be less like (I thank Heaven) the ordinary yachtsman's recollections of his travels, and I get an impression that Mr. Bennett was not ill-pleased to leave most of the work and the technical knowledge to his skipper.



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“Crepe de Chine in oyster white will show the top of the dress embroidered to the knees in some unconventional design of black and a deeper shade of white.”—*Daily Paper*.

“The bridesmaid’s dress was of heavy white crepe-de-chine, of pale apricot shade.”—*Provincial Paper*.

Canning must have had a premonition of the modern fashions when he wrote in *The New Morality*, “Black’s not so black, nor white so very white.”

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From a bookseller’s advertisement:—

“Mr. —— has the way of when you finish one of his most interesting books that you really cannot help yourself by reading all.” *Newfoundland Paper*.

Not being quite sure whether this is a compliment or not we have suppressed the distinguished author’s name.