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# PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.

## VOL. 159.

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DECEMBER 22ND, 1920.

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### CHARIVARIA.

It is pointed out that the display of December meteors is more than usually lavish. Send a postcard to your M.P. about it.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE recently stated that the first prize he ever won was for singing. It is only fair to say that this happened in the pre-NORTHCLIFFE era.

An elderly Londoner recalls a Christmas when the cold was so intense that in a Soho restaurant the ices froze.

There has arrived at the Zoo a bird akin to the partridge and excellent for the table, but unable to fly. The very thing for the estate of a sporting profiteer.

"What is the best fire preventative?" asks a weekly journal. The answer is, the present price of coal.

The National Rat Campaign this year, we are told, was a great success. On the other hand we gather that several rats have threatened to issue a minority report.

"There is nothing so enjoyable," says a newspaper correspondent, "as a trip across the water to Ireland." Except, of course, a trip back again.

A number of Huns are receiving Iron Crosses through the post inscribed "Your Fatherland does

not forget you." How like Germany! She won't even allow bygones to be bygones.

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"Let Christmas come," says a contemporary headline. We have arranged to do so.

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A Minneapolis judge rules that a man has the right to declare himself head of the household. Opinion in this country agrees that he has the right but rarely the pluck.

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"My faith in the League of Nations is not shaken," says Lord ROBERT CECIL. This is the dogged spirit which is going to make this country what it used to be.

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"It may yet be possible," according to the Water Power Resources Committee, "to harness the moon." This of course would depend upon whether Sir ERIC GEDDES would let them have it or not.

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Cinema stunt actors, says *The Manchester Guardian*, expect to be paid fifty pounds for a motor smash. It seems an injustice that ordinary pedestrians should have to take part in this sort of thing for nothing.

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The continued disappearance of notepaper from a well-known club has now been traced to a large female cat, and most of the paper has been recovered from her sleeping-basket. It is thought that she was probably preparing to write her memoirs.

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A burglar who broke into a private house near Hitchin helped himself to a good supper before leaving. It is pleasing to learn, however, that, judging by the disordered state in which the pantry was left, the Stilton cheese must have put up a splendid fight.

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It was most unfortunate that Mr. "FATTY" ARBUCKLE'S visit to London should have clashed with the Cattle Show at the Royal Agricultural Hall.

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During a recent revue performance in London the conductor accidentally turned over two pages of music at once and the orchestra suddenly ceased playing. Several words of the chorus were actually heard by those sitting in front before the mistake could be rectified.

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Green peas in excellent condition, says a contemporary, have been picked at Pentlow, Sussex. It serves them right.

---

"Although Labour extremists are now much quieter it would take very little to set the ball of discontent into motion once again," states a writer in the Sunday Press. This being so, is it not rather unwise to let Christmas Day fall this year on the workmen's half holiday?

---

We question the wisdom of drawing the attention of Parliament to the silence of the POET LAUREATE. If he is goaded into breaking it we shall know whom to blame.

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"If people at home only knew how grateful we are for *anything* that is sent us," writes a lady from the island of Tristan d'Acunha. If they are as easily pleased as that, the idea of sending them Lieut.-Commander KENWORTHY should not be lost sight of.

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"The Hexathlon," we read, "is a form of contest new to this country." Mind you get one for the children at Christmas.

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A new type of American warship is expected to be able to cross the Atlantic in a little over three days. It will be remembered that the fastest of the 1914 lot took nearly three years.

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Large numbers of Filipinos are resisting an edict requiring them to wear trousers. Unfortunately it is impossible to offer to accommodate them all in the ranks of the Chicago Scottish.

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Riverside residents remarked that just before the cold set in large flocks of seagulls passed up the Thames. Well, what did they expect? Flamingoes?

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Mr. A. B. WALKLEY has remarked that a prejudice against actors is as old as the stage. It is satisfactory to think that it is no older and that in many cases it may be removed by a change of

profession.

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"I never dreamed of anything like this when I invented the telephone," said Dr. BELL after a demonstration. Neither as a matter of fact did we when we hired ours.

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Owing to the fact that Dr. BELL has experienced no unpleasantness during his stay over here, it is thought that the American genius who invented revues may now risk a visit to our shores.

**It is with the deepest sorrow that we record the death of F. H. Townsend, which occurred, without any warning, on December 11th. Their personal loss is keenly felt by his colleagues of the *Punch* Table, to whom the fresh candour of his nature and his brave gaiety of spirit, not less than his technical skill and resourcefulness, were a constant delight and will remain an inspiration. As Art Editor he will be greatly missed by the many contributors who have been helped by his kindly counsel and encouragement. Of the gap that he leaves in the world of Art they are sadly conscious who followed and appreciated his fine work not only in the pages of *Punch* but in his book-illustrations and in those appeals for charity to which he always gave freely of his best.**

**To his nearest and dearest among the wide circle that loved him we ask leave to offer the sympathy of friends who truly share their grief. With them we mourn a life untimely closed, and great gifts lost to us while still in their fulness; but we take comfort in the thought that death touched him with swift and gentle hand, and that he died with harness on, as a man would choose to die.**

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## **"THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT."**

IN AFFECTIONATE MEMORY OF F. H. TOWNSEND.

Only a few days before the sudden tragedy which took from us our colleague of the *Punch* Staff, he made me a small request, very characteristic of his kindly heart. It was that I should put in these pages a notice of *The Christmas Spirit*, the illustrated annual published in aid of the work of Talbot House ("Toc. H."), in which he had taken a practical interest. In carrying out his wish I want not only to plead in behalf of a good cause, but also to associate this appeal with the memory of one with whom for over fourteen years I have worked in close and happy comradeship.

In case any reader of *Punch* has yet to be introduced to the idea of Talbot House, let me explain that its purpose is to carry on in peace-time the work that was done by the original "Toc. H.," which from 1915 to 1918, under the management of the Rev. P. R. CLAYTON, M.C., Garrison Chaplain, provided the comforts of a club and rest-house at Poperinghe for soldiers passing to and fro in the deadly Salient of Ypres. Its objects—I quote from *The Christmas Spirit*—are:

"(1) To preserve among ex-Service men and to transmit to the younger generation the traditions of Christian Fellowship and Service manifested on Active Service.

(2) To offer opportunities for recreation and the making of friendships to thousands of men who find life a difficult salient to hold.

(3) To provide opportunities for men of all kinds to come together in the Spirit of Service, to study, to discuss and, if possible, to solve the problems of their time.

(4) To offer the help and happiness of club life at a low rate by establishing clubs in many centres throughout the country as the focus of the brotherhood."

The noble work done by Talbot House in Poperinghe and Ypres was gratefully recognised by the scores of thousands of our troops whose needs it served in those hard days, but it was only when the War was over that its story was made known to the public at home in *Tales of Talbot House* (CHATTO AND WINDUS), which received a warm welcome in the review columns of *Punch*. This was followed recently by *The Pilgrim's Guide to the Ypres Salient* (REIACH), a little book compiled and written, as a labour of love, entirely by ex-Service men. Besides being actually a present-day guide to the Salient, it contains special articles illustrating the life that was there lived during the War by various branches of the service. And now we have the annual of "Toc. H."—*The Christmas Spirit*—to which the PRINCE OF WALES has given a foreword and a host of brilliant authors and artists have freely contributed. Here are RUDYARD KIPLING, STEPHEN GRAHAM, G. K. CHESTERTON, E. F. BENSON, IAN HAY, GILBERT FRANKAU, W. ROTHENSTEIN, "SPY," DERWENT WOOD, HEATH ROBINSON and, of *Punch* artists, F. H. TOWNSEND, LEWIS BAUMER, G. L. STAMPA, GEORGE MORROW, G. D. ARMOUR, E. H. SHEPARD, "FOUGASSE," WALLIS MILLS and H. M. BATEMAN.

The four contributions of F. H. TOWNSEND include a "first study" for a drawing that appeared recently in *Punch* and a delightful sketch of "The Christmas Spirit," as typified by a St. Bernard dog from whose little keg of brandy a traveller, up to the neck in snow, is reviving himself.

Out of the great scheme in whose aid this remarkable annual has been published have already sprung two Talbot Houses, one in Queen's Gate Gardens, and one in St. George's Square. There is still need of a main headquarters in London and hostels for its branches, more than sixty of them, spread all over the country. "'Toc. H.," says its Padre, "is not a charity. Once opened our Hostel Clubs are self-supporting, as our experience already proves. In Edinburgh, Liverpool, Manchester, Bristol, Newcastle, Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, two thousand pounds will open a house for which our branches in each of these places are crying out. It is only the original outlay, the furniture and the first quarter's rent, which stand between us and a whole series of such houses in the great provincial centres. Fifty pounds will endow a bedroom, where a lad can live cheaper than in the dingiest lodgings, and know something better of a great city than that it is a place where all evil is open to him and all good is behind closed doors.... 'Toc. H.,' we repeat, is *not* another recurrent charity. It is a wise way of helping to meet our debt of honour; it is a living and growing memorial, charged with the task of making reincarnate in the younger world the qualities which saved us."

