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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI, VOLUME 159, OCTOBER 27, 1920 ***

PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.

VOL. 159

October 27, 1920.

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CHARIVARIA.

Some idea of the evils consequent on a coal strike can be obtained when we hear there was talk of a football match in the North having to be cancelled.

Mr. Lloyd George is certainly most unlucky. As a result of the coal strike the New World has again been postponed.

We are assured that everything has been done to safeguard our food supply. We ourselves have heard of one grocer who has sufficient fresh eggs to last him for many months.

"Large numbers of South Wales miners left by train yesterday for the seaside," says *Lloyd's News*. Unfortunately they did not travel by the Datum Line.

The Opera House at Covent Garden is to be used as a cinema theatre. Meanwhile the House of Commons remains firm.

The Daily Mail Prize Hat has now been chosen, though it is not yet definitely decided whether the wearing of it will be made compulsory. If it is, we understand that Mr. Winston Churchill will apply for exemption.

Thieves have broken into the railway station at Blaenau Festiniog and stolen a quantity of chocolate. Apparently with the idea of confusing the police, they left the name of the station behind them.

Twenty-one persons have been injured as the result of the explosion of a bomb in a first-class carriage on the Brazil Central Railway. The culprit, we understand, has written to the company expressing regret, but pointing out that no seat was available in a third-class carriage.

A ship's cook has been fined twenty shillings for refusing to join his ship, his excuse being that he had seen a rat as big

as a cat in the cabin. It was pointed out to him that only ship's officers are entitled to see rats in the cabin.

A company has been formed at Stockholm for storing wind power. There should be a great demand for the insides of some puff pastry that we know of.

An American has invented an aeroplane capable of remaining in the air for hours and hours. This is nothing to Mr. Asquith's Irish solution, which is guaranteed to remain in the air for years and years.

Brides are getting rather tired of Harris's lilies, says a writer in *The Daily Graphic*. It is only natural that brides should become rather bored if they always wear the same sort of flowers every time they're married.

Mr. E. Van Ingen, a New York merchant now in London, boasts that he has crossed the Atlantic one hundred and sixty-eight times. It may be against the Prohibition laws, but we fancy it would be cheaper if he kept a few bottles of the stuff in New York.

A medical man advises people to use dried milk on health grounds. We have felt for some time that what was wanted was a really good waterproof milk.

Mr. E. A. Douse has spent forty-two years in a Cheshire post-office. It is only fair to say that the young lady behind the counter didn't notice him standing there all that time.

A Hertfordshire farmer, says *The Daily Mail*, has counted one hundred and twenty-three grains of wheat in one ear. Our contemporary has not yet decided what can be done about it.

"What is the right age for a man to marry?" asks Miss Gertie Wentworth-James. The answer is, Not yet.

While addressing a meeting of miners an extremist declared that the idle rich were the cause of all industrial troubles. It has since been reported that several of the audience immediately proceeded home and told themselves off in front of a mirror.

We understand that the miners greatly desire that Ireland will remain quiet for a short period, and thus refrain from distracting public attention from their cause.

"Lord Northcliffe," says *The New York World*, "is always in advance of public opinion." This is a fitting rejoinder to those who tell us that he is always behind *The Times*.

We cull the following from a speech of Senator Harding: "As I note the cornfields I am reminded that we still plough the land and plant and cultivate the fields in order to grow crops." We would remind the Senator that, with the Elections drawing daily nearer, the habit of making such sweeping and unguarded statements as the above is extremely dangerous.

We advise all readers to stick to their own particular newspaper, as a sudden change might upset the "net sales" which are being so carefully compiled at the present moment.

The up-to-date song-writer, says a musical journal, must strike a sad and soulful note this season. We are already engaged in writing "The Scotsman's Farewell to his Corkscrew."

A theatrical writer informs us that *The Laughing Husband* will be revived this year. Not in our suburb, unless the cost of living drops considerably.



Betty. "Grandma, I know my twelve times."

Grandma. "Do you, dear? Well, what are twelve times thirteen?"

Betty. "Don't be silly, Grandma. There isn't such a thing."

"The modern Hydra, embracing innumerable adverse factors, would appear at least as many headed as the ancient, for as fast as one is more or less effectively decapitated up comes another to upset the applectart."

Financial Paper.

Classical students will, of course, remember how cleverly Hercules made use of this habit of the Hydra to secure the apples of the Hesperides.

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THE DINING GLADIATOR;

or, War to the Knife (and Fork).

(*Being further Extracts from a certain Diary.*)

II.

Wrote an even better article than ever, on indigestion as a determining factor in national *moral*. Pointed out how important it is, if we are to think coolly, that we should eat discreetly. Sufficiently, of course, but with thought.

At the Tribunal all the afternoon, busily combing out.

To the Hippodrome in the evening. A most diverting show.

Northcliffe is becoming impossible and I must find another paper. Several of my best commas cut out of to-day's article. All reference to the necessity for immediately beheading Asquith omitted yesterday. Was comforted by lunch at the Carlton with Doris Keane, Gertie Millar and Scatters. We had some good jokes.

The news of my resignation from *The Times* has set my telephone ringing all the morning with congratulations, requests for interviews and offers of employment. Also some attractive invitations to dinner and week-ends. The War for the moment seems to be forgotten. Wonderful, the power of the printed word!

My first article in *The Morning Post*, distributing blame and praise with my usual deadly accuracy. Wonder what poor Northcliffe is doing without me.

Received long letter from Haig asking for instructions, which I sent by return.

Lunched at the Carlton with some charming musical-comedy actresses. To the Tribunal after. Dined at the National Sporting Club and saw a good fight.

A visit from an Italian personage of consequence, who told me that my articles are the talk of Italy. If writing could win wars, he said, my pen would have done it.

L. G. came up to Carryon Hall heavily masked. I gave him an excellent dinner and some equally good advice, and he left much heartened.

Dined at Lady Randolph's. A merry crowd there. Every one very gay and amusing; but we forgot that Winston was our hostess's son and castigated him badly. Lady Juliet said that with some people, no matter what they begin to talk about, even with Cabinet Ministers, it all comes back to food.

Wrote a careful article pointing out that we must have at least one hundred more divisions in the West before next Friday.

