

Punch, or the London Charivari, Vol. 159, November 3, 1920 eBook

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Page 1

CHARIVARIA.

"After all," asks a writer, "why shouldn't Ireland have a Parliament, like England?" Quite frankly we do not like this idea of retaliation while more humane methods are still unexplored.

* * *

"The miners' strike," says a music-hall journal, "has given one song-writer the idea for a ragtime song." It is only fair to say that Mr. *Smillie* had no idea that his innocent little manoeuvre would lead to this.

* * *

The Admiralty does not propose to publish an official account of the Battle of Jutland. Indeed the impression is gaining ground that this battle will have to be cancelled.

* * *

We are asked to deny that, following upon the publication of *Mirrors of Downing Street*, by "A Gentleman with a Duster," Lord *Kenyon* is about to dedicate to Sir *Claude Champion de CRESPIGNY* a book entitled *A Peer with a Knuckle-Duster*.

* * *

"Mr. Lloyd George seems to have had his hair 'bobbed' recently," says a gossip-writer in a Sunday paper. Mr. *Hodges* still sticks to the impression that it was really two-bobbed.

* * *

"Cigars discovered in the possession of Edward Fischer, in New York," says a news item, "were found to contain only tobacco." Very rarely do we come across a case like that in England.

* * *

"Water," says a member of the L.C.C., "is being sold at a loss." But not in our whisky, we regret to say.

* * *

What is claimed to be the largest shell ever made has been turned out by the Hecla Works, Sheffield. It may shortly be measured for a war to fit it.

* * *

A taxi-driver who knocked a man down in Gracechurch Street has summoned him for using abusive language. It seems a pity that pedestrians cannot be knocked down without showing their temper like this.

* * *

After months of experiment at Thames Ditton the question of an artificial limb of light metal has been solved. It is said to be just the thing for Tube-travellers to carry as a spare.

* * *

In connection with Mr. PRINGLE'S recent visit to Ireland we are asked to say that he was not sent there as a reprisal.

* * *

Mr. *George* LANSBURY recently told a Poplar audience why he went to Australia many years ago. No explanation was offered of his return.

* * *

A coal-porter summoned for income-tax at West Ham Police Court said that his wages averaged eight hundred pounds a year. We think it only fair to say that there must be labouring men here and there who earn even less than that.

* * *

"The thief," says a weekly paper report, "entered the house by way of the front-door." We can only suppose that the burglars' entrance was locked at the time.

* * *

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A small boy, born in a Turkish harem, is said to have forty-eight step-mothers living. Our office-boy, however, is still undefeated in the matter of recently defunct grandmothers.

* * *

The number of accidental deaths in France is attaining alarming proportions. It is certainly time that a stop was put to the quaint custom of duelling.

* * *

A rat that looks like a kangaroo and barks like a prairie dog is reported in Texas, says *The Columbia Record*. We can only say that, when we last heard that one, it was an elephant with white trunk and pink eyes.

* * *

“Why do leaders of the Bar wear such ill-fitting clothes?” asks a contemporary. A sly dig, we presume, at their brief bags.

* * *

A reduction in prices is what every housewife in the land is looking for, says *The Daily Express*. It is not known how our contemporary got hold of this idea.

* * *

There is no truth in the report that *The Daily Mail* has offered a prize of a hundred pounds to the first person who can prove that it has been talking through its prize hat.

* * *

“What should *The Daily Mail* hat be worn with?” asks an enthusiast. “Characteristic modesty” is the right answer.

* * *

Emigrants to Canada, it is stated, now include an increasingly large proportion of skilled workers. Fortunately, thanks to the high wages they earn at home, we are not losing the services of our skilled loafers.

* * *

A burglar who was recently sentenced in the Glasgow Police Court was captured while in the act of lowering a chest of drawers out of a window with a rope. The old method of

taking the house home and extracting the furniture at leisure is still considered the safest by conservative house-breakers.

* * *

Found under a bed in a strange house at Grimsby, a man told the police who arrested him that he was looking for work. It was pointed out to him that the usual place for men looking for work is in bed, not under it.

* * *

In a recent case a Hull bargee gave his name as ALFAINA *swash*. Nevertheless the Court did not decide to hear the rest of his evidence *in camera*.

* * *

A cyclist who stopped to watch a stag-hunt near Tivington Cross, in Somerset, was tossed into the hedge by the stag. On behalf of the beast it is claimed that the cyclist was off-side.

* * * * *

[Illustration: "*She don't 'ARF Swank since 'er Farver was knocked over by A Rolls-Royce.*"]

* * * * *

"The Czecho-Slovaks will shortly be able to see the successful play, 'The Right to Stroke.'"—*Evening Paper*.

Good news for the local pussies.

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* * * * *

"The first annual dinner of the — Club was held in the Club Rooms on Saturday evening, a large number sitting down to an excellent coal collation."—*Local Paper*.

Surely a little extravagant in these times.

=*The poet laureate and his German friends*.=

"Prisoners to a foe inhuman, Oh, but our hearts rebel;
Defenceless victims ye are, in claws of spite a prey.

* * * * *

Nor trouble we just Heaven that quick revenge be done
On Satan's chamberlains highseated in Berlin;
Their reek floats round the world on all lands neath the sun:
Tho' in craven Germany was no man found, not one
With spirit enough to cry Shame!—Nay but on such sin
Follows Perdition eternal ... and it has begun."

The POET LAUREATE, in "The Times," November 4th, 1918.

"The letter [of reconciliation from Oxford Professors, etc., 'to their fellows in Germany'] is written ... with the recognition that we have both of us been provoked to 'animosities' which we desire to put aside ... The commonest objection was that the action was 'premature'—my own feeling being that of shame for having vainly waited so long in deference to political complications, and that shame was intolerably increasing ... It is undiscerning not to see that at a critical moment of extreme tension they [the German Professors] allowed their passion to get the better of them."

The POET LAUREATE, in "The Times," October 27th, 1920.

[The author of the following lines fears that he has failed to do full justice to the metrical purity of the Master's craftsmanship.]

Such people as lacked the leisure to peruse
My scripture, one-and-a-quarter columns long
In *The Times*, may like me, as having the gift of song,
To prosodise succinctly my private views.

Did I cry Shame! in November, 1918,
On those who never cried Shame! on the lords of hell?
Rather the shame is mine who delayed to clean
My soul of a wrong that grew intolerable.

What if our German colleagues, our brothers-in-lore,
Preached and approved for years the vilest of deeds?
Yet is there every excuse when the hot blood speeds;
We too were vexed and wanted our fellows' gore,
Saying rude things in a moment of extreme tension
Which in our calmer hours we should never mention.

Dons in their academic ignorance blind,
With passions like to our own as pea to pea,
Shall we await in them a change of mind?
Shall we require a repentant apology?
Or in a generous spasm anticipate
The regrets unspoken that, under the heavy stress
Of labour involved in planning new frightfulness,
They have been too busy, poor dears, to formulate?

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Once I remarked that on German crimes would follow
“Perdition eternal”; Heaven would make this its care,
Nor need to be hustled, with plenty of time to spare.
Those words of mine I have a desire to swallow,
Finding, on further thought, which admits my offence,
That a few brief years of Coventry, of denied
Communion with Culture—used in the Oxford sense—
Are ample for getting our difference rectified.

What is a Laureate paid for, I ask *The Times*,
If not to recant in prose his patriot rhymes?
I stamp my foot on my wrath’s last smouldering ember,
And for my motto I take “*Lest we remember.*” O. S.

* * * * *

=THE SUPERFECTION LAUNDRY.=

I let myself into my flat to find a young woman sitting on one of those comfortless chairs designed by upholsterers for persons of second quality who are bidden to wait in the hall.

“You want to see me?” I inquired. “Yes; what is it?”

“I have called, Madam, to ask if you are satisfied with your laundry.”

“Far from it,” I said. “It is kind of you to ask, but why?”

“Because I wish to solicit your custom for the laundry I represent.”

“What faults do you specialise in?” I inquired.

“I beg your pardon, Madam?”

“Will you send home my husband’s collars with an edge like a dissipated saw?”

The young woman’s face brightened with comprehension.