*Punch* ventures to add his voice to this claim upon our honour and gratitude; and, if I may, I would like to make appeal to all who loved the work of our friend who is dead, that they should send some offering to this good cause as a personal tribute to the memory of a man who, in his own form of service, did so much to cheer the hearts of our fighting men in the dark hours that are over.

Contributions should be addressed to the Rev. P. B. CLAYTON, M.C., Effingham House, Arundel Street, Strand, W.C.2.

O. S.

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## THE FAIRY TAILOR

Sitting on the flower-bed beneath the hollyhocks  
I spied the tiny tailor who makes the fairies' frocks;  
There he sat a-stitching all the afternoon  
And sang a little ditty to a quaint wee tune:  
"Grey for the goblins, blue for the elves,  
Brown for the little gnomes that live by themselves,  
White for the pixies that dance upon the green,  
But where shall I find me a robe for the Queen?"

All about the garden his little men he sent,  
Up and down and in and out unceasingly they went;  
Here they stole a blossom, there they pulled a leaf,  
And bound them up with gossamer into a glowing sheaf.  
Petals of the pansy for little velvet shoon,  
Silk of the poppy for a dance beneath the moon,  
Lawn of the jessamine, damask of the rose,  
To make their pretty kirtles and airy furbelows.

Never roving pirates back from Southern seas  
Brought a store of treasures home beautiful as these;  
They heaped them all about him in a sweet gay pile,  
But still he kept a-stitching and a-singing all the while:  
"Grey for the goblins, blue for the elves,  
Brown for the little gnomes that live by themselves,  
White for the pixies that dance on the green,  
But who shall make a royal gown to deck the Fairy Queen?"

R. F.

"Unless he wishes to raise a hornet's nest about his ears we would advise him to let sleeping dogs lie."

—*Local Paper.*

Personally we never keep a dog that harbours hornets.

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**From a concert-programme:—**

"Fantastic Symphony ... Berlioz in a Vodka Shop ... Bax."

*Birmingham Paper.*

This should help to combat the current opinion that BERLIOZ is dry.

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"Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson said there were, in certain places, some forms of light entertainments which, to say the least, wanted carefully watching."

—*Daily Paper.*

At present, we gather, the wrong people do the watching.

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**SING A SONG OF DRACHMAS.**

*(TINO AT ATHENS.)*

THE KING WAS IN HIS COUNTING-HOUSE LOOKING FOR HIS MONEY.

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[pg 484]



*Man of Wealth (to his son just home for the holidays). "AND WHY DON'T YOU LIKE YOUR FUR COAT? I'LL BET NONE OF THE OTHER BOYS 'AVE GOT ONE."*  
*Son. "YES, BUT NONE OF THE OTHER BOYS HAVE TO BE CALLED 'SKUNKY.'"*

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### THOUGHTS IN A COLD SNAP.

It is going to be very cold when I get up, which will be almost immediately—very cold indeed. It was zero yesterday; it may be below the line to-day, twenty or thirty below the line—even more. A little slam, perhaps, in spades. There are icicles hanging from the window-frame; and it is a curious thing, when one comes to think of it, what a lot of things there are that rhyme with icicle: tricycle, bicycle, phthisical, psychical—no, I am wrong, not psychical ...

Anyhow, it is going to be very cold. Some people do not mind the cold. There are people bathing in the Serpentine at this moment, I suppose, and apparently nothing can be done about it. They ju-just break the ice and ju-jump in. And yet it is not their ice; it is the KING'S. It seems to me that it ought to be made illegal, this breaking of the KING'S ice, like the breaking of windows in Whitehall. These ice-breakers seem to me as bad as the people who say, "It's going to be a nice old-fashioned Christmas, with Yule-logs and things." Not that I object to Yule-logs. I have some in my own Yule-shed, hand-sawn by myself, though I am not a good hand-sawyer. When I get about halfway through, the saw begins to gnash its teeth and groan at me. It seems to me that what is wanted is a machine for turning the logs round and round while one holds the saw steady. But there is something beautiful in burning the Yule-logs of one's own fashioning that makes one feel like the sculptor when at last the living beauty has burst forth under his chisel from the shapeless stone. Besides, they are cheaper than coal.

As I say, when people talk of "Yule-logs and things," it is not the Yule-logs that I object to. It is the things. Nasty cold things like clean shirts and collars and bedroom door-handles—there ought to be hot water in bedroom door-handles—nasty cold things that make one say "Ugh." I have a theory that the word "Ugh" was invented on some such morning as this. Previously people had been contented with noises like "Ouch" and "Ouf" and "Ur-r," though they realised how inadequate they were. And then one day, one very cold  $\frac{9}{10}$  day, inspiration came to the frenzied brain of a genius, and he wrote down that single exquisite heart-cry and hurried it off to the printer. People knew then that the supreme mating of sound and sense, which we have agreed to call poetry, had once more been achieved.

But I have wandered a little from the Serpentine. Has it ever struck you what people who bathe in the Serpentine on days like this are like during the rest of the year?

Suppose it is a balmy spring morning, a mild temperate afternoon in early summer, a soft autumn twilight when everyone else is happy and content, what are they doing then? Positively bathed in perspiration, groaning under the burden of the sun, mopping their shining foreheads and putting cabbage-leaves under their hats. And then at last comes the day they have longed for and looked forward to all through the twelve-months' heat-wave, a beautiful day forty degrees below the belt. They spring out of bed and fling wide the casement. That is what they intend to do, at least. As a matter of fact, of course, it is stuck, and they have to bash it out with a bolster, sending the icicles clinking into the basement. "Delicious!" they say, leaning out and breathing deep. Then

they chip a piece of ice out of the water-jug with a hammer, rub it on their faces and begin to shave.

They shave in their cotton pyjamas, with bare feet, humming a song. Then they put on old flannels and a blazer, wrap a towel round their neck, light a cigarette, pick up a mattock and stroll to Hyde Park. When they get there they feloniously break the KING'S ice. Then they "ugh." The mere thought of these people ughing with a great splash into the Serpentine makes me feel ill. When I think of them afterwards sitting lazily on the bank and letting the blizzard dry their hair, basking in the snow for an hour or two and reading their morning paper, and every now and then throwing a snowball or a piece of "ugh" into the water, I hate them. Nobody ought to be allowed to bathe in the Serpentine on days like this except the swans, who paddle all night to hold the ice at bay. I wonder if I could get a swan and keep it in the water-jug.

Half-past eight? Yes, I did hear, thank you. I am really going to get up very soon now.

What I am going to do is to make one tiger-like leap—tiger-like leap, I say—for the bathroom door and turn the hot-water tap full on until the whole of the upper part of the house is filled with steam.

I am going to do it this very moment. I—yes—ugh.

Now I come to think of it a tiger-like leap would be quite the wrong idea. I am glad I did not do it. Tigers are not cold when they leap. "Tiger, tiger, burning bright." Tiger, tiger—

What did you say? A quarter to nine? What? And the water-pipes frozen? *Are* they?

Thankugh.

K.

---

**"WIDOW KISSED BY BURGLAR.**

**ADVENTURE WITH A SOFT-VOICED GIANT.**

The gurglar took nothing away with him."

*Scots Paper.*

"Gurglar" seems the *mot juste*.

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**"— CLUB.**

Monthly medal competition. Returns:—

	Gross.	Hep.	Nett.
F. Slicer	92	8	84
W. H. Putter	103	16	87"

*Provincial Paper.*

If only the Judicious HOOKER had been playing he might have downed them both.

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**AT THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM.**

*Mother (trying to calm her lachrymose offspring). "ERE, ALBERT—LOOK AT THE PRETTY FISHES."*

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**NEW RHYMES FOR OLD CHILDREN.**

**THE PIG.**

The way in which he eats and drinks  
Is so extremely crude  
That nearly everybody thinks  
The pig enjoys his food.

But when I see how very fast,  
Without one single chew,  
He gobbles up his huge repast,  
I'm sure it isn't true.

Far nobler than your Uncle Joe,  
Who simply sits and sits,  
Revolving, gluttonous and slow,  
The more attractive bits;

Far nobler than your Uncle Dick,  
Who likes the choicest food,  
And, if he doesn't have the pick,  
Is very, very rude;

The pig has not a word to say  
To subtleties of taste;  
He eats whatever comes his way  
With admirable haste.

In fact, the pig may well resent  
The insult to his line  
When certain of the affluent  
Are said to eat like swine.

A. P. H.

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"None are much better than others, and some are much worse."

—*New Zealand Paper.*



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## TAFFY THE FOX.