I was gratified to learn to-day that in consequence of my articles *The Morning Post* has doubled its circulation, while *The Times* hardly sells a copy.

Lunched with Massingham of *The Nation*, who eats more sensibly than he writes.

In Paris. Saw Clemenceau at the War Ministry. His table was littered with papers and reports, amongst which he pointed out laughingly one of my articles. I can't think why he laughed. Lunched at Voisin's.

Left for rapid tour of inspection to British H.Q. Found much to put right. Issued an Order of the Day to soldiers of all ranks. The Germans, hearing of my presence, made desperate attempts to bomb me, but failed. Food at the Front not very alluring.

Yesterday's article, I learn, put the wind up the War Cabinet, and great things may result. All my pleasure spoilt, however, by breaking a tooth on a pellet in a Ritz grouse.

Visited the French H.Q. and was pleased with Foch, whom I asked to run over to Carryon when he was ever in any doubt. Sent home a powerful article which, when it is reproduced in all the French papers, as it will be, should encourage him and improve his position.

Dined at Lady Ridley's. A very cheery party and much chaff. Mrs. Asquith said that she was writing her reminiscences. I made no mention of my diary, but if I don't get it out in book form before hers I'm not the Colonel of the Nuts.

To-day's article should bring things to a head very shortly. Shall be very glad when it is over and I can rest a little. Took some bicarbonate of soda.

Armistice signed. Spent the day in a kind of triumphal procession from restaurant to restaurant, at each of which I was hailed with applause.

Reached Versailles and let the news be known. A visible quickening up already to be noted.

Sent for President Wilson, but something must have prevented his coming. Lunched at Paillard's and dined at Larue's. Saw an amusing Palais Royal farce.

June 28th, 1920.—Treaty of Peace, for which I have worked so long, signed at last. Now I can utter my *Nunc Dimittis*, having accomplished the two ends I had in view—to bring the first world War to a more or less satisfactory finish and to make it dangerous for any but the deaf and dumb to dine out.

E. V. L.

THE LATE WORM

(Being a correction of "A Ballad of the Early Worm," "Punch," October 6th).

Oh ye whose hearts were rent with pain
A few short weeks ago,
Is it unkind to harp again
Upon that tale of woe?

You know the tale—in *Punch*, I mean—
Pathetic every word;
Three wormlets fought to stand between
Pa and the Early Bird.
You sorrowed for their non-success
(By use of triple strength
They saved their father's life—ah yes—
But not his total length).
You thought, of course—I know you did—
That Father left his hole,
A briskly virtuous annelid,
To take an early stroll.
Well, now just go and read a book
Called *Vegetable Mould*
And *Earthworms* (Darwin); if you look
You'll find that you've been sold.
It's not my own, it's Darwin's firm
Authority I cite:
There never is an early worm;
Pa had been out all night.
He swaggered forth at eventide
And stayed till dawn next day;
For I will not attempt to hide
That *worms behave that way.*
So pious folk like you and me
Should not be filled with woe
At thought of Father's tragedy;
His morals were so low.

Our Courtly Contemporaries.

"The Earl of Athlone walked away on foot, as is the simple way of our Royal Family." *Sunday Paper*.

"High-backed chair of Tudor period, about 1660."—*Advt. in Daily Paper*.

We don't question its genuineness, but infer that it has been subjected to Restoration.

"Furnished House, consisting of dining, drawing, eight breakfast rooms, etc." *Sunday Paper*.

Would suit a large family inclined to be short-tempered in the morning.

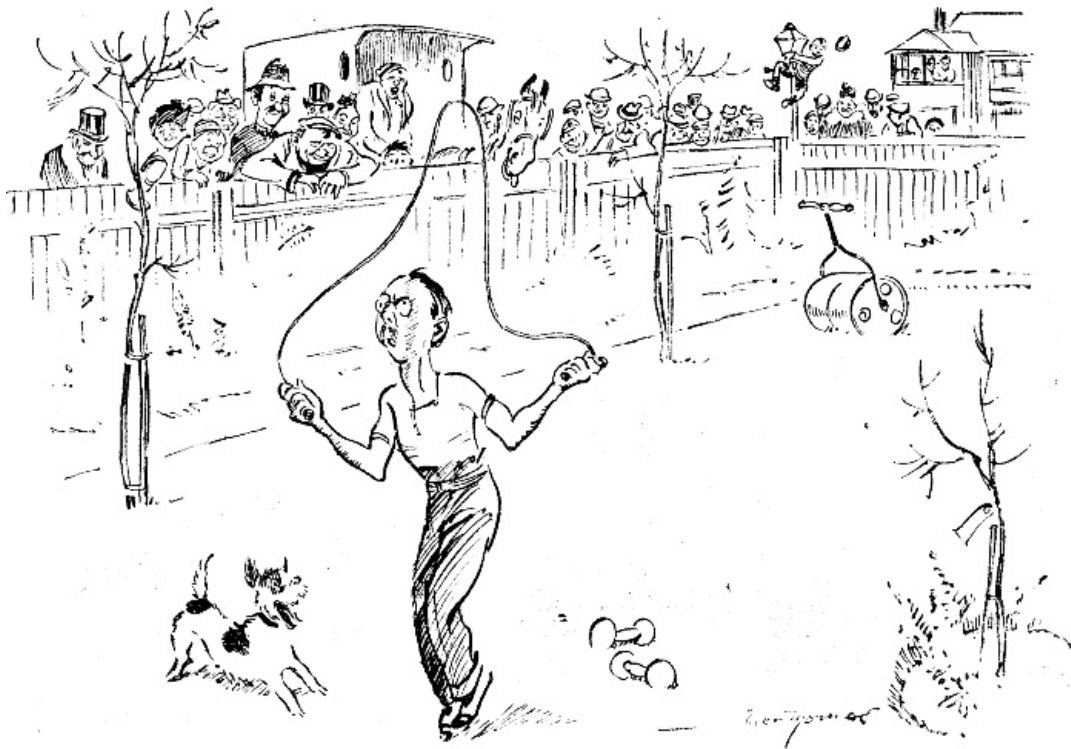


A TOO-FREE COUNTRY.

Alien Rioter. "DOWN WITH EVERYBODY!"

P.C. John Bull. "WELL, WE'LL MAKE A START WITH YOU."

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PEOPLE WE ADMIRE.

