

Punch, or the London Charivari, Vol. 152, June 20, 1917 eBook

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Contents

Punch, or the London Charivari, Vol. 152, June 20, 1917 eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	4
Page 1.....	5
Page 2.....	7
Page 3.....	9
Page 4.....	11
Page 5.....	13
Page 6.....	15
Page 7.....	16
Page 8.....	18
Page 9.....	20
Page 10.....	23
Page 11.....	25
Page 12.....	27
Page 13.....	29
Page 14.....	31
Page 15.....	33
Page 16.....	35
Page 17.....	37
Page 18.....	39
Page 19.....	41
Page 20.....	43
Page 21.....	45
Page 22.....	46

Table of Contents

Section	Table of Contents	Page
Start of eBook		1
PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.		1
I.		3
KINSMEN AND NAMESAKES.		8

Page 1

PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.

Vol. 152.

June 20th, 1917.

=CHARIVARIA.=

A man who purchased sandwiches at a railway restaurant and afterwards threw them into the road was fined five shillings at Grimsby Police Court last week. His explanation—that he did not know they might injure the road—was not accepted by the Court.

* * *

We cannot help thinking that too much fuss has been made about trying to stop Messrs. *Ramsay* MACDONALD and *Jowett* from leaving England. So far as we can gather they did not threaten to return to this country afterwards.

* * *

A North of England man, obviously wishing to appear unusual, still persists in the stupid story that he did not hear the Messines explosion.

* * *

We can think of no finer example of the humility of true greatness than *king Constantine's* decision to abdicate.

* * *

There were forty thousand fewer paupers in 1916 than in 1915, according to figures recently published. The difference is accounted for by the number of revue-writers who have resumed their agricultural occupations.

* * *

In a small town in Australia, says a news item, over two tons of mice were killed in two days. For some unknown reason, which perhaps the Censor can explain, the name of the cat is withheld.

* * *

"Eliminate the middleman," demands a contemporary. It might prove a simpler affair, after all, than the present system of suppressing the inner man.

* * *

Mr. GINNELL, M.P., is responsible for the statement that “bringing an action against the police in Ireland is like bringing one against Satan in hell.” The chief obstacle in the latter case is of course the total absence of learned counsel in that locality.

* * *

The *Kaiser*, it appears, has lost no time in commiserating with his troops on their magnificent victory at Messines.

* * *

The title which Mr. *John* HASSALL wrote under one of his sketches suggested the words for a song which has now been written. It is only fair to the artist to say that he was not aware that his quite innocent title would lead to this.

* * *

The National Service staff at St. Ermin’s Hotel, Westminster, has been reduced by half. It is now expected that the unemployed half will volunteer for National Service.

* * *

Berlin announces that all through-lines in Germany are running. The case of the *Hindenburg* Line seems to be infectious.

* * *

“No cheese,” says *The Evening News*, “has quite the bite of Cheddar.” At the same time, unless it wags its tail to show that it is friendly, we feel that every cheese with a bite like that would be much safer if muzzled.

Page 2

* * *

Triplets were born in Manchester last week. The father is going on as well as can be expected.

* * *

Complaint has been made by a member of the Hounslow Burial Committee of courting couples occupying seats in the cemetery. The killjoy!

* * *

We can only suppose it was the hot weather that tempted a newsagent correspondent to ask whether Lord *Northcliffe* had gone to America on "sail or return."

* * *

Mr. *Balfour*, we are told, while staying at Washington, visited eleven public buildings and interviewed nine representative Americans on one day. There is some talk of his being elected an honorary American.

* * *

We wish to deny the foolish rumour that when he arrived in London from his American tour and was asked if he had had a good voyage, he remarked, "Sure thing, sonny. All the little Mister Congressmen gathered around, and it suited your Uncle Dudley very nicely and some more. Yep!"

* * *

An old lady was recently fined two pounds for putting out crumbs for birds. Had the bread-crumbs been put outside, instead of inside, the birds, no offence, it seems, would have been committed.

* * *

Newspapers in Germany may now be sold only to subscribers for one month or more. A similar measure for England is opposed on the ground that it would be most inadvisable to check the practice at present in vogue among patriotic supporters of the Coalition Government of buying *The Morning Post* and *The Daily News* on alternate days.

* * *

Bobbing for eels is being pursued with much enthusiasm on the Norfolk Broads. Two-bobbing for haddocks in Kensington is sport enough for most of us.

* * *

Large numbers of the German prisoners taken at Messines wore new boots and new uniforms. Other improvements included a less ragged rendering of the well-known recitation, "Kamerad!"

* * *

Asked what bait could be used for coarse fish, the late *food-controller* suggested one "made from bran, with a limited quantity of oatmeal." The correspondent has now written to inquire whether the fish have been officially informed of the new diet.

* * *

Four shillings a hundredweight is being paid for old omnibus tickets, but there are still a few people who use these vehicles for pleasure, without any motive of gain.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Visitor*. "Yes, *but what's the point of whitewashing the tree trunks?*"

Amateur Gardener. "I can't say for certain; but I *THINK* the idea is to keep the bats from knocking their Heads in the Dark."]



Page 3

* * * * *

=Suspended Animation.=

“*Laundry*.—Girl to hang up and make herself useful.”—*Liverpool Echo*.

* * * * *

“For myself, I have very good reasons for not being in khaki. I live on a farm near the Grand Falls of the St. John River. These falls are second to Niagara in size and splendour, and attract visitors from all over the country.”—*Canadian Paper*.

He must have told the recruiting-officer that he was subject to cataract.

* * * * *

=T.M.G.=

Farewell, my *Constantine*! A guardian navy
Facilitates your exit on the blue;
For Greece has been this long while in the gravy
And he that put her there was plainly you;
“*Tino must go!*” was writ for all to see,
Or, briefly, “T.M.G.”

Whither, dear Sir, do you propose to sally?
To Switzerland’s recuperative air,
To sip condensed milk in a private chalet
Or pluck the lissom chamois from his lair,
Or on the summit of a neutral Alp
Recline your crownless scalp?

Or did you ask from him you love so dearly
A royal haven fenced from rude alarms,
Even though *William* should reserve you merely
A bedroom at “The Hohenzollern Arms,”
Having for poor relations on the loose
No sort of further use?

Beware! I gather he might clasp his *Tino*
Only too warmly to his heaving chest,
Saying, “O how reward such merits? We know!
Thou shalt command an Army in the West!



Yes, thou shalt bear upon the British Front
The pick of all the brunt."

Frankly, if I were you, I wouldn't chance it.
Fighting has never really been your forte;
Witness Larissa, and your rapid transit,
Chivied by slow foot-sloggers of the Porte;
Far better make for Denmark o'er the foam;
There is no place like home.

Try some ancestral palace, well-appointed;
For choice the one where *Hamlet* nursed his spite,
Who found the times had grown a bit disjointed
And he was not the man to put 'em right;
And there consult on that enchanted shore
The ghosts of Elsinore.

O.S.

* * * * *

=*Lessons of the war.*=

I.

(Acting upon instructions received from the 3rd Self-help Division the 9th Self-help Brigade issues its orders for a Raid.)

9TH SELF-HELP BRIGADE OPERATION ORDER No. 49.
August 1st, 1920.

