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1920-04-21, by Various**

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI,
VOL. 158, 1920-04-21 ***

**PUNCH,
OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.**

Vol. 158.

April 21st, 1920.

CHARIVARIA.

It appears that Irish criminals may be divided into three classes (*a*) The ones you can't catch; (*b*) The ones you have caught but can't convict; (*c*) The ones you have convicted but can't keep in prison.

To such an extent has America gone dry that nearly all letters despatched from Scotsmen living over there are posted with the stamps pinned to the envelopes.

"We are certainly going to gain by the sale of the Slough works," said Mr. BONAR LAW last week. Whether to an extent that will justify the Government for having kept *The Daily Mail* waiting like that is another question.

Mr. JAMES FOWLER of Deptford has offered to walk from Westminster Bridge to Brighton with a jar on his head. We assume that he has mislaid his hat.

In Hertfordshire the other day a boy was knocked down by a funeral-car. It may have been an accident, but it has all the appearance of greed.

A constable giving evidence at Willesden police-court said a prisoner called him a "sergeant-major." We feel sure the fellow could not have meant it.

Mrs. ALICE L. YOCUM, of Boone, U.S.A., has just obtained her thirteenth divorce. It is said that she has the finest collection of husbands in America.

The man who last week said he had not read "Another Powerful Article" by Mr. HORATIO BOTTOMLEY in the Sunday Press is thought to be an impostor.

Parents in New York who are afraid of losing their children may register them at the Bureau of

Missing People. As we have no such institution in this country parents must adopt the old method of writing their names and addresses on the top right-hand corner of their offspring.

Any wind blowing at more than seventy miles an hour, says an informing paper, may be called a hurricane. At the same time we doubt if this would have much effect on it.

Our sympathy is with the young Flight Lieutenant of the R.A.F. who has been unable to keep up with the uniforms designed by the Air Ministry. He is now said to be three uniforms behind.

It is claimed that whilst standing on a certain rock near Aberdeen one can obtain a thousand echoes from a single shout. We understand that the local habit of going there in order to pull a cork out of a bottle has now been prohibited owing to the annoyance caused to American visitors.

A large grocery warehouse in Liverpool was practically destroyed by fire last Thursday week. We understand that the orderly manner in which the cheeses fell in and marched out of the danger-zone was alone responsible for preventing a panic.

"Keep smiling and you will never need a doctor," advises a writer in an illustrated daily. A friend of ours who put it to the test now writes to us from a well-known county asylum advising us to choose the doctor.

According to a morning paper, Micky, the oldest ape in the Zoo, now wears a mournful expression and seems to be tired of life. It is thought that he may have recently overheard the remark made by a thoughtless visitor that he was growing more like a Bolshevik every day.

A certain lamp-post in Maida Vale has been knocked down twice by the same bus. If the bus knocks it down once more the lamp becomes its own property.

The amazing report that one of the first six to finish in the London to Brighton walk was once a telegraph-boy is now denied.

There is a man living in the Edgware Road, it is stated, who has never been on an omnibus. He has often seen them whizzing by, he declares, but has always resisted the temptation to take the fatal plunge.

There will be no Naval manœuvres this year, it is announced. How under these conditions Mr. POLLEN can continue to teach the Navy its business is a very grave question.

At a St. Dunstan's auction at Thornton Heath autographs of Mr. GEORGE ROBESON and the PREMIER were sold at ten shillings each. Mr. ROBESON, it appears, generously insisted on treating the matter as a joke.

A Manchester scientist claims to have discovered a means of making vegetable alcohol undrinkable without impairing its usefulness. It looks as if the secret of Government ale must have leaked out at last.

We are in a position to deny a report which was being spread in connection with a certain Model Village scheme, to the effect that the model bricklayer had refused to perform unless he was provided with a model public-house, while the model public-house could not be provided until the model bricklayer started work.

Bonnet strings, says a fashion paper, will be worn by *débutantes* this summer. Apron strings, we gather, will continue to be unfashionable with our flappers.



British Museum Official. "No, you CAN'T GET INTO THE MUMMY GALLERY. THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ARE STILL THERE."

Rustic. "WHAT! AIN'T THEY SORTED 'EM OUT YET?"

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ON THE ITALIAN RIVIERA.

ENGLAND TO HER FRANCE.

This is a joyous trysting-place, my love,
 With no inconstant climate to distract us;
 Pure azure is the sky that laughs above
 These admirable bowers of prickly cactus,
 Where we may nestle, conjugating *amo*
 (Dear old San Remo!).

We've had our difference, as lovers do;
 A slight misunderstanding came between us;
 But that is past; the sky (I said) is blue
 And this the very sea that nurtured Venus;
 Come, like her doves amid the groves of myrtle—
 Come, let us turtle.

"How can they ever kiss again?" 'twas said;
 But Love made light of that absurd conundrum;
 And lo! your breast is pillow to my head,
 And we've a pair of hearts that beat as one drum;
 Our bonds, if anything, are even more
 Tight than before.

Your independence caused a passing pain,
 But now, I thank you, I am feeling better;
 You'll never go upon your own again
 Nor I will write another nasty letter;
 Embrace me, then, for sign of love's renewal,
Mon bijou (jewel).

O.S.

THE IDENTIFICATION OF HOBBS.

Old Hobbs, the gardener, has been in our family longer than I have. Although we live within twenty miles of London only once has he made the journey to the great city, for that one memorable day so nearly ended in disaster that he always speaks of it with a shudder. Indeed, but for the arrival of Mrs. Hobbs, belated, flustered and inquiring everywhere for her man, he must assuredly have spent the night in a police-station.

This is how it all happened. Mrs. Hobbs was returning from a visit to relations in Sussex, and her husband was to meet her in London, convoy her across the city and bring her home. In order to avail himself of a cheap fare Hobbs left by the 7.30 train, though his wife would not arrive till four o'clock in the afternoon.

He managed to get across London somehow. After locating the station at which Mrs. Hobbs was

to arrive his intention was to spend the day "looking round London a bit;" but the crowds and the traffic were too much for the old countryman, so he sought safety by staying where he was.

Time hung heavily after a while. He lingered round the bookstall looking at the books and papers till a pert girl behind the counter asked him if he wouldn't like a chair; but when Hobbs, who was never rude and consequently never suspected rudeness in other people, raised his hat and said, "No, thank'ee, Miss, I be all right standing," even the pert girl was disarmed.

Next he amused himself counting the milk-churns on the platform. Then he killed time by interesting himself in the stacks of unattended luggage and examining the labels; and at three o'clock a railway policeman laid a hand on his shoulder and asked him what his game was.

Hobbs, a little startled but clear in conscience, told his tale.

"That don't do for me," announced the constable. "I been keeping observation on you since nine, and your wife don't arrive till four, so you say. I seen you hanging round the luggage and fingering parcels, and you'll just come with me to the police-office as a suspected person loitering. An old luggage-thief, I should say, to put it quite plain."

"Me a thief!" gasped Hobbs, roused to realities; "why, I've worked ever since I was twelve, and me sixty-three now; I was never a thief, Sir. Look at me hands."

The constable inspected them critically. "They're a bit horny certainly; but then that may be only your dam artfulness. Come on and talk to the Sergeant."

The Railway Police-Sergeant briskly inquired his name, address, occupation and all the rest of it. Hobbs gave a good account of himself and mentioned that he had worked in our family for forty-two years.

"Any visiting-cards, correspondence or other papers to identify you?" asked the Sergeant mechanically. He had said it so often to the people who cry "Season! Season!" when there is no Season.

Hobbs confessed to having none of these things; and no, he knew no one in London.

"Then you'll stay here till four," pronounced the Sergeant, "and we'll see if this good lady of yours comes along."

But, alas! no Mrs. Hobbs appeared. "Must have missed the train," suggested Hobbs despairingly. "P'r'aps the trap broke down or something."

There was only one more train, it seemed, and that was not due until nine.

"Oh, I don't think my missus 'ud like to be so late as that," said the suspect. "She'd wait till the morning. I don't reckon she'll come to-night."

"No more don't I." The constable was beginning to enjoy himself. "If I was you I should drop the bluff and own I was fair caught. If you was to ask me, I should say you didn't look like a married man at all. We'll see what the Sergeant says now."

The Sergeant was accordingly consulted. He too was rather sceptical.

"If there's any truth in what you say you'd better wire to this gentleman at Monk's Langford that you say you work for, and try if we can identify you somehow," he advised. And to the constable, "Take him to the Telegraph Office and let him send his wire. Then bring him back here. Mind he don't give you the slip."

So Hobbs, sighing deeply and perspiring freely, wrote his message: "Sir, they have got me in the police-station here and say I am a suspected person, which you know I never was, having worked for you, Sir, and your father for forty-two years. But the Sargeant here says he wants proofs, and you, Sir, must vouch for me as being respectable, which you know I am, and none of us was ever thieves. So will you please do so, Sir, and oblige, as this leaves me at present, George Hobbs."

The clerk glanced at it. "It's a long message," he said; "it'll cost four or five shillings."

Hobbs hadn't got that—no, really he hadn't.

The constable standing on guard, rather bored, interposed, "We ain't asking you to write a book about it."