THE HERO WHO KEEPS UP HIS ARMY EXERCISES, STRIKE OR NO STRIKE.

A LETTER TO THE BACK-BLOCKS.

Dear Ginger,—So you have bought a very promising little gold-mine from a rollicking Irish nobleman called Patrick Terence O’Ryan, who is retiring on Mayo to take up the paternal estates. H-m!—have you? And you think you yourself will be retiring home presently on the proceeds of the said mine? H-m! again. There is a certain familiarity in your description of the gentleman. Tell me, has this Hibernian philanthropist a slight squint, a broken nose and a tendency to lisp in moments of excitement?

I think I see you nod.

Ginger, I once bought a mine from that man. His name was Algernon Maddox Cholmondely *then*, and he was homeward bound to assume the ancestral acres in Flint. He escorted me down the hole and displayed visible gold sparkling all along the reef. A week after he had gone I found that he had put it there with a shot-gun—an old "salter’s" trick, but new to me at the time. You are not likely to be seeing Patrick Algernon Terence Maddox O’Ryan-Cholmondely again, but, if you should, remember me to him, please—with the business end of a pick-axe. Always delighted to keep in touch with old friends.

Ginger, *you never can tell*. This is not an original remark. One of our brainy boys—George Bernard, unless I err—thought of it before I did; went away into the wilderness, wrapped his grey-matter in wet Jaeger bandages, subsisted on a diet of premasticated grape-nuts and produced this aphorism. And there’s a world of truth in it, my son. You certainly never can.

One fine morning last August (yes, there was *one*), I stepped out of my diggings in an obscure Cornish fishing-village to find a gentleman busily engaged strangling a lady on the cliff side. He had her by the throat and was gradually forcing her over the edge. Once in Bristol I interposed in a slogging contest between husband and wife and was very properly chastised for my interference, not only by the happy pair but by the entire street, who had valuable bets laid on the event. That, you say, should have been a lesson to me. But you know me, Ginger, impetuous, chivalrous, brave; I simply couldn’t stand there and watch a defenceless woman—moreover a good-looking woman—fouly done to death like that. I flung myself upon the villain—that is to say I spoke to him about it.

"Oh, dash it, old bean," I said, "draw it mild!"

Somebody shouted something behind me, but I didn’t catch its purport for the sufficient reason that at that moment the long-suffering cliff gave way and we all went overboard, all three of us, he, she and it—me.

Fortunately the drop wasn’t terrific—not more than four feet or so—and the tide happened to be in at the time, which was very decent of it. My first thought as I came to the surface—or, at any rate, *one* of my first thoughts—was "What of the woman?" I struck out for the poor creature. At the same moment she struck out for me, and, what is more, she got me too, clean between the eyes—a straight left-hander.



Mistress. "Would you like to go out this afternoon, Mabel?"

Mabel. "I *am* going out."

"Out of my way, fathead!" she hissed [pg 325]and went on for the shore under her own steam at about forty knots an hour. I was washed up myself, along with a quantity of other jetsam, a few minutes later, to be met by a small furious man with a heliotrope complexion and white spats who wagged bunches of typescript under my nose and informed me that I had absolutely ruined about twenty million feet of the Flickerscope Company’s five-reel paralysers, "The

Smuggler's Bride."

Of course you say that you saw what was coming all along. Of course you did. But wait a moment.

Yesterday afternoon I was strolling down a certain fashionable street when a loud explosion occurred in a near-by shop and a cloud of acrid grey smoke came rolling out. Being by nature as inquisitive as a chipmunk I was on the point of shoving my head round the door-jamb to see what was up when caution prompted me to turn round. Yes, there they were, of course, a tall, thin youth winding away at a cine-camera like an Italian at a barrel-organ, and beside him a heavy-weight Israelite, dancing a war-dance, waving bunches of typescript and howling at me to stand clear. I had very near ruined a further mile or two of film.

I sprang out of range, and then, wishing to atone for my previous blunders and prove that I really had no malevolent intentions towards a struggling industry, I went round and assisted the caracoling producer in stemming the crowd. Among others I stemmed a pushful policeman. I didn't notice he was a policeman until he was biting the dust, with my stick between his legs. However an instantaneous application of palm-oil made it all right between us, and he squatted half-stunned on the kerb, nursing his brow with one hand, my five bob with the other and took no further interest in the proceedings. And very interesting they were, too.

Three masked men dashed out of the shop laden with booty and were pursued by a fourth, whom they knocked on the head and left lying for dead on the pavement. Most realistic. The crowd, led by me, cheered like mad. Then the thieves jumped into a waiting car and were whirled away. That done, the photographer and his step-dancing friend leapt into a second car and were whirled away also. Once more we cheered. I made a short speech to the effect that everything was all right with the British Cinema business and, after leading a few more cheers for myself, came home.

"Well," you say, "all very jolly and so on, but what about it?"

There's this about it, old companion, just this, that I am very probably spending a meditative winter in gaol. The charge is that I did aid and abet a peculiarly ingenious gang of desperadoes to blow a jeweller's safe, knock the jeweller on the head and get safely away with the stuff. I am even accused of obstructing the police. An inspector has been round to see me this morning and he tells me there is practically no hope. He advises me, as between friends, to make a clean breast of it, return the boodle, betray my accomplices, plead mental deficiency and trust to the clemency of the Court. It's pretty rough, after making all arrangements for spending a cheerful Christmas in Algiers, to have it changed to cold porridge in Parkhurst or Princetown. Of the two I hope it'll be Parkhurst, for Princetown, so *habitués* tell me, is no place for a growing lad when the wintry winds do blow.

Thine, *de profundis* Patlander.

Rhymes of Unrest.

There was a young miner of Ayr
Who gave himself up to despair;
For he said, "If we're paid
On our 'get,' I'm afraid
That I canna ca' canny no mair."
"Strike while the iron is hot,"
Said the wise old saw of old;
But the miners say, "What rot!
Strike while the weather's cold."

"The art of decoration is alien to painting in this—that you must mix your colours with your brains."—*Daily Paper*.

We await a reply from the intellectuals of Chelsea.

"There is one building now being erected, within a few miles of Manchester as the cock crows."—*Provincial Paper*.

We are unfamiliar with this method of mensuration.

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ABOUT CONFERENCES.