[Mr. HORATIO BOTTOMLEY has complained of the war-time efforts of the POET LAUREATE, and desires the appointment of a national bard whose mind is more attuned to the soul of the British nation. Recent political events are not of course a very inspiring subject for serious verse, but we have tried to do our feeble best here in faint imitation of one of the manners of Mr. JOHN MASEFIELD.]

Safe and snug from the wind and rain  
In a thicket of gorse with a tranquil brain  
The fox had slept, and his dreams were all  
Of the wild Welsh hills and the country's call;  
He slept all night in the Wan Tun Waste,  
He woke at dawn and about he faced,  
He flexed his ears and he flaired the breeze  
And scratched with his foot some poor wee fleas;  
He sat on his haunches, doubted, stood;  
To his left were the lairs of his native wood,  
The deep yew darkness of Cowall Itchen;  
He flaired, I say, with his nostrils twitching  
Till he smelt the sound of the Fleet Street stunt  
And over the hillside came the Hunt.

---

Over the hillside, clop, clip, clep,  
And the dappled beauties, Ginger and Pep,  
Live Wire, Thruster, Fetch Him and Snatch Him,  
They were coming to bite him and pinch him and scratch him,  
Whimpering, nosing, scenting his crimes,  
The Evening News and The Morning Times.  
"Yooi! On to him! Yooi there!" Hounds were in;  
He slunk like a ghost to the edge of the whin;  
"Hark! Holloa! Hoick!" They were on his trail.

---

The huntsman, Alfred, rode The Mail,  
A bright bay mount, his best of prancers,  
Out of Forget-me-not by Answers.  
A thick-set man was Alf, and hard;  
He chewed a straw from the stable-yard;  
He owned a chestnut, The Dispatch,  
With one white sock and one white patch;  
And had bred a mare called Comic Cuts;  
He was a man with fearful guts.  
So too was Rother, the first whip,  
Nothing could give this man the pip;  
He rode The Mirror, a raking horse,  
A piebald full of points and force.  
All that was best in English life,  
All that appealed to man or wife,  
Sweet peas or standard bread or sales  
These two men loved. They hated Wales.

---

The fox burst out with a flair of cunning,  
He ran like mad and he went on running;  
He made his point for the Heroes' Pleasance,  
By Hang Bill Copse, where he roused the pheasants.  
They rose with a whirr and kuk, kuk, kukkered;  
The fox ran on with a mask unpuckered  
By Boshale Stump and Uttermost Penny,  
Where the grass was short and the tracks were many.  
He tried the clay and he tried the marl,  
A workman's whippet began to snarl;  
Into the Dodder a splash he went;  
All that he cared was to change the scent,  
And half of the pack from the line he shook  
By paddling about in the Beaver Brook.

---

He swerved to the left at Maynard Keynes,  
With an eye to sheep and an eye to drains;  
By Old Cole Smiley and Clere St. Thomas,

Without any stops and without any commas;  
At Addison's Cots he went so quick,  
He startled a bricklayer laying a brick;  
He ran over oats and he ran over barleys,  
By Moss Cow Puddle and Rushen Parleys;  
By Lympe Sassoone and Limpet Farm  
He scattered the geese in wild alarm;  
He ran with a pain growing under his pinny  
Till he heard the sound of a war-horse whinny,  
And tried for an earth in the Tory Holts.

---

The earth was stopped. It was barred with bolts.

---

He turned again and he passed Spen Valley,  
By Paisley Shawls and Leamington Raleigh;  
His flanks were wet, he was mire-beslobbered  
By Hatfield Yew and by Hatfield Robert;  
He tried a hen-coop, he tried a tub,  
He tried the National Liberal Club—  
A terrier barked and turned him out.

---

He tried the end of an old drain-spout.

---

It was much too small. With a bursting heart  
He thought of the home where he made his start;  
His flanks were heaving, his soul despairing,  
He flaired again—he was always flairing  
To find the best way of escape and nab it,  
He couldn't get out of this flairing habit;  
He felt at his back the fiery breath  
Of the Kill Gorge pack that had vowed his death;  
He turned once more for the shelter good  
Of the Wan Tun Waste and the dark yew wood,  
The deep yew fastness of Cowall Itchen  
And the scuts and heads of hens in his kitchen.  
The hounds grew weak and The Mail was blowing;  
Rother said, "Alf, this is bad going!"  
Past Pemberton Billing, past Kenworthy,  
He shook them off, he was damp and earthy;  
By Molton Lambert and Platting Clynes—  
But I can't go on with these difficult lines.

---

The night closed down and the hunt was dead,  
Alfred and Rother were tucked in bed;  
The cold moon rose on a fox's snore  
And everything much as it was before.

Evoo.

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### **Our Erudite Contemporaries.**

"Her feet beneath her petticoat like little mice peep in and out."

Yes, but when Bobbie Burns wrote that the lassies of Scotland didn't wear Louis heels and extremely short skirts."

—*Ladies' Paper*.

Any more than they did when Sir JOHN SUCKLING apostrophised the "wee, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie."

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### **Our Sleuths.**

"A Sheffield firm of solicitors have, this week, had stolen from one of the pegs in the hall an overcoat belonging to one of the principals. The solicitor concerned is of the opinion that someone removed it between his arrival at the office the other morning and going to find it in the evening, when it was missing."

—*Provincial Paper*.

---

## The Sandringham Hat.

"Many women are making surprise presents of hats to their husbands, and will take great pleasure in seeing them worn for the first time on Christmas Day."

—Daily Mail.

We understand that it will be the quietest Christmas on record, many family men having decided to spend the day in the seclusion of their own homes.

[pg 487]



"WHAT I LIKE—



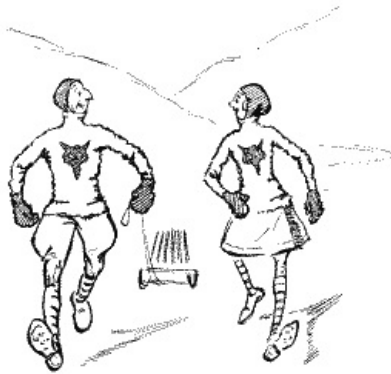
—ABOUT SWITZERLAND IS—



—THE COMPLETE CHANGE—



—FROM LONDON LIFE—



—AND ALL THAT—



—NEEDLESS DRESSING-UP."

[pg 488]



*Doris.* "BUT, JIMMY, I THOUGHT YOU CAME TO BUY A PRESENT FOR DADDY?"  
*Jimmy.* "YES, IT'S ALL RIGHT, SIS, I *AM* DOING. HE M'NOPOLISED MY ENGINE LAST CHRISTMAS; I THOUGHT HE'D LIKE ONE FOR HIMSELF THIS YEAR."

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## THE HUMOURIST.

"Here's Alan," said Cecilia; "good."

"Really," I said, stopping and bowing slightly in several directions, "I am touched. Such a reception.... I find no words—"

"Don't be funny," said Margery cuttingly, "we shan't laugh. What we want to know is what are you going to do?"

"Well," I said, "I did think of sitting by the fire and—er—just watching it burn."

"Oh, dear," said Margery, "please don't be dense. I mean, what are you going to do at the show?"

I passed my hand over my eyes.

"I'm sorry," I said; "I'm afraid I don't.... Have I been to sleep for ten years or anything?"

"Tell him," said Margery impatiently. "You'll have to start right at the beginning."

I sat down expectantly.

"Well," began Cecilia, "Christmas is coming and we shall be full up."

"Of course, of course," I murmured deprecatingly. "You want me to get some medicine ready for you?"

"I mean the house will be full up," explained Cecilia coldly. "The point is we must arrange something beforehand—some sort of entertainment."

"Good heavens," I said, "you're not going to hire the Sisters Sprightly or anything, are you?"

"No, we are not," said Cecilia; "not the Sisters Sprightly nor the Brothers Bung. We are going to do it ourselves."

"What—a Sisters Sprightly Act? Have a little shame, Cecilia. What will Christopher think when he sees his mother in a ballet skirt, kicking about all over the drawing-room?"

"He'd think I looked very nice," said Cecilia hotly, "if I was going to wear one; but I'm not."

"Not going to wear a ballet skirt?" I said. "You surely don't mean to appear in—"

"We're not going to do a Sisters Sprightly turn at all," shouted Margery: "nobody ever thought of

them but you."

"Then I give it up," I said helplessly; "I quite understood you to say— Then what are you going to do, anyway?"

"Well, we thought at first we'd do a play, but there were difficulties in the way."

"Too true," I said; "none of us can act to begin with."

"Speak for yourself," said Margery.

"Pardon, Miss Thorndike," I apologised.

"No, the difficulty is that we haven't really room for theatricals. We should have to use the drawing-room, and by the time you've got a stage and scenery and rooms for changing, well, there's simply no space left for the audience," explained Cecilia.