Ref. Maps. LONDON 1/40000 sheet 27^d S.W. and (Special) 1/500 (BROADMEAD).

1. The 9th Self-help Brigade will carry out a Raid upon BROADMEAD HOUSE, BROADMEAD SQUARE, W., on the night of 12/13 August.

Page 4

2. The Raid will be carried out by the BILL SIKES and ROBIN HOOD Battalions. The CHARLIE PEACE Bn. will be in close support, and the DICK TURPIN Bn. in reserve.
3. The four sides of the house will be attacked simultaneously, the BILL SIKES Bn. attacking with one Coy. each on the North and West, and the ROBIN HOOD on the South and East.
4. The noise of entry will be covered by a barrage of street cries and taxi whistles. "Q." will arrange.
5. Zero hour will be notified later.
6. The grounds and approaches will be reconnoitred thoroughly and as many friends as possible made in the neighbourhood. Every opportunity of reconnoitring the house itself, either through friendship or by substitution for legitimate plumbers, window-cleaners, piano-tuners, etc., will be taken.
7. The Brigades on the Right and Left will co-operate by starting a street fight and a small fire respectively at some convenient distance from the scene of operations.
8. At Zero *minus* one hour, a cordon of outposts will be established at a radius of 500 yards from the house, with strong points at the street corners. "Q." will arrange for a supply of hedging-gloves.
9. The general scheme of approach will be on the lines as laid down in the "Self-help Corps Standard Formation of Attack" (OK 340/CV/429).
10. Commanding Officers will submit a detailed scheme for the attack (with sketch maps) not later than 4 P.M. on August 6th.
11. Mopping-up parties will be detailed to deal with all dug-outs known to be occupied. Prisoners will not be taken, but undue roughness is to be discouraged as likely to bring discredit upon the service. Steps will be taken, however, to ensure the immediate, if temporary, silence of the obstreperous. O.C. Chloroform will arrange.
12. The Dog emplacement at G 36 A 0.8 will be dealt with by the Brigade Dog-fancier.
13. Brigade Cooks will be detailed in specified areas to act as decoys for Policemen.
14. All information as to the plans, intentions, appearance, habits and dispositions of inhabitants will be found in Appendix I. Some good interior photographs of the house have been obtained by Corps photographers acting as window-cleaners.
15. As foreshadowed in the Self-help Corps Intelligence Summary of June 29th most of the family will be away at the seaside by the date fixed for the Raid.

16. A teetotal Guard will be placed over all cellars.
17. Advanced Report Centre will be at G 25 D 93 ("The Peck and Jackdaw").
18. A site for a forward dump will be chosen—preferably on the BAYSWATER-BROADMEAD Road. "Q" will arrange.
19. Practice Raids will be carried out upon a model of the objective which will be erected at the depot.
20. Parties detailed for Glass-cutting, Safe-opening, *etc.*, *etc.*, will draw the necessary tools from the Main Dump at K 25 A on the 12th inst. "Q" will arrange.

Page 5

21. Dress: Fighting Order with Rubber Soles.

22. A non-committal hot meal (without onions) will be served to all before starting. "Q" will arrange.

23. Results of the Raid will be collected and dumped at Advanced Brigade dump at G 36 A. "Q" will arrange for necessary transport. Distribution of proceeds will be made in accordance with G.R.O. 15. "*G*" *Staff will arrange.*

24. Please acknowledge. *Issued at 5.15 P.M.*

Copies to
Diary I.
Diary II., *etc., etc.*

* * * * *

"Detroit aldermen yesterday adopted a resolution asking for the freedom of Ireland from British rule.

It is addressed to the president and was introduced by Alderman Walsh.

Other Irish patriots eager for the freedom of Erin who did sign the resolution were Jacob Guthard, William H.C. Hinkle, Joseph H. Bahorski, Joseph A. Miotke, Anthony Nowe, Herman Zink, Charles Braun, Charles A. Kocher, Oscar A. Dodt, John C. Bleil, Ralph G. Mitter, Alexander Dill, John A. Kronk, Herman Schultz, Albert G. Kunz, Frederick W. Wendell and Oscar Riopelle."

Detroit Free Press.

Your true Irish patriot doesn't mind what country he comes from.

* * * * *

[Illustration: HOIST WITH HIS OWN PETARD.

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD (*Champion of Independent Labour*). "OF COURSE I'M ALL FOR PEACEFUL PICKETING—ON PRINCIPLE. BUT IT MUST BE APPLIED TO THE PROPER PARTIES."]

* * * * *

=BLANCHE'S LETTERS.=

WAR FEVER.

Park Lane.

[Illustration: THE LAST STRAW.]

Dearest DAPHNE,—Juno ffarrington's wedding to the Oldcastles' boy, Portcullis, the other day, quite the best done of Allotment Weddings that are having a little vogue just now. Juno's white satin gown was embroidered with mustard and cress and spring onions in their natural colours, her veil was kept in place by a coronal of lettuce leaves, and, instead of a Prayer-Book or a posy, she carried a little ivory-and-silver spade. The effect was *absolutely!* The 'maids had on Olga's latest in Allotment Wedding frocks, carried out in potato-brown charmeuse and cabbage-green chiffon; also they'd garden-hats, tied under the chin with ribbon-grass and with a big cluster of radishes at the left side, and each of them carried a bunch of small salad and a darling little crystal-and-silver watering-pot (Portcullis's gifts). The Duke of Southlands gave his daughter away, and Juno *insisted* on his wearing a smock-frock and carrying a trowel, and just as the dear Bishop said, "Who giveth this woman?" the poor old darling dropped his trowel with a crash and rather spoilt things.

Page 6

The wedding-cake was a great big war loaf stuck with flags. Juno cut it in old-fashioned style with Portcullis's sword. While we were doing ourselves well with war-bread and margarine, boiled eggs and plenty of champagne, the Controller of Wedding Breakfasts blew in (it's a new post, and he's two hundred and fifty able-bodied young assistants). He was curious to see what we were having, and cautioned us against throwing any rice after our bride and 'groom. "But how absurd, you ricky person!" chipped in Popsy, Lady Ramsgate, who, of course, is Juno's great-aunt. "We never throw rice at our wedding-people! *That's* only done by the outlying tribes of barbarians." It was a pity she attracted his notice, for he was down on her directly for having on a toque almost entirely made of young turnips and carrots. He said it was "an infraction of rule 150, cap. 4,500 of the Safety of the Empire Act, forbidding the use of the people's food for personal adornment."

The Allotment expression, which is the correct one now, is a look of interest and expectation, because what one's planted is coming up. *Some* people rather spoil their Allotment expression by a *puzzled* look. *Et pourquoi?* dear, they've *quite* forgotten what they planted, and, though they *pretend* they know *exactly* what it is that's coming up, they really haven't the slightest!