We may not have coal, but we can have conferences. A conference is the most typically English thing that there is. The old Anglo-Saxons had them and called them moots. Why they called them a silly name like that, when "conferences" would have done just as well, one can't imagine; but they had their notions and stuck to them. They would have called Parliament a moot; in fact they did. They called it a moot of wise men. Sarcastic beggars, these Anglo-Saxons!

The advantages of having a conference about everything are almost too numerous to explain. For one thing, suppose Smith is coming to see you at 2.30 p.m. "It's no use his waiting now," you say. "I've got a conference at 3. Tell him to come back at 5.30." And when he comes back at 5.30 of course the conference is still going on, so you don't have to see him at all.

There is nothing again that makes you feel so deliciously important as being at a conference. You may be a leader of quite an insignificant body of workers, like the Nutcracker-Teeth Makers' Union, but you rub shoulders at a conference with men whose names are a household word throughout the whole of Great Britain, amongst those who have houses. The distinguished and the undistinguished lay their heads together; the spat-wearing get their feet mixed with the non-spat-wearing; though there is rather a fake, mind you, about this spat-wearing business, for it may simply mean that the uppers are very badly worn, or that only that very bright pink pair of socks came home from the wash this week, or even that there are no socks underneath at all.

But anyhow, at a conference, Tom, Dick and Harry hobnob with Bob, James and George, and all are equal, except perhaps the chairman, who has two more pens in front of him and a much larger ash-tray. Mr. Bevin and Sir Eric Geddes smile affably across at each other, and the Prime Minister and Mr. Cramp find out how much they have in common, such as love of poetry and pelargoniums. The mine-owner offers the miners' representative a cigarette, and the miners' representative says to the mine-owner, "Many thanks, old boy; but I'll have one of my own." And after it is over they all go out and stand arm-in-arm in a long row to be photographed for the papers, and are read next morning from left to right. It is the ambition of every properly constituted Englishman to wake up some morning and find that his portrait is being read from left to right; but how few succeed.

The total output of conferences in this country during one year has never been computed yet, but it is supposed to exceed that of any country in the world, except Red India. If there were to be a strike of conferents or conferees, whatever they are called, in England, it is impossible to say what would happen. But it might be possible to lay down a datum line—a shilling extra for the first million words above two hundred and fifty million per shift, and two shillings more for every million words above that. Fortunately this will never be necessary, for people who confer are so fond of conferences that they will never down chairs.

And no wonder. Only a very strong man can hew coal, and only a very reckless one can make a speech, but almost anyone can confer if he has a large enough ash-tray; and there seems no reason why more people shouldn't confer. Everybody is interested in conferences, whatever they are about, and the British public ought to be admitted to this kind of thing. One is always reading in the paper that the sound commonsense or the traditional sense of fair play of the great British public will support the miners in any just claim; but this claim is not just or just isn't, or something of that sort. But how do they know what the great British public will feel about it? They aren't there, are they? There ought to be representatives of the G.B.P. on all these conferences. They ought to be chosen from a rota, like jurymen. Very likely one of them would have found out what a datum line is, anyway. There's a man who comes up in the train with me in the morning who thinks he knows, but unfortunately he gets out at Croydon so we haven't found out yet.

By having a lot more conferences and having a lot of representatives from the public on them all, and paying them well for it, one could practically settle the unemployment problem for the winter. If the Government can only be brought to see that this is the only statesmanlike course, and the sole course consistent with the Anglo-Saxon sense of justice, and capable of leading to a satisfactory Exploration of Avenues, Finding of Bridges and Discovery of Ways Out, we may all achieve our life's ambition some day and open the morning paper to find that we are being read at last from left to right. "Mr. Robert Williams, Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. J. H. Thomas, Lord Riddell," and so on and so on, till you come at last to "J. Smith, Esq., R.B.P.," smiling the widest of all. R.B.P.'s, I think, should wear a distinguishing mark—a single spat perhaps. Evoe.

MORE SECRET HISTORY.

[According to a report in a daily paper, at the recent Peace Conference held at Spa, where the delegates were royally entertained in the matter of hotel accommodation, meals, etc., the cigar bill (which has been sent in to the League of Nations and sent out again) amounted to three thousand two hundred pounds. What the delegates could not smoke they seem to have taken away with them.]

'Tis sweet in darkish times like these to see a
Rent in the veil which keeps the public blind,
And thus obtain a pretty shrewd idea
Of what goes on behind;
To note how quite an innocent report'll
Reveal apparent trifles which befall,
Proving that men whom we supposed immortal
Are human after all.
But here, while I can hardly call you blameful
For smoking "free" cigars with so much zest,
Frankly I feel 'twas little short of shameful
To go and pinch the rest.
I can forgive your huge hotel expenses;
Your beef was rightly of a super-cut;
A modicum of wine does whet the senses;
But those cigars—tut, tut!
For there's a finer aid to meditation,
Much more appropriate, in my humble view,
When Nation nestles cheek by jowl with Nation,
And far, far cheaper too.
So, if you'd really slay Bellona's bow-wows,
Might I suggest your vicious ways should cease,
And that in future you conduct your pow-wows
Over the pipe of peace.

An Affectionate Diminutive.

"Lord Buxton, who retired this summer from the post of High Commissioner and Governor-General of South Africa, has been made an early."—*Daily Paper*.

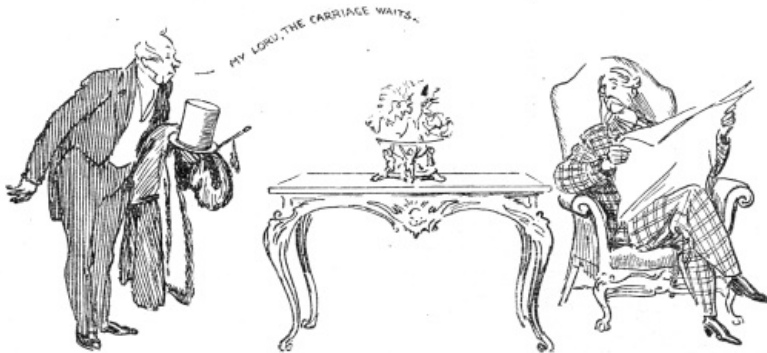
A correspondent, referring to Mr. Punch's quotation (from an Australian paper) of the title of a song, "It was a Lover and His Last," suggests "*Ne suitor ultra crepidam*."