"That's no objection at all," I said; "rather an advantage, in fact."

"And anyhow," continued Margery, "we haven't got a play to do."

"And so," said Cecilia, "we've decided to have a concert party."

I gasped.

"Not a concert party," I implored.

"Yes," said Cecilia, "a costume concert party. It isn't any use groaning like that. It's all arranged. Sheila and Arthur Davies, Margery, John, you and I are in it. The question is what are you going to do?"

"Nothing. I never heard of such a horrible idea."

"Don't be a pig, Alan," said Margery.

"Really, Cecilia," I said, "let me plead with you. *Not* a costume concert party, please. A simple glee perhaps—just four of us—in evening dress; or even a conjurer. I'll agree to anything. But not, *not* Pierrots, Cecilia."

"Pierrots it is," said Cecilia defiantly.

"Then I wash my hands of it. To think that our family——"

"You can wash your hands if you like," said Cecilia; "we should prefer it, in fact; but you are certainly going to take part."

I know the futility of arguing with Cecilia.

"Then tell me the worst," I begged; "what am I to be? Can I show people to their seats, or am I the good-looking tenor with gentlemanly features and long hair?"

"We thought of making you the funny man," said Cecilia.

I buried my head in my hands and shuddered.

At this moment John came into the room. "Talking about the 'Merry Maggots'?" he said. "Splendid idea of Cecilia's, isn't it? I've just been thinking it over, and what we must decide on first of all is who is to be the—the humourist. He's the really important man; must be someone really first-class."

"We've also been discussing it," I said quickly, "and we came to the conclusion that there's only one man for the job—yourself."

John nodded complacently.

"I'm glad to hear you say so, because I was going to suggest it myself. It's my belief that I should be a devilish funny fellow if I had a chance. I've just tried a few jokes on myself upstairs, and I've been simply roaring with laughter. Haven't enjoyed myself so much for years."

"Splendid fellow!" I said heartily; "you shall tell them to me later on and I'll roar with laughter too. Cecilia, put your husband down for the funny man."

"H'm—humourist," corrected John with a slight cough.

"Humourist," I agreed; "and thank goodness that's settled."

"But," said Cecilia, "you said you were going to do a dramatic recitation."

"So I am, so I am," said John; "I'm going to do that as well. Contrast, my dear Cecilia. Laughter

and tears. Double them up with sly wit one moment and have them sobbing into their handkerchiefs the next. I'm going to do it all, Cecilia."

"So it appears," said Cecilia; "it hardly seems worth while to have anybody else in the show."

"Now, now," said John, wagging his forefinger at her, "no jealousy. You ought to be glad to have someone really good in the party. *Good* funny men aren't to be found just anywhere."

"But we don't know that you *are* a good funny man," said Margery.

"Of course you don't," said John; "I've never had a chance to prove it. For years I have been kept in the background by your family. I'm never allowed to make a joke, and if I do nobody laughs. This is my chance. I'm going to be in the limelight now. I shall be the life of the party, and it's no good trying to stop me. In fact," he finished confidentially, "I shan't be surprised if I take it up professionally. You should have heard me laughing upstairs."

"But, John," began Margery.

"Sh—!" said Cecilia; "it's no use arguing with him while he's in this mood. That's all right, John. You shall be everything you like. But as you've selected such a lot of parts for yourself perhaps you'll suggest what we can do with Alan."

"Ah," said John; "Alan! Yes, he's a problem, certainly. If he had any voice, now. I'm not sure that we want him at all. Could he do a clog-dance, do you think?"

"Don't worry," I interrupted; "I've thought of a fine part for me. All the best concert parties have a chap who sits in the corner and does nothing but look miserable. I could do that splendidly."

"That's quite true," said John approvingly; "it tickles the audience, you know, to see a fellow looking glum while everyone else is having hysterics at the funny—at the humourist. It isn't as easy as it looks, though, Alan. I shall keep saying things to make you laugh, you know. You'll find it jolly difficult to keep looking miserable once I get going."

"Not at all," I said. "That is, I shall do my best to keep serious. I shall try not to listen to you being funny."

John looked at me and considered whether it was worth following up. He decided it was not.

"I daresay he'll do," he said loftily to Cecilia; "the fellow has no sense of humour anyway."



"SO LONG, OLD CHAP! I'M OFF TO CHARING CROSS."  
"HOSPITAL, I PRESUME."

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### Commercial Modesty.

"This system develops such valuable qualities as:—

- |                 |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| —Forgetfulness  | —Timidity           |
| —Mind Wandering | —Weakness of Will   |
| —Brain Fag      | —Lack of System     |
| —Indecision     | —Lack of Initiative |
| —Dullness       | —Indefiniteness     |
| —Shyness        | —Mental Flurry."    |

*Advt. in Sunday Paper.*

"It is announced that, starting with next week, 'Ways and means' and 'Common Sense' will be amalgamated."

*Evening Paper.*

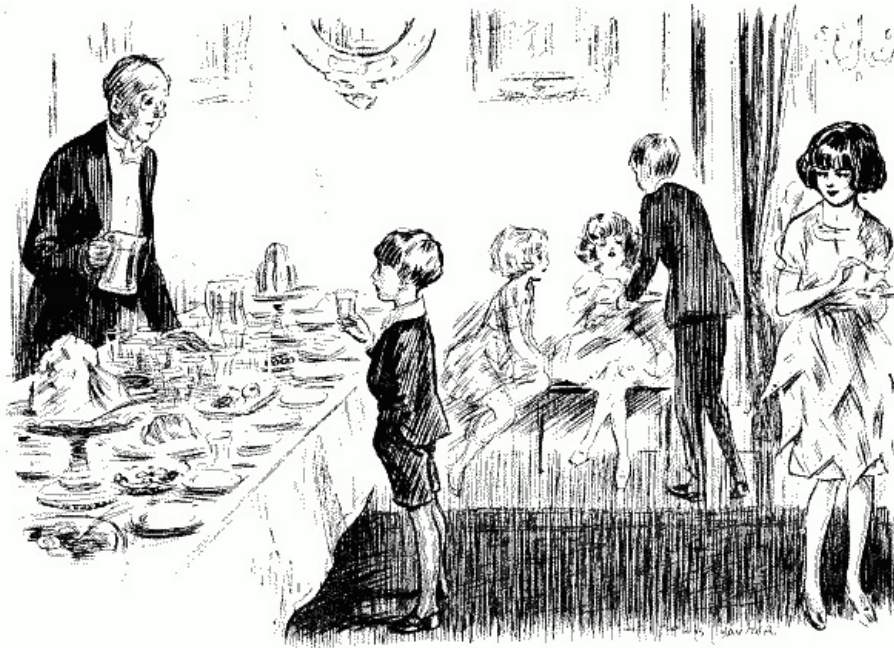
Will the Government please note?

"Army biscuits, suitable for bed-chair cushions. 3s. reserve. —'s Auction Sale."

*Provincial Paper.*

They seem to have lost something of their war-time hardihood.

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*Small Boy.* "I SAY, ISN'T THERE ANYTHING WITH A BIT MORE BUCK IN IT THAN THIS LEMONADE?"

### PUSS AT THE PALACE.

[*The Daily Telegraph*, in a report of the Cat Show at the Crystal Palace, remarks that "the cat has 'come back' as a hobby."]

O ALL ye devoted cat-lovers,  
Ere spending the cheques you have cashed,  
Leave a trifle for tickets to enter the wickets  
That ope on the Temple of Pasht.

For to-day in the Palace of PAXTON  
Cats gathered from every zone—  
Manx, Persian, Sardinian, Chinese, Abyssinian—  
Are now being splendidly shown.

The names of the winners and owners  
Inspire me with joy and delight;  
*E.g.*, Blue-eyed Molly, John Bull (Madame Dolli)  
And Snowflake, the champion white.

And then the adorable kittens!

Too high-bred to gambol or skip,  
With names that are mighty, like Inglewood Clytie,  
Or comic, like Holme Ruddy Pip.

It is pleasant to learn Mr. SHAKESPEARE'S  
Success with his Siamese strain,  
For his namesake the poet, so far as we know it,  
Held "poor, harmless" puss in disdain.

Yes, the cat has "come back" as a hobby,  
Oh, let us be thankful for that,  
For it might be the coon or the blue-nosed baboon,  
Or the deadly Norwegian rat.

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### THE FINE OLD FRUITY.

Wine merchants must be kind men. So many of those who have sent me their circulars this Christmas-time have announced that they are "giving their clients the benefit of some exceptionally advantageous purchases which they have made."

But it is not the humanity of wine merchants of which I wish to speak. It is the intriguing epithets which they apply to their wines. And I have entertained myself by applying these to my relatives, an exercise which I find attended by the happiest results.