“Oh, no, Madam,” she replied. “We exercise the greatest care with gentlemen’s stand-up collars.”

“Will you shrink my combinations to the size of a doll’s?”

An expression of horror invaded her countenance. “The utmost precaution,” she asserted, “is taken to prevent the shrinkage of woollens.”



"Is it your custom to send back towels reduced to two hems connected by a few stray rags in the middle?"

The young woman was aghast. "All towels are handled as gently as possible to avoid tearing," she replied.

"How about handkerchiefs?" I asked. "I dislike to find myself grasping my bare nose through a hole in the centre."

The suggestion made my visitor laugh.

"Are you in the habit of sewing nasty bits of red thread, impossible to extricate, into conspicuous parts of one's clothing?"

"Oh, no, Madam," she asseverated; "no linen is allowed to leave our establishment with any disfiguring marks."

"You never, I suppose, return clothing dirtier than when it reached you?" I proceeded.

Suppressed scorn that I could believe in such a possibility flashed momentarily from her eyes before she uttered an emphatic denial.

"Nor do you ever perhaps send home garments belonging to other people while one's own are missing?"

"Never, I can assure you, Madam."

"Does the man who delivers the washing habitually turn the basket upside down so that the heavy things below crush all the delicate frilly things that ought to be on top?"

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She seemed incapable of conceiving that such perverted creatures could exist.

“Do they never whistle in an objectionable manner while waiting for the soiled clothes?”

“Whistling on duty is strictly forbidden, Madam.”

“Well, all these things I have mentioned my laundry does to me, and even more, and when I write to complain they disregard my letters.”

“We rarely have complaints, Madam, and all such receive prompt attention. I can give references in this street—in this block of flats even.”

“Well,” said I, “if you like to give me a card I am willing to let you have a trial.”

The young woman opened her bag with alacrity and handed me a card.

“The Superfection Laundry,” I read with amazement. “Surely there must be some mistake?”

“Are you not Mrs. Fulton?” asked the young woman.

“No, you have come a floor too high. Mrs. Fulton lives in the flat below me.”

“I must apologise for my call, then; I was sent to see Mrs. Fulton. But all the same may we not add you to the list of our customers?”

“Impossible,” I said.

“May I ask your reasons, Madam?”

“Because the laundry I employ at present is the Superfection.”

* * * * *

=The Church Militant in the Near East.=

“Resht was bombed by Red aeroplanes on September 28 and 30; one of the machines was forced to descend on the latter date some 6 miles to the north of the town. The pilot and observer were taken by the Cassocks.”—*Evening Paper*.

[Illustration: OUR VILLAGE SIGN.]

[Illustration:

The Guest (exasperated with waiting). “I’VE A GOOD MIND TO DRIVE OFF, BUT I’M AFRAID OF HITTING THAT IDIOT IN FRONT.”

The Hostess. "HIT HIM WHERE YOU LIKE, DEAR—IT'S MY HUSBAND."]

* * * * *

=PROOF POSITIVE.=

This kind of thing had been going on morning after morning until I was quite tired.

They. You ought to get hold of a good dog.

It is extraordinary how many things one ought to get hold of in the country. Sometimes it is a wood-chopper and sometimes a couple of hundred cabbages, and sometimes a cartload of manure, and sometimes a few good hens. I find this very exhausting to the grip.

I. What for?

They. To watch your house.

I. I do not wish to inflict pain on a good dog. What kind of a dog ought it to be?

They. Well, a mastiff.

I. Isn't that rather a smooth kind of dog? If I have to get hold of a dog, I should like one with rather a rougher surface.

They. Try an Irish terrier.

I. I have. They fight.

They. Not unless they're provoked.

I. Nobody fights unless he is provoked. But more things provoke an Irish terrier than one might imagine. The postman provoked my old one so much that it bit the letters out of his hand and ate them.

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They. Well, you didn't get any bills, then.

I. Yes, I did. Bills always came when the dog was away for the week-end. He was a great week-ender, and he always came back from week-ends with more and more pieces out of his ears until at last they were all gone, and he couldn't hear us when we called him.

They. Well, there are plenty of other sorts. You might have a Chow or an Airedale or a boar-hound.

I. Thank you, I do not hunt boars. Besides, all the dogs you mention are very expensive nowadays. In the War it was quite different. You could collect dogs for practically nothing then. My company used to have more than a dozen dogs parading with it every day. They had never seen so many men so willing to go for so many long walks before. They thought the Millennium had come. A proposal was made that they should be taught to form fours and march in the rear. But, like all great strategical plans, it was stifled by red tape. After that—

They. You are getting away from the point. If you really want a good cheap dog—

I. Ah, I thought you were coming to that. You know of a good cheap dog?

They. The gardener of my sister-in-law's aunt has an extremely good cheap dog.

I. And would it watch my house?

They. Most intently.

That is how Trotsky came to us. Nobody but a reckless propagandist would say that he is either a mastiff or a boar-hound, though he once stopped when we came to a pig. I do not mind that. What I do mind is their saying, now that they have palmed him off on me, "I saw you out with your what-ever-it-is yesterday," or "I did not know you had taken to sheep-breeding," or "What is that thing you have tied up to the kennel at the back?" There seems to be something about the animal's tail that does not go with its back, or about its legs that does not go with its nose, or about its eyes that does not go with its fur. If it is fur, that is to say. And the eyes are a different colour and seem to squint a little. They say that one of them is a wall-eye. I think that is the one he watches the house with. Personally I consider that they are very handsome eyes in their own different lines, and my opinion is that he is a Mull-terrier; or possibly a Rum. Anyhow he is a good dog to get hold of, for he is very curly.

The village policeman came round to the house the other day. I think he really came to talk to the cook, but I fell into conversation with him.

"You ought to be getting a licence for that dog of yours," he said.

“What dog?” I asked.

“Why, you’ve got a dog tied up at the back there, haven’t you?” he said.

“Have I?” said I.

And we went out and looked at it together. Trotsky looked at me with one eye and at the policeman with the other, and he wagged his tail. At least I am not sure that he wagged it; “shook” would be a better word.

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"Where did you get it?" he inquired.

"Oh, I just got hold of it," I said airily. "It's rather good, don't you think?"

He stood for some time in doubt.

"It's a dog," he said at last.

I shook him warmly by the hand.

"You have taken a great load off my mind," I told him. "I will get a licence at once."

This will score off them pretty badly.

After all you can't go behind a Government certificate, can you? EVOE.

* * * * *

[Illustration:

Caller. "IS MRS. JONES AT HOME?"

Cook-General. "SHE IS, BUT SHE AIN'T 'ARDLY IN A FIT STATE TO SEE ANYBODY. SHE'S JUST BIN GIVIN' ME NOTICE."]

* * * * *

=THE CRY OF THE ADULT AUTHOR.=

[The "Diarist" of *The Westminster Gazette*, in the issue of October 25th, utters a poignant *cri de coeur* over what he regards as one of the great tragedies of the time—the crowding-out of the "genuine craftsmen" of journalism and letters by Cabinet Ministers, notoriety-mongers and, above all, by sloppy infant prodigies.]

Oh, bitter are the insults
And bitter is the shame
Heaped on deserving authors
Of high and strenuous aim,
When all the best booksellers
Their shelves and windows cram
With novels from the nursery
And poems from the pram.

In recent Autumn seasons
Writers of age mature
(From eighteen up to thirty)



Of sympathy were sure;
Now publishers their portals
On everybody slam
Save novelists from the nursery
And poets from the pram.

Unfairly WINSTON CHURCHILL
Invades the Sunday sheets;
Unfairly MRS. ASQUITH
With serious scribes competes;
But these are minor evils—
What makes me cuss and damn
Are novels from the nursery
And poems from the pram.

When on the concert platform
The prodigy appears
I do not grudge his welcome,
The clappings and the cheers;
But I can't forgive the people
Who down our throats would cram
The novelists from the nursery,
The poets from the pram.

I met a (once) best seller,
And I took him by the hand,
And asked, "How's OPAL WHITELEY
And how does DAISY stand?"
He answered, "I can only
See sloppiness and sham
In novels from the nursery
And poems from the pram."