On the coal strike:—

"We look to the Government to keep all doors open. We look to the public to keep cool."—*Westminster Gazette*.

The public should have no difficulty in doing its part if the Government do theirs.

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TRANSPORT: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

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Giles. "I didn't 'ardly agree wi' the Vicar in wot 'e said about them early martyrs bein' thrown to the lions an' burnt at the stake an' livin' on for ever."

Curate. "Why not?"

Giles. "Well, Zur, no constitootion could stand it."

THE CONSPIRATORS.

V.

My dear Charles,—Let me remind you that the Bolshevik conspirator has to stir up conflagrations in other countries without leaving his own. Passports and things are put in to make it more difficult when he comes to getting his inflammable material and directions for use over the frontier. So he has to invent a way over the obstacles.

The first prize is awarded to the following: Secret instructions are printed in Arabic and the pages containing them are bound up in a five hundred page book in that language. The courier, an Oriental, carries this book openly in his hand when he presents himself at the frontier. It is ten to one that an innocent-looking book, thus carried, will not be suspected; a hundred to one against there being an official capable of reading it; five hundred to three against that official trying one of the guilty pages, if he is there and duly suspicious. Yet, with a hundred and sixty-six thousand chances against it, our Little Man got hold of those instructions.

The Sherlock Holmes of fiction is a gaunt figure, with a hatchet face, spare of flesh. Our Little Man is a chubby lad, standing about four foot ten in his stockinged feet, rubicund and corpulent, and he wears a mackintosh with a very mackintoshy smell in all weathers. He never did a day's work, and he never means to try, but he is a genius at getting it out of others. Some say he is of Swiss origin, some say he is American, and some say that surely he must be Chinese; he was never certain himself until Czecho-Slovak was invented, and he plumped for that. He has the degree of Master of Arts; what arts I don't know; probably the black ones. His inner knowledge of the human species seems to give him plenty to laugh at. He notices everything, forgets nothing, and there is never a weakness in a man but he is on to it. He made up his mind that those secret instructions were passing and set about to find how they passed and what they were. He was too lazy to begin at the beginning, so he began at the end. He called in person, as a commercial traveller, at the suspected office of destination, and in the short time available ascertained that the door-keeper who turned him out was a patriotic and fervent admirer of the wine of the country.

Our Little Man had no vulgar idea of getting the secret out of him by making him drunk. If there was a secret it wouldn't be in the door-keeper. But he and that door-keeper got to drinking together and the door-keeper did all the paying; the drinking and the paying went on by progressive degrees till the door-keeper had no money and only a still almighty thirst left. The Little Man left him with his thirst for a few days, until it became intolerable, and the door-keeper insisted that something simply must be done about it. The Little Man regretted that he could not give the necessary money to finance further orgies, but he would gladly advance it. Four nights got the door-keeper well in his debt, and our Little Man then began to talk about repayment. The door-keeper said he had no money; the Little Man

said he must get it. Off whom? His employer.

How was the door-keeper to get his employer's money off him? By selling him a safe. Our Little Man then divulged that he was in reality a commercial traveller in safes; if the door-keeper would get his employer to buy one of his safes the Little Man would forgive him his debt by way of commission. He felt sure that the Head of the Office had a weakness for precautions. The door-keeper, now enthusiastic, said he should just think he had! The Little Man felt he was getting warm. The door-keeper put the deal through and prevailed upon his master to instal a really safe safe in the office, instead of the old one. You had only to look at it to see it was impregnable by fire, water or the King's Enemies. But one set of keys stayed with the Little Man.

The drinking (by both) and the paying (by the door-keeper) were resumed. When the debt was again large enough the Little Man imposed new terms. This time he wanted to see the Head of the Office himself, to put further deals through. The door-keeper thought deeply, but could see no harm in this. The Little Man was thus introduced into the presence, and startled it by pointing to the safe and offering to do burglar on it any night of the week. The Head was manifestly concerned.

"We have here," said the Little Man, producing two formidable slabs of steel hinged together and leaving room between them when locked for a wad of papers only—"we have here a special strong box exactly suited for the storage of your bank-notes. Put them in this box, and the box in the safe, and then you really are ahead of your enemies."

The Head bought. He gave the Little Man less money than he had spent on the strong box, and the Little Man gave him less keys than he was entitled to. The drinking and the debt were resumed, and, when it came to a question of settlement for the third time, the Little Man pointed out to the door-keeper that, if he hadn't the money to repay, then he must steal it. He now divulged that he was not really a broker, but a breaker of safes and strong boxes. He handed the door-keeper a key of his employer's safe. In the safe would be found the strong box. In the strong box would be found some notes of high value, unless he was very much mistaken.

So the door-keeper went and opened the safe and returned. And the Little Man opened the strong box, and he *was* [pg 329]very much mistaken. There was never a note there; just half-a-dozen pages torn out of a book printed in Arabic.

He was so angry that he gave the strong box one on the lid for itself, with the result that he couldn't lock it again. However, he said he had a friend who could lock or unlock anything, and he left the door-keeper drinking, for the first time at the Little Man's expense, while he took off the box to be repaired by his friend. The latter happened to be in the next room with a camera. The pages were photographed; the Little Man returned to the door-keeper with the strong box, now capable of being re-locked; the door-keeper returned to the office and put back the strong box, locked, into the safe, which he also locked, and was wiping the sweat off his forehead and congratulating himself that no one was the worse, when he was startled to find a policeman had been watching him all the time.

But he proved to be a very amenable policeman. He said he would take no action before he and the door-keeper had had time to talk it over next day. By the time that talk came the photographs had been developed, printed and translated. But the policeman did not wish to bore the door-keeper with the tiresome details. To put it quite shortly the policeman thought it was a most excellent crime, worthy of repetition at intervals.

Yours ever, Henry.

(To be continued.)



CONCENTRATION.

NEW RHYMES FOR OLD CHILDREN.

The —.