"No, Sir, I couldn't do that," replied Hobbs anxiously. "What would you say, Sir, if you was me?"

"Don't ask me," answered the policeman. "It's your wire, not mine. Send something you can pay for. We only wants to find out if you're the person you say you are. Daresay you'd like me to write it for you, and you 'op it while I done it. I seen your kind before. Try again, mate."

So Hobbs tried again. And that is how it came about that at tea-time a telegraph-boy brought me the bewildering message: "Mr. Lockwood, The Nook, Monk's Langford. Sir, am I Hobbs? Hobbs."



LOVERS' QUARRELS.

JOHN BULL (*to France*). "WONDERFUL HOW A LITTLE STORM IN A TEA-POT BRINGS OUT THE FLAVOUR!"



OUTSIDE THE RADIUS.

Strong Man. "NOW THEN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, KIND APPRECIATION, IF YOU PLEASE. YOU SHORLY DON'T EXPECT A GENUINE WEST-END PERFORMER TO 'ALF KILL 'ISSELF IN THE SUBUBS FOR FOURPENCE?"

BRIDGE NOTES.

(With acknowledgments to several contemporaries.)

It would, I feel, be but fair to the great Bridge-playing public to preface these few notes with a word of warning against the writers whom I find to my regret affecting to speak with authority on this subject in other periodicals. Until, as in the kindred profession of Medicine, it is impossible to practise without a Bridge degree, nothing can be done to prevent these quacks from laying down the law. All I can do for the present is to point out that there is only one writer who can speak not merely with authority, but with infallibility, upon all matters pertaining to our national game.

In this the eighth instalment of my series on Auction etiquette, I should like to urge once more upon the young Bridge-player the importance of playing quickly. And this because yet another case has come under my notice in which much trouble might have been avoided by doing so. In this case A. took seven minutes to decide whether to play the King or the Knave, which, especially as the Queen had already been played, was, I consider, far too long. Y., the declarer, sitting on A.'s left, certainly found it so, for towards the end of the seventh minute he dropped off to sleep and his cards fell forward face upward on the table. Dummy having gone away in search of liquid refreshment, A. and his partner B. then played out the hand as they liked and then roused Y. to inform him that, instead of making game, he had lost three hundred above.

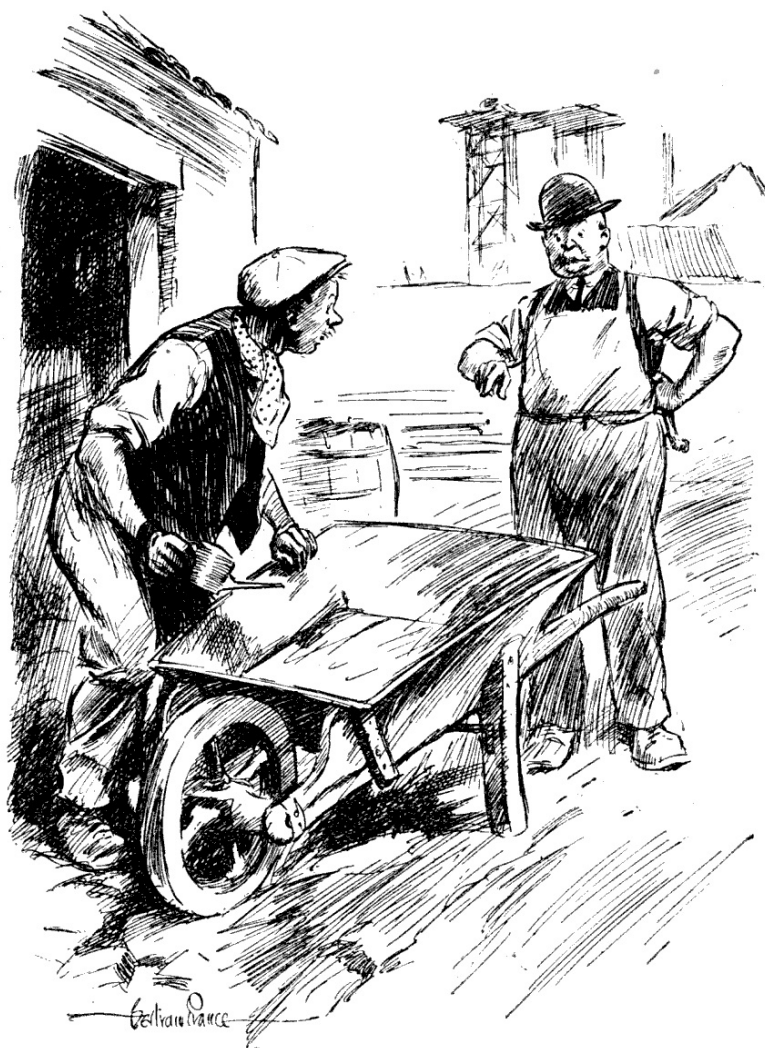
Now, A. and B. were strictly within the rules of Auction Bridge in acting as they did. There is no legal time limit for players, as there is at cricket. But it would have been more tactful had they roused Y. at once, that he might see what they were doing with his cards.

Nor should tact be confined to such comparatively rare incidents as this. For instance, it is a mistake to confuse Auction Bridge with Rugby football. I have known players who declared "Two No-trumps" in very much the same manner as that in which a Rugby football-player throws the opposing three-quarter over the side-line. Excessive aggression is a mistake. A young Civil Servant of my acquaintance even went so far as to abstain from claiming an obvious revoke when the delinquent was the chief of his department. Unfortunately, however, this young man, so wise in other ways, had the annoying habit of turning his chair to bring him luck. On one evening, when the run of the cards was against him, he turned his chair between every hand and so annoyed his chief that no promotion has ever come his way, and he now spends his days bitterly regretting that he did not claim that revoke.

Passing to another point, I am asked by a correspondent if it is permissible occasionally to play from left to right, instead of from right to left, just to relieve the monotony. He asks, not unreasonably, why, if this is not so, writers on Bridge go to the trouble of putting those little curved arrows to show which way round the cards are to be played.

For myself, I see no reason why the right-to-left convention should not occasionally be reversed, always provided that the whole table agrees beforehand to play in the same direction.

There are many other points to which I should like to refer, and many players to whom I should like to give a word of warning. There is the player who suddenly breaks off to join in the conversation of other people who happen to be in the room. There is the player who whistles to himself while he is playing: this is a grave fault, nor does the class of music whistled affect the question; the *Preislied* performed through the teeth is quite as exasperating as *K-K-Katie*. Then there is the player who breathes so hard with the exertion of the game that he blows the cards about the table. Finally there is the player who slaps the face of his or her partner. This is a mistake, however great the provocation. I have not space now to deal exhaustively with these breaches of Auction etiquette. Besides, I have to keep something in hand for future articles.



Foreman (to new hand). "WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' THERE?"

New Hand. "OILIN' THE WHEELBARROW."

Foreman. "WELL, JUST LET IT ALONE. WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT MACHINERY?"

THE MADDING CROWD.

The scene is an Irish Point-to-Point meeting.

The course lies along a shallow valley, bounded on the north by a wall of cloudy blue mountains.

At each jump stands a group of spectators; the difficulty or danger of an obstacle may be measured by the number of spectators who stand about it, recounting tales of past accidents and hoping cheerfully for the future. Motor cars, side-cars, waggonettes, pony-traps and ass-carts are drawn up anyhow round a clump of whitewashed farm buildings in the background.

Blanketed hunters are having their legs rubbed or being led up and down by grooms. Comes a broken-winded tootle on a coach-horn and the black-and-scarlet drag of the local garrison trundles into view. The unsophisticated gun-horses in the lead shy violently at the flapping canvas of an orange-stall and swerve to the left into a roulette-booth presided over by a

vociferous ancient in a tattered overcoat and blue spectacles. The gamblers scatter like flushed partridges and the ancient bites the turf beneath his upturned board amid a shower of silver coins. The leaders, scared by the animated table, and the blood-curdling invocations and wildly-waving arms and legs of the fallen croupier, shy violently in the opposite direction and disappear into the refreshment-tent, whence issue the crash of crockery and the shrieks of the attendant Hebes. (Lieut.-Commander KENWORTHY should have some questions to pop about this at Westminster when next the Irish Question comes up.)

The bookmakers are perched a-top of a grassy knoll which overlooks the whole course, and around them surges the crowd.

Scarecrow (in somebody's cast-off dinner-jacket and somebody else's abandoned hunting breeches.) Kyard of the races! Kyard of the races!

Farmer. Here y' are. How much?

Scarecrow. Wan shillin'-an'-sixpence, Sorr.

Farmer. There's "Price wan shillin'" printed on ut, ye blagyard.

Scarecrow. The sixpence is for the Government's little Intertainmints Tax, Sorr.

Farmer. Oh, go to the divil!

Scarecrow. Shure an' I will if yer honour'll give me a letther of inthroduction. We'll call ut a shillin', thin, and I'll sthand the loss mesilf.

[Farmer parts with the price and the Scarecrow dodges swiftly into the crowd. The Farmer peruses the card and frowns in a puzzled way; then the date catches his eye and he curses and tears the list to pieces.]