My last photo is considered to show the Allotment expression in utter perfection. (It's been in *People of Position*, *Mayfair Murmurs*, and several other weeklies.) I'm standing in my potato-patch (my Allotment toilette is finished off by a pair of *enthraling* little hob-nailed boots!) and I'm holding a rake and a hoe and a digging-fork in one hand and a garden-hose in the other; there's a wheel-barrow beside me, and I'm looking at the potato-plants with the *true* Allotment smile, my dearest. I sent a copy of this picky to Norty, and under it I wrote those famous last words of some celebrated Frenchman (I forget whether it was MOLIERE or MIRABEAU or NAPOLEON): "*Je vais chercher un grand peut-etre!*"

Wee-Wee is frightfully worried about Bo-Bo being so overworked. He used to be at the head of the Department for Telling People What to Do, and he and his five hundred assistants were worked half dead; and *now* he's at the head of a still newer department, the one for Telling People What They're *Not* to Do, and, though he's eight hundred clerks to help him, Wee-Wee says the strain is too great for words. He goes to Whitehall at ten every day and comes back at three! And then he has the Long-Ago treatment that's being used so much now for war-frayed nerves. The idea is to get people as far away from the present as poss. So when Bo-Bo comes in from Whitehall he lies down on a fearful old worm-eaten oak settle in a dim room hung with moth-eaten tapestry, and Wee-Wee reads CHAUCER to him, and sings ghastly little folk-songs, accompanying herself on a thing called a *crwth*—(it's a tremendously primitive sort of harp, but I can't believe that even a *crwth* meant to make such a horrible noise as Wee-Wee makes on it!). Myself, I don't consider Bo-Bo a bit the better for the Long-Ago treatment, and there's certainly a wild look in his eyes that wasn't there before!

Page 7

M'amie, would you like to hear the simply *odious* storyette of Somebody's Cousin? Well, so you shall. Somebody is by way of being an intimate foe of mine, and Somebody's Cousin has long been a thorn in the flesh and a shaking of the head to his people. Before the War he belonged to the League for Taking Everything Lying Down, the Fellowship for Preventing People from Standing up against Foreign Aggression, and the Brotherhood for Giving up All Our Advantages to Aliens. He was of military age, and when war came, after giving vent to some completely detestable sentiments, he crossed to the U.S. and naturalised himself there, constantly attacking the country that was unlucky enough to produce him.

[Illustration: *Recruit*. "EXCUSE ME, SIR, I FEEL GREATLY EXHAUSTED BY THIS EXERCISE."

Instructor. "DO YOU, DEARIE? WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO PLAY AT? KISS-IN-THE-RING?"]

When the U.S. came in, he shed his citizenship in a hurry, fled to South America, and naturalised himself in a republic that had sworn by all its gods to keep out of the War *a tout prix*. This republic, however, changed its mind later and followed its big northern brother into the War, *et voila!* Somebody's Cousin was at a loose end again. He afterwards naturalised himself in half-a-dozen small far-away nations that all finally came in, and *then, cherie*, he drifted down to the islands of the South Pacific (the favourite ocean of *his* sort!) and had himself made an Ollyoola. (The Ollyoolas are a tribe that has *never in all its past history* been known to go to war). He was made an Ollyoola with all the native rites, dancing and shrieking and so on, and he wore the correct Ollyoola dress (a few shells and his hair trained on sticks to stand straight up).

And *now* comes the point of this storyette: Only a few weeks after Somebody's Cousin had become a full-blooded Ollyoola (I think that's the proper phrase), the Ollyoolas suddenly fell out with the Patti-Tattis (on the next island) and went to war, for *absolutely the first time*, with a *ferocity*, my Daphne, that seems to have been saving up through all their centuries of peacefulness!

Nothing's been heard since of Somebody's Cousin!

Ever thine,
BLANCHE.

* * * * *

"AIRMEN'S ORDEAL IN THE NORTH SEA.

FIVE DAYS ON A PIECE OF CHOCOLATE."

Continental Daily Mail.

Rather a precarious perch.

* * * * *

“‘GIB.’ SHELLS FALL IN MOROCCO.

MADRID.—Near Algeciras 20 shells fell from the batteries of Gibraltar. There were no victims, and no damage was caused. The authorities at Gibraltar have given satisfactory explanations.”—*Evening Paper*.

Still, we should like to know the nature of the explosive that blew Algeciras across the Straits.

Page 8

* * * * *

KINSMEN AND NAMESAKES.

An official circular, commenting on the presentation at the Scala, in film form, of *The Crisis*, by Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL, the American novelist, adds the interesting statement, "the author is of course a distant cousin of the Right Hon. Winston Churchill, M.P."; This sounds a little ungracious. Why "of course *distant*?" But perhaps the gifted novelist shares the opinion held by Lord BERESFORD of the politician who did not write *The Crisis*, but is always trying to make one.

* * * * *

From the account of a military wedding in *The West London Press*:—

"The bridegroom was wearing a simple draped gown of lavender-blue crepe georgette, with a mushroom-shaped hat in the same shade, wreathed with small coloured flowers and draped with a blue lace veil."

Some mufti!

* * * * *

"When the Lord Provost ruled that the mater was not urgent, the Labourists created something of a scene."—*Glasgow Citizen*.

Quite justifiably, in view of the imminence of "Baby Week."

* * * * *

=THE DISSUADERS.=

For many years—ever since the first piece of chalk was applied to the first wall and advertising began its bombastic career—the advertiser's tendency has been to commend his wares, if not to excess, at any rate with no want of generosity. Everyone must have noticed it. But war changes many things besides Cabinets, and if the paper famine is to continue there will shortly be a totally novel kind of advertising to be seen, where dissuasion holds the highest place. For unless something happens those journals which have already done much to reduce circulation will have to do more and actually decry themselves. Such counsels as those which follow may before long meet the eyes, and, it is possible, influence the minds, of the great B.P.:—

* * *

THE PROPRIETORS OF

THE TIMES

Urge you to spend your money
elsewhere.

THE TIMES

may have the best foreign correspondence, the latest news, the greatest variety of letters (in types of all sizes), the funniest dramatic criticisms, the sternest leading articles, and the only newspaper proprietor now acting as a plenipotentiary in America;

BUT

you are implored not to buy it.

Remember its virtues for future use,
when skies are brighter, but disregard
them to-day.

* * *

We appeal to the great-hearted Public
to make a real effort and refrain from
buying

THE OBSERVER.

Sunday may be only half a Sunday
without it;

Page 9

But indulge in a little self-sacrifice.

Not only eat less bread
But
Read less GARVIN.

* * *

DOWN SPECTATORS!

Give

THE SPECTATOR

A WIDE BERTH.

There are reasons why it must be published
regularly

But there are no reasons why you
should buy it.

There is no better, saner, or soberer
Critic of Life; but what of it?

We print all the latest Canine and
Feline news; but never mind.

If you won't, as seems probable, down
your glass, down your *Spectator*.

* * *

HELP TO WIN THE WAR

BY NOT BUYING

THE DAILY CHRONICLE.

* * *

Whatever Sixpenny weekly you buy
don't let it be

THE NATION.



Owing to its persecution by the present
incapable Government *The Nation* is
achieving an embarrassing popularity.

Please forget it.

Let your only

NATION

Be your determi-

Nation

NOT TO BUY IT.

* * *

THE PROPRIETORS OF

THE STAR

urge you not to buy it any more until
the War is over and paper is cheap again.

Buy *The Evening News* instead.

* * *

DON'T BUY

THE SPHERE.

IT IS ONLY SEVENPENCE A WEEK,

BUT DON'T BUY IT.