If I were only despot,
To end this painful feud
I'd banish straight to Mespot
The scribbling infant brood,
And bar the importation,
By that hustler, Uncle Sam,
Of novels from the nursery
And poems from the pram.

* * * * *

From an account of Sir J. FORBES-ROBERTSON'S *debut*:—

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“It was interesting to remember that in the audience on that occasion were Dante, Gabriel, Rossetti and Algernon Charles Swinburne.”—*Provincial Paper*.

The archangel was a great catch.

* * * * *

“When the Royal Cream horses were dispersed from the royal stables, one or two golf clubs made an endeavour to get one of these fine animals, and Ranelagh and Sandy Lodge were fortunate to secure them. The horses look fine on the course behind the mower.” *Evening Paper*.

Shoving, we suppose, for all they are worth.

* * * * *

=EUCLID IN REAL LIFE.=

If it was not for the paper-shortage I should at once re-write EUCLID, or those parts of him which I understand. The trouble about old EUCLID was that he had no soul, and few of his books have that emotional appeal for which we look in these days. My aim would be to bring home his discoveries to the young by clothing them with human interest; and I should at the same time demonstrate to the adult how often they might be made practically useful in everyday life. When one thinks of the times one draws a straight line at right angles to another straight line, and how seldom one does it EUCLID’S way ... every time one writes a T....

Well, let us take, for example—

BOOK III., PROPOSITION 1.

PROBLEM.—*To find the centre of a given circle.*

Let ABC be that horrible round bed where you had the geraniums last year. This year, I gather, the idea is to have it nothing but rose-trees, with a great big fellow in the middle. The question is, where is the middle? I mean, if you plant it in a hurry on your own judgment, everyone who comes near the house will point out that the bed is all cock-eye. Besides, you can see it from the dining-room and it will annoy you at breakfast.

[Illustration]

CONSTRUCTION.—Well, this is how we go about it. First, you draw any chord AB in the given bed ABC. You can do that with one of those long strings the gardener keeps in his shed, with pegs at the end.

Bisect AB at D.

Now don't look so stupid. We've done that already in Book I., Prop. 10, you remember, when we bisected the stick of nougat. That's right.

Now from D draw DC at right angles to AB, and meeting the lawn at C. You can do that with a hoe.

Produce CD to meet the lawn again at E.

Now we do some more of that bisecting; this time we bisect EC at F.

Then F shall be the middle of the bed; and that's where your rose-tree is going.

PROOF???—Well, I mean, if F be *not* the centre let some point G, outside the line CE, be the centre and put the confounded tree *there*. And, what's more, you can jolly well join GA, GD and GB, and see what that looks like.

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Just cast your eye over the two triangles GDA and GDB.

Don't you see that DA is equal to DB (unless, of course, you've bisected that chord all wrong), and DG is common, and GA is equal to GB—at least according to your absurd theory about G it is, since they must be both *radii*. *Radii* indeed! *Look* at them. Ha, ha!

Therefore, you fool, the angle GDA is equal to the angle GDB.

Therefore they are both right angles.

Therefore the angle GDA is a right angle. (I know you think I'm repeating myself, but you'll see what I'm getting at in a minute.)

Therefore—and this is the cream of the joke—therefore—really, I can't help laughing—therefore *the angle CDA is equal to the angle GDA!* That is, the part is equal to the whole—which is ridiculous.

I mean, it's too *laughable*.

So, you see, your rose-tree is not in the middle at all.

In the same way you can go on planting the old tree all over the bed—anywhere you like. In every case you'll get those right angles in the same ridiculous position—why, it makes me laugh *now* to think of it—and you'll be brought back to dear old CE.

And, of course, any point in CE *except* F would divide CE unequally, which I notice now is just what you've done yourself; so F is wrong too.

But you see the idea?

What a mess you've made of the bed!

BOOK I., PROPOSITION 20.

THEOREM.—*Any two sides of a triangle are together greater than the third side.*

Let ABC be a triangle.

[Illustration]

CONSTRUCTION.—You know the eleventh hole? Well, let B be the tee, and let C be the green, and let BC be my drive. Yes, *mine*. Is it dead? Yes.

Now let BA be *your* drive. I'm afraid you've pulled it a bit and gone into the road by the farm.

You can't get on to the green by the direct route AC because you're under the wall. You'll have to play further up the road till you get opposite that gap at D. It's a pity, because you'll have to play about the same distance, only in the wrong direction.

Take your niblick, then, and play your second, making AD equal to AC. Now join CD.

I mean, put your third on the green. You can do that, *surely*? Good.

PROOF.—There, I'm down in two. But we won't rub it in. Do you notice anything odd about these triangles? No? Well, the fact is that AD is equal to AC, and the result of that is that the angle ACD is equal to the angle ADC. That's Prop. 5. Anyhow, it's obvious, isn't it?

But steady on. The angle BCD is greater than its part, the angle ACD—you must admit that? (Look out, there's a fellow going to drive.)

And therefore the angle BCD—Oh, well, I can't go into it all now or it will mean we shall have to let these people through; but if you carry on on those lines you'll find that BD is greater than BC.

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I mean you've only got to go back to where you played your third and you'll see that it *must* be so, won't you? Very well, then, don't argue.

But BD is equal to BA and AC, for AD is equal to AC; it *had* to be, you remember.

Therefore—now follow this closely—the two sides BA and AC are together greater than the third side BC.

That means, you see, that by pulling your drive out to the left there you gave yourself a lot of extra distance to cover.

You'd never have guessed that, would you? But old EUCLID did.

Come along, then; they're putting. You must be more careful at this hole.

I think it's that right shoulder of yours ...

A. P. H.

* * * * *

=Our Candid Candidates.=

From an election address:—

“Should I get returned as your representative you will have no cause for regret when my term of office expires.”—*Provincial Paper*.

* * * * *

“The strike of the mechanical staff of the ‘Karachi Daily Gazette’ has ended.”

Evening Paper.

We wondered why everybody looked so pleased in London that day.

* * * * *

“Since her treatment with the monkey gland Miss Ediss has received enough complimentary nuts to stock a market garden. An ornate basket of monkey nuts fills a prominent place in her room, and two cocoanuts tied up with coloured ribbon strike the eye of the visitor.”—*Sunday Paper*.

In that case we shall postpone our intended visit until Miss EDISS is herself again.

* * * * *

[Illustration: =MANNERS AND MODES.=

NOW THAT MEN'S ATTIRE IS SO COSTLY WHY NOT TAKE A LEAF FROM THE LADIES' BOOK OF FASHION AND LET THE TAILORS HAVE DRESS PARADES OF THE LATEST DESIGNS?]

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE CULT OF FACE-READING.

'Erb (a cinema habitue). "SEE WOT 'E'S SAYING, EM'LY? 'E'S STILL AT THE OFFICE AND WON'T BE ABLE TO GET 'OME TO DINNER."]

* * * * *

=THE CONSPIRATORS.=

VI.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—I was talking to the Editor the other day about this correspondence of ours which we are conducting in the public Press, thus saving the twopenny stamps and avoiding the increased cost of living which is hitting everyone else so hard.

"This ought to be put a stop to," said he.

"That is just what I have been saying since 1918," I replied; "but the question is what to do about it? When you get down to it, the word 'Bolshevist' is but the Russian for 'advanced Socialist,' and there is nothing to prevent Socialists, whether they be advanced or retarded. How then are you going to put a stop to Bolshevism?"

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"I was thinking of the correspondence," the Editor replied.

So I stopped talking to him and sat down to write my last letter to you on the subject.

To resume: In the summer of 1918 the German War Lords began to have their doubts of a Pax Germanica and saw signs rather of a Wash-out Germanicum. Things looked ill with them, so they consulted their doctor, a certain person who called himself "Dr. Help-us" by way of a jest. He proved more successful as a business man, however, than he was as a humourist. He advised that the "War of World Conquest" was not likely to produce a dividend, because its name was against it. Cut out "Imperialism"; substitute another word, with just as many syllables and no less an imposing sound, "Proletariat"; call the thing "Class Warfare"; advertise it thoroughly and attract to it all the political egoists of disappointed ambition in the various countries of the enemy, and the German War Lords would find it no longer necessary to crush all existing nations, since all existing nations would then set about to crush themselves.