Farmer. Drat take the little scut; he's sold me last year's kyard!

Cattle-Dealer (shouting). Hi, sthop him there!

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Farmer. Whist, let him go. Let him trap some others first the way I'll not be the only mug on the market this day.

Trickster (setting up his table and jerking his cards about). I'm afther losin' a pony to thim robbers beyant, but, as Pierpont Rockafeller said to Jawn D. Morgan, "business is business, an' if ye don't speculate ye won't accumulate." Spot the dame and my money's yours; spot the blank and yours is mine. "The quickness of the hand deceives the eye, or vicy-versy," as Lord Carnegie remarked to Andrew Rothschild. Walk up, walk up, my sporty gintlemen and thry yer luck wid the owld firm.

Farmer. There go the harses down to the post. Who's that leadin' on the black?

Dealer. Young Mither Darley, no less. 'Tis a great fella for all kinds of divarsion he is, the same. I was beyant to Darleystown this week past and found him fightin' a main o'cocks before the fire in his grandmother's drawin'-room. Herself riz up off her bed and gave the two of us the father and mother of a dhrubbin' wid her crutch, an' she desthroyed wid the gout an' all.

Farmer. 'Tis herself has the great heart. Hey! that's never Clancy goin' down on the owld foxey mare? Faith, it's sorra a ha'porth cud she course or lep these fifteen years.

Dealer. Lep, is ut? Shure she'll spring out like a birrd an' fear no foe by dint of the two bottles of potheen she has taken an' the couple o' lads Clancy has stationed at ivvery jump to let a roar at her an' hearthen her wid the sthroke of an ash-plant as she comes at ut.

First Country Boy. Arrah, they're off, they're away!

Second Country Boy. Thin let us down to the big double, avic, and be the grace of God we'll see a corpse.

Girl in Brown (hopping from one foot to the other). Can you see Freddy, Uncle George? Is he in front? I'm sure he is. He hasn't fallen, has he? He won't fall, will he? I'm sure he will. I do hope he'll win; I *know* he won't. The jumps look frightful, and I'm certain he'll break his darling neck. Oh, where *is* he, Uncle George?

Uncle George. Here, take my field-glasses.

Girl in Brown. I can't see, I can't see.

Uncle George (drily). Try looking through them the other way round.

Beshawled Crone (towing an aged beggar-man who wears a framed placard reminding the public that "charity covers a multitude of sins," and announcing that the bearer is not only "teetotally" deaf and dumb, but also blind, barmy and partially paralysed). May God's blessin' and the

blesin's of all the howly Saints an' Martyrs be on ye, and would ye spare a little copper for a poor owld stricken crature an' I'll pray for ye this night an' ivvery night of me life?

Girl in Brown. Give her a shilling, Uncle George, and tell her to pray for Freddy *now*.
[Uncle George *does the needful*.

Beggar-man (miraculously recovering his speech). Whist! Was that a shillin' he gave ye? That makes ten ye have now, thin. Bun like a hare an' put ut on Acrobat at the best ye can get.

Farmer. Clancy leads be a length.

Dealer. Thin 'tis a hardy rider will dare pass the owld foxy mare now, for she'd reach out an' chew the leg off him, she's that jealous.

Farmer. Woof! Pat Maguire is into the wather head-first an' dhrinkin' a bellyful, I'll warrant—which same will be a new sensation for him.

Dealer. It will indeed. 'Tis a wonder he wouldn't send a lad round the course before him givin' the ditches a dash from a pocket-flask the way he'd be in his iliment should he take a toss—the thirsty poor fella!

Farmer. The foxy mare is down on her nose an' Clancy throwing somersets all down the course. Acrobat has ut.

Dealer. He has not. He is all bet up. He's rollin' like a Wexford pig-boat. Beau Brocade has the legs of him.

Girl in Brown (jumping up and down). Beau Brocade! Beau Brocade! Oh, Freddy darling!

Beggar-man (miraculously recovering his sight). Acrobat! Put the whip to him, ye lazy varmint! Acrobat! Och, wirra, wirra!

Dealer. Beau Brocade has him cot. He is on his quarther. He is on his shoulder. They are neck and neck. He has him bet. Huroosh!

Farmer. What are you hurooshin' for—you with five poun' on Acrobat?

Dealer (crestfallen). Och, dang it, I was forgettin'.

Girl in Brown (dancing and clapping her hands). Hurray! Hurray! Hurray!

Beggar-man. ***!!! ***!!!

[*Local brass band, throned in a dilapidated waggonette, explodes into the opening strains of "Garryowen."*
PATLANDER.

"The question which arises in the mind of the writer is this:—'Is Salicylic Aldehyde
"C₆H₄(OH)COH orthohydroxybenzaldehyde"
the cause of the trouble?'"—*The Fruit-Grower.*

It must be a dreadful thing to have a mind like that.



MANNERS AND MODES.

THEN AND NOW.

[From an Early-Victorian pocket "Etiquette for Gentlemen."—"During the morning hours a gentleman visitor who neither shoots, reads, writes letters nor does anything but idle about the house and chat with the ladies is an intolerable nuisance. Sooner than become the latter he had better retire to the billiard-room and practise cannons by himself."]

TELEPHONE TACTICS.

It is now some months since the great autumn offensive was conducted with the idea of biting off an awkward salient in my circumstances—in brief, of obtaining the necessary telephone to enable me to commence an ordered existence. For many, many days my voice had been unheard crying in the wilderness that I was a poor demobilised soldier, that I had once had a telephone and had given it up at my country's call, and please couldn't they give me back even my old, old telephone again? I have already told how in response to these very human appeals I at length got only a request for the balance due for calls for 1914. My old friend Time, however, worked his proverbial wonders and one day a telephone came—phit! like that.

Directly it had come I suspected a trap somewhere. Nor were my friends behindhand in telling me of the horrors of gigantic and inexorable bills from which there was no appeal. They said I must have a coin-box. Excellent idea! I would have a coin-box.

So the great Spring offensive began. In early February I opened a strong barrage upon the main headquarters (how lovingly these ancient military metaphors come back to one!) and kept up a little light harassing fire upon the District Agent. The enemy replied with rigid uniformity upon printed forms—a mean advantage, for I have to type mine myself. But matters progressed. At the end of the first fortnight I had been advised that the work of installing my coin-box had been entrusted to no fewer than three groups of engineers, "to whom you should refer in all cases."

Well, I "referred" for some little time, and then, after a decent interval, made their acquaintance separately. If anything was calculated to bring back memories of the lighter side of the War it was the gracious and suave manner in which I despatched and redespached to other departments. I might have been the buffest of buff slips the way I was "passed to you, please."

Once again I cancelled all my work in the pursuit of where the rainbow ends. Nor was this renunciation any great hardship, for I had been writing a book about the Realities of War, and had just found that all the horrors that ever might have happened had already been set down by one who saw most of the game, being an onlooker. "But this," I said, as I set out every morning—"this is the life, pure adventure in every moment of it."

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My efforts were rewarded. In late February three people came and left three coin-boxes—in pieces. Then I must admit that I did a foolish thing. I wrote and said that I only wanted one box. I was afraid that if I kept them all it would be, a case of "Thr-r-ree pennies, please," instead of one. (Mine is a penny district).

It annoyed them all. They came and took all the boxes away again—jealousy, I suppose. So at the end of February I was back in my old trenches again and visitors were still saying, "Oh, *do* you mind if I ring up So-and-so?" and I was listening to myself answering, "Oh, *do*. No, of *course* don't bother about the twopence" (visitors always want calls just outside the radius; I do myself).

The crisis came in March. It was then that I joined the criminal classes. For many days I had haunted the telephone dump, taking a melancholy pleasure in watching real engineers come out with real coin-boxes for other people. No Peri at the golden gate ever looked more wistful. I know now that it is opportunity that makes the criminal, and one day the opportunity came. It came in the form of a young and evidently new hand, who emerged from the dump and pitched upon me—me of all people—to ask, "Can you tell me where this place is?" As he spoke he began to get out a slip with the address, and in that moment my fate was sealed. One glance showed me that he was the bearer of a perfectly good coin-box, and in a second I had seized the opportunity.

What he said I have not the slightest idea and it wouldn't have mattered what the address had been; before he started I had assured him that by a curious coincidence I was going to that very place, and that by a still more curious coincidence I was the very man who wanted that coin-box. Curious, wasn't it, how such coincidences happened in real life as well as in books?

I took him to my home in a taxi. On the way I succeeded in diverting his mind from any possible awkward questions by relating details of my sad story until I could see the poor fellow was on the verge of tears. For those interested in criminology I may say that all the best criminal devices are not necessarily planned beforehand to the end; they are begun any-old-how and the genius consists in carrying the thing through afterwards, much the same as running a great war. I recked not what might occur after I had nefariously induced the poor innocent to install the machine; perhaps I had some vague idea that the Englishman's house is his castle, though this seems ridiculous when considered calmly. However, what matter these psychological dissections? He came with me unsuspecting, and I piloted him out of the taxi without his ever noticing the name of the street even. How could I have foreseen? Well, anyhow I didn't, or I shouldn't have tipped him on the stairs.