It is full of Pictures of the War, but you can do without them. It has punctual literary
judgments of astounding finality by "C.K.S.," but they can wait.

Do anything in reason, but don't buy

The Sphere.

The depreciation, you observe, is not always quite whole-heartedly done. But it must be
remembered that the habit of self-praise cannot be broken down in a minute, and this is
only a beginning.

* * * * *



PAN PIPES.

In the green spaces of the listening trees
Pan sits at ease,
Watching with lazy eyes
Little blue butterflies
That flicker sidelong in the fitful breeze;
While on his pipe he plays
Quaint trills, and roundelays
With dropping cadences;
And shy red squirrels rub against his knees.

And, thro' the city's tumult and the beat
Of hurrying feet,
Those whom the god loves hear
Pan's pipe, insistent, clear;
Echoes of elfin laughter, high and sweet;
Catch in the sparrows' cries
Those tinkling melodies
That sing where brooklets meet,
And the wood's glamour colours the grey street.

=A LOCAL FOOD-CONTROLLER.=

"No partner for you this evening, Sir," said the Inspector. "Mr. Tibbits has just telephoned through that he has rheumatism badly again."

Page 10

I know Tibbits' rheumatism. I also know he plays off his heat in the club billiard handicap to-night. I can imagine him writhing round the table. Still I remember the first rule of the force—under no circumstances give another policeman away.

"You'll have to take Dartmouth Street by yourself, Sir," continues the Inspector.

"What's it like?"

"Bit of a street market. All right—just tact and keep them moving."

I reach Dartmouth Street. It is a thronged smelly thoroughfare. I pass along modestly, hoping that every one will ignore me.

But a gentleman who is selling fish detects me and calls "'Ere, Boss, move this ole geezer on."

"What's the trouble?" I inquire.

The old geezer turns rapidly on me. "'Ere 'e's gone and sold me two 'errings for tuppence 'alfpenny which was that salt my 'usband went near mad, what with the pubs bein' shut all afternoon, an' now 'e's popped the fender jus' to get rid of 'is thirst."

"I told you to soak 'em in three waters," says the fishmonger.

"'Ow much beer is my 'usband to soak 'imself in—tell me that?"

It is time for tact. I whisper in the lady's ear, "Come along—don't argue with a man like that. He's beneath you."

She comes away. I am triumphant. But she turns round and cries, "This gentleman as *is* a gentleman says I ain't to lower meself by talkin' to a 'ound like you."

I move on. I doubt if the fishmonger will be pleased by the lady's representation of my few words, and I make a mental note to keep away from his stall. All at once another lady, who for some obscure reason is carrying a bucket, grips me by the arm.

"I'm goin' to 'ave the law on my side, I am," she declares emphatically, "an' then I'll smash 'is bloomin' fice in."

I am swayed towards a fruit-stall.

"Look at them," says the irate lady, holding out three potatoes. "Rotten—at thrippence a pound. My 'usband 'e'd 'ave set abaht me if I'd give 'im them for 'is dinner."

The fruiterer takes a lofty moral standard. "I sold yer them fer seed pertaters, I did. If yer 'usband eats them 'e's worse than a Un."

"Seed pertaters, was they? Where was I to grow 'em? In a mug on the mantelpiece?"

"Ow was I ter know yer 'adn't a 'lotment?"

"You'll need no 'lotment. It's a cemet'ry you'll want when my 'usband knows you've called 'im a Un."

"Now, now," I interpose tactfully. "Perhaps you can exchange them, then you'll have the lady for a regular customer."

"I don't want the blighter fer a reglar customer," says the fruiterer.

Three potatoes whirl past me at the fruiterer. The lady with the bucket departs rapidly.

"Lemme get at 'er," cries the irate fruiterer.

"You wouldn't hit a woman," I protest.

"Wouldn't I?" says the infuriated fruiterer.

Page 11

I interpose—verbally. “You’ll get everything stolen,” I say, “from your stall if you leave it.”

“I’ll leave you in charge.”

“I’m needed down my beat,” I reply, and stalk on instantly, leaving a sadly disillusioned man behind me.

I reach a queue outside a grocer’s shop.

“There now,” says a stout lady, “give ’er in charge.”

The queue all speak at once.

“She’s a ’oarder, she is. Got ’arf-a-pound o’ sugar already in ’er basket and only ’erself and ’er ’usband at ’ome, while I got five kids.”

A lady down the queue caps this with seven kids, and in the distance a lady in a fur cap claims ten, and is at once engaged by her neighbours in a bitter controversy as to whether three in France should count in sugar buying.

All the time the hoarder stands with nose in the air, the picture of lofty indifference.

Tact—tact—I remember the Inspector’s advice.

“Excuse me, Madam,” I say, “but in these times we all have to make sacrifices. You already have sugar. Some of your friends have none. Under the circumstances—”

Slowly the lady turns a withering eye on me. “I’ll move nowhere no’ow for nobody.”

A lady in the background suggests that the female should be boiled in a sugar-sack. A more humane person expresses the hope that she will be bombed that night.

“But, Madam, consider your friends,” I proceed.

“Don’t you call that lot my friends! I’m ’ere fer a pound of marge, and get it I will if all the bloomin’ speshuls come ’oo ’re doin’ reglar coppers outer jobs.”

Public opinion in the queue takes a sudden turn. One lady remarks that these speshuls are that interfering. Another alleges that she has no doubt I have sacks of sugar at home.

I remember the Inspector’s counsel about moving on, and move myself on.

There is one man in England who proclaims himself absolutely unfitted to fill the Food-Controller’s position.



I am that modest person.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Stage Manager*. "THE ELEPHANT'S PUTTING UP A VERY SPIRITED PERFORMANCE TO-NIGHT."

Carpenter. "YESSIR. YOU SEE, THE NEW HIND-LEGS IS A DISCHARGED SOLDIER, AND THE FRONT LEGS IS AN OUT-AND-OUT PACIFIST."]

* * * * *

Broody.

"WHIST DRIVE.—A sitting of eggs was given by Mrs. —— for the lady or gentleman sitting the greatest number of times consecutively."—*Worcester Daily Times*.

* * * * *

"In Captain ——'s boat all the men survived, although full of water."—*New Zealand Paper*.

In the interests of temperance we protest against "although."

* * * * *

"RUSSIAN TROOPS MUTINY.

Petrograd, Saturday.

Page 12

The Minister of War has given orders to disband the regiments, and to bring the officers and men responsible before a court-martial."

East Anglian Daily Times.

That's right. Let their wives talk to them.

* * * * *

[Illustration: "I'LL LEARN YER TO CALL ME 'LITTLE WILLIE.' MY FARVER DON'T ARF KNOW 'OW TO KILL GERMANS. AN' I'LL SHOW YER WHERE HE GITS IT FROM!"]

* * * * *

=OPEN WARFARE.= Men said, "At last! at last the open battle!

Now shall we fight unfettered o'er the plain,
No more in catacombs be cooped like cattle,
Nor travel always in a devious drain!"
They were in ecstasies. But I was damping;
I like a trench, I have no lives to spare;
And in those catacombs, however cramping,
You did at least know vaguely where you were.