The idea was voted excellent, and the trial run in Russia gave complete satisfaction.

But not all countries were so immediately susceptible to the idea of a World Revolution. Victory hath its charms and does not predispose a people to complain; so where the Masses (invested with a capital "M" to flatter their vanity and secure their goodwill) were victorious and content they were to be made to believe by advertisement that with a little trouble they could become even more victorious and more content. The KAISER and Imperialism had been disposed of; it only remained to get rid of Capitalism and Charles. The subterranean campaign was developed, and that is what our conspirators have since been so brisk and busy about.

That was the programme; but it is a programme which required money. And so at last to the Chinese Bonds.

Oh, those Chinese Bonds! How some people abroad have learned to curse the very mention of them these last many months! I don't know where that tiresome man, LITVINOFF, first got them from, but my poor friends, whose business all this is, were running after them at least ten months ago. Sometimes they were in Russia, sometimes they showed up in Denmark, sometimes they got scent of them in Germany, and I am told it is the merest fluke that the Bonds did not come to Switzerland for the winter sports. And wherever they turned up they were always just on their way to England; either they had a poor sense of direction or, being bad sailors, were afraid of the crossing. There was never any knowing in what corner of the earth they would next be appearing; in fact the only country which those Chinese Bonds seemed to have successfully avoided was China.

The first time we heard of them, I will admit that we were thrilled. They gave a touch of reality to an otherwise over-hairy and unconvincing narrative of conspiracy. The second

time we were told of them we were pleurably moved. So it was true, after all, about those Chinese Bonds?

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The third time we heard of them we were satisfied; the fourth time we heard of them we were indifferent; the fifth time bored, the sixth time irritated, the seventh time infuriated, and the eighth time we said to our informant, "Now look you here. We appreciate the excitement of your mysterious presence and the soothing effects of your hushed voice, and as long as you care to go on revealing your secrets we will listen. You may speak of finance and you may even touch upon British bank-notes forged by the Soviets; you may go so far as to divulge some new forms of script involved, getting as near as even, say, Japanese Debentures; but if you so much as mention China or its Bonds to us again we will wrap you up in a parcel and post you to Moscow with a personal note of warning to LENIN as to your inner knowledge and the dangerous publicity you are giving it."

For ourselves we wrote many a learned treatise on the subject and sent many a thousand memos home to those authorities near to whose hearts the welfare of those Bonds should be. And after many months of this correspondence someone in the what-d'you-call-it office suddenly sat up and took notice and wrote to us as follows: "His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Thingummy has the honour to inform you that rumours have reached his ears concerning the existence of certain bonds, alleged to be Chinese, in the hands of Bolshevik agitators coming or intending to come to this country. You are requested to ascertain and report what, if anything, is known of these Chinese Bonds."

I could have made a story for you of the uses to which the Bonds were put in other countries and newspapers as well as your own. But that painfully honest journal, *The Daily Herald*, has anticipated me. And anything more you want to know about the conspiracies or the conspirators you may now, as I judge from reading your Press, experience for yourself. So upon that these letters may end. I would like to have concluded by a protestation that, in making these frank statements as to the working of, and against, the Conspirators, I personally draw no pecuniary benefit of any sort, not a sovereign, not a bob, not a half-penny stamp. It is perhaps better, however, to anticipate discovery by owning up to the fact that my frankness is being paid for at so many pence per line.

Yours ever, HENRY.

(Concluded.)

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Nervous Party*. "ARE YOU SURE THAT LOBSTER'S ALL RIGHT?"

Fishmonger (on his dignity). "QUITE RIGHT, SIR. IF IT ISN'T WE SHALL BE HERE TO-MORROW."

Nervous Party. “YES—BUT SHALL I BE HERE TO-MORROW?”]

* * * * *

EPITAPH FOR A PROFESSOR OF TANGO:

“Nihil tetigit quod non ornavit.”

* * * * *

THE CAGE.

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He stood in the packed building, a small lonely figure, pathetic in the isolation that shut him off from the warm humanity of the watching crowd.

He felt weak, ill, but he struggled to bear himself bravely. He could not move his eyes from the stern white face that seemed to fill all the space in front of him. About that cold minatory figure, which was speaking to him in such passionless even tones, clung an atmosphere of awe; the traditional robes of office lent it a majesty that crushed his will.

He knew he was being addressed, and he strove to listen. His brain was a torrent of thoughts. And so his life had come to this. It was indeed the final catastrophe. That was surely what the voice meant—that voice which went on and on in an even stream of sound without meaning. Why had he come to this—in the flower of his life to lose its chiefest gift, Liberty?

Up and down the spaces of his brain thought sped like fire. The people behind—did they care? A few perhaps pitied him. The others were indifferent. To them it was merely a spectacle.

Suddenly into his mind crept the consciousness of a vast silence. The voice had stopped. The abrupt cessation of sound whipped his quivering nerves. It was like the holding of a great breath.

He gathered his forces. He knew that the huge concourse waited. A question had been put to him. It seemed as if the world stood still to listen.

He moistened his lips. He knew what he had meant to say, but his tongue was a traitor to his desire. What use now to plead? The soundlessness grew intolerable. He thought he should cry aloud.

And then—

“I will,” he said, and, looking sideways, caught the swift shy glance of his bride.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *The Master Plumber*. “I’VE NEVER SEED A BLOKE TAKE SO LONG OVER A JOB IN ALL ME LIFE. THAT LAD’LL GO FAR.”]

* * * * *

=NEW RHYMES FOR OLD CHILDREN.=

THE SPONGE.



The sponge is not, as you suppose,
A funny kind of weed;
He lives below the deep blue sea,
An animal, like you and me,
Though not so good a breed.

And when the sponges go to sleep
The fearless diver dives;
He prongs them with a cruel prong,
And, what I think is rather wrong,
He also prongs their wives.

For I expect they love their wives
And sing them little songs,
And though, of course, they have no heart
It hurts them when they're forced to part—
Especially with prongs.

I know you'd rather not believe
Such dreadful things are done;
Alas, alas, it is the case;
And every time you wash your face
You use a skeleton.

And that round hole in which you put
Your finger and your thumb,
And tear the nice new sponge in two,
As I have told you *not* to do,
Was once his *osculum*.

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So that is why I seldom wash,
However black I am,
But use my flannel if I must,
Though even that, to be quite just,
Was once a little lamb. A. P. H.

* * * * *

=HOW TO MISS THE MISSING LINK.=

We understand that an expedition will shortly leave the United States for Central Asia in search of the Missing Link. "Aeroplanes, motor cars, camels, mules and all means of locomotion found suitable will be used by the anthropologists, archaeologists and other scientists" taking part.

We predict that an enterprise so opposed to all the traditions of exploration is doomed to failure. We cannot doubt that the Missing Link possesses a sense of smell keen enough to detect a camel or a Ford car while yet afar off. His regrettable elusiveness is more likely to be established than overcome when he beholds mules and anthropologists, attended by aeroplanes and motor-cars, and possibly whippet-tanks, motor-scooters and phrenologists. Even if there are only nine or ten of each variety it will be enough to ensure that the adventurers miss the Link after all.

Another aspect of the expedition should be borne in mind. The progress through the jungle of such vehicles and personnel would cause something like consternation among the larger fauna, whose limited intelligence might reasonably fail to distinguish the procession from a travelling menagerie. In these days of unrest is it right, is it expedient, thus to stir up species hatred? It would be indeed deplorable if the present quest were to be followed by a search party got up to trace the missing Missing Link expedition.

Surely the old methods of the explorer are still the best. Simply equipped with an elephant-rifle and a pith helmet, let him plunge into the bush and be lost to sight for a few years. Whereas the Missing Link may be relied on to remain resolutely beneath his rock at the sight of a sort of a Lord Mayor's Show wandering among the vegetation, the spectacle of a simple-looking traveller in the midst of the lonely forest would rather encourage the creature to emerge from its place of retreat.