I never know why it should be
So rude to talk about the —.
What funny folk we are!
I think we've got the jealous hump
Because we see we'll never jump
So skilfully and far.
For, if one's nibbled by a gnat
Or harvest-bugs or things like that,
One seldom keeps it dark;
One may enlarge upon the tale
If one is gobbled by a whale
Or swallowed by a shark;
But if you speak about the bite
Of this abandoned parasite
You're very, very rash;
So sure is it to raise a frown
I dare not even write it down;
I simply put a —.
None but an entomologist
Will quite admit the things exist,
And generally *they* insist
On using other names;
For, when at night Professors leap
Out of their scientific sleep
Because these little devils keep
Playing their usual games,
They never shout, "It seems to be
A something, something, something —!"
(The word is never used, you see,
Except by artisans);
No, as they fling the bedclothes high
They give a wild but cultured cry,
"Confound it! Botheration! Hi!
A *Pulex irritans!*" A. P. H.

Our Ruthless Motorists.

"Triumph 1920 4 h.p. Model H, also Baby, both brand new; sacrifice, £5 off each."

Motor Journal.

"It was intended to hold mock trials in order to familiarise women with court procedure and 'legal shibboleths.'

When I saw her to-day, Miss — said that 'techniacilities' would have been a better word."—*Evening Paper.*

We hate to contradict a lady, but we cannot agree.



Aggrieved Profiteeress (studying photographs of the Peerage). "Well, I don't see as they've any call to look that 'aughty. Like as not me an' you'd be wearin' coronets this minute if all our ancestors 'adn't a-been cut off in the Wars of the Roses, or somethink."

WORKING FOR PEACE.

(Extracts from the Diary of Mr. John Robert Boffkins, Trade Union Leader.)

Monday.—Rose with a heart overflowing with love towards my fellow-men. Industrial strife must cease. Strikes are a barbarous and futile method of redressing wrong. Rather think that an increase in wages of two shillings a day would appeal to our members. Must inquire.

Tuesday.—Have confirmed my opinion that a two-shillings' increase would appeal to our members. They all seem enthusiastic over the suggestion. They appear to be under the impression that the idea is their own. It is not. It is mine. If it materialises I shall be most popular. But I am all for peace. A strike is out of the question. I shall spare no effort to prevent one.

Wednesday.—Presented formal demand to employers to-day. Told our members they must be firm to the bitter end. The two-shillings' increase is their strict due, and, if we present a united front, the grasping capitalist will be brought to his knees. Am working night and day for peace.

Thursday.—Pointed out to the employers that a strike is inevitable unless they give way. We can make no concession. My whole energies are concentrated on preventing a strike. Told our members that unless they remain firm the employers will crush them. A strike would be a national calamity and might spell ruin to the country.

Friday.—The possibility of a strike looms larger. Can nothing be done to prevent it? Informed the employers that we declined to abate one iota of our claim. "All or nothing" is our motto. Also refused to go to arbitration. Warned the employers that a strike means starvation for women and children. The prospect appals me.

Saturday.—The employers, who seem to be determined on a strike, have offered the men two shillings if they will consider the question of working five days a week instead of four. We refused their offer and demanded that our claim should be conceded unconditionally by noon, failing which our members would cease work.

Later.—The strike has commenced. Heaven knows that I did everything to prevent it which human being could do. The capitalists seem to have made up their minds to force civil war and all its horrors upon the country. The spectacle of little children starving causes me acute distress.

A GUIDE TO GREATNESS.

[Mr. Jacob Epstein maintains in *The Daily Mail* that a man to be a creative genius must lead an orderly domesticated life.]

I courted the Muse as a stripling,
Immured in a Bloomsbury flat,
And yearned for the kudos of Kipling
For fees that were frequent and fat;
But editors, far from discerning
The worth of the pearls that I placed
At their feet, had a way of returning
The same with indelicate haste.

But, espousing, a year or two later,
The sweetest and neatest of wives,
I found, after peeling a tater
Or imparting a polish to knives,
I could scribble with frenzy and passion,
That the breaking of coal would inspire,
In a truly remarkable fashion,
My soul with celestial fire.
Serenity reigns in the household;
I've cancelled my grudge against Fate;
My lyrical efforts are now sold
At a simply phenomenal rate;
And, whether I'm laying the lino
Or bathing the babes, I regard
The job as a cushy one: *I* know
The way to succeed as a bard.

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THE SCALES OF JUSTICE.

Sir Robert Horne. "I WANT TO KEEP THE BALANCE. NOW THEN, BOTH TOGETHER."

The Miner. "NO. *YOU* BEGIN—AND THEN PERHAPS I'LL THINK ABOUT IT."

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P. C. Greenwood. "Arrah! Get out wid yez and let the lady pass."

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

Tuesday, October 19th.—A start was made with half a hundred Questions, and, considering that most of them had been in cold storage since before the Recess, it was surprising how fresh they remained. Persia and Mesopotamia—not to mention Ireland—are still unsettled; the Turkish Treaty is not yet ratified; the cost of living continues to rise, and the ratio of unemployment has alarmingly advanced, especially in the case of ex-service men.

These last are to be found work in the building trades, with, it is hoped, the assistance of the trade unions, but, if that hope is disappointed, then without it. The country requires half-a-million houses built. "Here are men who could assist," said the Prime Minister, "and we propose that they should be allowed to assist."

Over a prospect already sufficiently bleak there broods the shadow of the coal-strike. Sir Robert Horne, in presenting the case for the Government, was admirably clear but, perhaps naturally, a little cold. Only when the new lighting arrangement had flooded the House with artificial sunshine did the Minister warm up a little and hint that a way of peace might yet be found.

I wonder if it was by accident or artifice that Mr. Brace began his plea for the miners with the admission that they had only dropped the demand for the reduction of fourteen shillings and twopence in the price of domestic coal when they discovered that "the money was not there." Anyhow the laughter that ensued served to put Members into a good temper and to cause them to lend a friendly ear to his suggestion that the two shillings advance, though in his view only "dust in the balance," should be "temporarily" conceded, pending the establishment of a tribunal which should permanently settle the conditions of the mining industry. The increase of output which everyone desired would then be brought about.

Most of the speakers who followed seemed to think that Mr. Brace had sown the seed of a settlement. It was left to the Prime Minister, who evidently did not relish the task, to awaken the House from its beautiful dream. He pointed out that to accept the proposal would be to give the miners what they had originally claimed, without any guarantee that the greater output would be forthcoming. If it were not forthcoming and the two shillings were taken away, what would happen? "A strike," cried someone. "Precisely," said Mr. Lloyd George; only it would have been provoked by the Government instead of by the miners. He was not prepared to do business on those lines.