Ah, happy days in deep well-ordered alleys,
Where, after dining, probably with wine,
One felt indifferent to hostile sallies,
And with a pipe meandered round the line;
You trudged along a trench until it ended;
It led at least to some familiar spot;
It might not be the place that you'd intended,
But then you might as well be there as not.

But what a wilderness we now inhabit
Since this confounded "open" strife prevails!
It may be good; I do not wish to crab it,
But you should hear the language it entails,
Should see this waste of wide uncharted craters
Where it is vain to seek the companies,
Seeing the shell-holes are as like as taters
And no one knows where anybody is.

Oft in the darkness, palpitant and blowing,
Have I set out and lost the hang of things,
And ever thought, "Where *can* the guide be going?"

But trusted long and rambled on in rings,
For ever climbing up some miry summit,
And halting there to curse the contrite guide,
For ever then descending like a plummet
Into a chasm on the other side.

Oft have I sat and wept, or sought to study
With hopeless gaze the uninformative stars,
Hopeless because the very skies were muddy;
I only saw a red malicious Mars;
Or pulled my little compass out and pondered,
And set it sadly on my shrapnel hat,
Which, I suppose, was why the needle wandered,
Only, of course, I never thought of that.

And then perhaps some 5.9's start dropping,
As if there weren't sufficient holes about;
I flounder on, hysterical and sopping,
And come by chance to where I started out,
And say once more, while I have no objection
To other people going to Berlin,
Give *me* a trench, a nice revetted section,
And let me stay there till the Bosch gives in!

* * * * *

Page 13

=A Judge Speaks Out.=

“Regarding the assertions that the appellant introduced politics into his sermons, it would be a bad day for this country when in a political controversy when a clergyman could conceive cases in which some high ideal was involved in a political controversy when a clergyman could honestly and reasonably preach about it.”—*Yorkshire Post*.

We have always felt that something like this needed saying.

* * * * *

[Illustration: COMFORT IN EXILE.

IMPERIAL BROTHER-IN-LAW. “AFTER ALL, MY DEAR TINO, YOU ARE SOMETHING BETTER THAN A KING; YOU ARE A FIELD-MARSHAL IN MY ARMY! YOU SHALL PRESENTLY HAVE A COMMAND ON THE WESTERN FRONT.”

TINO (*without enthusiasm*). “THANK YOU VERY MUCH.”]

* * * * *

=ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.=

Monday, June 11th.—I am told that it was WILLIE REDMOND’S ambition to be the Father of the House; indeed, that by some arithmetical process peculiar to himself he claimed, although only elected in 1883, to be already entitled to that venerable honour.

In reality he was the Eternal Boy, from the far-off time when it was his nightly delight with youthful exuberance to cheek Mr. Speaker BRAND until the moment of his glorious death in Flanders, whither he had gone at an age when most of his compeers were content to play the critic in a snug corner of the smoking-room.

Personal affection combined with admiration for his gallantry to inspire the speeches in which the PRIME MINISTER, Mr. ASQUITH and Sir EDWARD CARSON enshrined the most remarkable tribute ever paid to a private Member.

Sir GEORGE GREENWOOD’S affection for the animal creation is commonly supposed to be such that he would not countenance the slaughter of the meanest thing that crawls—not even those miserable creatures who hold that SHAKSPEARE’S plays were written by SHAKSPEARE. It was therefore with pained regret that I heard him attempting to support his objection to the activities of sparrow-clubs by the argument that, if the birds were destroyed, large numbers of grubs and caterpillars would be left alive. After this I shall not be surprised to hear that he has been summoned by the R.S.P.C.A. for brutality to a slug.

What I most admire in the CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND is his wonderful self-restraint. When Mr. GINNELL stridently inquired whether to institute legal process against the police in Ireland was not like bringing an action against Satan in hell, the ordinary man would have been tempted to reply: "The hon. Member probably has sources of information not accessible to me." Mr. DUKE contented himself with mildly suggesting that the hon. Member should "apply his own intelligence to that matter." Perhaps, however, he meant much the same thing.

[Illustration: *IN RE AN ACTION AGAINST SATAN.*

Page 14

(MR. H.E. DUKE, K.C.)]

Half the sitting was taken up with discussing whether Messrs. JOWETT and RAMSAY MACDONALD should be given passports to Russia. Mr. BONAR LAW clinched the matter by saying that the Russian Government wanted them. Well, *de gustibus, etc.*

Tuesday, June 12th.—Perhaps the most wonderful revelation of the War has been the adaptability of the British working-man. Mr. CATHCART WASON called attention to the case of a professional gardener who, having been recruited for home service, had first been turned into a bricklayer's assistant, then into an assistant-dresser, and finally into a munition-maker. For some time the Ministry of Munitions seems to have been loth to part with the services of this Admirable Crichton, but having learned from the Board of Agriculture that there was a shortage of food it has now consented to restore him to his original vocation.

It will be a thousand pities if Captain BATHURST should persist in leaving the department of the FOOD-CONTROLLER. If he could only keep down food-prices as effectively as he does irrelevant questioners he would be worth his weight in "Bradburys." His latest victim is Mr. PENNEFATHER, who has developed a keen curiosity on the subject of potatoes. Did not the Government think that the high price would cause premature "lifting"? Were they aware that potatoes could be used for making rubber substitutes and cement; and would they assure the House that there would be an abundance of them for the next twelve months'? Captain BATHURST declined to figure in the *role* of prophet, and, for the rest, remarked that the hon. Member appeared to have an insatiable appetite for *crambe repetita*. Mr. PENNEFATHER is understood to be still searching the Encyclopaedia to discover the properties of this vegetable, with the view of putting a few posers on the subject to Captain BATHURST (or his successor) next week.

[Illustration: CAPTAIN BATHURST REFUSES TO BE A POTATO PROPHET.]

As the friends of Proportional Representation are wont to refer to their little pet by the affectionate diminutive of "P.R.," they can hardly be surprised that its appearance should lead to combats recalling in intensity the palmy days of the Prize Ring. It was designed that the Front Bench should be content to perform the function of judicious bottle-holder, and leave the issue to be fought out by the rest of the House. But Sir F.E. SMITH, like the Irishman who inquired, "Is this a private fight, or may anyone join in?" could not refrain from trailing his coat, and quickly found a doughty opponent in Mr. HAYES FISHER. The House so much enjoyed the unusual freedom of the fight that it would probably be going on still but for that spoil-sport, the HOME SECRETARY, who begged Members to come to a decision. By 149 votes to 141 "P.R." was "down and out."

Mr. EUGENE WASON entered an anticipatory protest against the possibility that Scotland might be deprived of some of her seventy-two Members. "I myself," he said,

“represent two whole counties, Clackmannan and Kinross, and I have a bit of Stirling and Perth and West Fife, and I am told I am to be swept out of existence.” Gazing at his ample proportions the House felt that the Boundary Commissioners will have their work cut out for them.

Page 15

[Illustration: HEAVY WORK FOR THE BOUNDARY COMISSIONERS.

MR. EUGENE WASON TO BE SWEEP AWAY.]

Wednesday, June 13th.—Considering that barely three hours before the House met the “Fort of London” had been drenched with the “ghastly dew of aerial navies” Members showed themselves most uncommon calm. They exhibited, however, a little extra interest when any prominent personage entered the House, showing that he at least had escaped the bombs, and were too busy comparing notes regarding their personal experiences to ask many Supplementary Questions.

