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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI, VOLUME 159, DECEMBER 1, 1920 ***

PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.

Vol. 159.

December 1st, 1920.

[pg 421]

CHARIVARIA.

According to *The Evening News*, lambs have already put in an appearance in Dorset. People who expect the Poet Laureate to rush to the spot will be bitterly disappointed.

"What was a golden eagle doing in Lincolnshire?" asks "L.G.M." in *The Daily Mail*. We never answer these personal questions.

The Public Libraries Committee of West Ham has declined to purchase *The Autobiography of Margot Asquith.* It would just serve them right if the publisher sent them a copy.

Sir R. Baden-Powell recently declared that men contemplating matrimony would do well to notice whether their prospective brides gave an inside or an outside tread. We still maintain that the safest course is to remain single and not be trodden on either way.

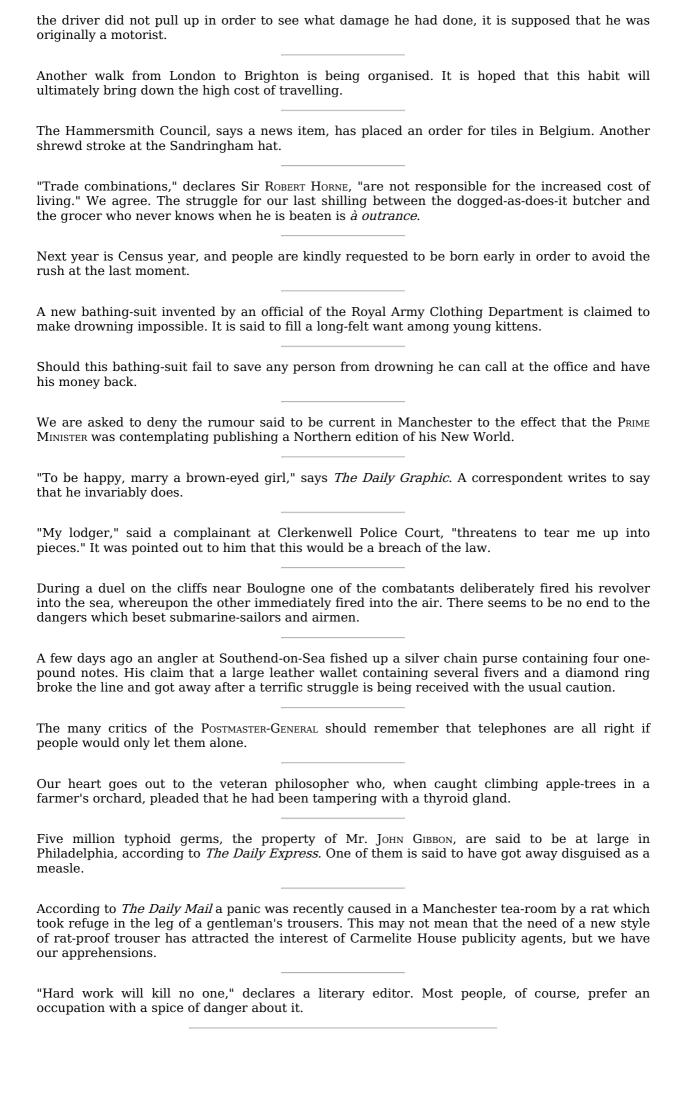
The report that a British soldier has recently discovered a genuine specimen of a small war, in which Mr. Winston Churchill had no hand whatever, is now regarded as untrustworthy.

A Scotsman knocked down by a car in New York was given a glass of water and quickly regained consciousness. He is now making inquiries concerning the number of times one has to be knocked down in order to get a drop of spirit.

Sea-gulls have been observed near the Willesden public parks. It is assumed that they didn't know it was Willesden.

A clothing firm advertises suits to fit any figure. It is not known what eventually happened to the man who asked them to supply him with a suit for a figure round about thirty shillings.

An express train recently crashed through the closed gates of a level-crossing in Yorkshire. As





Son. "Muvver, tell me 'ow farver got ter know yer."

Mother. "One dye I fell into the water an' 'e jumped in an' fished me aht."

Son (thoughtfully). "H'm, thet's funny; 'e won't let me learn ter swim."

"Madame ——, Dressmaker, Milliner, and Ladies' making paths, tree lifting; planting; would suit nursery."—*Provincial Paper*.

But would she do plain sowing?

[pg 422]

THE STANDARD GOLF-BALL

I do not want a standard ball,
So many to the pound;
Whether its girth is trim and svelte
Or built to take an out-size belt,
I hardly seem to care at all
So long as it is round.

But it appears to my poor wit

That we might well contrive

A means by which the merest babe

Would hold his own with MITCHELL (ABE),

If we could have a standard *hit*(Especially the drive).

I want a limit made to bar
The unrestricted whack
(A hundred yards I think should be
The length on which we might agree),
And if you pushed the ball too far
You'd have to bring it back.

And I should love a standard *lie*.

A ball inside a cup

Or latent under sand or whin

Hampers my progress toward the pin;
It would improve my game if I

Could lift and tee it up.

But most, when tongues of golfers wag, Talking their dreadful shop Of rotten luck and stymies laid And chip-approaches, Taylor-made— Oh, then I want a standard gag

THE LANGUAGE FOR LOGIC.

"Very well," I said, "if Jones is laid up I'll go round myself."

Our French visitor chuckled quietly and then shrugged his shoulders by way of apology.

"Pardon," he murmured with the most disarming politeness, "but your English language it is so veray funny, and I 'ave not yet become quite used to it. Is it not that it lack the accuracy, what you call the logic, of the French?"

"Indeed," I said, without the least interest.

But my wife was all enthusiasm. She clapped her hands in delighted agreement. "M. du Val is quite right, Dickie," she said. "We are a frightfully illogical lot, aren't we? I mean, the French are able to say just exactly what they mean."

"Your reinforcement, Madame, it completes my victory," replied the Frenchman with a graceful gesture. "*Voyez, M'sieu'*," he added, turning to me, "you 'ave just said zat your friend is laid *up*, when the unfortunate truth is zat he is laid *down*, and because of zat you will encircle, surround, make a tour of your person."

"There, you see," said my wife flatly, "it's all utterly illogical. Think how logical the French are."

"Well, let us work it out," I said in hearty agreement. "As a start I solemnly declare that the French are not so logical as they don't think."

"As they *don't* think?" repeated my wife in surprise.

"Ah!" I retorted, "you are not so observant as you might not be. I was merely giving you a little French idiom, 'logically' and 'accurately done into English.'"

"Mister," I next asked our ally, "your visit to England, will she be prolonged?"

"Who's the lady?" interrupted my wife.

"M. du Val's visit, of course, dear," I informed her. "You forget that the French are particularly logical with their genders."

"M'sieu'!" murmured the guest, rather puzzled.

"I asked," I went on for M. du Val's edification, "because if you stay long enough you may have the pleasure of meeting the parents of Mistress my wife. They are coming to the house of us next month. His father is extremely anxious to see her daughter, whom he has not seen since his wedding—"

"Whom in the world are you talking about?" muttered my wife.

"Monsieur will readily understand," I said wickedly, "that I allude to my wife and their parents. I hope they will bring his brother with them."

"'Her,' you should say," my wife put in with the suspicion of a snap. "There's only Johnny and me."

"It was of Johnny I spoke," I assured her. "And, by the way, if you haven't heard the latest gossip it may interest you to hear that the young rascal has formed an attachment, and is very proud of her *fiancée*. She is an awfully pretty girl and quite athletic as well—in fact, his arm is not nearly so small as Johnny's isn't, and his carriage is perfect. Their eyes are lovely, while a poet would rave about his sweet nose, her rosebud mouth and their longs blacks hairs. Their shoes—"

"Oh, stop!" cried my wife. "You're muddling me all up. Are you talking about Johnny or—"

"Name of a pipe, my cabbage," I said, determined to give her logic with swear-words and endearments as well, "where has your reasoning gone to? Any logical Frenchman would tell you at once that I wasn't talking about Johnny, but about her girl. As I was saying, their shoes have each a dinky Gibson bow on her."

"M'sieu'," reflected M. du Val in his polite way, "I begin to think zat you are getting ze advantage over me."

"Don't take any notice of him, Mosseer," pleaded my wife indignantly; "he's only pulling your leg."