Then nothing would remain but for the explorer to advance with out-stretched hand (preferably the left), and exclaim, "The Missing Link, I presume?"

* * * * *

[Illustration: A CLOSE CORPORATION.



EX-SERVICE MAN (*unemployed*). "IF YOU'RE SO SHORT OF LABOUR, WHY DON'T YOU TAKE ME ON?"

TRADE UNION OFFICIAL. "MY GOOD FELLOW, BRICKLAYING REQUIRES YEARS AND YEARS OF APPRENTICESHIP."

EX-SERVICE MAN. "SO DOES SOLDIERING; BUT THEY WEREN'T SO PARTICULAR WHEN THERE WAS WORK TO BE DONE AT THE FRONT."]

* * * * *

=ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.=

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Monday, October 25th.—Sir PHILIP LLOYD-GREAME, the newest recruit on the Treasury Bench, already answers Questions with all the assurance of the other LLOYD G. His readiness in referring the inquisitive to other Departments and in declining to go beyond his brief—witness his modest refusal to discuss in reply to a Supplementary Question the possibility of imposing a tariff in this country—suggests that somewhere behind the SPEAKER’S chair there must be a school for Under-Secretaries where the callow back-bencher is instructed in the arts and crafts required in the seats of the mighty.

For this purpose I can imagine no better instructor than the ATTORNEY-GENERAL, who combines scrupulous politeness with an icy precision of language. Take, for example, his treatment of Mr. PEMBERTON BILLING’S defiant inquiry if it would now be “compatible with the dignity of the Government” to say that there had never been any intention to bring the War-criminals to trial. “No,” replied Sir GORDON HEWART in his most pedagogic manner, “it cannot be compatible with anyone’s dignity to make a statement which is manifestly untrue.”

[Illustration: A GOVERNMENT RECRUIT.

Sir PHILIP LLOYD-GREAME.

Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade.]

This week was to have been devoted, *de die in diem*, to getting on with the Government of Ireland Bill. But the malignant sprite that has hitherto foiled every effort to pacify Ireland again intervened, and the House found itself called upon to discuss the Emergency Powers Bill. The measure is a peace-time successor to D.O.R.A. (who in the opinion of the Government is getting a little *passee*) and, perhaps naturally, met with little approval. Mr. ASQUITH, while admitting that something of the kind might be required, took exception to the vagueness of its drafting. “What is ‘substantial’?” he inquired. “Ask them another!” Mr. WILL THORNE joyfully interjected. “What is ‘substantial’?” repeated the EX-PREMIER; whereupon the Coalition with one voice replied, “WILL THORNE.”

[Illustration: SOMETHING “SUBSTANTIAL.” Mr. WILL THORNE.]

With consummate skill the PRIME MINISTER managed to get the House out of its hostile mood and to satisfy the majority, at any rate, that the measure was neither provocative nor inopportune, but a necessary precaution against the possibility that “direct action” on the part of extra-Parliamentary bodies might confront the country with the alternatives of starvation or surrender.

Tuesday, October 26th.—In these troublous times the House gladly seizes the smallest occasion for merriment. There was great laughter when Colonel YATE, the politest of

men, inadvertently referred to Sir ARCHIBALD WILLIAMSON as “the right honourable gent,” and it broke forth again when, in his anxiety to make no further slip, he addressed him *tout court* as “the right honourable.”

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There are some fifty thousand British soldiers in Ireland, costing over a million pounds a month. But Mr. CHURCHILL took the cheery view that after all they had to be somewhere, and would cost nearly as much even in Great Britain.

They would cost a good deal more in Mesopotamia, where we have a hundred thousand troops (British and Indian), and the cost is two and a half millions a month. Sir WILLIAM JOYNSON-HICKS could not understand why we should spend all this money “merely to hand the country back to the rebels.” Mr. CHURCHILL said he had heard nothing about handing the country back to the rebels; from which it may be inferred either that he is not admitted into all the secrets of the Cabinet or that he draws a distinction between “rebels” and “persons who object to British rule.”

The Press campaign in favour of a nickel three-halfpenny coin has not succeeded. In Mr. CHAMBERLAIN’S opinion it would not be a coin of vantage. Among his objections to it may be the extreme probability that the present Administration would promptly be nicknamed (I will not say nickel-named) “the Three-half-penny Government.”

Owing to a number of concessions announced by the HOME SECRETARY the Emergency Powers Bill had a fairly smooth passage through Committee. Objections were still raised to making an Emergency Act permanent—it *does* sound rather like a contradiction in terms—but the ATTORNEY-GENERAL skilfully countered them by pointing out that it was only the framework of the machinery, not the regulations, that would be permanent. One can imagine the bold bad baron who set up a gallows to overawe his villeins comforting objectors with the remark that after all it was merely a framework—quite useless without a rope.

[Illustration: THE BOLD BAD BARON.]

Sir Gordon Hewart. “MERELY A FRAMEWORK—QUITE USELESS WITHOUT A ROPE.”]

Wednesday, October 27th.—Much pother in the Lords because the FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS had set up a Committee to advise him with regard to the preservation of ancient monuments, including cathedrals and churches, without first consulting the ecclesiastical authorities. Lord PARMOOR moved a condemnatory resolution, and His Grace of CANTERBURY, after renouncing Sir ALFRED MOND and all his works, declared that, so far as religious edifices were concerned, the proposed Committee was a superfluity of naughtiness with which he personally would have nothing to do. Lord LYTTON, with that delightful free-and-easiness which characterises the attitude of our present Ministers towards their colleagues, observed that he could have sympathised with the objectors if it were really intended to place cathedrals under Sir ALFRED’S care; but it wasn’t;—so why all this fuss? Lord CRAWFORD, while sharing the Opposition’s dislike of restorers, from VIOLLET-LE-DUC to the late Lord GRIMTHORPE, could not admit that in this matter the Office of Works had been guilty of

anything worse than a want of tact. Lord PARMOOR insisted on going to a division, and carried his motion by 27 to 17. Despite this shattering blow the Government is said to be going on as well as can be expected.

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[Illustration: A PILLAR OF THE CHURCH.]

What happened at Jutland? After four years' cogitation the Admiralty does not appear to have emerged from the state of uncertainty into which it was plunged by the first news of the battle. In February last Mr. LONG announced that the official report would be published "shortly," but then the German sailors began to publish *their* stories, and these not very unnaturally differed from the British accounts. So now My Lords have decided to leave Sir JULIAN CORBETT'S *Naval History of the War* to unravel the tangle and inform Lords JELLICOE and BEATTY (who, according to Sir JAMES CRAIG, are quite agreeable to the proposal) exactly what they and their gallant seamen really did on that famous occasion.

Thursday, October 28th.—There being no Labour Party in the House of Lords the Emergency Powers Bill passed through all its stages in a single sitting. Even Lord CREWE did not challenge its necessity in these troublous times, but Lord ASKWITH was a little alarmed at the possibility that "an unreasoning Home Secretary"—as if there could ever be such a monster!—might be over-hasty to issue Orders in Council, and so exacerbate an industrial dispute.

A long list of "reprisal" Questions—mercifully curtailed by the time-limit—was chiefly remarkable for Sir HAMAR GREENWOOD'S emphatic declaration that he was not going to accept the statements even of English newspaper correspondents against the reports of officials "for whom I am responsible and in whom I have confidence."

Assuming that the House of Commons is, as it ought to be, a microcosm of the population, it will be some time before this country goes "dry." Members of all parties pressed upon the PRIME MINISTER the necessity of relaxing the regulations of the Liquor Control Board. His suggestion that an informal Committee should be set up to make recommendations to the Government was received with cheers, and there was much amusement when Mr. BOTTOMLEY and Lady ASTOR, who do not, I gather, quite see eye to eye on this subject, promptly nominated themselves for membership.

As the PRIME MINISTER is popularly supposed to be not averse from appearing in the limelight, especially when there is good news to impart, it is pleasant to record that he left to Sir ROBERT HORNE the congenial task of announcing that an agreement had been reached with the Miners' Federation, and that the coal-strike was on the high road to settlement. The terms, as stated, seemed to be satisfactory to all parties, and the only mystery is why the negotiators should have required the stimulus of a strike before they could arrive at them.