"Fine old style, rich," is, of course, obvious. It applies to more than one of my Victorian uncles. "Medium rich" to a cousin or so. More subtle is "medium body." This must be Uncle Hilary; he takes little exercise nowadays and his figure is suffering. Soon he will be "full-bodied" or "full and round." "Elegant, high class" is my Cousin Isabel. "Pretty flavour" also is hers. "Fresh and brisk" is Aunt Hannah. And could anything be more descriptive of Aunt Geraldine than "delicate and generous"?

For "great breed and style" (used, I see, of a claret) I should, I fear, be obliged to go outside the family; and "recommended for present consumption and for laying down" I only mention because it leaves me wondering to what other uses a fine fruity Burgundy could be put. But here is a noble one: "Of very high class, stylish, good body and fine character." I have tried this on several relations without being entirely satisfied about it, and I have finally decided that I shall keep it for myself.

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"Only a few visitors braved the first fall of the snow yesterday and adventured as far as the Zoological Gardens. They found there a depressed-looking collection of animals in the open-air cages, but a perfect holocaust of sparrows."

—*Sunday Paper.*

The sparrows must have been warm enough, anyway.

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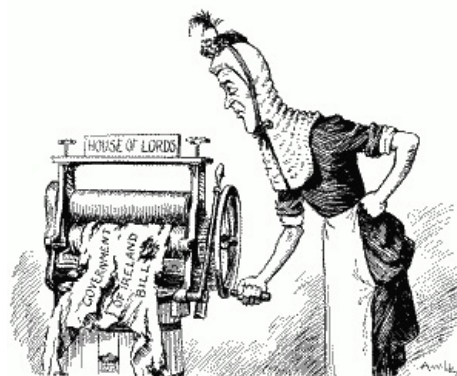
VERDUN.

LONDON (to her adopted daughter). "YOU WILL LET ME PASS—TO YOUR



## ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

*Monday, December 13th.*—Since the House of Lords took the bit in its teeth and bolted with the Government of Ireland Bill the LORD CHANCELLOR has practically thrown the reins on the creature's neck and confined himself to occasional mild remonstrance when it kicked over the Government traces. The most he could do when rival amendments were put forward was to secure the passage of the less objectionable. Thus when Lord SHANDON, for purely sentimental reasons—Ireland knew him as "a most susceptible Chancellor"—desired that the unifying body should be called a Senate Lord BIRKENHEAD laughed the proposal out of court with the remark that "a man might as well purchase a mule with the object of founding a stud," and persuaded the Peers to accept the word "Council." He was at first inclined to oppose Lord WICKLOW'S amendment providing that neither Irish Parliament should take private property without compensation; but when he found that an old Home Ruler, Lord BRYCE, was in favour of imposing this curb on Irish exuberance he, as "a very young Home Ruler," gracefully withdrew his objection.



*The Lord Chancellor.* "AND TO THINK IT WAS THE BEST IRISH LINEN!"

Sir JOHN BAIRD revealed the names of the members of the Central Control Board (Liquor Traffic). The muffled groans that followed the announcement of the first of them, Mr. WATERS-BUTLER, were quite uncalled for, as I understand that the gentleman in question preserves a strict impartiality between two branches of his patronymic.

Sir ERIC GEDDES was not too sympathetic to the complaints of overcrowding on the suburban railways; but I cannot think that Mr. MARTIN had fully thought out the consequences of his suggestion that the right hon. gentleman should take a trip one night from Aldgate to Barking and see for himself. Imagine the feelings of the strap-hangers when Sir ERIC essayed "little by little" to wedge himself into their midst.

If the Opposition desired a really satisfactory discussion on the origin of the fires in Cork it should have chosen some other spokesman than Lieut.-Commander KENWORTHY. The hon. and gallant gentleman was less aggressive in manner than usual, but even so he encountered a good many interruptions. He was answered in a characteristic speech by Mr. CLAUDE LOWTHER; and the debate as a whole never rose much above the level where it was left by these "Burnt Cork Comedians."

*Tuesday, December 14th.*—Despite the protests of Lord BRAYE, who demanded full self-determination for Ireland, the Peers gave a Third Reading to the Government of Ireland Bill. Lord CREWE so far modified his previous attitude as to congratulate the Government on having held on their course in the face of the discouraging events in Ireland, and to express the hope that the measure would be worked for all it was worth, though, in his lordship's estimation, it was not worth much.



**THE END OF THE OMNIBUS.**

*Conductor ADDISON.* "A NICE OLD MESS YOU'VE BEEN AND GONE AND MADE!"

*Driver CURZON.* "ME? IF YOU HADN'T BEEN SO LATE IN TURNING OUT I SHOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO CUT

The Ministry of Health Bill found the Peers in a much less accommodating mood. Lord STRACHIE moved its rejection, chiefly on the ground of the financial strain it would impose upon local authorities, and was supported by Lord GALWAY, who thought it an insult to Parliament to bring forward so ambitious a measure at the fag-end of the Session. Lord CURZON vainly endeavoured to avert the coming storm by accepting a suggestion that the Bill should be carried over till next Session. The majority of the Peers were out for blood, and they defeated the Second Reading by 57 to 41. Dr. ADDISON, from the steps of the Throne, gloomily watched the overturn of his omnibus. It is understood that, following the example of his distinguished namesake, he is going to write to *The Spectator* about Lord STRACHIE.

So many of the Commons appeared to have anticipated the Christmas holidays that Questions were run through at a great pace. Mr. HOGGE, however, was in his place all right to know how it was, after all the protestations of the

Government, that an official motor-car containing an officer and a lady had been seen outside a toy-shop in Regent Street. "Mark how a plain tale shall set you down," said Mr. CHURCHILL in effect. The officer was on his way from an outlying branch of the War Office to an important conference in Whitehall; the lady was his private secretary; the natural route of the car was *viâ* Regent Street, and the officer had merely seized the opportunity to pick up a parcel.

A Supplementary Estimate of six and a-half millions for the Navy gave the economists their chance. Mr. G. LAMBERT could not understand why we were employing more men at the dockyards than before the War, and suggested that three or four of the yards might be sold. This proposal was received with singularly little enthusiasm by most of the Members for dockyard constituencies; but Sir B. FALLE (Portsmouth) handsomely remarked that Chatham might well be leased for private enterprise. The Member for Chatham was not present, or he would, no doubt, have returned the compliment.

*Wednesday, December 15th.*—A less adventurous Minister than Mr. CHURCHILL might have funked the task of justifying to a House of Economists a Supplementary Army Estimate of forty millions. But he boldly tackled the job, and proved to his own satisfaction that half the liability was a mere book-entry, and the other half inevitable, in view of the Empire's commitments. Sir CHARLES TOWNSHEND, in a maiden speech which in the more flamboyant passages suggested the collaboration of the EDITOR of *John Bull*, announced his intention of supporting the Government "for all I am worth," and proceeded to demonstrate that their policy in Mesopotamia had been wrong from start to finish.

*Thursday, December 16th.*—I don't know whether the current rumours of the PRIME MINISTER'S delicacy are put about by malignant enemies who hope that Nature will accomplish what they have failed to achieve, or by well-meaning friends who desire to convince the Aberystwith Sabbatarians that Sunday golf is essential to his well-being. In his answers to Questions this afternoon he showed no signs of failing powers. When Mr. BILLING accused him of breaking his pledge that there should be no more secret diplomacy he modestly replied that that was not his but President WILSON'S phrase; and a little later he informed the same cocksure questioner that a certain problem was "not so simple as my hon. friend imagines most problems are."

An inquiry about the Franco-British boundaries in the Holy Land led the PRIME MINISTER to observe that the territory delimited was "the old historic Palestine—Dan to Beersheba." It was, of course, a mere coincidence that the next Question on the Paper related to the destruction of calves, though not the golden kind.

The quarter-deck voice in which Rear-Admiral ADAIR thundered for information regarding the Jutland Papers so startled Sir JAMES CRAIG that, fearing another salvo if he temporised with the question, he promptly promised immediate publication.

Despite a characteristic protest from Mr. DEVLIN, who, as Mr. BONAR LAW observed, treats his opponents as if they were "not only morally bad but intellectually contemptible," the House proceeded to consider the Lords' Amendments to the Home Rule Bill, and dealt with them by the time-honoured device of "splitting the difference."



*Dealer.* "WELL, THERE SHE IS, GUV'NOR, AN' YOURS AT A ROCK-BOTTOM PRICE."

*Farmer.* "NOA, THANKEE. I ONLY GOT POUND NOTES ON ME, YE SEE, AN' I DOAN'T WANT TO BREAK INTO ANOTHER."

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"MALESWOMAN WANTED.—Competent to take charge of Millinery establishment."

*Trade Paper.*

A sort of Mannequin, we presume.