"Pulling my—?" The Frenchman cogitated for a minute; then he understood and smiled in a superior way again. "All the same," he murmured quietly, "we French 'ave not all ze illogicalness, $n'est\ ce\ pas$?"

"Not quite all," I cheerfully agreed. "By the way, would you like to come with us this afternoon to the great Review in Hyde Park? Her Majesty the King will be there, also the Queen and very likely His Royal Highness Princess Mary—"

"I come wiz muchness of pleasure," assented our guest very hurriedly. Then, being a thorough little sportsman, he added with a bow:— $\,$

"If M'sieu' could persuade 'er wife to wear 'is new 'at, so veray charming?"

Another Apology Wanted.

"AN ATTRACTIVE EVENT AT —— CHAPEL. LADY ABSENT FOR FIRST TIME FOR FIFTY YEARS."

Provincial Paper.

"Dogs frequently go straight to destruction in this way, but an official of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Animals told an $Evening\ News$ representative he did not think they had suicidal intentions."

—Evening News.

If they had there would be less need for the Society.

"Persian Rugs for Sale by gentleman recently returned from Persia; various designs, old and modern; no dealers; preferably after six evenings."

—Daily Paper.

This gentleman seems to have brought back with him the methods of the Oriental bazaar. Six evenings is about the average time for adjusting a bargain.

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BALM FOR THE SICK MAN.

THE TURK (after reading report from Greece). "WELL DID THE INFIDEL SAY, 'WHEN ROGUES FALL OUT HONEST MEN COME BY THEIR OWN'!"



Parent (after tour of inspection of Art school). "Yes, I think this will do. I'll send my daughter here. Your ventilation seems good."

UNAUTHENTIC IMPRESSIONS

IV.—DR. ADDISON.

The ridiculous tradition of government by K. C.'s has for some time past been broken down, and quite a number of our present Ministers have never taken silk in their lives, except from cocoons in a match-box. There is at least one business man in the Cabinet, and even the LORD CHANCELLOR, great lawyer though he is, is almost equally renowned as a horseman. "He sits the Woolsack," a hard-riding Peer has said of him, "almost as though he were part of it."

Of this tendency to break away from the Bar Dr. Addison is one of the pleasantest examples. We Englishmen surely owe as much to our great physicians as to our great lawyers, and in some cases indeed the fees are even higher. After the Demosthenic periods and Ciceronian verbosity of some of our previous rulers Dr. Addison's bright bedside manner with an ailing or moribund Bill is a refreshing spectacle. The shrewd face under the shock of white hair is too well known to need description. The small black bag and the slight bulge in the top-hat, caused by the stethoscope, are equally familiar. Nor is there wanting in Dr. Addison that touch of firmness which is so necessary to a good practitioner and in his case comes partly, no doubt, from his Lincolnshire origin, for he was born in the county which has already produced such men as Sir Isaac Newton, the late Lord Tennyson, M. Worth of Paris, the present Governor of South Australia and Hereward the Wake.

None but the robustest of officials is allowed to direct the affairs of the new Ministry of Health. The patron saint of its Chief is St. Pancreas and his eupepsia is reflected in his subordinates. His junior clerks whistle continuously, his liftmen yodel, his typists sing. Of his own official methods I have been privileged to obtain the report of an eye-witness. Let us suppose that, as frequently happens, a deputation of disappointed house-hunters has arrived to see him.

Leader of Deputation. We want houses and we won't wait.

Dr. Addison (tapping his forehead and glancing significantly at his Private Secretary). Tck, tck! That's very serious. Shall we feel the pulse?

[Leader of Deputation puts his hand out. Private Secretary takes out his watch. Sixty seconds elapse.

Dr. Addison. Do you take much walking exercise?

Leader of Deputation. No.

Dr. Addison. Ah, I thought as much.

"After breakfast walk a mile, After dinner rest awhile."

What you need is a good sound constitutional every morning. If you *see* any houses, of course there is no objection to your *looking* at them. But keep on walking, mind; don't loiter. And come back to me in a month's time and we'll see how you are then.

[Exit Deputation, looking slightly dazed.

Almost equally successful is Dr. Addison's professional method in dealing with representatives of the Building Trades Unions. A bricklayers' leader, let us say, has expounded at great length the technical difficulties which prevent rapidity of construction.

[pg 425] Dr. Addison (softly and suddenly). Take a deep breath. (Bricklayer takes it.) Say ninety-nine! (Bricklayer tries hard.) Where do you feel the pain?

Bricklayer. In the shoulders and arms.

Dr. Addison. Tck, tck, we must go easy. Don't take it too quickly, and we'll have you right again before the year's out. Try three bricks a day and come and see me in a month's time.

These, however, are not the only methods by which Dr. Addison has attempted to remedy the crisis. At his suggestion a permanent sub-committee of the Cabinet, called "The Happy Homes for Heroes' Panel," was appointed, and it was during one of its sessions that the bright idea of Housing Bonds was originated, I believe by Sir Alfred Mond. If the campaign has not met with the success which it deserves, the cause is probably to be found in the slightly unfortunate title whose assonance suggests to the public mind the "House of Bondage" in the Psalms. It would have been better, I think, to adopt Mr. Austen Chamberlain's suggestion, which was "The Cosy Cot Combine."

However, things are not as bad as they might seem, and outside one large suburb the other day I observed a gang of bricklayers actually in operation, anxiously hovered over by a clerk from the Ministry, thermometer in hand.

I think I have forgotten to mention in this brief sketch that Dr. Addison has a frame of iron. Since I have said it of all the other Cabinet Ministers of whom I have spoken, I ought certainly to say it of Dr. Addison too. Like Mr. Lloyd George, like Mr. Winston Churchill, like Sir Eric Geddes, the Minister of Health and Housing has a frame of iron. All that he really needs is the concrete.

K



Wealthy Parvenu (showing acquaintance his house, "ancestors," etc.). "Ah! AN' THEY'RE ALL TIP-TOP AN' PRE-WAR, MIND YER."

ELEGIA MACCHERONICA.

[We print as it reaches us this strange incoherent ejaculatory effusion, signed "A Lover of the Old Italian Opera." With the general spirit of this valediction it is possible to feel a certain amount of sympathy, but the author is clearly inaccurate in including amongst the bygone glories of the institution which he deplores places, persons, musical and even culinary features which are by no means obsolete. We

confess also to grave misgiving as to the purity of the writer's style, which in some lines seems to smack more of the debased Anglo-Italian of Soho than the crystal-clarity of the Tuscan of Carducci.]

O TEMPI passati!— PAGANI, FRASCATI, Mascagni, Sgambati— O Asti spumante! O scena cantante! Polenta, risotto, O contra-fagotto! Sordini, spaghetti, Bellini, confetti. O cioppo dal grillo! Tartini del "trillo," Barbière, "Di tanti," O fiaschi di Chianti! O dolce solfeggio! O caro arpeggio! Salsiccia con veggio! O lingua Toscana! O bocca Romana! O voce di petto! Rigoletto, Masetto, Stringendo e stretto, O notte di festa! E poi mal di testa. O Caffè di Gatti! O PASTA! O PATTI! O PATTI! O PASTA! O Brava! O Basta! O danza San Vito! Clemenza di Tito, Camillo Boïto, Sarastro, "Qui sdegno," Da capo, dal segno, ALBANI, ALBONI! Trebelli, Gardoni! O coloratura! O bella bravura! O "Salve dimora!" O Norma, Dinorah! O lunga cadenza Senza desinenza, O tempo rubato! Strumenti a fiato! O pingue contralto! O ponte di Rialto! O basso profondo! O fine del mondo! O "voi che sapete!"— PER SEMPRE VALETE!

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RACING AS A BUSINESS.

[The kind of article which one may confidently look for in the sporting columns of a penny newspaper at this time of the year.]

From the very beginning of the season I have insisted that our objective should be "the winter's keep." Those who have stuck to me all along and played my system are on velvet.

During the flat-racing year I have given a hundred-and-fourteen selections. Let me just tabulate the results; I like tabulating, for it fills my column in no time.

Selections. Won. Second. Third. Unplaced. 114 5 8 1 100

N.B.—Non-starters neglected.

The above is a statement of which I may well be proud. I assert with confidence that few sporting journalists can show anything like this record.