* * * * *

THE DOWNING OF THE PEN.

A little difference of opinion on the moral aspect of strikes which has been ventilated in *The Daily News* has caused one correspondent to write: "Let us suppose that Mr. SILAS HOCKING regards the serial rights of one of his novels as worth L250. Suppose I offer him L100. What does he do? He withholds his labour; and quite right too!"

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But does this analogy go far enough? It would be a simple matter, for which we might easily console ourselves, if the author in question merely withheld his own labour. But if he followed modern strike tactics he would do more.

Calling in aid the services of his brother JOSEPH, he would endeavour by peaceful persuasion to induce Mrs. ASQUITH, Mr. ARNOLD BENNETT, Mrs. ELINOR GLYN, Mr. COMPTON MACKENZIE and others to withhold their labour also. Picketing would follow, and London would be stirred to its depths by the news that Sir HALL CAINE was on duty outside the establishment of *The Sunday Pictorial*, and that Miss ETHEL M. DELL was in charge of the squad on the doorstep of the Amalgamated Press.

Sympathetic strikes would develop. The newspaper-vendors would rise and demand that *The Daily Mirror* feuilleton be suppressed, thus plunging the country into an agony of suspense, and railwaymen would cease work at the sight of any passenger immersed in the most recent instalment of the *Home Bits* serial story.

Mr. W. W. JACOBS would address mass meetings at the Docks, and Mr. HILAIRE BELLOC would embark on a resolute thirst-strike. At the same time daily newspapers would compete in offering solutions of the problem. One would say, "For goodness' sake give him the extra paltry one hundred and fifty pounds and let the country get on with its work;" and another would suggest a compromise at one hundred-and-fifty guineas, conditional upon the author's output.

Far from the simple withholding of his labour by a single novelist, such a turmoil would ensue as would not only shake our intellectual life to its foundations, but would keep the PRIME MINISTER engaged in the exploration of interminable vistas of avenue.

* * * * *

=Mixed Education.=

"Formerly a student at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, her husband is a Fellow of Balliol College."—*Local Paper*.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Prospective Sitter (with unconventional past)*. "I ALWAYS THINK YOU GET SUCH WONDERFUL CHARACTER INTO YOUR PORTRAITS."

Artist. "GLAD TO HEAR THAT. I ALWAYS TRY TO MAKE MY SUBJECTS' PORTRAITS A MIRROR OF THEIR PAST LIVES."]

* * * * *

=THE SUBSTITUTE.=

[Sweets are replacing alcohol.—*Vide Papers passim.*]

As more and more the god of wine
Grows faint from want of tippling,
Nor round his path the roses shine,
Nor purple streams are rippling;
As usquebaugh and malt and hops
No longer much entice us,
We crown anew with lollipops,
With peppermints, with acid drops,
The nobler Dionysus.



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Bright coloured as his orient car,
Piled high with autumn splendours,
The pageants of the sweetstuffs are
At all the pastry-vendors;
From earliest flush of dawn till eight
The Maenad nymphs in masses,
With lions' help upbear the freight
Of marzipan and chocolate
And stickjaw and molasses.

The poet from whose lips of flame
Wine drew the songs, the full sighs,
Performs the business just the same
When masticating bull's-eyes;
The knight who bids a fond "Farewell,
Love's large, but honour's larger!"
Shares with the Lady Amabel
One last delicious caramel
And leaps upon his charger.

The rake inured to card-room traps,
Yet making fearful faces
Because his foes, perfidious chaps,
Have always all the aces—
"Ruined! the old place mortgaged! faugh!"
(The guttering candles quiver)—
Instead of draining brandy raw
Clenches a jujube in his jaw
And strolls towards the river.

O happier time that soothes the brain
And rids us of our glum fits
(Eliminating dry champagne)
With candy and with comfits!
The oak reflects the firelight's beam,
In song the moments fly by,
Till the old squire, his face a gleam,
Sucking the last assorted cream,
Toddles away to bye-bye.

EVOE.

* * * * *

From a P.S.A. notice:—

“Subject: ‘A RENEWED WORLD—No Sorrow. No Pain. No Death.’ No Collection.”—*Local Paper*.

The last item sounds almost too good to be true.

* * * * *

“The proposed changes were discussed with the captain of the England side and one or two prominent cricketers who had visited Australia.”—*Expensive Daily Paper*.

Hitherto it had been supposed that these cheerful little creatures only sought the kind of “ashes” that you get on the domestic hearth.

* * * * *

[Illustration: “WE AIN’T A BIT AFRAID, ALFY ’IGGINS. YER OWN FICE IS A LUMP UGLIER.”]

* * * * *

=A STRIKE IN FAIRYLAND.=

The fairies were holding a meeting.

“They grumble when we send the rain,” said a Rain-fairy, “and they grumble when we don’t.”

“And we get no thanks,” sighed a Flower-fairy. “The time we spend getting the flowers ready and washing their faces and folding them up every night!”

“As for the stars,” said a Star-fairy, “we might just as well leave them unlit for all the gratitude we get, and it’s such a rush sometimes to get all over the sky in time. They don’t even believe in us. We wouldn’t mind *anything* if they believed in us.”

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"No," agreed a Rainbow-fairy, "that's true. I take such a lot of trouble to get just the right colours, and it has to be done so quickly. But I wouldn't mind if they believed in us."

"I wonder what *they'd* do," said the Queen, "if no one believed in them?"

"They'd go on strike," said the Brown Owl (he was head of the Ministry of Wisdom).
"They always go on strike if they don't like anything."

"Then we'll go on strike," said the Queen with great determination.

They all cheered, except the Flower-fairies.

"But the flowers," they said, "they'll get so dusty with no one to wash them, and so tired with no one to fold them up at nights."

"I hadn't thought of that," said the Queen. "When *they* go on strike," she said to the Brown Owl, "how do things get done?"

The Brown Owl considered for a moment and everyone waited in silence.

"Of course there are sometimes blacklegs," he began.

"I don't know what blacklegs are," said the Queen cheerfully, "but we'll appoint some."
And she did.

"Is that all?" said the Queen.

"Someone ought to have a sympathetic strike with us," said the Brown Owl. "*They* always do that."

So a fairy was sent off to the Court of the Birds to request a sympathetic strike.

"Is *that* all?" said the Queen.

"You ought to *talk* more," said the Brown Owl. "*They* talk ever so much."

"Yes, but they can't help it, can they?" said the Queen kindly.

And so the strike began that evening.

None of the birds sang except one little blackleg Robin, who sang so hard in his efforts to make up for the rest that he was as hoarse as a crow the next morning. The blackleg fairies had a hard time too. They hadn't a minute to gossip with the flowers, as they usually did when they flew round with their acorn-cups of dew and thistledown sponges and washed their faces and folded up their petals and kissed them good-night.

“But what’s the matter?” said the flowers sleepily.

“We’re on strike,” said one of the other fairies importantly “not for ourselves, but for posterity.”

The Brown Owl had heard *them* say that.

Meanwhile the rest of the fairies sat silent and rather mournful, awaiting developments.

Then a Thought-fairy flew in. Thought-fairies can see into your heart and know just what you think. They get terrible shocks sometimes.

“I’ve been all over the world,” she said breathlessly, “and it’s much better than you think. *All* little girls believe in us and—” She paused dramatically.

“Yes?” they said eagerly.

“All fathers of little girls believe in us.”

The Queen shook her head.

“They only pretend,” she said.

“No, that’s just it,” said the Thought-fairy. “They *pretend* to pretend. They never tell anyone, but they really believe.”

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"Then we'll end the strike," said the Queen.

Here the Brown Owl bustled in, carrying a little note-book.

"I've found out lots more," he said excitedly. "We must have an executive and delegates and a ballot and a union and a Sankey Commission report and a scale of the cost of living and a datum line and—"

"But the strike's over," said the Queen. "It was a misunderstanding."

"Of course," he said huffily. "All strikes are that, but it's correct to carry them on as long as possible."

"And the blacklegs are to have a special reward."

"That's illogical," muttered the Brown Owl.