With many nods and winks I gave my wife the hint how I had managed it, and we went about the house whispering and hobnobbing in odd corners like a couple of conspirators while he began the work of installation.

Then the first dreadful moment came. Suddenly he addressed me by my name, with a certain suspicious interrogation in his tone.

"Who?" I asked blandly, going as red as a turkey-cock, of course; I never can help it.

He looked surprised and I plunged heavily, giving the first name I could think of, which happened to be the one he had mentioned in the taxi—his own, in fact. He looked still more suspicious and I knew it had been a mistake, especially as close to where he had been working were two envelopes addressed to me. I am certain that if my wife had not called me at that moment I should have gone permanently purple all over.

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When I got back (I tried to get my wife to go, but she said she would rather I went, and that I wasn't really as red as I felt)—when I got back I could see that it had dawned upon him that I had wheedled him there without his knowing exactly where he was, and that he was determined not to be had. He asked me to sign for the installation.

Alas, I could not do that. It was only then that I realised that I am constitutionally honest; besides they might find me out.

We both tried to turn his thoughts to pleasanter topics. Perhaps asking him to have a glass of port was a mistake there are times when even bribery is bad policy. Briefly, after a mumbled remark that "there was something fishy," he refused to leave the box. Dry-eyed we watched him take it all down and depart in a dudgeon. We were left with a vision of shameless visitors with their twopenny calls and interminable bills running up even while we were away on our holidays.

"Let us," I said hoarsely—"let us go and look at our child; she is all we have left now."

Moodily we turned to go upstairs. In the hall we stopped dead. Upon the floor was the wretched paper which my Victorian conscience and my twentieth-century caution had prevented me from signing.

"He must," said my wife with her usual perspicacity, "have dropped it on his way out. Let's see who the box was really meant for."

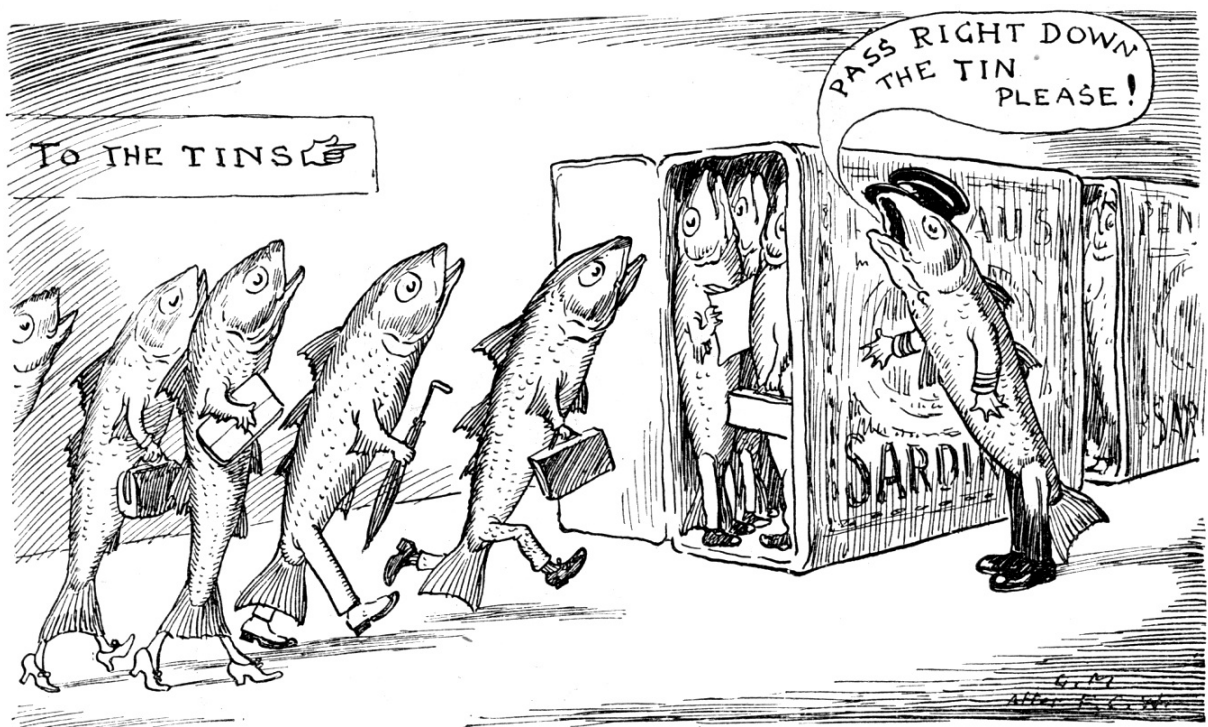
Picking it up I read aloud in cold firm tones *my own name and address*. The box had been meant for us after all.

We got it in the end. It came one morning, like the flowers in Spring, quite suddenly, and we spent a whole day telephoning to our friends to tell them we had a coin-box at last. I also wrote a letter full of gratitude to the telephone people and got the reply that, "owing to the shortage of plant, etc.," they regretted that for the time being they could not grant my request for a telephone.

We did not tell them that we had had one for three months; Heaven knows what would have happened.

And we are left in peace—now that our visitors have heard that we have a coin-box.

L.



THE PIONEERS.

SUPPOSED ORIGIN OF UNDERGROUND TACTICS.

TWO "STEIN"-WAY GRANDS.

BY A PHILISTINE.

EINSTEIN and EPSTEIN were wonderful men,
Bringing new miracles into our ken.
EINSTEIN upset the Newtonian rule;
EPSTEIN demolished the Pheidian School.
EINSTEIN gave fits to the Royal Society;
EPSTEIN delighted in loud notoriety.

EINSTEIN made parallels meet in infinity;
EPSTEIN remodelled the form of Divinity.
Nature exhausted, I hopefully sing,
Can't have more Steins of this sort in her sling.



Mrs. Faulkner (to District Visitor). "NICELY, THANK YOU, MISS, EXCEPT FOR A POISONED 'AND. FOR THE REST OF 'EM, FATHER'S IN HOSPITAL, LITTLE FLORRIE'S SCALDED HERSELF AND BABY'S GOT THE WHOOPING-COUGH. IT BE A BLESSING THAT TROUBLES DON'T COME SINGLY OR ELSE THERE'D BE NO END TO IT."

"Disputing Sergt. Alvan C. York's claim as the world war's greatest hero, Sergt. Mike Donaldson of New York has challenged the Tennessean to a debate on who is the greatest war hero."—*New Haven Journal-Courier (U.S.A.)*

Without waiting for the result of this unique contest Mr. Punch has no hesitation in saying that between them these warriors are responsible for the mightiest "blow" of the War.



The Colonel (at the end of his vocabulary). "WHAT DID LORD FISHER SAY IN 1919?"

FROM THE DANCE WORLD.

(By our Ballet Expert.)

The Daily Graphic announces that Mr. ARNOLD BENNETT has "fallen a willing victim to the latest fashionable dances," and is having lessons in them "in the privacy of his Hanover Square home." A thousand entrancing possibilities are opened up by this bald announcement. We are content to supplement it by a few authentic details.

Mr. BENNETT, who does nothing by halves, has mapped out a programme which will occupy his energies for at least two years. First comes the period of pupilship, which will last for six months. Then a year on the stage; then six months devoted to the composition of three novels and three plays, each with a Terpsichorean motive. Already, while engaged on his daily exercises, Mr. BENNETT has found time to revise the titles of some of his earlier works in keeping with his present aims, and two of these have now been appropriately rechristened *Anna Pavlova of the Five Towns* and *Helen of the High Kick*.

In the actual technique of his adopted art Mr. BENNETT has already shown extraordinary progress. The other day, while a wedding party was just about to leave St. George's, Hanover Square, Mr. BENNETT, who happened to be passing by, took a flying caracole clean over the Rolls-Royce which contained the happy pair. Those who witnessed the feat say that it eclipsed Nijinsky in his most elastic mood. But Mr. BENNETT is not satisfied, and declined an invitation to appear at the Devonshire House Ball last week on the ground that his achievement does not yet square with his ambition. Moreover he has decided not to dance in public under his real name, but is not yet quite certain whether to choose the artistic pseudonym of Ben Netsky or Cinquecittà—probably the latter.

Above all he is firmly resolved to preserve in his dancing the sympathetic and humanistic tone of his presentation of life in his books. It will be a message of hope. He is determined by his gestural artistry and resilient thistle-downiness to "sanction and fortify the natural human passion for believing that life can somehow, behind all the miseries and the mysteries, mean something profoundly worth while." To render justice to his mental and physical agility is beyond our powers.

We have been driven to culling this memorable sentence from the latest and most preternaturally precious of his American admirers.

It is only fair to say that as a dancing fictionist Mr. BENNETT will not be allowed to have it entirely his own way. Rumours are already afloat of the appearance on the boards of Messrs. CHESTERTON and BELLOC, under the impressive aliases of Campoborgo and Bellocchio, "the Terrible Tarantulators." This may be only a wild surmise. There is however strong *a priori* evidence in support of the statements that Mr. MASEFIELD is taking lessons in the Fox Trot at Boar's Hill, and that Lord Northsquit is bringing back with him from Morocco a powerful troupe of Dancing Dervishes, with the intention of installing them ultimately in Downing Street.