Certain captious correspondents like "O. T." and "Disgusted" have pointed out that my selections during this period show a loss of £104 9s. $11\frac{1}{2}d$. on a *flat stake* of £1. All I can say is that people who bet increasing stakes are increasing, while people who bet flat stakes are— Well, that

disposes of "Disgusted" and "O. T." My readers know that my system is to have the minimum stake on the losers and the maximum stake on the winners. We shall never attain that abstract perfection, but we should keep this ideal before us. I believe in idealism; it pays.

Take yesterday's selections, for instance. Here they are, with results tabulated:—

1.00	Breathing Time	Unplaced.
1.30	Taddenham	Unplaced.
2.00	Aminta I.	Unplaced.
2.30	Giddy Gertie	Non-starter.
3.00	Transformation	Unplaced.
3.30	Likely Case	Won-20 to 1 on.

That I consider a highly successful day's racing, provided your stakes were proportionally placed; and here again I must insist on my principle of maximum and minimum stakes.

Let us suppose, as naturally most of my readers did, that a backer went to the course with a bookmaker's credit of twenty thousand pounds and a thousand or so spare cash in his pocket. Being a shrewd man he would place £1 on Breathing Time to win. (I daresay even "O. T." and "Disgusted" did me the honour of following me so far.) On Taddenham, true to my principles, our backer would raise his stake to £1 10s. Aminta I. would carry £2, or £2 10s. if he were punting. But I cannot too strongly discourage this habit of making violent increases in stake; it is almost gambling. Much better put on only £2 with a safe bookmaker, such as Mr. Bob Mowbray, of Conduit Street, whose advertisement appears elsewhere in our columns.

To proceed, our backer finds to his relief that Giddy Gertie is a non-starter and retires to the refreshment bar for a bracer. The 2.30 race being run off he returns to the Ring for the serious business of the day. After examining Transformation in the paddock and listening to the comments of the knowing ones—"Too thick in the barrel," "Too long in the pastern," "Too motheaten in the coat"—he will exercise caution and, instead of "putting his shirt" on Transformation and plunging to the extent of, say, £5, will put up not more than £3 10s. and await the result with calmness. When Transformation is returned unplaced (or, as "O. T." and "Disgusted" would say, "also ran") our backer is not abashed. Taking full advantage of his credit he places his twenty thousand on Likely Case, together perhaps with the odd thousand or so in his pocket, being careful, however, to ascertain that his return ticket is still safely in his possession.

Our backer is shrewd enough to understand that this is a case for the maximum stake. Strong in his faith in my principle he sees Likely Case win with little surprise.

Returning to Town that evening he records his day's dealings in this manner:

	Lost.		Won.			
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Breathing Time	1	0	0		_	
Taddenham	1	10	0		_	
Aminta I.	2	0	0		_	
Giddy Gertie		_			_	
Transformation	3	0	0		_	
Likely Case		_		1,000	0	0
Expenses: Return ticket, entrances, three double b. & s., etc.	2	0	4		_	
	10	0	4	1,000	0	0
				10	0	4
Balance				£989	19	8

I may mention that the official s.p. of 20 to 1 on Likely Case is distinctly cramped. On the course it was possible to obtain more generous terms and lay only 19 to 1 on.

Thus one sportsman by careful observance of my principle has stacked up a goodly array of chips towards his winter's keep. All this goes to show that if a man will bet sanely and avoid "going for the gloves" he can make a modest competence on the Turf.

This afternoon the Vale Selling Plate of 300 sovs. is down for decision. To fill my space I cannot do better than give a list of

PROBABLE STARTERS AND JOCKEYS.

	st.	lb.	
Mayana	9	7	Digby.
AVIGNON	9	3	Harris.

WISE UNCLE 8 7 Holmes (O.)
PERIWIG 7 7 Benny.
BEATUS 7 0 Peters.

In Nurseries, Weight-for-age races and so on I make it a rule to give only one selection, but in a struggle of this importance I expect to receive a little more latitude. Of these, then, I take Mayana and Periwig to beat the field. At the same time I feel strongly that Wise Uncle's form at Kempton was not correct, and that he will nearly win, if he can beat Beatus, who seems to be let in nicely at 7 st. All the above will be triers, but it is doubtful whether any amount of trying will enable them to beat Avignon, whose chances I am content to support. I conclude by wishing my readers a good time over this race.

NEW RHYMES FOR OLD CHILDREN.

THE WORM.

The worms, the worms, the wriggly worms,
They keep on eating earth,
And always in the grossest terms
Complain about their birth;
They have no eyes, they have no eyes,
They cannot read a book;
I wonder if they realise
What dreadful things they look.

The trowel cuts them quite in half, It is a bitter cup;
They give a sour sardonic laugh And sew the pieces up;
They sew them up and wind away With seeming unconcern,
But oh, be careful! one fine day I hear the worm will turn.

And though I don't know what it means, I know what reptiles are;
They love to make unpleasant scenes
When people go too far;
However calm he seems to be
When only cut in two,
If you go cutting him in three
I don't know what he'd do!

A. P. H.

Effect of the Greek Imbroglio.

"Asked why *The Daily Mail* had been asked to send a representative, Mr. MacSweeney stated that Mr. MacCormack had cancelled an agreement with his agent, which meant the cancellatino of a number of provincial engagements."

"AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF POLY. PRICE 25/-

With 43 Illustrations.

A Noah's Ark

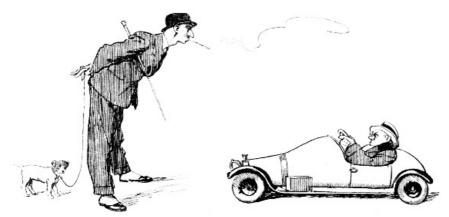
With a real educational interest. Education without effort. Containing 25 animals, all perfectly drawn."

—Advt. in Glasgow Paper.

Not at all a bad description.

"The Oxford University forwards created a very favourable impression against Major Stanley's XV. at Oxford yesterday, and were not to blame for the defeat of the University by 2 placed girls...."

-Daily Paper.



HELLO SMITH - YOU DON'T MEAN TO SAY-



YOU'VE GOT ONE OF THOSE



BEASTLY LITTLE THINGS!

THE HANDY LITTLE CAR.

[pg 428]

THE PLACE OF THE TROMBONE IN THE BAND.

When I speak of the place of the trombone in the band I am not referring to his site or locality. That is for the conductor to settle. My purpose is to give an intelligent reply to the oft-quoted query, "Why the trombone?" $\frac{1}{2}$

Everybody knows that it is not in the band for musical purposes. It is not a musical instrument. The man who could extract music from a trombone could get grapes out of a coal-mine.

No, its *raison d'être* is mostly critical and punitive. It is there to see that the orchestra does its job and to put the fear of a hectic hereafter into the man who is out of step with his fellow-conspirators.

The uninformed have a vague idea that the conductor should do that with his little stick. But I put it to you, what use would a little stick be against a man like the big drum? A meat-axe would have some point, but the difficulties of conducting with a meat-axe will be obvious to even the least musical.

When the French horn, in the throes of a liver attack, sees supplementary spots on the score and plays them with abandon, or when the clarionet (or clarinet), having inadvertently sucked down a fly which in an adventurous mood has strolled into one of those little holes in the instrument, coughs himself half out of his evening clothes, does the conductor forsake his air of austerity and use language unbefitting a solemn occasion? Does he pick up his music-stand and hurl it at the offender? He does not. It would be a breach of etiquette.

He simply signals to the trombone, who promptly turns the exit part of his instrument on the culprit and gives a bray that makes the unfortunate man's shirt-front crumple up like a concertina. That is discipline.

Then again the trombone is employed as a sort of brake when in a moment of excitement the rest of the orchestra has a tendency to overdo things.