He was right, of course, but things *are* illogical in Fairyland. That's the nicest part of it.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Salesman*. "IT IS POSSIBLE THAT IT MAY INTEREST YOU TO KNOW THAT OUR CAR WAS DRIVEN UP ALL THE FLIGHTS OF STEPS AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE."

Inquiring Visitor. "WELL—ER—NOT MUCH. YOU SEE, I LIVE IN A BUNGALOW."]

* * * * *

"Fears are entertained that the chalice, which is of silver-gilt, may have been broken up and investments profaned."—*Daily Herald*.

We should have thought that our Communistic contemporary was the last paper that would have considered investments sacred.

* * * * *

"K. T. B—— and T. W. H——, both of Liverpool, who were in company with Mr. L—— in the car, agreed that the speed was about fifty-one miles an hour. On the gradient and at the turn it was not safe to travel faster."—*Provincial Paper*.

One of those examples of "Safety First" which we are always pleased to chronicle.

* * * * *

=THE OPENING RUN.=

The rain-sodden grass in the ditches is dying;
The berries are red to the crest of the thorn;
Coronet-deep where the beech-leaves are lying
The hunters stand tense to the twang of the horn;
Where rides are refilled with the green of the mosses,
All foam-flecked and fretful their long line is strung;
You can see the white gleam as a starred forehead tosses,
You can hear the low chink as a bit-bar is flung.

The world's full of music. Hounds rustle the rover
Through brushwood and fern to a glad "Gone away!"
With a "Come along, Pilot!"—one spur-touch and over—
The huntsman is clear on his galloping grey;
Before him the pack's running straight on the stubble—
"*Toot-toot-too-too-too-oot!*" "*Tow-row-ow-ow-ow!*"
The leaders are clambering up through the double
And glittering away on the brown of the plough.

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The front rank, hands down, have the big fence's measure;
The faint-hearts are craning to left and to right;
The Master goes through with a crash on "The Treasure;"
The grey takes the lot like a gull in his flight;
There's a brown crumpled up, lying still as a dead one;
There's a roan mare refusing, as stubborn as sin;
While the breaker flogs up on a green underbred one
And smashes the far-away rail with a grin.

The chase carries on over hilltop and hollow,
The life of Old England, the pluck and the fun;
And who would ask more than a stiff line to follow
With hounds running hard in the Opening Run?

W. H. O.

* * * * *

IN PRAISE OF THE PELICANS.

The pelicans in St. James's Park
On every day from dawn to dark
Pursue, inscrutable of mien,
A fixed unvarying routine.
Whatever be the wind or weather
They spend their time in peace together,
And plainly nothing can upset
The harmony of their quartet.

Most punctually by the clock
They roost upon or quit their rock,
Or swim ashore and hold their levee,
Lords of the mixed lacustrine bevy;
Or with their slow unwieldy gait
Their green domain perambulate,
Or with prodigious flaps and prances
Indulge in their peculiar dances,
Returning to their feeding-ground
What time the keeper goes his round
With fish and scraps for their nutrition
After laborious deglutition.

Calm, self-sufficing, self-possessed,
They never mingle with the rest,



Watching with not unfriendly eye
The antics of the lesser fry,
Save when bold sparrows draw too near
Their mighty beaks—and disappear.

Outlandish birds, at times grotesque,
And yet superbly picturesque,
Although resignedly we mourn
A Park dismantled and forlorn,
Long may it be ere you forsake
Your quarters on the minished Lake;
For there, with splendid plumes and hues
And ways that startle and amuse,
You constantly refresh the eye
And cheer the heart of passers-by,
Untouched by years of shock and strain,
Undeviatingly urbane,
And lending London's commonplace
A touch of true heraldic grace.

* * * * *

RING IN THE OLD.

There is a shabby-looking man who (I read it in *The Times*) rings the bell of London hospitals, asks to see the secretary, presumes (as is always a safe thing to do) that the establishment is grievously in need of funds, and without any further parley hands to the startled but gratified official bank-notes to the tune of five hundred pounds. He then vanishes without giving name or address. This unknown benefactor is dressed in top-boots, riding breeches of honourable antiquity, a black coat green with age and a "Cup Final" cap. At the same time (this too on *The Times*' authority) there is an oddly and obsolescently attired lady going about who also makes London hospitals her hobby. She begins by asking the secretary if she may take off her boots, and, receiving permission, takes them off, places her feet on an adjacent chair and hands him two thousand pounds.

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The result of the activities of these angelic visitants is that all the other hospital porters have had instructions from their eager and hopeful secretaries to be careful to be polite to any and every person, even though he or she should be in rags, who expresses the faintest desire to enter on business; more than polite—solicitous, welcoming, cordial; while all the secretaries are at this moment polishing up their smiles and practising an easy manner with ladies in last century costumes who put sudden and unexpected requests.

The Times, in limiting the effect of these curious occurrences entirely to hospital servants, seems to me to lose a great opportunity. Surely the consequences will be more wide-reaching than that? To my mind we may even go so far as to hail the dawn of the golden age for old clothes; for in the fear that shabbiness may be merely a whimsical disguise or the mark of a millionaire's eccentricity the whole world (which is very imitative and very hard up) will begin to fawn upon it, and then at last many of us will enter the earthly paradise.

But the gentleman who puts ease before elegance and the lady who prefers comfort to convention have got to work a little harder yet. They must not fold their hands at the moment under the impression that their labours are done. The support of hospitals is humane and only too necessary, and all honour to them for their generosity; but other spheres of action await exploration.

I had hoped that the War was going to reform ideas on dress and make things more simple for those whose trouser-knees go baggy so soon and remain thus for so long; but, like too many of the expectations which we used to foster, this also has failed. It is therefore the benign couple who must carry on the good work. Let them, if they really love their fellow-creatures, go to a wedding or two (having previously given a present of sufficient value to ensure respect) and display their careless garb among the guests, and then in a little while old garments would at these exacting functions become as fashionable as new and we should all be happier.

I was asked to a wedding last week, and should have accepted but for the great Smart Clothes tradition. If *The Times'* hero and heroine were to become imaginatively busy as I suggest, I could go to all the weddings in the world. (Heaven forbid!) Receptions, formal lunches, the laying of stones, the unveiling of monuments, private views—these ceremonies, now so full of terrors for any but the dressy, could be made endurable if only the gentleman in the black coat green with age and the lady with the elastic sides would show themselves prominently and receive conspicuous attentions.

And then, if any more statues were needed for the police to keep their waterproofs on, one of them should be that of an unknown philanthropical gentleman who wears venerable top-boots, and another that of a philanthropical lady who would rather be without any boots at all, and the inscription on the pedestals would state that their glorious achievement was this: They made old clothes the thing.



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E. V. L.

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THE OLD BEER FLAGON.

(Many old English flagons are adorned inside with grotesque figures of animals.)

Within my foaming flagon
 There crawls on countless legs
 A lazy grinning dragon
 That wallows in the dregs;
 Of old I saw him nightly
 Look up with friendly leer,
 As if to hint politely,
 "I share your taste in beer!"

Through merry nights unnumbered
 (From Boxing Day to Yule)
 He'd greet me, ere I slumbered,
 From out his amber pool;
 But now he is beginning
 To look a trifle strange;
 His smile, once wide and winning,
 Has undergone a change.

No more, as pints diminish
 (I wish the price grew less)
 He hails me at the finish
 With wonted cheeriness;
 For, as I drain my mellow
 Allowances of ale,
 He seems to sigh, "Old fellow,
 Will PUSSYFOOT prevail?"

* * * * *

=Commercial Candour.=

"Cleaning and pressing suites, \$3. Dyeing and pressing suits, \$6.
 Clothes returned looking like now."

Advt. in "Standard" (Buenos Aires).

* * * * *

From an election address:—

“As a woman and a ratepayer, I realise the importance of eliminating all unavoidable expenditure in Municipal undertakings.”

Local Paper.

We trust she will be elected and show how it's done.

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“After an interval of seven years, the ‘Beasts’ Ball, a pre-war popular annual event in aid of the Royal Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, is to be held at the Guildhall, on Wednesday, November 10. Tickets can be obtained from Mrs. Bushe-Fox and from Mrs. Wolf.”—*Cambridge Review.*

It sounds just like *Uncle Remus*.