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*The Viking's Wife (to husband, who is setting off to raid the coast of Britain). "GOOD-BYE, SIGURD DARLING. DON'T FORGET WHAT I SAID ABOUT GETTING YOUR FEET WET. AND, BY THE WAY, I'M GREATLY IN NEED OF A COOK-GENERAL, IF YOU HAPPEN TO SEE ONE. BUT REMEMBER SHE MUST BE CAPABLE AND PLAIN—NOT LIKE THE HUSSIES YOU USUALLY FETCH."*

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### A FOUL GAME.

It is Christmas, and here is a nice little cricket story for the hearth. The funny thing about it is that it is true. And the other funny thing about it is that it was told to me by a huge Rugger Blue called Eric. (I understand people can change their names at Confirmation. Why don't they?)

It was in a College match—not, I gather, a particularly serious one. Eric and his friend Charles were playing for Balbus College against Caramel College. Caramel had an "A" team out, and Balbus, I should think, must have had about a "K" team ... anyhow, Eric and Charles were both playing. Eric, as he modestly said, doesn't bat much, and Charles doesn't bowl much. Eric said to Charles, "I bet you a fiver you won't get six wickets." Charles said to Eric, "All right; and I bet you a fiver you won't get a hundred runs."

Then began a hideous series of intrigues. Caramel were to bat first, and Eric went to the Balbus captain and said, "There's a sovereign\* for you if Charles doesn't go on to bowl *at all*."

\* This is a pre-war story.

"Very well," said the captain, with a glance of sinister understanding. "Wouldn't have anyhow," he added as he pocketed the stake.

Then Charles arrived.

"Two pounds," said the captain.

"What for?" said Charles.

"For ten overs—four bob an over."

"It's too much," said Charles; "but there's a sovereign for you if Eric goes in ninth wicket down."

"Very well," said the captain, with a glance of devilish cunning. "It's only one lower than usual. Thank you."

Acting on intuition and their knowledge of the captain, Eric and Charles then hotly accused each other of bribery. Both confessed, and it was agreed to start fair. Charles was to bowl first change and Eric was to bat first wicket. The captain said he would want a lot of bribing to go back on the original arrangement, especially if it meant Charles bowling, but he would do it for the original

price; and, as he already held the money, Eric and Charles had to concede the point.

By the way, I am afraid the captain doesn't come very well out of this, and I'm afraid it is rather an immoral story; but my object is to show up the evils of commercialism, so it is all right.

Pallas Athene came down and stood by the bowler's umpire while Charles was bowling, and he got five wickets quite easily. It was incredible. The Caramel batsmen seemed to be paralysed. Then the last man came in, and the first thing he did was to send up a nice little dolly catch to Eric at cover-point. Eric missed it. When I say he missed it I mean he practically flung it on the ground. Indeed he rather over-did it, and the batsman, who was a sportsman and knew Charles, appealed to the umpire to say he was really out. Pallas Athene grabbed the umpire by the throat, and he said firmly that no catch had been made.

Then the batsmen made a muddle about a run and found themselves in the common but embarrassing position of being both at the wicket-keeper's end. The ball had gone to Eric and he had only to throw it in to Charles, who was bowling, for Charles to put the wicket down. But in one of those flashes of inspiration which betray true genius he realised that in the circumstances that was just what Charles would *not* do. Direct action was the only thing. So, ball in hand, he started at high velocity towards the wicket himself.

He was a Rugger Blue (I told you) and a three-quarter at that, so he went fairly fast. However, the batsman saw that he had a faint hope after all, and he ran too. It was an heroic race, but the batsman had less distance to go. Eric saw that he was losing, and from a few yards' range he madly flung the ball at the wicket. He missed the wicket, but he hit Charles very hard on the shin, which was something. I fancy he must have hit Pallas Athene as well, for with the very next ball she gave Charles his sixth wicket.

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By this time the game had resolved itself into an Homeric combat between the two protagonists, of which the main bodies of the Balbus and Caramel armies were merely neutral spectators—neutral, that is, so far as they had not been hired out for some dastard service by one or other of the duellists.

When Eric went in it was clear that Juno had come down to help him, for he made three runs in eight balls without being bowled once. Then Charles came in. His first ball he hit slowly between mid-off and cover, and he called for a run. All unsuspecting, Eric cantered down the pitch. When he was half-way Charles seemed to be seized with the sort of panic which sometimes possesses a batsman. "No, no!" he cried. "Go back! go back!" And he scuttled back himself. Juno fortunately intervened and Eric just got home in time. But he realised now what he was up against. His next ball he hit towards mid-wicket, and shouting "Come on!" he galloped up the pitch. Charles came on gingerly, expecting to be sent back, but Eric duly passed him; he then turned round and just raced Charles back to the wicket-keeper's end. Charles was only a Soccer Blue (and a goal-keeper at that), and Eric won.

"After that," said Eric with his usual modesty, "it was easy." Eyewitnesses, however, have told me more. Juno dealt with the Caramel bowlers, but Eric had to compete with Charles. And Charles resorted to every kind of devilish expedient. Nearly all the Balbus batsmen were bribed to run Eric out, and whenever he hit a boundary Eric had to stop and reason with them in the middle of the pitch. Sometimes he tried to outbid Charles, but he usually found that he couldn't afford it. So he collared the bowling as much as possible and tried not to hit anything but boundaries. Juno helped him a good bit in that way.

When he had made seventy he got a ball on the knee. Charles ran out and offered to run for him, but Eric said he could manage, thank you. Then Charles went and walked rapidly up and down in front of the screen; but Eric wasn't the sort of batsman who minded that.

At about ninety, Eric's knee was pretty bad, so he called out for somebody to run for him—*not* Charles. Five of Charles's hirelings rushed out of the pavilion, but the captain said he would go himself, as that wasn't fair. Besides, he had money on Eric himself.

At this point I gather that Pallas Athene must have deserted Charles altogether, for he seems to have entertained for a moment or two the ignoble notion of tampering with the scorer. I am glad to be able to say that even the members of the Balbus College "K." Team, eaten up as they were by this time with commercialism, declined to be parties to that particular wickedness. With every circumstance of popular excitement Eric's hundredth run—a mis-cue through the slips—was finally made, scored and added up. In fact, he carried his bat.

"So you were all square," I said, not without admiration.

"By no means," said Eric. "It cost me forty shillings."

"And Charles?"

"It cost him seven pounds."

A. P. H.

## A WARNING.

Entering as we are upon the season of games, it might be well to utter an urgent appeal to hostesses not to play "Suggestions." For "Suggestions," though it may begin as a game, is really a wrangle. Under the guise of a light-hearted pastime it offers little but opportunities for misunderstanding, general conversation, allegations of unfairness, and disappointment.

"Suggestions" ought to be played like this: You sit in a semicircle and the first player says something—anything—a single word. Let us suppose it is (as it probably will be in thousands of cases) "MARGOT." The next player has to say what "MARGOT" suggests—"reticence," for example—and the next player, shutting his mind completely to the word "MARGOT," has to say what "reticence" suggests—perhaps *Grimaud*, in *The Three Musketeers*—and the fourth player has to disregard "reticence" and announce whatever mental reaction the name of *Grimaud* produces. It maybe that he has never heard of *Grimaud* and the similarity of sound suggests only GRIMALDI the clown. Then he ought to say, "GRIMALDI the clown," which might in its turn suggest "melancholy" or "the circus." All the time no one should speak but the players in their turn, and they should speak instantly and should say nothing but the thing that is honestly suggested by the previous word. At the end of, say, a dozen rounds the process of unwinding the coil begins, each player in rotation taking part in the backward process until "MARGOT" is again reached.

That is how the game should be played.

This is how it *is* played:—

*First Player.* Let me see; what shall I say?

*Various other Players (together).* Surely there's no difficulty in beginning? Say "anything," etc., etc.

*A Player (looking round).* Say—say "fireplace."

*First Player.* But that's so silly.

*Master of Ceremonies (who wishes he had never proposed the game).* It doesn't matter. All that is needed is a start.

*Another player.* Say "MARGOT."

*(Roars of laughter.)*

*All.* Oh, yes, say "MARGOT."

*First Player.* Very well, then—"MARGOT."

*(More laughter.)*

*Second Player (trying to be clever).* "Reticence."

*(Shouts of laughter.)*

*Other Players.* How could "MARGOT" suggest "reticence"?

*M. C.* Never mind; the point is that it did. Now then—and please everyone be silent—now, then, Third Player?

*Third Player.* "Audacity."

*M. C.* I'm afraid you're not playing quite fairly. You see "reticence" cannot suggest "audacity." The First Player's word not impossibly might. Could it be that you were still thinking of that?

*Third Player.* I'm sorry. But "reticence" doesn't suggest anything.

*Other Players (together).* Oh, yes, it does—"silence," "grumpiness," "oysters," "Trappists."

*M. C.* If a word suggests nothing whatever to you, you should say, "Blank mind."

*Third Player.* Ah, but I've thought of something now—"reticule."