For example, all will remember the throbbing moment at the end of the drama, where the hero and heroine, murmuring "At last!" fall into each other's arms and move slowly off the stage whilst the band starts up Mendelssohn's or Glückstein's "Wedding March." The effect on an orchestra is immediate and immense. Somewhere behind each of these stiff shirt-fronts beats a heart that thrills at every suggestion of romance. It is well known that, when at intervals during a performance they retire through the man-hole under the stage, it is to imbibe another chapter of Ethel M. Dell or of "Harried Hannah, the Bloomsbury Bride." And so the lingering embrace of the lovers sets them tingling and they tackle the "Wedding March" at the double. The clarionet (or clarinet) wipes the tears from his eyes and puts a sob in his rendering; the cornet unswallows his mouthpiece and, getting his under-jaw well jutted out, decides to put a jerk in it; the piccolo pickles with furious enthusiasm; the 'cello puts his instrument in top-gear with his left hand and saws away violently with the other; the triangle, who has fallen perhaps into a Euclidian dream, sits up and gets a move on; the stevedore—no, no, that is the next chapter—the oboe, the French horn, the kettledrum, the euphonium, the proscenium, the timbrel, the hautboy, the sackbut-and-ashes—all get a grip of the ground with both feet and let her go.

They try to depict golden lands of radiant sunshine, where beautiful couples stroll hand-in-hand for ever and the voice of the turtle replaces that of the raucous vendor of the racing edition.

If they were allowed to have their way the effect on the unmarried portion of the audience would be to send them rushing out of the theatres and dragging registrars out of a sick-bed in order to perform the marriage ceremony there and then.

But the trombone introduces the hard practical note, the necessary corrective. His monotonous grunt is used to remind the audience of marriage as it is lived in real life, of the girl at breakfast in unmarcelled hair, of the man dropping cigarette-ash on the best carpet, of double income-tax, of her family, of his, of her bills for frocks, of his wandering off to golf or the club, and a host of other incidentals.

A reaction takes place among the audience. Men who had been a moment before estimating the price of a diamond-ring turn their thoughts to two-stroke motor-bicycles, and girls decide that love in a cottage is an overrated pastime—especially when you can't get the cottage—and decide to wait a few years till a house or two has been built.

That is the chief function of the trombone—to pursue those who are wandering in the clouds and bring them to earth with a crash.



Press Photographer (to perfect stranger while arranging group on departure of popular personage). "Hold your hat up and cheer."

The Triumphs of Art.

"Woman Sculptor In The Kremlin.

Bolshevist Busts."

"Rhodes bowled Ryder for a duck, and off his very next ball he got Moyes smartly stumped by Dolphin at point." Irish Paper. Dolphin must have acquired "the long arm of coincidence." "LETTS CLASH WITH POLES." Japan Gazette. "Autumn made a lightning spring into winter yesterday." —Daily Paper. England's seasons seem to be getting hopelessly intermingled. "—— Htl.—S. asp. Magnificently equipped."

"A telephone call office has been opened at Mumps Post Office."

"To Let, Furnished Bedroom, beard optional, terms moderate."

-Official notice.

-Daily Paper.

-Local Paper.

"Times" headlines.

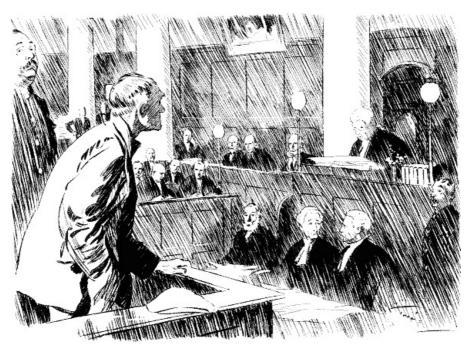
Subscriber.—Can you give me Mumps?

Would suit almost any young shaver.

Patronized by the late QUEEN CLEOPATRA.

No, don't let's.

[pg 429]



"Well, and what brings you here again?"

MY WEATHER-GUIDE.

I was admiring Cripstock's barometer.

"Take it," he said.

"My dear Cripstock!" I exclaimed, as I pulled it from the wall.

"My dear fellow!" he replied, in tones more of gratitude than of generosity.

I have fastened it in my hall at the regulation distance from the hat-rack and between the assegais. It will be nice company for the dinner-gong, which it faces. I purposely did not place them side by side, for fear of any error in tapping.

These delicate contrivances do not readily settle down in a new home, and for a week I ignored the barometer. This may have seemed unfriendly to a newcomer, yet surely it was kind not to observe any faults it might display during its novitiate. When on the Saturday morning I scrutinised it for the first time I saw it pointed to "Stormy." I hastened over breakfast in order to get into the garden in time to fix up the starboard fence. After working feverishly for three hours, glancing at the sky at frequent intervals, I heard the "All clear" signalled from a back window, the needle having swung round to "Set Fair."

There it remained for several days, a marvel of accuracy. My poor umbrella began to wear a look of neglect, but my walking-stick was jubilant. "Set Fair" it was again on the Friday, and again I set out with my happy malacca.

On my return wet through I had another proof of the excellence of my faithful aneroid. Its needle pointed imperatively to "Change." This, in fact, I had already decided to do, but to a less careful man the instruction must have been of inestimable advantage.

OUR "PROMISED" LAND.

(An "explanation" of another of the Premier's election "promises.")

My emotion I well can remember
O'er a "promise" that somewhere I'd seen
One night, away back in December
Anno Domini 1918.
Happy tears in my orbs began wellin'
As I read how the England-to-be

[&]quot;Force of 'abit."

Would become a fit messuage to dwell in For heroes like me.

Refreshed by an access of ardour
I returned to my business in town;
But, as life seemed each day to grow harder,
I despaired of its joy and its crown;
Till, fed up with a "tale" for poor Tommies,
My temper I finally lost,
And pronounced that oracular "promise"
A palpable frost.

But I've tumbled at last to my error;
For, although I am far from content,
I know that this era of terror
Is just what the Government meant;
When through England so bell-like and clear rose
That eager, that passionate vow;
Since none but a race of real heroes
Can live in it now.

Commercial Candour.

"SITUATIONS WANTED. Housemaid, unscrupulously clean."

Melbourne Argus.

"Mr. Arthur Henderson, M.P., has added $2\frac{1}{2}$ stones to his stature since he left the nursing home in Leeds."

-Daily Mail.

And three cubits to his weight.

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MORE HINTS TO SOCIAL CLIMBERS: HOW TO ATTRACT NOTICE.

THE BROWN LADY.

We were talking of the sex, the dark and the fair, and "Give me," he said, "a brunette every time. But how seldom one meets them now!"

I expressed surprise at this.

"Yes," he said, "it is so. Plenty of women with dark hair, but not dark skins. The true brunette is very rare."

"I know one," I said; "probably the most perfect brunette in London."

"Young?" he asked.

"Yes," I said.

"Could I—would you take me to see her?" he asked.

"Certainly," I said.

"When?" he asked.

"Now," I said; "this afternoon. But we must hurry. Her servants have orders not to let anyone in after four."

"You're sure she won't mind?" he asked.

"Absolutely," I said. "My friends are hers. I've introduced lots of people to her and she's delighted."

He smiled blissfully.

Having obtained a taxi I gave an address in Regent's Park, but told the driver to stop at a shop on the way "She loves sweets," I explained.

"They all do," he replied, with the sententiousness of gallantry, as though speaking from abysmal depths of knowledge.

"Yes, but she has a more catholic taste than most," I said. "She's the only brunette—or, if it comes to that, the only blonde—I ever knew with a weakness for—well, I'll make you guess."

"Preserved ginger?" he suggested.

"No," I said.

"American pop-corn?"

"Not that I know," I said.

"Tell me," he replied.

"Condensed milk," I said.

"Good Heavens!" he exclaimed. "Condensed milk? That's the oddest thing I've ever heard."

"That's what I'm getting," I said; "and it won't injure your chances with her if you take her a pot of honey."

"But I don't know her," he submitted.

"It doesn't matter," I said; "she's the most unconventional creature in the world—just a child of nature."

"Delicious!" he murmured.

"She's a Canadian, you see," I added.

"Oh, a Canadian," he replied, as though that explained everything. "And, by the way, what's her name?"

"She lets me call her Winnie," I said.

"And what do I call her?" he asked.

"Well," I said, "if I were you I'd call her Winnie too. She'd love it."

"This is extraordinarily interesting," he replied. "But you know I'm far too shy to do a thing like that."

When, however, the time came and we were shown into Winnie's drawing-room in Mappin Terrace and the most adorable brown bear in captivity came lumbering towards us, he called her Winnie as naturally as her keeper does or any of the Canadian soldiers whose mascot she was, and he held the honey-pot for her until her tongue had extracted every drop. She then clawed at his pocket for more.

"I told you she'd like you," I said.