Our Literary Legislators.

"AN IMPERIAL POLICY.

(By Mr. ALFRED BIGLAND, M.P.)

May I commence my argument by a well-known quotation from Shakespeare, 'He knows not England who only England knows'?"—*Liverpool Paper*.

"SITUATIONS OPEN.

(COLONIAL, INDIAN AND FOREIGN.)

IRELAND.—Invoice Clerk required by leading firm of Wholesale Druggists in Ireland."—*Trade Paper*.

Dominion Home Rule casts its shadow before.

"The decree of the Archbishop of Canterbury for the creation of a separate Providence of Wales was read."—*Scotch Paper*.

What's wrong with Mr. LLOYD GEORGE?



RESTORING THE BALANCE.

VOICE FROM AUDIENCE: "IT'S A TRICK!"

PERFORMER: "OF COURSE IT'S A TRICK! THE POINT IS THAT IT HASN'T BEEN DONE FOR YEARS AND YEARS—AND I'LL TROUBLE YOU TO APPLAUD IT."

[pg 313]

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

Monday, April 12th.—Neither Ministers nor ordinary Members showed any marked eagerness to resume their Parliamentary labours. Little green oases were to be seen in every part of the House, and on the Treasury Bench even Under-Secretaries (who often have to maintain a precarious perch on one another's knees) had room to spread themselves.

The Underground Railway may, like Nature, be careless of the individual, but it is extremely careful of the typewriter, and insists on making a special charge for this instrument, officially regarded as a bicycle. But as Sir ERIC GEDDES announced that this extortion, "though legal," was in his opinion "neither just nor expedient," we may hope that it will shortly be abandoned. The Ministry of Transport at last seems likely to justify its existence.

Lieut.-Commander KENWORTHY was annoyed to find that there has been no change during the recess in the regulations relating to passports, and that they are still not issued to Soviet Russia. The tone of the Minister's reply rather suggested that the Government might be disposed to make an exception in favour of the hon. and gallant Member.

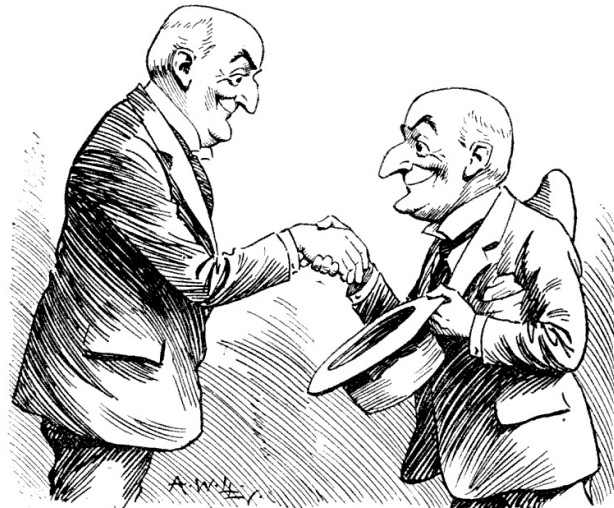
Tuesday, April 13th.—After the official announcement that the Slough depot had been sold, and the chorus of satisfaction in the Press that the Government had disposed of its white elephant at a profit, Mr. HOGGE was disappointed to learn that, though the heads of agreement were being discussed, no contract had yet been signed. He was indeed rather surprised that the Government should think of parting at all with what the LEADER OF THE HOUSE had assured them was going to be "a dripping roast for the taxpayer." Mr. LAW smilingly disclaimed the coinage of this appetising phrase.



"HOT STUFF."
MR. MILLS OF DARTFORD.

Mr. MILLS, the new Member for Dartford, is credited with being "very hot stuff" (a cadet, I am told, of the *Moulin Rouge* family), but he looked much too trim and spruce for a real revolutionary as he walked up, amid the plaudits of his Labour colleagues, to take the oath and his seat. In fact Mr. GREENWOOD, the new Coalition-Unionist Member for Stockport, who followed him, has much more the air of an *homme du peuple*. As for Mr. FILDES, his Coalition-Liberal colleague, I don't wonder that Stockport favoured a candidate whose genial countenance so strongly resembles that of Mr. Punch.

The debate on the Civil Service Estimates furnished Mr. HOPKINS with an opportunity of delivering an appeal, doubtless cogent but mainly inaudible, for the restoration of the exchange value of the pound sterling. Mr. A.M. SAMUEL, on the other hand, was more audible than orthodox. At least it rather shocked me to be told that we were getting too much for the pound before the War. Mr. BALDWIN, for the Government, made a speech so full of sound commonsense that Sir FREDERICK BANBURY hoped he would send a special copy of it to San Remo for the edification of the PRIME MINISTER.



MR. PUNCH GREETS HIS DOUBLE.
MR. FILDES OF STOCKPORT.

The rest of the evening was mainly taken up with the case of the Irish hunger-strikers. Mr. BONAR LAW was at first very stiff in his attitude, pointing out quite reasonably that if the Government found it necessary to intern people suspected of crime it was absurd to let them out again because they threatened to commit suicide. Several Members, English as well as Irish, thought that there was a case for differentiating between convicted prisoners and those who were merely under suspicion, and on the adjournment the Irish Attorney-General a little relieved the prevailing gloom by a hint that some modification of the prison-rules might be made on these lines.

Wednesday, April 14th.—The MINISTER OF HEALTH announced with some pride that under the Housing Acts passed last year no fewer than 1,346 dwellings had actually been completed, and twelve thousand more were in various stages of construction. But he showed no enthusiasm for the suggestion that he should extend the benefits of the Acts to others besides the "working classes," and flatly declined to attempt a definition of that ambiguous term. It is believed, however, that recent experience has convinced him that builders in general and bricklayers in particular cannot properly be so described.

Mr. RENDALL's attempt to get the House to pledge itself in advance to the full policy of Lord BUCKMASTER's Divorce Bill was defeated. The main opposition came from Mr. RONALD McNEILL, who sits for Canterbury and spoke with cathedral solemnity. Mr. MUNRO supported the Resolution, on the ground that Englishwomen ought not to be refused the advantages enjoyed by their Scotch sisters. Marriage in Scotland appears to resemble Glasgow—there are great facilities for getting away from it. But Lady ASTOR, hailing from a land where they are even greater, displayed no desire to jump to conclusions, and asked for an interval of five or ten years to make up her mind.

If the cheers that greeted Mr. MACPHERSON were meant to console him for his "Irishman's rise" in slipping down from the Chief Secretaryship to the Ministry of Pensions, they were assuredly superfluous. The supposed victim was obviously delighted to be rid of the responsibility for a policy which seems to grow more tangled every day. Only on Tuesday Mr. BONAR LAW was assuring the House that the Mountjoy hunger-strikers must be left to commit suicide if they

chose; the Government could not release men suspected of grave crimes. This afternoon he announced that sixty-six of them had in fact been liberated on parole.

The new Minister of Labour (late of the Admiralty) came on board again, looking none the worse for his strenuous exertions at Camberwell. He had a hearty welcome from all quarters of the House, which would hardly know itself without its "Dr. MAC."

It is one thing to gain a seat in the House, but quite another thing to keep it, as Sir W. JOYNSON-HICKS has just discovered. Returning from a prolonged tour in foreign parts he found that his favourite corner-seat had been annexed by another Member. Determined to reclaim it, he visited the House at 8 A.M. and inserted his card; but on coming back to the House for prayers found that the usurper had substituted her own. Mr. T.P. O'CONNOR, with old-world chivalry, considered that the only lady-Member should be allowed to sit where she pleased; but the SPEAKER upheld the principle "first come, first served."



AN EX-ADMIRALTY CRICHTON.
DR. MACNAMARA EFFECTS A LABOUR
EXCHANGE.

On a Vote of twenty-seven millions for the expenses of the Ministry of Munitions Mr. HOPE told a flattering tale. The Department might be spending a lot of money, but it was making a great deal more; and he anticipated that the Disposals Board would hand over to the Exchequer this year something like a hundred millions, if not more. The Slough Depôt, he maintained, had been run at a profit and sold at a profit. The Ministry might have made some mistakes, but it represented a prodigious national effort, of which the historian would speak with amazement and praise.

Unimpressed by this panegyric Sir DONALD MACLEAN intimated that he came to bury the Ministry and not to praise it. In his view its administration had been grossly extravagant. He demanded the full details of the Slough transaction and suggested that the Vote should be withdrawn until they were forthcoming. To this proposal Mr. HOPE, with more humility than I should have expected after the optimism of his earlier speech, ultimately agreed.



Our Animal Artist. "THOSE CHICKENS I BOUGHT OFF YOU ARE NO GOOD TO ME."
Farmer. "NO GOOD, SIR? WHAT'S WRONG WI' 'EM?"
Our Animal Artist. "THEY'VE GOT NO EXPRESSION."

THE LAND OF LOGIC.

Let me tell you about my Nationalist friend, Gabal Osman Effendi.

The circumstances of his brother's death, which were as follows, drove him into politics and

made him a fervent advocate of "Egypt for the Egyptians."