*(Roars of laughter.)*

*M. C.* It's all right. That's how the mind does work. Now, next player.

*Fourth Player.* Have I got to say something that "reticule" suggests?

*M. C.* That's the idea—yes.

*A Player.* Say "vanity-bag."

*Another Player.* Say "powder-puff."

*(Roars of laughter.)*

*M. C.* Please, please—either the game is worth playing or it isn't. If it is worth playing it is worth playing seriously, and then you can get some very funny effects—it's a psychological exhibition; but if other players talk at the same time and try to help it's useless. Now, next player, please. The word is "reticule."

*Fourth Player (after a long silence).* "Bond Street."

*Fifth Player.* Ah, "Bond Street"! That's better. That suggests heaps of things. Which shall I choose? "Chocolates"? No. "Furs"? No. "Diamonds"? No. Oh, yes—"Old Masters."

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*M. C. (with resignation).* But you know you mustn't select. The whole point of the game is that you must say what comes automatically into your mind as you hear the word.

*Fifth Player.* I'm sorry. Shall I go back to "diamonds"?

*M. C.* No; you had better stick to "Old Masters."

*Fifth Player.* "Old Masters."

*Sixth Player (deaf).* What did you say—"mustard-plasters"?

*Fifth Player.* No; "Old Masters."

*Sixth Player.* I've heard of new men and old acres, but I've never heard of Old Pastures. What are they?

*Fifth Player (shouting).* No, no; "Old Masters." Pictures of the Old Masters—RAPHAEL, TITIAN.

*Sixth Player.* Ah, yes! "Old Masters." Well, that suggests to me— Yes (*triumphantly*), "the National Gallery."

*Seventh Player (who has been waiting sternly).* "Trafalgar Square."

*Eighth Player (instantly).* "NELSON."

*Ninth Player (even more quickly).* "NELSON KEYS."

*M. C. (beaming).* That's better. It's going well now.

*Tenth Player.* "England expects——"

*Ninth Player.* No, you can't say that. I could have said that, but you can't.

*Tenth Player.* Why not?

*Ninth Player.* Because "NELSON" is all over and done with. The new name is "NELSON KEYS." You ought to have thought of something connected with him.

*Tenth Player.* If you'd said "KEYS" I might have done. But you said "NELSON KEYS," and the "NELSON" touched a spot. Isn't that right?

*M. C.* Quite right. It's the only way to play. But may I once more ask that there should be no talking? We shall never be able to unwind if there is. Now, please—"England expects——"

*Eleventh Player.* "Duty."

*Twelfth Player.* "Bore."

*Thirteenth Player.* "The Marne."

*(Cries of astonishment.)*

*Various Players.* How can "bore" suggest "the Marne"?

*M. C.* But it did. You mustn't mind.

*Twelfth Player.* How did it? Just for fun I'd like to know.

*Thirteenth Player.* Well, when I was on the Marne I used to see the marks on the ground made by them.

*Twelfth Player.* By who?

*Thirteenth Player.* The wild boars.

*(Roars of laughter.)*

*Twelfth Player.* But I meant that duty is a bore—b-o-r-e.

*M. C. (frantic).* It doesn't matter. It's what you think—not what is—in this game. But really we're in such a muddle, wouldn't it be better to begin again? You all know the rules now.

*Hostess.* Perhaps "Clumps" might be better, don't you think?

*M. C.* Just as you like. "Clumps," then.

*The Deaf Player.* What is the word now?

*A Player.* We're going to play "Clumps" instead.

*The Deaf Player.* Mumps in bed? I'm sure I don't know what that suggests. That's very difficult. But I like this game. It ought to be great fun when we unwind.

*(They separate for "Clumps.")*

E. V. L.



*Fruiterer.* "ROYALTY 'ISSELF, MADAM, COULDN'T WISH FOR A BETTER PINEAPPLE THAN THAT."  
*Newly-rich Matron.* "WELL, IF ROYALTY CAN BITE 'EM I S'POSE I CAN. I'LL 'AVE IT."

---

Headline to an article on ladies' fashions:—

"STOCKINGS COMING DOWN."

This should make the hosiers pull up their socks.

---

"Several reasons, besides the claims of humanity, made the Eugenist favour schemes for abolishing the eugenist."

—*Daily Paper.*

We are inclined to agree with the Eugenist.

---



### AT A FAT STOCK SHOW.

"THEY'RE TWO SMART 'OGS, I ADMIT. BUT LOOK AT THE PRICE O' FOOD-STUFFS. YOU KNOW YERSELF IT DON'T PAY ANYONE TO FEED THESE DAYS."

---

### MISPLACED BENEVOLENCE.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—From your earliest years you have preached sound and wholesome doctrine on the duty of man to birds and beasts. Indeed, I remember your pushing it to extreme lengths in a poem entreating people not to mention mint-sauce when conversing with a lamb. Still, I wonder whether even you would approve of the title of an article in *Nature* on "The Behaviour of Beetles." Of course I know that "behaviour" is a colourless word, still I am rather inclined to doubt whether beetles know how to behave at all. I may be prejudiced by my own experiences, but they certainly have been unfortunate. They began early—at my private school, to be precise. I shall never forget the conversation I had, when a new boy, with a sardonic senior who, after putting me through the usual catechism, asked me what I was going to be. I replied that I had not yet decided, whereupon my tormentor, after looking at my feet, which I have never succeeded in growing up to, observed, "Well, if I were you, I think I should emigrate to Colorado and help to crush the beetle." Later on in life I was the victim of a cruel hoax, carried out with triumphant ingenuity by a confirmed practical joker, who with the aid of a thread caused what appeared to be a gigantic blackbeetle to perform strange and unholy evolutions in my sitting-room. Worst of all, I was victimised by the presence of a blackbeetle in a plate of clear soup served me at my club. I backed my bill, but it was too late, for I am very shortsighted.

No, Mr. Punch, I am prepared to discuss the Ethics of Eels, the Altruism of Adders, the Piety of Pintails, or even the Benevolence of Bluebottles, but (to deviate into doggerel)—

"Let LANKESTERS, LUBBOCKS and CHEATLES  
Dilate with a rapturous bliss  
On the noble behaviour of beetles—  
I give them a miss."

I am, Mr. Punch, with much respect,

Yours faithfully,  
PHILANDER BLAMPHIN.

---

### THREE TRAGEDIES AND A MORAL.

There was an imperious old Sage  
Who upheld the dominion of Age,  
But his son, a grim youth,  
Red in claw and in tooth,  
Shut him up in a chloroformed cage.



There was also a Child full of beans  
Who bombarded nine great magazines,  
But not one of the nine  
Ever published a line,  
For the Child was not yet in its teens.

There was thirdly, to round off these rhymes,  
A Matron who railed at the crimes  
Of designers of frocks  
Who in smart fashion "blocks"  
Left middle-age out of *The Times*.

The moral—if morals one seeks  
In an age of sensation and shrieks—  
Is this: Even still  
Things are apt to go ill  
With old, young and middle-aged freaks.

---

### Our Erudite Contemporaries.

"The Grecian women were forbidden entrance to the stadium where the [Olympic] games were being held, and any woman found therein was thrown from the Tarpeian rock."

*Canadian Paper.*

"The French are thinking of building straw houses to remedy the present housing crisis. The first straw house has already been built at Montargis."

—*Evening Paper.*

Where, presumably, they are trying it on the well-known local Dog.

"Negotiating the intricate traffic of the City was quite easy, the engine being responsive to the slightest touch of the steering wheel. It is just the car for the owner-driver."

*Financial Paper.*

Our chauffeur agrees. He says *he* wouldn't undertake to drive it down the village street, let alone the City.

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### "IS SINGING ON THE DECLINE? A GREAT TENOR'S ADVICE. 'NEVER FIGHT AGAINST THE BRASS.'"

*Morning Paper.*

It is, we believe, the experience of most impresarios that great tenors almost invariably fight *for* the brass.



"QUICK, MUMMIE! COME AND HELP BOBBIE—HE'S FALLEN INTO THE LUCKY DIP."

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## OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

So charged is it with liable-to-go-off controversy that I should hardly have been astonished to see Mr. H. G. WELLS's latest volume, *Russia in the Shadows* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON), embellished with the red label of "Explosives." Probably everyone knows by now the circumstances of its origin, and how Mr. WELLS and his son are (for the moment) the rearguard in that long procession of unprejudiced and undeceivable observers who have essayed to pluck the truth about Russia from the bottom of the Bolshevik pit. What Mr. WELLS found is much what was to be expected: red ruin, want and misery unspeakable. The difference between his report and those of most of his forerunners is that, being (as one is apt to forget) a highly-trained writer, he is able to present it with a technical skill that enormously helps the effect. Our author having been unable to deny the shadow, like everyone else save perhaps the preposterous Mr. LANSBURY, the only outstanding question is who casts it. The ordinary man would probably have little hesitation about his answer to that. Mr. WELLS has even less. He unhesitatingly names you and me and the French investors and several editors. Well, I have no space for more than an indication of what you will find in this undeniably vigorous and vehement little volume. But I must not forget the photographs. Some of these, of devastated streets and the like, have rather lost their novelty. Unfortunately, however, for Mr. WELLS as propagandist he has also included a number of the most revealing portraits yet available of the men who are hag-riding a once great nation to the abyss. I can only say that for me those portraits put the finishing touch to Mr. WELLS's argument. They extinguish it.