"Isn't she a pet? And a brunette all right? I didn't deceive you."

"She's perfect," he said. "Absolutely the Queen of She-Bears."

And so say all good Zoologicians.

E. V. L.

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A GERMAN INVASION.

HERR NOAH (to Frau Noah). "HERE WE ARE AGAIN—JUST AS IF NOTHING HAD HAPPENED!"

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ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT

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Monday, November 22nd.—Fortunately or unfortunately, according to one's point of view, this deponent was not a spectator of the fight in the House of Commons this afternoon, having been himself previously knocked out by a catarrhal microbe possessing, as the sporting journals say, "a remarkable punch." He therefore gives the fracas an honourable miss.

The Tariff Reformers were horrified to hear from Sir Robert Horne that nearly four hundred thousand pounds' worth of clocks had been imported from Germany this year. They were quite under the impression that when we wound up the Watch on the Rhine clocks were included.

They were still more surprised to learn that without further legislation it is impossible for British parents, when purchasing toys for their children, to be sure that they are not the productions of our late enemies. It would appear that the famous label, "Made in Germany," which did so much to advertise the products of the Fatherland before the War, has now outlived its usefulness; but the goods are coming along just the same.

Tuesday, November 23rd.—Lord Birkenhead's complete recovery from his recent ear-trouble was attested by the ease and mastery of his speech in moving the Second Reading of the Government of Ireland Bill. Some men in this situation might have been a little embarrassed by their past. But Sir Edward Carson's erstwhile "galloper" neither forgot nor apologised for his daring feats of horsemanship, and triumphantly produced a letter from his former chief assuring "my dear Lord Chancellor" that "Ulster" had come round to the view that "the best and only solution of the question is to accept the present Bill and to endeavour to work it loyally."

For the rest he minimised the temporary partition of Ireland and laid stress on the ultimate union to be effected by the Council of Ireland; magnified the financial advantages—seven millions is the sum he reckons Southern Ireland will ultimately have to play with—and hinted that they might be further stretched "if peace were offered to us by any body which was qualified to speak for Irish opinion."



A LECTURE TO THE UPPER SCHOOL.

LORD BIRKENHEAD.

For a time little encouragement came from the Irish Peers. Lord Dunraven moved the rejection of the Bill, on the ground that there could never be permanent peace in Ireland until moderate opinion was behind the law, and that moderate opinion would not be satisfied without full financial control. Lord Willoughby de Broke spoke as an unrepentant Unionist, and Lord Clanwilliam bluntly declared that the Irish were one of those peoples who were unfit to govern themselves and who had got to be governed.

The Duke ABERCORN, as Ulsterman, the supported Bill, and Lord Haldane gave an elegant exhibition the military exercise known "the balance as step without advancing." It. was not the Bill he would have drafted, and the



"The balance step without advancing." LORD HALDANE.

Government must pass it on their own responsibility. Still he thought it should be given a chance.

In the Commons Sir Archibald Williamson gave an account of the remarkable transmigrations of the Egyptian G.H.Q., which within a few weeks was located at the Savoy Hotel, the Abbassiah Barracks and the Eden Hotel.

"Each move was made from motives of economy." Sir Alfred Mond is understood to be most anxious to know how this game is played. He can manage the first moves all right, but never achieves a winning position.

Wednesday, November 24th.—Those who were fortunate enough to hear Viscount Grey's speech on the Government of Ireland Bill speak of it as on a par with that which he delivered as the spokesman of the nation on August 3rd, 1914. To me it did not appear quite so plain and coherent; but who can be plain and coherent about the Irish Question? Lord GREY thinks, for example, that if the Government made a more liberal offer to Nationalist Ireland the pressure of moderate opinion would put an end to murders and outrages. But how would that moderate opinion be able to overcome the terrorism of the secret societies, which, as Lord Bryce told the Peers, have dogged every Irish patriotic movement since the eighteenth century and which will admit no compromise with the hated invader?

The debate was neatly summarised by Lord RIBBLESDALE, who said, "We are all Home Rulers, but each of us thinks the other fellow's brand is wrong."

The state of Ireland was at that moment being debated in the Commons, when Mr. Asquith found himself saddled with the introduction of a motion which, while nominally blaming the Irish Executive, really accused the soldiers and police of attacking the lives and property of innocent people. The awkwardness of the situation was reflected in the terms of his indictment. At one moment the charge was that houses and creameries were destroyed "without discrimination" between innocent and guilty; at the next the House was asked to note "overwhelming evidence of organisation." His only suggestion for a remedy was that we should get into touch with "the real opinion of the great bulk of the Irish people," but he did not indicate how it was to be done or what the opinion would be when you got to it.

Sir Hamar Greenwood is quite clear that you won't get to it until you have crushed the murdergang which is terrorising the great mass of the Southern Irish people, not excluding "the intellectual leaders of Sinn Fein.'

Colonel John Ward cleverly remodelled the resolution into a vote of thanks to the servants of the Crown in Ireland for their courage and devotion, and this was eventually adopted by 303 votes to

Thursday, November 25th.—For the first time in its history the House of Lords gave a Second Reading to a Home Rule Bill for Ireland. Up to the very last the issue was in doubt, for Lord MIDLETON'S motion that the debate should be adjourned for a fortnight, in order that a more generous financial scheme might be produced, attracted two classes of Peers-those who are resigned to Home Rule, but want a better brand, and those who won't have it at any price or in any shape.

On the steps of the Throne sat the PRIME MINISTER, whose humility in going no higher will doubtless receive favourable comment in Welsh pulpits. He was accompanied-I will not say shepherded—by Sir Hamar Greenwood and Sir Edward Carson. What signals, if any, passed

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between this triumvirate and the Woolsack I cannot say, but the fact remains that, after a brief chat with the Lord Chancellor, Lord Curzon came down heavily against the motion. An adjournment would be useless unless it produced peace. But could Lord Midleton guarantee that even the most complete fiscal autonomy would satisfy Sinn Fein? If later on, when the Irish Parliaments were in operation, a demand came from a united Ireland, the Government would give it friendly consideration. Lord Midleton's motion having been rejected by eighty-six votes, and Lord Dunraven's by ninety, the Second Reading was agreed to without a division.

In the Commons a final attempt to defeat the Agricultural Bill was made by the Farmers' Party. Mr. Courthope declared that the Bill would produce only doubt and uncertainty, whereas the farmer needed confidence, a plant of slow growth (as we know on the authority of another statesman), which would not flourish under bureaucratic supervision. Sir F. Banbury said the measure must end in nationalisation, and he would prefer nationalisation—cum proper compensation, of course—straight away. The surprising statement by a Labour Member, that the farmers had subsidised the nation to

the extent of forty millions a year by selling at less than world-prices, may have helped to placate their champions, who had not quite realised what generous fellows they were, for only a dozen stalwarts carried their protest into the Division Lobby.

"Learn to be independent of domestics. In four months I undertake to train any young girl of good family, and willing to learn, as a thoroughly competent and economical Plain Cook. Live in as one of family. Three maids kept. Mrs. --."

-Church Times.

The advertiser seems to fight shy of her own medicine.

IMPROVING "HANSARD."

If *Hansard* would only introduce a little brightness into its bald and unconvincing narrative of Parliamentary procedure it would provide reading-matter which would grip the heart and stir the emotions, winning many new readers from the students of fiction and other light literature. *Hansard* will otherwise never find it worth while to organise sand-castle competitions for the little ones about its certified net sales.

It suffers under the disadvantage of having no sporting expert, no front-rank descriptive writer and no specialist in the humanities (sometimes known as a sob-artist) on its staff. That is why it reports a soul-stirring incident in the following terms?—

"Mr. X. struck out, and unintentionally hit an hon. member (Mr. Y.), who was sitting in close proximity. Grave disorder having thus arisen, Mr. Speaker rose and ordered the suspension of the sitting under Standing Order No. 21."

How differently the thing might have been done if put into competent hands. Would not something like the following (though far short of perfection, we admit) have been more acceptable to the general reader?—

Mr. X's erstwhile florid face paled. An ugly look invaded his features of normally classic beauty. Flinging off his braided morning-coat he flew at his opponent. Parrying with his right he brought his left well home with a middle-and-off jab, tapping the claret—a pretty blow, whose only defect was that it struck the wrong face.