Even Mr. BONAR LAW’S announcement that KING CONSTANTINE had abdicated the throne of Greece passed almost without remark; except that Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL anxiously inquired whether TINO, having received the Order of the Boot, would be allowed to retain that of the Bath.

The mystery of Lord NORTHCLIFFE’S visit to the United States has been cleared up. Certain journals, believed to enjoy his confidence, had described him as “Mr. Balfour’s successor.” Certain other journals, whose confidence he does not enjoy, had declined to believe this. The fact, as stated by Mr. BONAR LAW, is that “it is hoped that Lord NORTHCLIFFE will be able to carry on the work begun by Mr. BALFOUR as head of the British Mission in America.” He is expected “to co-ordinate and supervise the work of all the Departmental Missions.” It was interesting to learn that his Lordship “will have the right of communicating direct with the PRIME MINISTER”—a thing which of course he has never done before.

Thursday, June 14th.—Mr. KEATING, having made the remarkable discovery that the War has injured the prosperity of Irish seaside resorts, demanded the restoration of excursion trains and season tickets. Mr. GEORGE ROBERTS stoutly supported the Irish Railway Executive Committee in its refusal to encourage pleasure-traffic. His decision received the involuntary support of Mr. MACVEAGH, who attempted to back up his colleague by the singular argument that the existing trains in Ireland ran half-empty.

The Lords spent the best part of a sunny afternoon in discussing whether or not the South-Eastern Eailway should be allowed to bolster up the Charing Cross railway bridge. In vain Lord CURZON, flying in the face of his Ministerial colleague, the PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE, urged the claims of Art; in vain he assured the House that when WORDSWORTH wrote of the view from Westminster, “Earth has not anything to show more fair,” he was not thinking of that maroon-coloured monstrosity. The majority of their lordships, understanding that the proposal had something to do with “strengthening the piers,” declined to reject it.

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[Illustration: *Officer*. "AND WHAT DID YOU SAY TO PRIVATE SMITH?" *Witness (who had discovered prisoner milking cow belonging to French farmer)*. "I TOLD HIM TO STOP IMMEDIATELY AND PUT THE MILK BACK."]

Page 16

* * * * *

We have received a copy of *The Glasgow Weekly Herald*, dated “May 56, 1917.” Trust a Scot to make a good thing go as far as possible.

* * * * *

“Great jubilation prevailed amongst the people at finding the children alive, and congratulations were extended to their parents that their little ones were not lost in the cavities and chasms of Knocknatubber Mountain, though straying thereon for upwards of 25 years.”—*Nenagh Guardian*.

The young “Rips”!

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[Illustration: *National Service Volunteer (late crack billiard player)*. “MARKER, HAND ME THE REST.”]

* * * * *

=“IN PRIZE.”=

A ship was built in Glasgow, and oh, she looked a daisy
(Just the way that some ships do!)
An’ the only thing against ’er was she allus steered so crazy
(An’ it’s true, my Johnny Bowline, true!)

They sent ’er out in ballast to Oregon for lumber,
An’ before she dropped ’er pilot she all but lost ’er number.

They sold ’er into Norway because she steered so funny,
An’ she nearly went to glory before they drew the money.

They sold ’er out o’ Norway—they sold ’er into Chile,
An’ Chile got a bargain because she steered so silly.

They chartered ’er to Germans with a bunch o’ greasers forrard;
Old shellbacks wouldn’t touch ’er because she steered so ’orrid.

She set a course for Bremen with contraband inside ’er,
An’ she might ’ave got there some time if a cruiser ’adn’t spied ’er.

She nearly drowned the boarders because she cut such capers,
But they found she was a German through inspectin’ of ’er papers.



So they put a crew aboard 'er, which was both right an' lawful,
An' the prize crew 'ad a picnic, because she steered so awful.

But they brought 'er into Kirkwall, an' then they said, "Lord lumme,
If I ever see an 'ooker as steered so kind o' rummy!"

But she'll fetch 'er price at auction, for oh, she looks a daisy
(Just the way that some ships do!)
An' the chap as tops the biddin' won't know she steers so crazy
(But it's true, my Johnny Bowline, true!)

C.F.S.

=TO MR. BALFOUR ON HIS RETURN.=

Our hearts go out with all our ships that plough the deadly sea,
But the ship that brought us safely back the only ARTHUR B.
Was freighted with good wishes in a very high degree.

There are heaps of politicians who can hustle and can shriek,
And some, though very strong in lung, in brains are very weak,
But A.J.B.'s equipment is admittedly unique.

His manners are delightful, and the workings of his mind
Have never shown the slightest trace of self-esteem behind;
Nor has he had at any time a private axe to grind.

Page 17

For forty years and upwards he has graced the public scene
Without becoming sterilized or stiffened by routine;
He still retains his freshness and his brain is just as keen.

His credit was not shipwrecked on the fatal Irish reef;
He has always been a loyal and a sympathetic chief;
And he has also written *The Foundations of Belief*.

As leader of the Mission to our cousins and Allies,
We learn with satisfaction, but without the least surprise,
That he proved the very cynosure of Transatlantic eyes.

For the special brand of statesman *plus* aristocratic sage,
Like the model king-philosopher described in PLATO'S page,
Is uncommonly attractive in a democratic age.

"BALFOUR Must Go!" was once the cry of those who deemed him slack,
But now there's not a single scribe of that unruly pack
Who is not glad in every sense that BALFOUR has come back.

And as for his "successor"—the Napoleonic peer
Whose functions are restricted to a purely business sphere—
We must try to bear his absence in a spirit of good cheer.

* * * * *

=THE INFANTICIDE.=

From an economic point of view it was inexcusable. I can only hope that the affair will never reach the ear of the new FOOD-CONTROLLER. The chief culprit was undoubtedly Joan minor—I only became an accomplice after the fact—and I can scarcely believe that even a Food-Controller could be very angry with Joan minor. For one thing she really is so very minor. And then there's her manner; in face of it severity, as I have found, is out of the question. Even Joan major, who has been known to rout our charlady in single combat, finds it irresistible. Indeed when I taxed her with having a hand in the crime she secured an acquittal on the plea of duress.

Ever since Joan minor arrived at years of understanding the weeks preceding the great day have been fraught with a mystery in which I have no share. Earnest conversations which break off guiltily the moment I enter the room; strained whisperings and now and again little uncontrollable giggles of ecstatic anticipation from Joan minor—these are the signs that I have learned to look for, and, being well versed in my part, to ignore with a sublime unconsciousness which should make my fortune in a melodrama of stage asides. And then, on the morning of my birthday, the solemn ceremonial of revelation, I

would come in to breakfast, to find a parcel lying by my plate. At first I would not see it. In a tense and unnatural silence Joan minor would follow me with her eyes while I opened the window a few inches, closed it again, stroked the cat and generally behaved as though sitting down at table was the last thing I intended. Then, when I did take my place, "The post is early to-day," I would say, pushing the parcel carelessly on one side as I took up the paper, while Joan minor hid her face in Joan major's blouse lest her feelings should betray her into premature speech. And at last I would open it, and my amazement and delight would know no bounds. There was very little acting needed for that. It is no small thing to be spirited back to the age when birthdays really matter.