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The pictorial wrapper of *A Man of the Islands* (HUTCHINSON) is embellished with a drawing of a coffee-coloured lady in a costume that it would be an under-statement to call curtailed, also (inset, as the picture-papers say) the portrait of a respectable-looking gentleman in a beard. In the printed synopsis that occupies the little tuck-in part of the same wrapper you are promised "an entrancing picture of breaking seas on lonely islands and tropical nights beneath the palms." In other words Mr. H. DE VERE STACPOOLE as before. Lest however you should suppose the insularity of this attractive pen-artist to be in danger of becoming overdone, I will say at once that the six tales from which the book takes its name occupy not much more than a third of it, the rest being filled with stories of varied setting bearing such titles as "The Queen's Necklace," "The Box of Bonbons," and the like—all frankly to be grouped under the head of "Financial Measures." This said, it is only fair to add that the half-dozen *Sigurdson* adventures—he was the Man of the Islands, a bearded trader, murderer, pearl thief and what not—seem to me a group of as rattling good yarns as of their kind one need wish to meet, every one with some original and thrilling situation that lifts it far above pot-boiling status. I could wish (despite anything above having a contrary sound) that Mr. STACPOOLE had given us a whole volume with that South Sea setting that so happily stimulates his fancy.

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Mr. S. P. B. MAIS has not yet extricated himself from the groove into which he has fallen. It is not a wholesome groove, and even if it were I should not wish an author of his capacity to remain a perpetual tenant of it. In *Colour Blind* (GRANT RICHARDS) we are given the promiscuous amours of a schoolmaster, a subject which has apparently a peculiar attraction for Mr. MAIS. *Jimmy Penraddocke*, who tells the story, left the Army and could not find a job until he was offered a mastership at a public school. The school rather than *Jimmy* has my sympathies. There was nothing peculiarly alluring about this philanderer to account for the devastating magnetism which he exerted upon the female heart. To describe all this orgy of caresses could hardly have been worth anyone's time and trouble; certainly it was not worth Mr. MAIS's. I say this with all the more assurance because, greatly as I dislike the main theme of this novel, there are many good things in it. There is, for example, *Mark Champernowne* (*Jimmy's* friend), a finely and consistently drawn character, and there are descriptive passages which are vividly beautiful and also some delightful gleams of humour. I think that when Mr. MAIS's sense of humour has developed further he will agree with me that a man who loved as promiscuously as *Jimmy* and then wrote over three hundred pages about it could, without much straining of the truth, be called a cad.

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For many reasons I could wish that England were China. It would be nice, for instance, to address the HOME SECRETARY as "Redoubtable Hunter of Criminals" and to call the Board of Exterior Affairs (if we had one) "Wai-wo-poo." I should like my house also to be named "The Palace of the Hundred Flowers." I think there are about a hundred, though I have not counted them. But in China it is above all things necessary to be an ancestor, and this may lead to complications if Mr. G. S. DE MORANT, who appears to be much more at home with the French and the Oriental idiom than the English, is to be trusted. In *the Claws of the Dragon* (ALLEN AND UNWIN) describes the experiences of a young lady named *Monique*, who married the Secretary to the Chinese Embassy in Paris and was obliged, after visiting her relations-in-law, to reconcile herself to the introduction of a second wife into the family, in order that their notions of propriety might be respected and an heir born to the line. When she had consented she returned to Paris and wrote the following cablegram from her own mother's house: "You have acted as a good son and

a faithful husband. Bring back with you the mother of our (*sic*) child." And so, the author evidently feels, it all ended happily. His book is an interesting and amusing presentment of an older civilisation, but if it won't strain the *Entente* I am bound to say that I disagree with his conclusions.

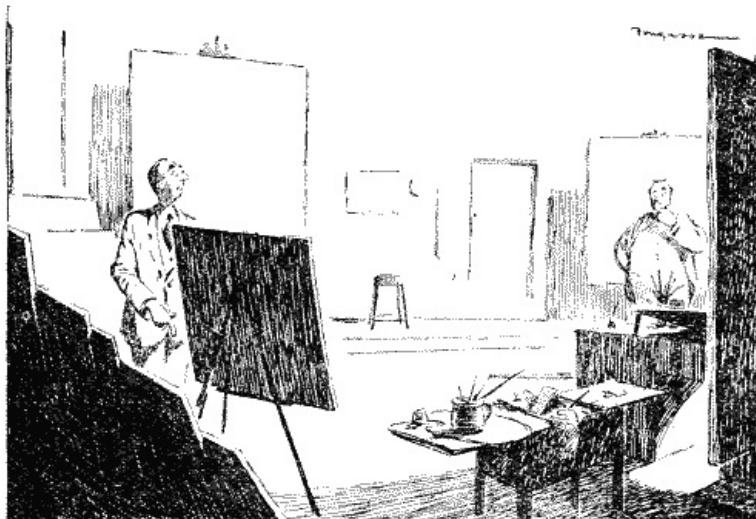
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I fear it may sound an unkindly criticism, but my abiding trouble with *Broken Colour* (LANE) was an inability to get any of the characters, with perhaps one exception, to come alive or behave otherwise than as parts of a thoroughly nice-mannered and unsensational story. Perhaps it was my own fault. Mr. HAROLD OHLSON (whose previous book I liked) has obviously, perhaps a little too obviously, done his best for these people. It is a tale of two rivalries: that for the heroine, between the penniless artist-hero and a pound-full other; and that in the breast of the p.a.h., between the flesh-pots of commerce and the world-well-lost-for-Chelsea. It is typical of Mr. OHLSON'S care that, though one would in such a situation nine times out of ten be safe in backing Art for the double event, he makes so even a match of it between *Hubert* and *Ralph* that he leaves the heroine ringing the door-bell of the one immediately after kissing the other. You observe that I was perhaps really more interested in the contest than my opening words would suggest, but it was always in a detached story-book way; except in the case of a mildly unsympathetic secretary, represented as having spent too much time in the contemplation of other persons' affluence, also as owning an expensive-looking stick that made him long to be as rich as it caused him to appear. I hate to think that there can have been anything here to touch a chord in the reviewing breast, but the fact remains that *Mr. Burnham* stands out for me as the only genuinely human figure in the book.

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Blessed, no doubt, is the nation or the man without a history, but blessed too is the biographer who has something definite to write about. Mr. C. CARLISLE TAYLOR, in putting together his *Life of Admiral Mahan* (MURRAY), the American naval philosopher and prophet, must have felt this keenly, for rarely can a man whose work was so important that he simply had to have a biography have done so few things of the kind that help to fill up a book. The Admiral not only foresaw the great War before 1914; he even suggested definite details of it—for instance, the loyalty of Italy to Western civilisation and the final surrender of the German fleet; yet in himself, though the writer draws an attractive picture of his home and religious life, he was only a kindly Christian gentleman who lectured to a few naval students. This is not the stuff to turn into a thrilling life-story, yet his studies on *Sea-Power* in relation to national greatness must certainly be reckoned among the prime causes of world-war. They set the Germans trying to outbuild the British fleet; more fortunately they were an inspiration to naval enthusiasts in this country also. Mr. TAYLOR has a pleasant chapter describing the immediate recognition and welcome his hero received in England, while it has taken quite a number of chapters to do justice to all the written tributes to his genius that the energetic author has collected. Personally, if ever I had been in doubt about it, I should have been quite willing to take that genius for granted some time before the end, and could indeed recommend the volume much more happily if it were reduced by about half. It will be valuable mainly as a necessary work of reference.

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Artist (*condescendingly*). "I DID THIS LAST SUMMER. IT REALLY ISN'T MUCH GOOD."  
Candid Friend. "NO, IT CERTAINLY ISN'T. BUT WHO TOLD YOU?"

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"At Kensington Palace the ground frost registered 9 deg. Fahr., which represents 23

degrees below zero."

—*Evening Paper.*

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**"WELLS HITS BACK AT CHURCHILL."**

—*Sunday Paper.*

Not the Bombardier, as you might think, but BERT WELLS.

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TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES:

Page 481: Tristan d'Acunha—this spelling also appears in the previous issue of 'Punch'.

Page 488: Single quote corrected to double quote.

Page 493: Replaced missing double quote.

Page 494: Replaced missing opening quote.

Page 498: Removed extraneous closing quote.

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