And so the debate came to an end rather than a conclusion.

Wednesday, October 20th.—The Peers plunged into the morasses of the Irish Question. Lord Crewe asked for an official inquiry into the alleged "reprisals" and particularly instanced the attacks upon the creameries. Rather than that Ireland should be "pacified" by such methods as these he would see her engaged in civil war, "fairly conducted on both sides." From these words it may be gathered that his lordship's knowledge of civil war is happily not extensive.

Furnished with a voluminous brief from the Irish Office, Lord Curzon made a long reply, the purport of which was that many of the reprisals were bogus, many were actions undertaken in self-defence, while the rest were generally due to men "seeing red" after their comrades had been brutally murdered. The Government did not palliate such cases, and had instituted inquiries and taken disciplinary action against the offenders, when known; but they were not prepared to set up a public inquiry such as Lord Crewe had demanded. It would only substitute "a competition in perjury" for the present "competition in murder"—a somewhat infelicitous phrase by which, as he subsequently explained, he did not mean to imply, as Lord Parmoor suggested, that police and rebels were engaged in a murderous rivalry.

Simultaneously the House of Commons was engaged upon an identically similar debate. Mr. Arthur Henderson was as lugubrious as Lord Crewe in presenting the indictment and distinctly less adroit in selecting his facts. His theory was that the Government had provoked the Sinn Fein outrages by its treatment of the people. Why, women had been prevented from taking their eggs to market!

Sir Hamar Greenwood spoke from the same brief as Lord Curzon, but threw far more passion and vigour into its recital. There had been some reprisals, he admitted, but they were as nothing compared to the horrors that had provoked them; and he protested against the notion that "the heroes of yesterday"—the R.I.C. is mainly recruited from ex-service men—had turned into murderers. As for the creameries, he had never seen a tittle of evidence that they had been destroyed by servants of the Crown, and he warned the House not to believe the stories put out by the propaganda bureau of the Irish Republican Army. He was still a convinced Home Ruler—an Ulster hot-gospeller had accused him of being a Sinn Feiner with a Papist wife!—but the first thing to do was to break the reign of terror and end the rule of the assassin. That they were doing, and there was no case for Mr. Henderson's "insulting resolution."

The Opposition for the moment seemed stunned by the Chief Secretary's sledge-hammer speech. No one rose from the Front Bench and Lieutenant-Commander Kenworthy had to overcome his modesty and step into the breach. Later on, Lord Robert Cecil, on the strength of information supplied by an American journalist, supported the demand for an inquiry. So did Mr. Asquith, on the ground that it would be in the interests of the Government of Ireland itself; but this argument was obviously weakened by Mr. Bonar Law's reminder that in 1913 and 1914 Mr. Asquith himself had deprecated inquiries in somewhat similar circumstances. The Government had a very good division, 346 to 79; but there were many abstentions.

Thursday, October 21st.—It was, no doubt, by way of brightening an unutterably gloomy week that Mr. L'Estrange Malone, who has not hitherto been known as a humourist, invited the Government to intercede at Washington for the release of the notorious James Larkin, now languishing in an American gaol. Inasmuch as Larkin had been convicted for having advocated the overthrow of the United States by violence, Mr. Harmsworth did not think H.M. Government were called upon to intervene. Mr. Malone understood from this that the Government had no sympathy with British subjects in foreign lands, and so he got another laugh.

Commander Bellairs thought it would be a good idea if the League of Nations, pending the discharge of its more important functions, were to offer rewards for world-benefiting discoveries such as a prophylactic against potato-blight. Sir John Rees saw his chance and took it. "Does the League," he inquired, "declare to win on Phosphates, Peace or Potatoes?"—thus supplying proof positive that he owes his precise pronunciation to past practice with "prunes and prisms."

It was rather impudent of Mr. Adamson, who has just been instrumental in throwing out of work some hundreds of thousands of his fellow-citizens, to initiate a debate on unemployment. Most of the speakers endeavoured to throw the blame on "the other fellow"—the Government on the trade unions, the trade unionists on the employers, and the employers on the Government. A welcome exception was Mr. Hopkinson, who boldly blamed the short-sighted selfishness of some of his own class. Employés would not work their hardest to "make the boss a millionaire." As a fitting *finale* to an inconclusive debate the Prime Minister announced that in order to force a settlement of the coal-strike the railwaymen—Mr. Thomas, apparently, dissenting—had threatened to join the unemployed.

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Harassed Secretary. "I say, you needn't make bunkers, you know."

Our Erudite Contemporaries.

"Willard was game and well trained, and in stature he was Goliath to the Daniel of Dempsey."—*Evening Paper.*

A David come to judgment!

"The rate plague has developed to an alarming extent in Thanet, and considerable anxiety is felt, especially as there appears to be no effective preparation of poison to exterminate them."—*Evening Paper.*

And Thanet is not the only place.

THE TYPE-SLINGER.

Biting and keen as any razor
The fluent pen of Lovat Fraser;
And swift as arrows, thick as hail,
His outbursts in *The Daily Mail*,
Exposing in impassioned phrase
The Premier's wild and wicked ways.
And yet the Premier doesn't squirm,
No, not a bit—the pachyderm!
But goes about with cheerful mien,
As if such things had never been.
So Lovat Fraser grows emphatic
In efforts to be more dogmatic,
And down the column, once a week,
His shrill italics fairly shriek.
But does the Premier bow his back
And go and give himself the sack?
Not he. Indeed, for all he troubles,
His critic might be blowing bubbles.
It's up to Lovat Fraser now
To make an even bigger row;
I'd like to see the sturdy fellow
Write articles that simply bellow.
I think the Premier might perhaps
Shiver and possibly collapse
If Lovat got to work in "caps."

The Black Swan of Avon.

"A Native Drama
Entitled
'Inu vere ki pani'

(Popularly known as Merchant of Venice, but beautified and enlarged to local taste), Interspersed with Popular Dialogues, latest Songs, etc. Will (D. V.) be rendered by the — Guild."—*West African Poster*.



WHAT OUR BOHEMIANS HAVE TO PUT UP WITH.