His brother was in a very humble way and lived in a little mud village. There he had a friend, yet poorer than himself, who only attained to prosperity when a plague fell on the village. The sanitary authorities put a cordon around it to prevent the spread of the plague, and hired this man among others to throw disinfectants and things into any drains that happened to exist. Thus Osman Effendi's brother's friend became a Government servant.

Now Osman Effendi's brother had a sore leg. When he heard of his friend's new work he thought he saw a way to avoid any doctor's fees. So he went to him and said, "I hear that you are now a doctor." His friend, proud but truthful, said he was perhaps hardly that, but he was certainly put to administer drugs. Osman's brother pointed out that his leg was sore and suggested that it should be healed. The other looked doubtful, then produced a lump of his disinfectant. "This," said he, "is a powerful drug and, who knows? it may cure your leg." It was a friendly act; but Osman's brother swallowed the lump and shortly afterwards died.

Osman Effendi at once brought an action for damages against the Government, on the ground that its servant had caused the death of his brother (whom, as a matter of fact, he himself had largely supported). The case was heard by a Court on which sat two Egyptian judges and one English, and the decision went against Osman. This convinced him of the injustice of the English.

The Assize Court of Appeal, which visited the district and heard Osman Effendi's appeal against the first verdict, consisted of three Egyptian judges. It is true that the English judge who should have gone on Assize had fallen ill, and there was no other to take his place. But Osman Effendi saw in this too the malevolent hand of the English, who nourished a grudge against him. "How," he said, "can I obtain justice if there is no Englishman on the Court?"

From that moment he has become an ultra-Nationalist, and has, I believe, been seen in the streets of Cairo shouting with the best of them the latest "English" catchword of "Long Live Egypt! Long Die MILNER!"

He is, you see, an educated man.



Editor (to poet of somewhat dissolute habits who has been paid in advance for contributions which are not forthcoming). "I KNOW YOU'RE GOING TO THE DEVIL AS HARD AS YOU CAN; BUT YOU'VE GOT TO SING AS YOU GO."

Consolidating the Empire.

"In honour of the visit to Napier of the Prince of Wales the roof of the Borough Council offices is to be given a coat of paint."—*New Zealand Paper.*

"PERSONAL.

ARTHUR.—You idiot.—Irene."—*Times.*

Very "personal," we should say.

"Sir Auckland and Lady Geddes left London last Saturday for the Untied States."—*Irish Paper*.

It is only fair to add that they have not chosen this country for the sake of its easy Divorce Laws.

"Major. Christopher Lowther (CUCumberland, North) moved a new clause."—*Provincial Paper*.

It was somewhere in this neighbourhood, we believe, that WORDSWORTH discovered his "winsome marrow."

"Though to-day is Primrose Day...."—*Daily Mirror, April 12th*.

At the risk of being thought behind the times, we ourselves deferred our celebration until April 19th as usual.

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"YOU SETTLE WITH HIM. YOU'RE CHAIRMAN OF THE ANTI-PROFITEERING COMMITTEE."

AT THE PLAY.

"BIRDS OF A FEATHER."

It is nearly always a good thing for the author of a play to know what he is after, and if he can get his audience to follow him so much the better. It is quite possible that Mr. ESMOND had an idea in his head when he wrote *Birds of a Feather*, but if so he never let me get at it. Up to the very end I had no conception of what he was trying to illustrate, unless it was the trite theory that we are the creatures of our environment.

That, at any rate, was how *Constance* (of "the House of *Ussher*") explained her vagaries, though I couldn't see why. The daughter of a very rich Jew, whose Christian wife had run away from him, she was brought up in great comfort, which included the love of a peer's son, her father's secretary. It is true that her stern parent would not hear of their union; but that has no doubt happened to young heiresses before now without turning them into criminals. With *Constance* however it seems to have been different. She had gathered from what she knew of her father's career that there must be easy ways of making money if you are not too scrupulous, so she forged his name for a thousand pounds with speculative intent. It was open to the old man to regard this as an act of filial piety, since it was an attempt, however crude, to follow the parental tradition; but apparently forgery had not been one of his foibles and he threatened her with the law unless she gave up the idea of marrying the secretary, now dismissed from his service.

Meanwhile she has been carrying on a secret intrigue with that gentleman (she must have got this from her "Christian" mother), and when her father comes to know of it he suddenly exhibits an unsuspected gift of sentimentality ("My baby Con! my baby Con!" he sobs), and, in terror lest his ewe-lamb's name should be tainted by the breath of scandal, he offers his late secretary a heavy sum of money to make an honest woman of her. It sounds a little inconsistent, but of course there may have been a nice differentiation in the old rogue's mind between a moral and a criminal offence, in favour of the latter.

As for *Constance* I have seldom met a less seizable character. If she was the result of environment there was no visible sign to show how it infected her. We simply had to take Mr. ESMOND's word for it. To me the ménage seemed to be of the most respectable. But, of course, you can always attribute anything to your surroundings. One environment is vicious and so drives you to vice; another is virtuous with the same effect. *Constance* might condemn hers, but it never had

a chance with a girl like that.

For myself it was not her viciousness that worried me, it was her vulgarity; and of this she seemed quite unconscious. Her speech abounded in second-rate colloquialisms. Was it her environment that taught her to say dreadful things like "Put that in your pipe and smoke it"? The cheap fun that she got out of a girl-friend who had made it a rule to pray for her was the kind of thing you would be sorry to find in a common boarding-school. And are gentlefolk in the habit of asking a man, as *Constance* did, how it was that he ever came to get engaged to such a woman as the one of his choice? In Bayswater it simply isn't done.

At the end of the First Act, after many trivialities and the waste of precious time over a description of certain characters that were presently to appear and endorse it, there was a sudden diversion. The professional card of a private detective was discovered in an arm-chair. No one seemed to know how it got there, and, as the curtain chose this moment to fall, we were left in a state of palpitation, wondering how we were to get through the interval with our curiosity unappeased. Ultimately it turned out that the detective was to be employed by *Miss Ussher* (aunt) to verify her suspicions with regard to the morals of *Constance*. But I shall never get you to believe me when I say that the subject was not so much as touched again till the final Act.

I have spoken of the incongruous stuff of which old *Jacob Ussher's* heart was constructed. That strange organ was hard enough to make him give his daughter away to his secretary in the matter of the forgery; but when it came to a question of the exposure of her relations with her lover this same heart was found to be of the consistency of putty.

I hope I shall not seem guilty of *Constance's* indiscretion if I politely wonder how it was that so astute a judge as Miss MARIE LÖHR accepted this play. Actor-managers, of course, have been known to produce indifferent work for the sake of a good acting part for themselves. If that was her motive I think she must have imagined a fine subtlety in a character which was difficult only because it was loosely conceived. If she failed to make it plausible it was not for want of very adroit handling.

In *Jacob Ussher* Mr. ESMOND gave himself a most congenial part, in which he easily surpassed his achievement as author. Mr. TOZER as a slum-parson was extremely probable with his quiet sincerity. But our chief consolation came from Miss RACHEL DE SOLLA as the maiden aunt, a reactionary type of the most confirmed stolidity, with a weakness for diamonds and indigestion. Miss MARIE LÖHR had many clever things to say, but it didn't matter what Miss DE SOLLA said; her manner was irresistible.

I must doubt, however, whether the excellent work of the actors will carry the play to success. Even its title is obscure. The only thing I know about "birds of a feather" is that they are supposed to "flock together"; and I have always been given to understand that the adage alludes to the mutual attraction of similar types. Nobody ever told me that it was meant to indicate that the sins of the father bird are liable to be reproduced in his chicken,

ANNA PAVLOVA.

She hasn't changed at all. Many Russian dancers have come and gone since last she was with us, but there is still none like her, none. Her perfect technique remains the least of her graces. The secret of her charm lies deeper, in the power to interpret and convey emotions in the language of her art. To watch her feet alone is to hear the shuddering sigh of her Dying Swan, but her whole body is alert to translate every nuance of her theme.

She can draw beauty even from an anticlimax. Again and again in *Snowflakes*, when her partner withdrew the support of his hand, she poised for a moment, and, when the poise had to cease, covered her descent with the most fascinating gestures of head and arms.

I liked her least (if one may talk of her like that) as the gipsy-girl in *Amarilla*; not that she failed in dramatic intensity but that jealous passion seems alien to her temperament as we have learned to know it. I think, however, that my judgment was tainted by her wig, which greatly distressed me.

In M. VOLININE she has a very accomplished partner. His solo as a *Pierrot*, danced to a familiar air of DVORÁK'S, was the most delightful of "*divertissements*." Her other dancers, Russian and English, make up a really excellent company. The *presto furioso* of the wild gipsy dance in *Amarilla*, to the exciting music of GLOZOUNOW and DRIGO, was a brilliant *tour de force*.

My only complaint (apart from *Amarilla's* wig) is that the programme's explanation of the motive of *Snowflakes* was beyond me. "A little girl," it says, "receives as a present a nut-cracker in the form of a doll. The doll is in reality a Prince who has been transformed by a bad fairy, but by an act of devotion to the little girl he is restored to life. He then leads his little friend and other children to the Kingdom of Pine-trees where the Christmas-tree was born." It is true that the music was from TSCHAIKOWSKI'S "Casse-Noisettes," and that the snow-scene was suggestive of Christmas-time; but there was no sign of a "nut-cracker in the form of a doll," or, if there was, I can't think how it escaped me, for I was watching with all my eyes.