Other honourable Members hastened to join the *mêlée*. Pince-nez flew in every direction, toupées were disarranged, dental plates shook to their very foundations. The opposition pack worked well, displaying brilliant footwork, tackling low and dodging neatly the dangerous cross-kicks of their opponents. The heel-work, while above the average, was too often below the belt.

Meanwhile the only lady Member present sat pale and bright-eyed, a silent spectator. Her mind, working rapidly, sensed an impending catastrophe. What could she do to emphasise the woman's point of view? At the sight of blood she nerved herself with a supreme effort to remain in her place. Then, springing to action, she tore her dainty handkerchief into strips with which to provide the bandages which it seemed would inevitably be needed.

At last silence reigned. The collar-studs were collected from the floor of the House and the few remaining Members breathlessly awaited the resumption of the sitting.

As the hon. Member apologised every throat was dry, but most of the eyes were moist. The gracious acceptance of the apology moved strong men to weep aloud until called to order. And there, in the background, sat she whose woman's wit had shown the better way.

•	Com	mai	cia	1 M	ons	200

"Taxis for Hire. Boats and Trains	met. Picnic	and Wedding	Parties	promptly	attended to
and executed with reliability."					

"There were only 67 persons enjoying annual incomes of £200,000 or over in 1918, upon whom a tax of about £28,000,000 was levied."

-Daily Paper.

What are we coming to!

"THE GARDEN.

VIOLINS.—For sale, several second-hand Violins."

—Local Paper.

They should harmonize well with the violas in the next bed.

"Mr. — (the bride's brother) was at the organ, and played the 'Bridle March' (Lohengrin)."

-Local Paper.

While the happy pair were on their way to the halter.

"An advertisement in a morning paper for 20 laborers to do store work resulted in 400 applicants assembling in front of the Petersham P.O., where the advertiser had promised to meet them. To their intense disgust he failed to materialise. The general opinion is that the advertisement was a hoar."

Australian Paper.

A frost anyway.

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THE USES OF GESTURE.

A SIXPENNY BIT—PLAIN.

ONE PENNY—WITH APLOMB.

"G.B.R.L."

G.B.R.L.'s are an old-established convention in my family. Joan and Pauline ("Porgie" *libentius audit*) are exceptional authorities on the animal world in general; exceptional, at any rate, for their years, which respectively total four-spot-six and two-spot-five. They confound their parents daily with questions relating to the habits of marmots or the language of kiwis. But they never talk about "lions," *tout court*. A lion is, *ex-officio* and *ipso facto*, a Great-Big-Roarin'-Lion—always has been: in short, a G.B.R.L.

It reminds me of a man I know who was made a G.B.E.; but that's another story, and Joan wouldn't see the joke of it anyhow, though I know she would smile politely.

But in this matter of lions, from which I am tending to digress, the old G.B.R. convention has just been weighed in the balance and found wanting. It came about in this wise. Joan's and Porgie's Uncle Barney (his nose is *retroussé*, if anything, only he had the misfortune to be born on St. Barnabas' Day) departed the other day for Afric's sunny shores—for Algiers, in fact—to nurse a tedious trench legacy. This, of course, was a matter of great concern to his nieces, in whose eyes he is distinctly *persona grata*, owing to his command of persiflage and taste in confectionery.

I went into the nursery on the fateful morning to break the sad news. My daughters were at breakfast and I was just in time to hear Joan's grace, "Thank God for our b'ekfas'—and *do* make us good." The extremely sanctimonious tone in which this was delivered, combined with the melodramatic scowl which marred the usual serenity of Porgie's countenance, convinced me that the morning had commenced inauspiciously and that it would be well to gild the pill which I had to administer.

"Hallo, stout women," I said cheerfully. Joan looked politely bored but made no reply.

"Not 'tout wimmin," said Porgie heavily and uncompromisingly. Obviously it was too early in the day for any of that sparkling back-chat for which my daughters are so justly famed. So I got down to hard tacks at once.

"Your Uncle Barney," I said, "is going to Algiers to-day."

I explained that Algiers was in Africa, where the black men come from. Joan was mildly intrigued. She opined that her Uncle Barney would follow the local customs (as she understood them) and wear no clothes. I said I doubted if his medical adviser would approve of his carrying international courtesy to such an extreme. Joan was frankly disappointed. So I tried again.

"I expect he'll see some lions in Africa," I suggested.

Joan's interest revived. "Great-big-roarin'-lions," she corrected me. Porgie expressed herself, as usual, in precisely similar terms.

"Yes," I said feelingly, "great big roarers. I expect they'll eat him up quite soon."

Joan looked deeply concerned at this callous prediction, and the corners of Porgie's mouth drooped ominously.

"I don't like roarin' lions," said Joan.

"Don't nike roarin' nions," said Porgie.

"Are they in cages?" suggested Joan hopefully. This was an excellent idea.

"Of course they are," I said with great heartiness.

Joan was not satisfied. "Will they roar when they see Uncle Barney?" she inquired.

This gave me my chance most unexpectedly. "I should just think they will," I said. "If they see him dressed like your black men, they'll roar till the tears pour down their cheeks."

"I 'spect they'd be laughing at him," said Joan, gracefully helping me out.

"I 'spect so," I replied.

"I see," said Joan comfortably.

"I see," said Porgie.

* * * * *

So G.B.R.L. has come to have a new and a more genial significance, thanks to Uncle Barney.

"Vacant Possession, through sickness.—Capital Chop, with good living accommodation, in best business position."

—Daily Paper.

Purchaser will acquire a steak in the country.



ANOTHER CHILD ACTRESS.

 $Mrs.\ Bluff$ (a popular pauper). "Now, Fanny, what'll yer say when I takes yer into the kind lady's drorin'-room?"

Fanny (thoroughly proficient). "Oh, that's an easy one. I'll put on a bewtiful lorst look an' say, 'Muvver, this is 'eaven!""

Mr. Punch's Misquotations.

Of a prima donna who sang in a private drawing-room: "At a party she gave what was meant for mankind."

(Goldsmith).

"Far-Fetched Herring.

"The steam drifter Bruces landed at Buckie to-day the furthest-fetched catch of herrings on record. The herrings were caught on the Yarmouth grounds, over 4000 miles distant."

Scotch Paper.

The last detail seems as far-fetched as the fish.

"Lost, in Paragon Street or Station, Black Dog with purse, money, eyeglass and papers; name and address inside.—Reward returning same."

-Daily Paper.

But suppose the finder is an anti-vivisectionist?

There was a young lady named Janet,
Who committed high treason in Thanet;
She dressed up her cat
In a *D**ly M**l* hat,
And was promptly fired out of this planet.

ONE TOUCH OF DICKENS.

Knowing that there was everything in my appearance to command respect, I went into the manager's room with confidence. Lean and brown and middle-aged, in a tweed coat and grey flannel trousers, which, though not new, were well cut, I felt that I looked like one accustomed to put in and take out sums from banks. There was no trying for effect, no effort, no tie-pin. The stick I carried was a plain ash. The pipe, which I removed from my mouth, had no silver

mounting. Ah, but it showed the tiny mother-of-pearl star which stamped it as a Bungknoll. There was going to be no difficulty here.

"Good morning," I said. "I regret to trouble a busy man over a small matter, but I wish to cash a cheque for ten pounds."

He was a quiet, capable-looking man with a rather tired expression.

"The cashing of cheques," he said, laying down his pipe, "is one item of our duties."

"Unfortunately," I continued, "I have run short of money. I bought a rather good print in a shop down the road and it has left me without any. I can give a cheque on Bilson's, but the banks in town close to-morrow and it would mean waiting three days, so I hope that you will be able to—"

"You can bring someone to identify you, of course?" he said, reaching for a bell.

"I am sorry to say that I am unknown here. I am all right at the hotel, but I don't like to ask the people for money. I have brought only a small bag, and what with the races and so forth I might expose myself to a disagreeable refusal."

"Yes," he said, "you might. But I'm afraid I can't cash a cheque for you without an identification. I'll send it for collection if you like."

"But that means waiting for days, and I haven't a shilling left. I came here for a week to look at the country about your town—a beautiful little town." I added this diplomatically.

"Do you think so? I consider it a hole. But I don't know much about it as I'm only here for a week. However, I'm sorry I can't help you except in the way I mentioned."