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[Illustration: =ECHOES OF THE COAL STRIKE.=

“WHAT’S THE KID SHOUTING ABOUT? THERE AIN’T NO RACING.”]

* * * * *

=OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.=

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

“Two households, both alike in dignity...” I ask you, could the novel, of which this quotation is the text, have been written by anyone but Mr. JOHN GALSWORTHY? Actually indeed the disputants belong to two branches of the same family, that grim tribe of *Forsytes*, whom you remember in *The Man of Property*, and of whose collective history the present book is a further instalment (not, I fancy, the last). I should certainly advise anyone not already familiar with the former work to get up his *Forsytes* therein before attacking this; otherwise he may risk some discouragement from the plunge into

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so numerous a clan, known for the most part only by Christian names, with their complex relationships and the mass of bygone happenings that unites or separates them. This stage of the tribal history is called *In Chancery* (HEINEMANN), chiefly from the state of suspended animation experienced by the now middle-aged *Soames* ("Man of Property") with regard to his never-divorced runaway wife *Irene*. Following the ruling *Forsyte* instinct, *Soames* wants a son who will keep together and even increase his great possessions, while continuing his personality. The expiring generation, represented by *James*, is urgent upon this duty to the family. You may imagine what Mr. GALSWORTHY makes of it all. These possessive persons, with their wealth, their hatred and affections and their various strongholds in the more eminently desirable parts of residential London, affect one like portions of some monstrous stone-fronted edifice, impressive but repellent. I have some curiosity to see, with Mr. GALSWORTHY'S help, how the *Forsyte* castle stands the disintegration of 1914-18.

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What with the scientists who explain things on the assumption that we know nearly as much as they do and those who explain things on the assumption that we know nothing, it is very difficult for you and me to persevere in our original determination to learn *something*. But I have always felt that Sir RAY LANKESTER is one of the very few who do understand us, and I feel it still more strongly now that I have read his *Secrets of Earth and Sea* (METHUEN). He is instructive but human; he does not take it for granted that we know what miscegenation means, but he does credit us with a little intelligence. And he realises how many arguments we have had about questions like "Why does the sea look blue?" Personally I rushed at that chapter, though I must say that I was a little disappointed to find that the gist of his answer was "Because water *is* blue." You see, if you had a tooth-glass fifteen feet high and filled it with water—But you must find out for yourself. Then I went on to the chapter on Coal, and discovered that "it is fairly certain that the blacker coal which we find in strata of great geological age was so produced by the action of special kinds of bacteria upon peat-like masses of vegetable refuse." I wonder if Mr. SMILLIE knows that. It might help him to a sense of proportion. The author is constantly setting up a surprising but stimulating relation between the naturalist's researches and the problems of human life, as when he observes that "the 'colour bar' is not merely the invention of human prejudice, but already exists in wild plants and animals," and in his remarks on mongrels and the regrettable subjection of the males of many species. There are chapters on Wheel Animalcules, Vesuvius, Prehistoric Art—everything—and all are admirably illustrated. A fascinating book.

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The Diary of a Journalist (MURRAY) is a volume of which the title is its own sufficient description, save that it leaves unsuggested the interest that such briskly written and comprehensive comments as these of our old friend, Sir HENRY LUCY, must command. His book differs from most of those in the flood of recollections that has lately broken upon us in being a selection from “impressions of the moment written without knowledge of the ultimate result.” In these stray moments between the years 1885 and 1917 I find at least two examples in which this ignorance of the final event adds much to the interest of the immediate record—the startling forecast of the EX-KAISER’S destiny, entered in the Diary under November ’98; and the mention, long before the actual illness of KING EDWARD declared itself, of the growing belief in certain circles that his coronation would never take place. It is at once obvious that not even “TOBY’S” three previous volumes have by any means exhausted his fund of good stories, the scenes of which range from Westminster to Bouverie Street, and round half the stately (or, at least, interesting) homes of England. Of them all—not forgetting DISRAELI and the peacocks and a new W. S. GILBERT—my personal choice would be for the mystery of the Unknown Guest, who not only took a place, but was persuaded to speak, at a private dinner given by Sir JOHN HARE at the Garrick Club, without anyone ever knowing who he was or how he came there. A genial lucky-bag book, which (despite unusually full chapter headings) would be improved by an index to its many prizes.

* * * * *

Mr. JAMES HILTON is very young and very clever. If, as he grows older, he learns to be clever about more interesting things he ought to write some very good novels. *Catherine Herself* (UNWIN) has red hair, but then she has a rather more red-haired disposition than most red-haired heroines have to justify it, so this is not my real objection to the book. My quarrel is that, though I cannot call it an ugly story without giving a false impression, it is certainly a quite unbeautiful one, and at the end of its three hundred and more pages it has achieved nothing but a full-length portrait of an utterly selfish woman. Mr. HILTON has dissected her most brilliantly; but I don’t think she is worth it. Catherinees, whether they marry or are given in marriage, or do anything else, are really stationary; and, since the persons of a story, if it is to be worth telling, must move in some direction, Mr. HILTON will be well advised in future to choose a different type of heroine. I want to say too that I don’t believe that it is either so easy or so profitable to become a well-known pianist “not in the front rank” as he seems to imagine it is. I wish I could think that no one else would believe him.

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[Illustration: *Knight (to his henchman)*. “EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT, PERKINS? YOU HAVEN’T FORGOTTEN ANYTHING? WHAT’S THAT?”

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Henchman. "IT'S THE PORTRAIT OF YOUR LADY, SIR, THAT YOU PROMISED TO TAKE INTO BATTLE WITH YOU, SIR."

Knight. "DID I? WELL, I MUST E'EN KEEP MY WORD. FASTEN IT ON MY BACK. ONE NEVER KNOWS—IT MAY BE USEFUL IN CASE OF A REVERSE."]

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It seems rather a bright idea of C. NINA BOYLE to dedicate "to THEA and IRENE, whose lives have lain in sheltered ways," a seven-shilling shocker about ways that are anything but sheltered. Perhaps the sheltered in general, and Thea and Irene in particular, will take it from me that the villainies of *Out of the Frying Pan* are much larger than life or, at any rate, much more concentrated, and that pseudo-orphans like *Maisie* usually have a better chance of getting out of frying-pans into something cool than the author allows her heroine. I also submit that there was nothing in *Maisie's* equipment to suggest that she would have been quite so slow in separating goats from sheep. But let me say that THEA and IRENE have had dedicated to them an exciting and amusing *fritto misto* of crooks, demi-mondaines, blackmailers, gamblers, roués, murderers, receivers and decent congenital idiots of all sorts. The characterisation is adroitly done and the workmanship avoids that slovenliness which makes nineteen out of twenty books of this kind a weariness of spirit to the perceptive. I wonder if *Maisie* with such a father and mother would have been such a darling. Perhaps Professor KARL PEARSON will explain.

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The *Hon. William Toppys* (pronounced "Tops"), brother of *Lord Topsham*, left Devonshire and retired to an island in the Torres Straits. There he married a Melanesian woman and became the father of a frizzy-haired and coffee-coloured son. It is a little strange to me, who think of Mr. BENNET COPPLESTONE as Devonian to the tip of his pen-finger, that the *Hon. William* is not rebuked for so shamelessly deserting his native county. Instead he is almost applauded for his wisdom, and this despite the fact that he quite spoils the look of the family tree with his exotic graft. For in the course of time his son, insularly known as *Willatopy*, inherited the title and became twenty-eighth (no less) *Baron of Topsham*. Mr. COPPLESTONE does not realise the vast difference between light comedy and broad farce, but apart from this substantial reservation I can vouch that his yarn of *Madame Gilbert's Cannibal* (MURRAY) is deftly spun. Should you decide to follow the famous *Madame Gilbert* when she visits the island where the twenty-eighth baron lived you will witness a lively and unusual entertainment.

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Transcriber's Note:

Page 355: “Ruined! the old place mortgaged! faugh!” [double quote added]. Page 356: “*They* always do that.” [double quote inserted].