O.S.



THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE.

Schoolboy (after long pause). "I SAY—ER—CAN YOU MOVE YOUR EARS?"

"Chaplain-Master Wanted on May 13th for one term to Teach Latin and History in Upper School, *coloris paribus* a cricketer would be most acceptable."—*Provincial Paper*.

"*Coloris paribus*" suggests faintly that the authorities hope to get a double-blue; but it looks as if he would have to spend most of the term in teaching Latin.

BIRD CALLS.

I.

The lark he trills his song on high,
A tiny speck on a wide blue sky;
"Tira-lir, it's sweet up here,
It's sweet up here, my dear, my dear."

The turtle-dove's in love and so
Is anxious all his world should know
And follow his example too:—
"Look at us two. Oh do, oh do."

Woodpeckers make their thirsty cry
Of "Pluie, pluie, pluie," to a sunlit sky;
But sure enough they have their way
For rain, rain, rain will fall next day.

The blackbird also craves a boon,
Says "Bring a cherry, bring a cherry, soon, soon, soon;"
And there in answer to his call
The cherry blooms on the garden wall.

The thrush of all the birds that sing
Of nests and little wives in Spring
Alone confides the secret way:—
"What does she *line* it with? Why, clay."

The willow wren she sings a song
Just like her mate, though not so long,
But both sing in all winds and weathers,
"Sing to me; bring to me little brown feathers."

SPRING AT KEW.

I am not one of those who believe in going down to the country to look at this Spring of which there is so much talk. Wanting in business organisation and coherent effort, Spring in the country is a poor affair at the best; there may be half-a-dozen daffodils in flower in one spinney, but you have to tramp over two or three muddy fields after that to find a button-hole of primroses, and so onwards over a stile and a ditch to the place where the blackthorn has blossomed and the green woodpecker is pecking the greenwood tree.

And very likely there are gates. Judging from statements in novels you might suppose a gate to be a bright and simple piece of mechanism, swung on by rosy-cheeked children and easily opened by Lord Hugo with his riding-crop so that Lady Hermione may jog through it on her practically priceless bay. That is quite wrong. It rests on the primary fallacy that gates are meant to be opened, whereas they are really meant to be kept shut. What actually happens when you want to open one is that you plunge halfway through a deep quagmire, climb on to a slippery stone, wrestle with a piece of hoop-iron, some barbed wire and some pieces of furze, lift the gate up by the bottom bar and wade through the rest of the quagmire carrying it on your shoulder.

If you are riding like Lord Hugo you hook the fastening of the gate with the handle of your crop and make your horse shunt slowly backwards by applying the reverse clutch with your feet. As the gate refuses to give, you are, of course, drawn gently over the animal's head until you tumble into the bog like a man whose punt-pole is stuck in the bottom of the stream.

That is why I like going down to Kew, where the Spring is tidy and concentrated, and there is a squared map, just like France, at the turnstile gate to direct you to the magnolia dump, and little notices pointing you to the Temperate Houses, though this is really unnecessary, because there are no licensed premises in the Gardens at Kew. All is quiet and calm. You are not even compelled to leave the gravel-walks and tread on the damp grass, unless you have a desire to go to the river's edge and see how stiffly the tail of the Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND'S stone lion sticks out on the further bank between the two peel towers from which his crossbowmen contemplate the Surrey marshes.

I used to know a man who had mugged up all the trees and plants, so that when you said to him, "What a funny juniper that is over there, with blue peach-blossoms on it," he would reply, "You mean the *Pyrofoliata persica corylus*," and explain how it was first introduced into England by JEREMY TAYLOR in 1658. Then when you went up to look at the placard on the tree you not only found that he was perfectly right, but obtained the additional information that the wood was of a particularly hard and durable nature, and only used for making the heads of croquet mallets and the seats on the tops of motor omnibuses.

I like this plan of putting placards upon trees, and I think it might well be carried out in the country too. There would be none of that standing about in the wet then, and arguing whether the thing is a beech or an oak, when all the time it is a horse-chestnut and laughing up its bark at you.

One must not forget either at Kew the great conservatories, though I do not care for these so much because there are men in them watching to see that you do not pick the cactuses or the palms to put in your button-hole; nor the magnificent Pagoda, which accommodates the Observer, who watches for the flowers to come out, and the Curator, who writes appreciative little notices to stick on the beds; nor the piebald swans in the artificial lake.

But the great glory of Kew is the Pump-room. It is surrounded by marble-topped tables and green seats, and I am aware that it is not called a Pump-room, though a noise proceeds from inside it very like the panting of a pump. They tell me that this is an hydraulic machine for washing up the cups and plates; but I do not believe them, because so many people who take tea round the Pump-room drink left-handed, as if the reverse side of the cup had belonged to somebody else.

Anyhow it is a very jolly and democratic assemblage that sits and drinks tea under the trees and eats cakes that have no placard on them to say at what date they were introduced into England. Here you may see the prosperous docker with his wife and family sitting quite unostentatiously at the next table to the needy scientist who has come to make notes about the purple narcissi. And a little further on is the novelist who is getting local colour for his great rustic love-scene which he is going to say took place in the heart of Devonshire.

But it was not for the purpose of providing you with tea and cakes that the Pump-room was founded. Just as you may read in your morning paper that the Honourable Miss Muffet has proceeded to Harrogate to take the waters, so it is with Kew. One goes to Kew to take the watercresses. I have found out by exhaustive inquiries from one of the waitresses that, though you may substitute rolls and butter for bread and margarine, and may have marmalade with either or both, and though it is optional to eat even the cakes with yellow sugar upon them, there is no way of evading the watercresses. There is a strong feeling amongst the waitresses that it is just these compulsory watercresses which have made us Englishmen what we are. The whole vast pleasure-ground really centres round them, and the reason why Londoners flock (as the papers say) to Kew is that they are hungry for the medicinal virtues of this aquaceous plant.

After you have taken the watercresses you are allowed to wander about the Gardens again and

look at QUEEN VICTORIA'S cottage, round which there is always an eager and admiring crowd examining it from every point of view and wondering what premium they would have to pay for it if it were on the market now. And then you will want to go home and be unable to find the gate; but after a little time the Observer will observe you with his telescope from the top of the Pagoda and mention it to the Curator, who will direct a bronzed and amiable man in a blue uniform to lead you to the turnstile.

I am told that there are some people who do not care to sample their Spring at Kew or in the country either, but prefer to go to San Remo or spend Saturday afternoon toiling in their own back-garden. Let them mind their peas, I say, while I go down to Kew.

EVOE.

THE CAUTIOUS AMORIST

(Showing the effect of official phraseology on love-letters.)

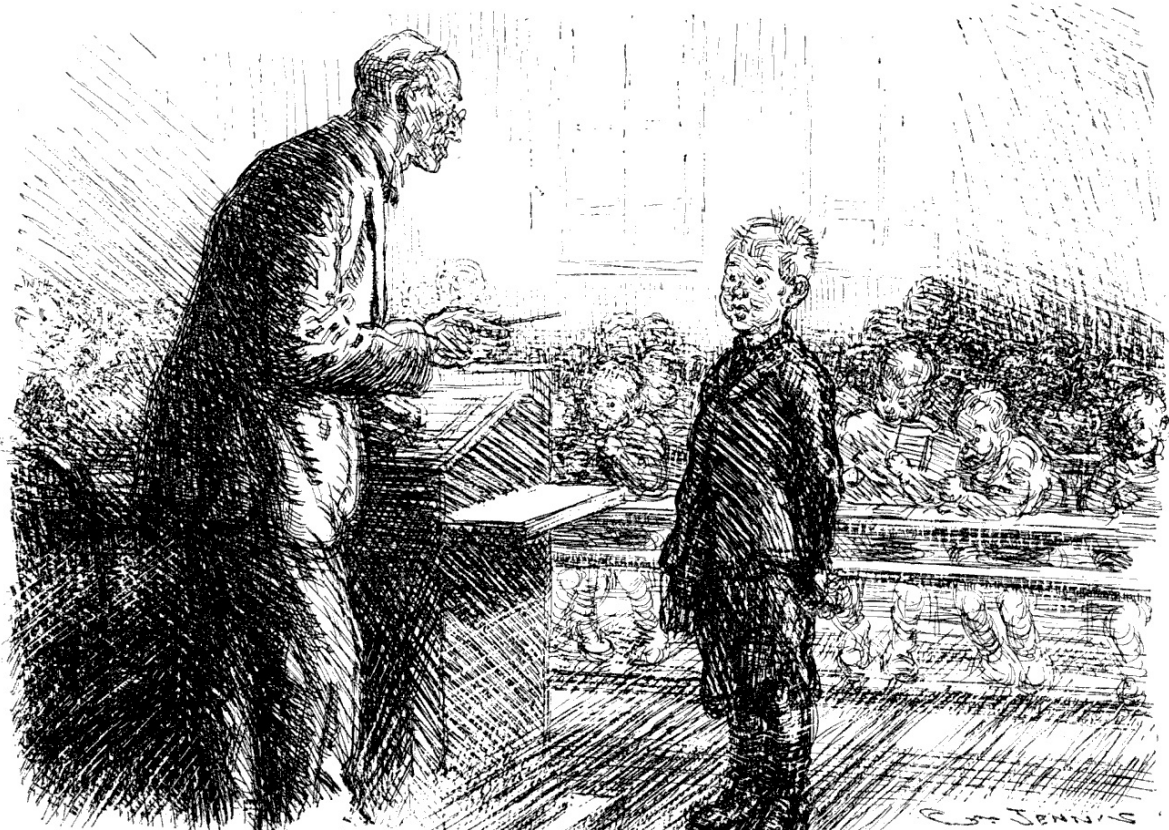
Dearest Mary, this delay
In the fixing of the day
Drives all happiness away
 From my ken.
If you *only* will decide
When you'll be my blushing bride
You will see me glorified—
 If and when.