"But look here—do I look like the kind of man who plays tricks? Here is my card and my club address. And letters"—I tore one out of an envelope, but it was the one from Mosbyson's reminding me that they had already applied twice for payment—"but letters are of little use to identify one."

"They are," he agreed.

"The fact is, among other things, I want to buy another print which I have just caught sight of. It may be snapped up at any moment, like the one I snapped up yesterday."

"Let it go. It's probably a fake."

"Which one?" I said hotly. "The one I bought yesterday or the one I'm going to buy?"

"Both. But I can't cash your cheque."

"But look at the mess I'll be in. Would you have me pawn my watch?"

"I would not; neither would I have you not do so, if you take my meaning."

"I see," I said bitterly. "In plain words you are indifferent to my fate."

He smiled slightly and reached for a match to re-light his pipe.

My blood was up. I would not be defied by this man; at least, not completely. "Very well," I said coldly, "I will leave my cheque for ten pounds with you and take only a couple on account."

"I couldn't do that either."

"Well, a pound will have to do then."

"No."

"Then," I said in despair, "we come to the ridiculously small amount of eighteenpence. Ha, ha!"

"And that," he answered, "would be equally objectionable."

I started. "Come," I said, "you are human after all. You can quote at random from ${\tt Dickens}$. You read him?"

"I do. When not engaged in business pursuits." He looked anxiously at the clock.

"Who was Mrs. Chickenstalker?" I asked sternly.

"She kept a shop. In *The Haunted Man*."

"Whom did Mr. Wopsle marry?"

"Nobody. But hadn't you better see about your watch?"

"Not yet. How many glasses of punch did Mr. Pickwick drink on One Tree Hill?"

"Depends on how you count them. I make it eight."

"Correct. Look here—have you thought about the bagman's story—the first one? He says it is eighty years since the events he relates took place, and that would carry it back to 1747. And yet the traveller damns his straps and whiskers. Why, if he'd worn strapped trousers and whiskers in those days he'd have had a mob after him."

"Yes, and he wouldn't have been driving a gig on Marlborough downs. He'd have been riding with pistols in his holsters, wrapped in a horseman's cloak and wearing a plain bobwig. I've thought of that too."

"I see you have. But there's another—"

"Let me. Can you account for this? *Martin Chuzzlewit* left *Mr. Pecksniff's* house in the late autumn—say the last of November to be on the safe side. He stays five weeks in London and then goes to America—say another five weeks. Then, after a week in *Major Pawkins'* boarding-house, he goes to a place which is identified as the original site of Cairo, Illinois—say another week. This would land him there at the end of February, when everything is frozen stiff. But they travelled down the river in a heat that blistered everything it touched."

"No," I said jealously, "I have not thought of that. Wonderful, isn't it, how one likes to catch Dickens in a mistake? Like having a joke on a good old friend."

"Exactly," he said ardently, "I wish I had more time—"

"If you're free this evening come and dine with me at the 'Bull.' At about eight, if you can."

"I'd like to very much. Thanks. I'll come."

"I've thought of two more," I said; "but I'll go now, as you must be busy, so good-bye for the present. A bit before eight."

"I'll be there. I am rather busy just now. Good morning." He rang the bell. "Oh, Mr. Jounce," he said to the underling who appeared, "will you please cash this gentleman's cheque?"



Lady (to applicant for situation as cook). "Have you been accustomed to have a kitchen-maid linder you?"

Cook. "In these days we never speak of having people 'under us.' But I have had colleagues."

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AN UNLIKELY STORY

I am hoping very much that this story will, as Agony Column advertisements put it, meet the eye of a certain Professor at a certain Academy of Music. Of course I might tell it to him myself, as he happens to be my Professor, at least from 7 to 7.45 on Friday evenings; but it is a story which involves a great deal of explanation and, well—things on the whole get believed better in print.

To be quite frank I did begin telling him at the time, but I saw that the first two words had destroyed his faith in the rest of it. I don't really blame him, for it began with "my cleaner," and I

don't suppose that he has the ghost of an idea that, if you teach cooking, as I do, under the London County Council, they kindly keep a charlady to wash up for you and so on, and they call her a "cleaner."

The Professor is a very bad listener. I might have managed to explain to him what a cleaner is, but I never could have made him see why she was having tea with me, so I gave it up.

Really it is so simple. She lives at Cambridge Heath; I live at Croydon, which doesn't sound as countrified but is really so much nicer that no Croydon people who knew Cambridge Heathers could help asking them to tea at least once a year, when the garden was at its best. My cleaner's visit is always very delightful, because she makes the garden seem at least four times its usual size by sheer admiration; but this year, just as she was getting into her stride, it began to rain, and we had to seek refuge by the piano.

We sang "Where the Bee Sucks" and "Annie Laurie" very successfully, and she at last unthawed to the extent of remarking that she would give us a "chune," though she "hadn't stood up" to sing by herself "for donkey's ears." Stipulating that someone should help her out if the need arose, she investigated the inside of the piano-stool where the music lives, looking for a suitable song, and made, to her horror, the discovery that among all the odd pages it contained there was not one that had ever adhered to a piece called "The Maxeema," nor yet to a song which asks how someone is "Goin' to keep 'em down on the farm now they've seen gay Paree?"

The painful incident was passed over at the time, "The Long Trail" being discovered at the bottom of the pile and satisfactorily negotiated, and I forgot all about it until the next Friday evening, when, just as I was about to shake the dust of Cambridge Heath off my shoes, my cleaner, rising from her scrubbing, wiped her hands on her apron, produced two large limp sheets of white paper which resolved themselves into the music I ought to have had and hadn't, and pressed them upon me with all the eagerness of a more than cheerful giver.

A kind of panic seized me, for on Friday evenings I make the Academy of Music as it were a half-way house on my way home. Under the cleaner's kind and beaming glance there was nothing to do but put them into the attaché case in which I carry my music and try to believe that, wonderful man as he is, even my Professor wouldn't be able to see inside it when it was shut, in fact that it only rested with me to be quite sure that in his presence I only took out Chopin and not the gentleman who was interested in farming.

And I managed nicely. I took out the "Nocturnes" and shut the case up again before the cleverest (and nicest) of Professors could have guessed the company they were keeping, and he was graciously pleased to nod, instead of shaking his head, for most of the three-quarters of an hour. He really must have been pleased with me, for at 7.45 he told me that I showed marked improvement, and then kept me till 7.49 while he explained that a *flair* for the best of music such as I exhibited was both uncommon and, from a Professor's point of view, exceeding enjoyable. At 7.50—he, benign, I blushful—we approached the attaché-case.

"Allow me," said my Professor, reaching for it to replace Chopin; but I snatched it up before he could get it. Like most truly great men he is a little absent-minded, and he didn't seem to notice anything, but just held out his hand in farewell. But when my Professor shakes hands it means more than that; it means benediction, recognition, salutation—lots of things; for it is rumoured at the Academy that he never bestows that honour on any save those whom he regards as kindred spirits, acolytes at the altar of Music, personalities, not pupils.

And then my attaché-case opened itself quietly, after the manner of attaché-cases, and laid "'Ow're you goin' to keep 'em?" and "The Maxeema" right side up, and their names in such large print too, like an offering at his wonderful feet. Trembling at the knees I said:—

"My cleaner gave them to me."

But he looked at me and went on looking, and that is why I hope so very much that he will read this very unlikely story.

MORE PAY FOR M.P.'S.

(A perfectly horrible prospect.)

If I were a Member of Parliament*
On a most inadequate stipend,
Up in an attic and worn and spent
And wondering how to pay my rent,
And sucking an old clay pipe end,

I'd write to Bonar and Mr. George,
Or the party Whips that ran 'em,
"Unless you want me to steal or forge
You must make those Treasury blokes disgorge
A thousand at least per annum.

"Put it at that and make it free From Austen Chamberlain's taxes, For the glory withers that used to be The sole reward of a stout M.P. As the cost of everything waxes.

"What-not and Coalitionist
Equally crave the shilling
For a pot of beer or an ounce of twist
As they trudge to their homes through the mire and mist
From the long day's lobby-filling.

"Radical joins Conservative
In a concord wholly hearty,
Wanting to know if the State will give
An adequate wage upon which to live,
And so does the National Party.

"And the boots of the Labour Members creak And a terrible ghastly pallor is On the Wee Free face as it tries to speak; But ah! what a change to each sunken cheek If you put a bit more on our salaries!