Page 18

And so this year it was with a feeling of having been cheated that I left the house for the office, where, in company with other old fogies and girl clerks, I do my unambitious bit towards downing the Hun. The premonitory symptoms had seemed to me unusually acute, but the morning had brought no parcel. My years weighed on my shoulders again, and I am afraid I was more than a little tart with my typist.

I was kept late for dinner, and when I entered the room I found Joan minor sitting in her place, her eyes bright with expectation. Beside my place was a covered muffin dish. There was no dallying with the pleasure this time, for I had suddenly become young again, and could not have waited had I tried. I lifted the cover, and there, about the size of a well-nourished pea, lay the first-fruit of Joan minor's peculiar and personal allotment, prepared, planted and dug by Joan minor's own hands, a veritable and unmistakable potato.

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[Illustration: *Official of Lady War-workers' Bureau*. "WHAT SORT OF WORK DO YOU FEEL FITTED FOR?"

Applicant. "I DON'T QUITE KNOW, BUT I WANT TO WEAR THESE CLOTHES."]

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Our Official Pessimists.

From an Admiralty notice:—

"It is to be particularly noted that entries are only being made for 12 years' service, and not for duration of war."—*Evening Paper*.

* * * * *

"Summoned at Barry for having driven a horse whilst drunk, Antonio Millonas was stated to have narrowly missed a policeman and two children."—*Western Mail*.

We are all in favour of prohibition for horses.

* * * * *

=IN A GOOD CAUSE.=

The Newport Market Army Training School, Greencoat Place, Westminster, which has for over fifty years been training homeless and destitute boys to become soldiers of the

KING, and has sent over two thousand into the Army, is in great need of funds. Mr. Punch cordially supports the appeal of the President of the School, H.R.H. the Duke of CONNAUGHT, who “sincerely hopes the public will generously support an Institution that has for so many years quietly and unobtrusively furnished a Christian home and education to poor and outcast lads, and has supplied the Army with so many good and gallant soldiers.”

Donations and inquiries should be addressed to the Secretary, the Rev. H.A. WILSON, 20, Great Peter Street, Westminster, S.W.1.

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A Credit to the Commonwealth.

“COCKATOO, Australian, splendid talker, does not swear.”—*Newcastle Evening Chronicle*.

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=THE HAT AND THE VISIT.=

“Francesca,” I said, “does my hat really look all right?”

Page 19

When I put this momentous question we were in a train, being bound on a visit to Frederick at his preparatory school. A sudden doubt had just assailed me as to my presentability. Should I, as a father, be looked upon as a credit or a disgrace to my son? Francesca took some time before she answered my question. Then she spoke.

"Your hat," she said, "is well enough."

"I see what it is," I said; "you think I ought to have worn a top-hat. There are still occasions when a top-hat may, nay, must be worn; and this, you think, is one of them. There are solemnities and venerationes that only a top-hat can inspire in the naturally irreverent mind of youth. A father in any other hat is a ridiculously youthful object and has no business to inflict himself on his son. Very well. I would not for worlds spoil Frederick's half-holiday by shaming him in the eyes of his schoolfellows."

"What do you propose to do about it, then? You can't alter your hat now."

"No," I said, "I can't; but I can get out of the train at the next station and go home and leave you in your comparative spickness and your relative spanness to spend your afternoon with the boy. Or, stay, there must be a shop in Belfield where top-hats can be bought. It is a cathedral city and possesses dignitaries of the Church who still wear top-hats, and——"

"But those are special top-hats. You couldn't go to Frederick in a bishop's hat, now could you?"

"No-o-o," I said doubtfully, "perhaps I couldn't. But suppose I wore the gaiters too—— wouldn't that make it all right?"

"I should like," she said, "to see Frederick's face on perceiving the new bishop."

"Francesca," I said, "you talk as if no boys ever had bishops for their fathers. Let me assure you, on the contrary, that there are many bishops who have large families of both sexes. I once stayed with a bishop, and I never heard anybody attempt to make a mockery of his gaiters."

"But they were his own. He couldn't be a bishop without them."

"That fact doesn't render them immune from laughter. My present hat, for instance, is my own, and yet you have been laughing at it ever since I called your attention to it."

"Not at all; I have been admiring it. I said it was well enough, and so it is. What more can you want?"

"I only hope," I said, "that Frederick will think so too. It would be too painful to dash the cup of half-holiday joy from a boy's lips by wearing an inappropriate hat."

"You're too nervous altogether about the impression you're going to make on Frederick. Take example by me. I've got a hat on."

"You have," I said fervently. "It has grazed my face more than once."

"It is feeding," she said, "on your damask cheek. But I'm quite calm in spite of it."

"But then," I said, "you never knew Rowell."

"No. Who was he?"

"Rowell," I said, "was a schoolfellow of mine, and he had a father."

Page 20

“Marvellous! And a mother too, I suppose.”

“Yes,” I said, “but she doesn’t come into the story. Rowell’s father had a passion, it appears, for riding, and one dreadful afternoon, when we were playing cricket, he rode into the cricket-field. *He was wearing trousers, and his trousers had rucked up to his knees.* It was a terrific sight, and, though we all pretended not to see and were very sorry for young Rowell, he felt the blow most keenly. I hope my hat won’t be like Rowell’s father’s trousers.”

“It isn’t a bit like them yet,” said Francesca.

R.C.L.

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[Illustration: *Officer.* “BUT SURELY, THOMPSON, IF THESE MUD-BILLETS ARE ALL ALIKE YOU OUGHT TO REMEMBER WHERE YOU PUT MY HORSE——”]

[Illustration: *Batman.* “HERE HE IS, SIR.”]

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“Fireman wanted; consuming under 50 tons; wages 30s.”

Under the present system of rationing, this demand for moderation does not seem excessive.

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[Illustration: *Inspecting Officer.* “IT’S NO USE YOUR TELLING ME YOU HAVEN’T GOT ANY POTATOES ABOUT THE PLACE. IF YOU HOLD THE END OF THIS TAPE I’LL VERY SOON TELL YOU HOW MANY YOU HAVE HERE.”]

Farmer. “YE’LL BE A MAIN CLEVER LITTLE FELLOW, THEN. THEY WAS TURMUTS WHEN I PUT ’EM IN LAST BACK END.”]

* * * * *

=OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.=

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

It is my deliberate verdict that Mr. E.F. BENSON is (as my old nurse used to express it) “in league with Somebody he oughtn’t.” I hope, however, that he will understand this for the extorted compliment that it is, and not magic me into something unpleasant, or

(more probably) write another book to prove to my own dissatisfaction that I am everything I least wish to be. That indeed is the gravamen of my charge: the diabolic ingenuity with which he makes not so much our pleasant vices as our little almost-virtues into whips to scourge us with. All this has been wrung from me by the perusal of *Mr. Teddy* (FISHER UNWIN). Even now I can't make up my mind whether I like it or not. The first half, which might be called a satire on the folly of being forty and not realising it, depressed me profoundly. I need not perhaps enlarge upon the reason. Later, Mr. BENSON made a very clever return upon the theme; and, with a touch of real beauty, brought solace to poor *Mr. Teddy* and consolation to the middle-aged reader. I need give you only a slight indication of the plot, which is simplicity itself. Into the self-contained little community of a provincial society, where to have once been young is to retain a courtesy title to perpetual youth, there arrives suddenly the genuine article, a boy and girl still in the springtime of life, by contrast with whom the preserved immaturity

Page 21

of *Mr. Teddy* and his partner, *Miss Daisy*, is shown for an artificial substitute. Baldly stated, the thesis sounds cynical and a little cruel; actually, however, you will here find Mr. BENSON in a kindlier mood than he sometimes consents to indulge. He displays, indeed, more than a little fondness for his disillusioned hero; the fine spirit with which *Mr. Teddy* faces at last the inevitable is a sure proof of the author's sympathy.