They have promised me a rise
When the senior partner dies;
He is eighty and he lies
 Very ill;
But until you seal your "Yes"
By a notice in the Press
I shall not feel safe—unless
 And until.

"Bicycles of old-fashioned design acquired a new lease of life, and took to the road, where they were joined by pony traps in which father, mother and many children, all with crimped hair and white pinafores, were tightly packed."—*Daily Paper*.

Father, we are told, looked a perfect darling.

[pg 319]



THE RULING PASSION.

Absentee. "I WAS PLAYING FOOT-BA' IN THE STREET, AND THE POLICE TOOK AND LOCKED ME UP FOR FOUR HOURS."

Teacher. "DID YOU GET ANYTHING TO EAT?"

Absentee. "AY—A HARD ROLL."

Teacher. "WHAT DID YOU DO WITH IT?"

Absentee. "PLAYED FOOT-BA'."

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

The title, somewhat puzzling at first, which Miss F.E. MILLS YOUNG has given to her latest story, *The Almonds of Life* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON), turns out to be based upon a Chinese proverb to the effect that "almonds came to those who have no teeth." This rather devastating sample of philosophy (which I have put by for use against the next person who attempts to work off upon me the adage about those who wait) forms the text of a well-told tale of misplaced affections. As you may expect, if you know Miss YOUNG's former work, it is a South African story, not concerned however with Boers and natives and the trackless veld, but with coastwise civilization and suburban garden-parties. As before, the author excellently conveys the place-feeling, so well indeed that I was sorry when the love intrigues of the two protagonists necessitated their quitting Africa for a more conventional Italian setting. I may summarise the plot by telling you that the particular almond that fell too late to the heroine was somebody else's husband. But it wasn't so much that she was unable to eat him as that he proved indigestible when swallowed. The lady was *Gerda*, young and dazzling bride of the middle-aged *Fred Wooten*, and the gentleman one of her husband's closest friends, also (before the arrival of *Gerda*) happily married to a wife whom I found the most attractive person in the book. I need not further detail the crooked course of untrue love, though I may hint at a fault in balance, where your sympathy, previously and rightly enlisted for poor betrayed *Fred*, is demanded for *Gerda* in her difficulty with the almond. As usual, Miss YOUNG unfolds her plot with admirable directness, chiefly through a natural and unforced dialogue, so easy that it disguises its own art.

If any reasonable man still possesses a grain of sympathy with Bolshevism I invite him to purge himself by reading *With the "Die-Hards" in Siberia* (CASSELL). In August, 1918, Colonel JOHN WARD, M.P., reached Vladivostok in command of the 25th Battalion Middlesex Regiment, and from the time of his arrival until his departure nearly a year later his position was almost grotesquely difficult. Of our Allies in Siberia and of their policy he writes with justifiable frankness. Our own is not excused, but he lets us clearly see that however ineffectual it may have been there was honesty of purpose underlying it. In the medley of confusion which prevailed we were lucky to have in Colonel WARD as senior British officer a man who was not afraid to shoulder his responsibility. Under conditions so exasperating that anyone might have been excused if he had been overwhelmed with anger and bewilderment he was resolved to uphold our prestige. Upon the Bolshevik horrors in Siberia he does not dwell, but he says enough in passing to make one shudder. Colonel WARD is a true friend of Russia. "This great people are bound to recover, and become all the stronger for their present trials," are the concluding words of his preface. That this prophecy may come true must be the prayer of all of us who remember what we owed to Russia during the earlier part of the War.

[pg 320]

It was perhaps my misfortune that, not having read the book in which Mr. EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS recorded the earlier adventures of his hero, *John Carter*, in the red planet Mars, when that gentleman precipitated himself thither (from the banks of the Hudson, of all places), I found myself in more senses than one out of my element. Not that it really matters; since the Martian existence of *Mr. Carter* was apparently of that wild and whirling character, familiar to patrons of the Continuous Programme, in which one thrill follows upon another so fast that their precise order becomes of small moment. When I tell you that the opening chapters of this remarkable nightmare—*The Gods of Mars* (METHUEN)—contain monsters with one white eye and mouths in their hands, flying pirates, an air-ship that sinks down a volcano, an ageless witch who—but why continue? The publishers call these happenings "bold;" but this is a pitiful understatement. Really they are of a character to make the wildest imaginings of JULES VERNE, friend of my youth, or Mr. WELLS, companion of my riper years, read like the peaceful annals of a country rectory. To quote again from the publishers, "only the man who created *Tarzan* could write such stories." If *Tarzan* were in any way comparable with the present volume, it would perhaps not be unfair to add the corollary that only those readers who appreciated the one could swallow the other. Mercifully, Mr. BURROUGHS writes so continually at the top of his voice that after a time the clatter comes to have an effect merely soporific.

Since Major-General Sir C.E. CALLWELL has, in *The Dardanelles* (CONSTABLE), added a volume to a series called *Campaigns and Their Lessons*, it is clear that he is writing mainly for military students, but none the less at least one man in the street—meaning myself—has been glad, after reading plenty of merely descriptive accounts of the Gallipoli affair, to find a book that frankly and justifiably does lay claim to technical proficiency. The exponents of vivid narrative, modestly disclaiming expert knowledge, have been painfully liable to break off just short of what one wanted most to know. They told us how things happened, or, at any rate, how it seemed they

happened, but the reason why of things they had to leave to others. In this book we really do get at the why, and even more the why not, of the magnificent failure. Of actual incident and human interest General CALLWELL'S account, which in a sense is only supplementary to the others, adds little to our previous knowledge. The only point of the sort I picked up is his notice of the characteristic reluctance shown by Anzacs to report themselves as sick when urged to do so with a view to the gradual removal of troops without withdrawal of entire units. It is hardly necessary to add that the author is an old literary hand, with a pleasantly clear and luminous style of his own, though one is free to admit he splits his infinitives almost as much as Sir IAN HAMILTON split his forces, and with less justification.

In the very improving books which I had to read long ago the hero or heroine usually had a cross to bear. They bore it with great fortitude, and frequently died young. When therefore I opened Mr. JEROME K. JEROME'S *All Roads Lead to Calvary* (HUTCHINSON) I fancied I knew what to expect. I read that *Joan Allway* was possessed of remarkable beauty, a "Stevensonian touch" and suitable introductions to editors and newspaper proprietors, and that from the pulpit of a column in the evening Press, with her photograph at the top, she attempted to reform the world. I don't know how the photograph came out, but there was apparently no martyrdom so far. Afterwards she began to encourage and inspire *Robert Phillips*, a Labour M.P. and future Cabinet Minister, and at the same time to be kind to and educate *Mrs. Phillips*, who was good-natured, vulgar and middle-aged. Falling gradually in love with the politician, she withdrew only just in time, nursed in a French hospital, married a journalist friend and settled down happily with him to reform a little bit of the world at a time, and that the part nearest to hand. And now I am left wondering what *Joan Allway's* cross was. Would avoiding the Divorce Court be counted the roughest path of self-denial in a moral anecdote of to-day?

Running Wild (SIMPKIN) is the expressive title of a collection of child-memories by the late Mr. BERTRAM SMITH, whom readers of *Punch* will remember by the pseudonym "Bis." They can here learn from a sympathetic little introduction by Mr. WARD MUIR under what conditions of a brave but losing battle with ill-health this delicate and vivacious work was written. When I say that these recollections (which I decline to call by any word implying more artifice) illustrate their author, I give you their measure for honesty and charm combined. Honesty first of all; Mr. SMITH'S young barbarians running wild and, one conjectures, rapidly reducing their elders to a like condition, have the compelling effect of unsentimental truth. Few clouds of glory, for example, trail about the protagonists of "A Day," a tribute to the joyous intoxication of a day-long orgie of naughtiness deliberate and wholly unrepented. You will find much in these pages to waken half-forgotten and perhaps secret pleasures. Thus there was for me a personal echo in the rejection as a seaside entertainment of castle-building and the ordered sequence of the tides in favour of the infinitely more variable delight of running water and a sufficiency of mud. Perhaps I have said enough to suggest the charm of an engaging volume, itself a memorial of one whose kindly laughter will be missed by many.



Young Alf. "CHUCK IT, JIMMY. 'E AIN'T GOT A KIND FACE."

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