"Shibboleths old to the wind we'd fling
And turn to the task that presses;
Sound reforms would go with a swing
And we might have a chance of lengthening
Those fearfully short recesses.

"There'd be the chance to show your tact In welding the hostile sections; Sworn and sealed in a mighty pact We'd put on the books the world's best Act Abolishing all elections."

EVOE.

* This beautiful opening line is not original. It is borrowed, with due acknowledgments, from a once famous music-hall song. (return)

From an article on "History without Tears":-

"There is no book that gives one a more comprehensive idea of the character of the Byzantine Empire, of the reasons for its decline and its disappearance, than Scott's 'Count Robert of Sicily.'"

Except perhaps Wrongfellow's "King Robert of Paris."



Sportsman (who has mounted boy for his first hunt in Ireland). "Well, how did you get on?"

Boy. "First-rate, thank you. I'll go in a hard hat next time, though. A fellow came up to me at the meet and said, 'Cap, half-a-crown, please."

[pg 439]

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

A new novel by Anthony Hope certainly deserves in these days to be considered a literary event of some importance. His *Lucinda* (Hutchinson) seems to me both in plot and treatment equal to the best of his work; as dignified and yet as lightly handled as anything he has given us in the past. The plot (which I must not betray) is excellent. From the moment when *Julius*, the narrator, making his leisurely way to the wedding of *Lucinda*, is passed by her alone in a taxicab going in an opposite direction, the interest of the intrigue never slackens. Into an epoch of rather "overripe" and messy fiction this essentially clean and well-ordered tale comes with an effect very refreshing and tonic. Anthony Hope's characters as ever are vigorously alive; in *Lucinda* herself he has drawn a heroine as charming as any in that long gallery that now stretches between her and the immortal *Dolly*. In short, those novel-readers who are (shall I say?) beginning to demand the respect due to middle age will enjoy in these pages the threefold reward of present interest, retrospection and a comforting sense that the literary judgment of their generation is here triumphantly vindicated in the eyes of unbelieving youth. What could be more pleasant?

It is a delight to welcome the Life of Mrs. R. L. Stevenson (Chatto and Windus), not only for the exceptional attraction of the environment in which she lived for many years, but because under any circumstances she would have been a remarkable woman. Once, when asked to write her own life, she refused because it seemed to her like "a dazed rush on a railroad express;" she despaired of recovering "the incidental memories." So it fell to her sister, Mrs. Van De Grift Sanchez, to undertake the task. A difficult one, for there was always the fear that the personality of Mrs. Stevenson might seem to be overshadowed by that of her husband. But the author, in giving us many interesting details about Robert Louis Stevenson, has been careful to select for the most part only those in which his wife was closely concerned. "In my sister's character," she writes, "there were many strange contradictions, and I think sometimes this was a part of her attraction, for even after knowing her for years one could always count on some surprise, some unexpected contrast which went far in making up her fascinating personality." Contradictions undoubtedly were to be found in her; thus during her later years Mrs. Stevenson intensely desired quietness and peace, and yet her love for change of scene never seemed to abate; but she was constant in her devotion as a wife and in her staunchness as a friend. Some excellent illustrations are included in this volume, and the only fault I have to find with it is that it lacks an index.

In selecting his hero for No Defence (Hodder and Stoughton) from the mutineers at the Nore, it may be admitted that Sir Gilbert Parker displayed a certain originality. With regard, to the *clou* of his plot, however, I can hardly say so much. Melodramatic young lovers have (in fiction) gone to prison and worse rather than employ a defence involving distress to the ladies of their choice, from ages untold. Dyck Calhoon did it when he was wrongly indicted for the killing of Erris Boyne, who was a traitor in the pay of France and incidentally the father of the heroine Sheila; though she knew nothing of this and would have been badly worried if the hazards of a defended murder case had brought it to light. Do you call the motive sufficient? No more do I. However, Dyck goes to prison, emerging just in time to join the fleet and became a successful rebel under the Naval soviets established by Richard Parker. Subsequently he takes his ship into action on the legitimate side, earns the quasi-pardon of exile on parole in Jamaica, finds a fortune of Spanish treasure, quells a black rising, is cleared of the murder charge (by the wholly preposterous arrival in the island of the now aged lady who had really done the deed-exactly like the finale of a Gilbert and Sullivan opera) and marries the heroine. A breathless plot, by which, however, my own pulse remained unquickened. To be brutally frank, indeed, the telling seemed to me wholly lacking in precisely the qualities of dash and crescendo required to carry off such a tale. Costume romance that halts and looks backward soon loses my following.

[pg 440]



LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI.

Airedales and collies, according to Lieut.-Colonel E. H. RICHARDSON, are notable for a truly remarkable and admirable characteristic. They would honestly rather be at work than just playing round. All the same, no one guessed before the War what they, and many other kinds of dogs, were able and willing to do for their country in emergency on guard and sentry duty, and, most of all, as battle-field messengers. Moreover it took the genius of the man who of all the world knows most of their mind to discover it. His book, British War Dogs (Skeffington), is neither very brilliantly written nor particularly well arranged (it contains quite a lot of repetitions and a system of punctuation all its own), but it is of more than average interest. The author details the training of war-dogs—literally "all done by kindness"—and records many thrilling exploits and heroisms of his friends. Further, he states at some length some rather attractive views on dog metaphysics, of which one need say no more than that, if you wish to believe that your fourfooted pal has a soul to be saved as well as a body to be patted, here is high authority to support you. I think what one misses all through these pages is the dog's own story. Without it one never seems to get quite to grips with the subject. What were Major's thoughts and feelings, for instance, when carrying a message twelve miles in an hour over all obstacles, dodging the shells as he ran? Not even Colonel Richardson can find a way to get a personal interview out of him.

All the Scandinavian countries have in the last twenty-five years produced novel-writers of power and distinction, but with the single exception of the Swedish authoress, Selma Lagerlöf, whose great novel, Gosta Berling, was awarded the Nobel Prize, and the Norwegian, Knut Hamsun, whose extremely unpleasant book, *Hunger*, was published in this country a score of years ago, few if any of them have been made accessible to the average English reader. Now the Gyldendal Publishing Company of Copenhagen has undertaken the neglected task of producing English translations of the best Scandinavian fiction, the latest of which is Guest the One-Eyed, by the Icelandic novelist, Gunnar Gunnarsson. It is not a particularly powerful narrative, and is marked by the characteristic inconsequence that tends to convert the Scandinavian novel into a mélange of family biographies; yet the author has been successful in weaving into his chapters some of the beauty and magic of his native land, lovely and forbidding by turns, and the charm and simplicity of its people. So when he makes Ormarr Orlygsson fling away the strenuous work of ten years and a promising career as a great violinist to return to a pastoral life on his father's Iceland estates, the step seems neither strange nor unnatural. So with the perfectly villainous Sera Ketill, who at the culmination of unparalleled infamies suddenly repents and becomes the far-wandering and well-beloved Guest, we do not feel anything strained in the author's assumption that in Iceland, at any rate, such things easily happen. Guest the One-Eyed is not a noteworthy novel in the sense that Gosta Berling was. Yet one would not have missed reading it.

It is interesting to watch heredity at play. Given the inclination to write, what kind of a first book should we get from the son of one of the most cultured and sensitive classical scholars and translators of this or any day and from the grandson of the painter of the Legend of the Briar Rose? The question is answered by Mr. Denis Mackail's *What Next?* (John Murray), which on

examination turns out to be a farcical novel. The story has certain technical weaknesses, but these are forgotten in the excitements of the chase, for the main theme is the tracking down of a coarse capitalist who defrauded the hero of his fortune and did something very low against England. With the assistance of a new character in fiction, a super-valet, justice is done and we are all (except the coarse capitalist and his son) extremely happy. Mr. Mackail has invented some excellent scenes and he carries them off with gaiety and spirit. In his second book (and for the answer to *What Next?* we shall not, I imagine, have long to wait) he will amend certain little faults, not the least of which is a tendency to give us the most significant events in the form of retrospective narrative instead of letting us see them as they occur.

"Bedroom Suite and a reasonable Piano Wanted."—Provincial Paper.
It mustn't be "overstrung."

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI, VOLUME 159, DECEMBER 1, 1920 ***

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