* * * * *

You will hardly have traversed the passages of our underground railway system without being hurriedly aware in passing of a picture in reds and browns, representing a faun-like figure piping to an audience of three rather self-conscious rabbits. This pleasing group does not portray an actual scene from *Autumn* (LANE), but is rather to be taken as symbolic of the atmosphere of Miss MURIEL HINE'S latest book. The faun, I imagine, stands for *Rollo*, the middle-aged lover of the country, into whose happy life other, more human, loves break with such devastation. What the rabbits mean is a more difficult problem. I jest; but as a matter of fact I should be the first to admit that Miss HINE has written a story that, despite a certain crudity of colouring, is both unconventional and alive. The attitude of the characters towards their parents, for example, is at least original. *Deirdre*, the heroine, frankly despised her mother, to whom she owed a marriage with the man whom she hated. The gift of a country cottage enabled her to escape from him to rabbits (figurative) and the simpler life. There, however, she fell in with *Rollo*, who loved her at sight, and whose daughter, *Hyacinth*, adored her father, but quite blandly deceived him about her own amorous adventures. A pretty tangle, you observe, and I am not sure that I can wholly acquit the author of some cowardice in her manner of cutting it. But undoubtedly *Autumn* remains a story to read, and remember.

* * * * *

Since Mr. H. PERRY ROBINSON'S name must be familiar to most of us by now as that of one of the very select company of journalists who monopolise seats at the Front, one naturally turns with interest from his daily despatches to a sustained narrative. His account of last year's battle of the Somme, which he names *The Turning Point* (HEINEMANN), is as lively and vigorous a recital as can well be imagined of events hardly the less thrilling because already well-known. Although he disclaims expert knowledge of strategies, he is at least uncommonly well qualified to appraise the things he saw. "Before July, 1916, our Army," he says, "was like a small hoy hoping to grow up and be big enough to lick a bully some day. Told to attack him before he felt sure of his own strength, the small boy would not have been sorry to wait a bit longer, but the pressure against Verdun and against the Russians had to be relieved, and so with steadily

Page 22

increasing skill and confidence the attack was made, and day after day fresh units proved themselves more than a match for the enemy.” The result was a series of victories—Mametz, Contalmaison, Pozieres, Guillemont, Thiepval, Beaumont-Hamel—and the writer is able to associate with each immortal name the regiments there engaged, all heroes, for “there were no stragglers.” Indeed, if there is a weakness in the book it is that the insistent recording of the individual heroism of different battalions tends to become monotonous. But what a fault! It is a monotony of British valour crowned by a monotony of British triumph.

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A point that will hardly avoid your notice in the plot of *In the Night* (LONGMANS), by Mr. R. GORELL BARNES (now Lord GORELL), is the exiguous part played in its elucidation by the Great Investigator, who (as usual) happens to be on the spot and able to place his services at the disposal of the local authorities. It is, I suppose due to the Sherlockian tradition these unhappy persons, the local detectives, must always be supplemented by a superior and high-handed expert. I think, from his preface, that the author does not quite share my own taste in such matters, since he promises that his Investigator shall keep no secrets and observe nothing withheld from the eye of the reader. So faithful is the author to this undertaking that he practically keeps his expert hanging about with the unenlightened crowd, while another character, in light-hearted amateur enthusiasm, does all the work. But of course, in a tale of this kind, the only thing that really matters is the one question of spotting the criminal, or who killed Cock Robin. Naturally I am not going to spoil your fun over this by any officious whisperings. As you probably know, the one safe rule in such matters is to concentrate upon Caesar’s wife; and even in repeating this antique maxim I may have betrayed too much. Forget it, and you may find what happened *In the Night* a sufficiently intriguing problem to provide a pleasant bedtime entertainment that will leave your subsequent repose unimpaired.

In deciding to add to what one may call the fiction of Metropolitan Adventures, whereof *The New Arabian Nights* may be regarded as both the model and the prototype, the author of *The London Nights of Belsize* (LANE) has undertaken a task which is both easy and difficult—easy because a sophisticated style and a lively imagination are the only essential qualifications, and difficult because it involves competition with a perfect galaxy of distinguished authors. There is always room for more of it, however, and, if Mr. VERNON RENDALL disappoints us, it is not merely because the standard has been set unusually high. His style is smooth and assured, and, though somewhat lacking in humour, his touch is light and pleasing. He begins well and interests us in his principal character so that we look forward with zest to the adventures

Page 23

of a personality which is everything that this sort of fiction requires. Here unfortunately the matter ends. *Belsize*, who promises so much, has no adventures worth the name. It is true that he rescues the *Prince of Mingrelia*, runs to earth a gang of highly-educated and aesthetic criminals, and does other things that we properly expect such men to do. But there is no excitement about his methods. Not to put too fine a point on it, the author of *Belsize* lacks the true imagination that makes the unreal seem real—a very different thing from the imagination which merely clothes realities in a garment of mystery. Notwithstanding this defect, *The London Nights of Belsize* should wile away an hour or so very pleasantly.

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[Illustration: *Delighted Patriot (after three days' absence)*. "NOT MUCH TO FEAR FROM U-BOATS IF WE CAN GROW FOOD AT THIS RATE!"

Voice from, above. "PLEASE WOULD YOU THROW OVER OUR LITTLE BOY'S ZEPPELIN?"]

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If *A Regimental Surgeon in War and Prison* (MURRAY) does not create so profound an impression as it would have done two years ago, the reason must be that our capacity for disgust at Hunnish cruelty is exhausted by the demands already made upon it. Captain DOLBEY was in the Mons retreat and assisted at what he calls "the Miracle of the Marne," and in writing of these events he shows a real knowledge of both friend and foe. Taken prisoner under circumstances entirely creditable to himself, he saw the inside of German prison-camps, and suffered the indignities and horrors for which these places have so justly become infamous. His experiences are described with an almost judicial calmness. In one case of childish revenge I trust that the sufferers were sustained by a sense of humour. When the picture of a "Prussian family having its morning hate" appeared, the prisoners were punished by having their deck-chairs confiscated. Mr. Punch, while deeply regretting this vicarious expiation of his offence, cannot help deriving some solace from the thought that he succeeded in penetrating the hide of these Teuton pachyderms. When, for a change, Captain DOLBEY received a kindness from German hands he acknowledges it frankly. He also makes one or two suggestions which I sincerely hope will be considered by those who are in a position to deal with them. Altogether an illuminating book.

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