Shabbily-dressed person. "I've lost the ticket, but I left a hat. That's it over there."

Attendant. "I must ask you to find the ticket, Sir, please. The hat that you indicate is quite new."

THE REVIVAL OF OLLENDORFF.

From the memories of my mid-Victorian childhood, before the instruction of a governess had reached a point at which the plunge was made into a preparatory school, three names emerge with remarkable distinctness. "Little Arthur," from whom I derived my earliest knowledge of the History of England; "Henry," by whom I was grounded in the rudiments of the dead Latin tongue (but who must be carefully distinguished from James Henry, the Virgilian, who in turn had nothing whatever to do with Henry James the novelist), and Ollendorff, the illustrious author of a series of manuals for the teaching of living foreign languages.

Ollendorff, I fear, is not even the shadow of a name to the present generation. There is no mention of him in *The Encyclopædia Britannica* or in *Chambers*. Even in his own country he seems to have lapsed into obscurity, and in Mendel's voluminous *Conversations-Lexikon* there is only a brief reference to the Ollendorffian method, but no account of the man or his history.

Yet he must have existed; Ollendorff cannot have been a mere symbol. And as students of Shakspeare have endeavoured to reconstruct the man from his plays so I feel sure that the character of Ollendorff, his interests and politics, might very well be reconstructed from a study of his dialogues. One must admit that his Teutonic patronymic is an obstacle to his revival, but that difficulty can be surmounted by the adoption of an *alias*. For example, by the omission of one of the "f"s and the transposition of one other letter his name, read backwards, becomes Frondello, which is at once euphonious and void of all racial offence.

The Ollendorffian method, it may be noted for the benefit of the ignorant, did not merely depend on the employment of question and answer; it aimed at conveying information drawn from the homely affairs of daily life and the relations between persons belonging to different trades and occupations. "Have you," Ollendorff would ask, "the hat of the gardener's son?" And when this had been duly and correctly translated into German or French the pupil proceeded to the answer, "No, but I have the boots of the grocer's brother-in-law."

I think Ollendorff built better than he knew; or perhaps he did know. A strong vein of Socialism runs through all his

examples, which seem to show a lively appreciation of the Communistic principle. To him there was nothing wrong or dangerous in this mutual interchange and enjoyment of property. He drew no hard-and-fast lines between *meum* and *tuum*. We cannot help thinking that, at a time when so much depends on the fusion of classes, a new edition of these immortal dialogues, brought up to date so as to meet the exigencies of the new poor, the new rich, the old aristocracy and the new plutocracy, would be fraught with the most salutary results.

The following are some crude suggestions of the lines on which the revision might be carried out:—

"Have you the leathern waistcoat of the taxi-driver?—"No, but I have the reach-me-down trousers of an inferior quality to those worn by the village postman."

"Have you the smooth-running automobile of the prosperous grocer?—"No, but I have the loan of the push-bicycle of my former under-gardener's uncle."

"Are you going to marry the beautiful daughter of the shoemaker?—"Yes, and her brother has just become engaged to the widow of my cousin the marquis."

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AT THE PLAY.

"The Romantic Age."



Mr. Arthur Wontner (to himself). "Well, I don't think much of your taste in clothes."

I hope that Mr. Alan Milne is a good enough critic to agree with me in thinking that this is the best play he has so far given us. Not that the idea of it is as new as that of his *Mr. Pim* or his *Wurzel-Flummery*, but because, without sacrificing his lightness of touch and his sense of fun, he has, for the first time, produced a serious scheme.

People will tell you that his Second Act was the weak spot in the play; that the others were brilliant, but that this one, for its first half, was tedious and delayed the action. They will say this because they are familiar with A. A. M.'s humour, but not with his sentiment. Yet it was in this middle Act that he gave us the best passage of all, in presenting the philosophy of his pedlar, which had in it something of the dewy freshness of the early morning scene in the wood ("morning's at seven," as *Pippa*—not *Mr. Pim*—said *en passant*). There was no real delay in the action here, for the pedlar was providing the hero with the argument without which he could never have persuaded the lady to yield; could never have made her understand that Romance is not confined to the trunk-and-hose period, or any age, so named, of chivalry, but is to be found wherever there is a true companionship of hearts. Unfortunately the effect of this passage was a little spoilt by what had just gone before—a rather slow and superfluous scene with the village idiot—and some of the audience imagined that the author was still marking time.

Mr. Milne has an individual manner so distinct that he can well afford to acknowledge his debt to Sir James Barrie. As in *Mary Rose*, so here (though there are no supernatural forces at work) we have the sharp contrast between commonplace life, as lived by the rest, and the life of Fairyland, as coming within the vision of one only. And we were reminded too of the Midsummer-madness that overtook the company in *Dear Brutus*. I won't say that it wasn't natural enough for *Melisande*, under the fascination of a moonlit Midsummer Eve, to imagine, when she chanced upon a gentleman in fancy dress of the right period, that at last she had realised her dream of a hero of romance; but she was stark Midsummer-mad to suppose, when she met him early next morning with his costume unchanged, that he would

keep it on till he came to tea with the family, and then, still wearing it, waft her off to Faerie.

But not even Barrie has ever made a better scene than that which showed us the disillusionment of the visionary when she is confronted with her blue-and-gold hero of romance now transformed into a plain Stock Exchange man, his air of banality enhanced by the last word in golf suitings. The humour of this scene, in which she made conventional conversation without any real effort to conceal her sense of the bathos of the situation, was very perfect. The relatively simple humour of the match-making mother—not so simple, all the same, as its spontaneity made it appear—had the distinction which one expects of Mr. Milne; but this was far the funniest feature in the play.

It would have been an easy matter to make cheap fun, as Mark Twain did in *A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur*, out of the popular view of the Age of Romance, but A. A. M. avoided that obvious lure. Indeed, in his natural anxiety not to be taken too seriously in his first attempt to be serious, he rather tended to make light of his own theory of modern romance, laying a little too much stress at the end on the culinary aspect of conjugal felicity.

I am not sure that Mr. Arthur Wontner (to whom my best wishes for his new managership) quite realised, in his doublet and long hose, my idea of a figure of mediæval romance. In fact I am free to confess that I disagreed with *Melisande* and preferred him in his golf-clothes. But perhaps that was part of the idea, and Mr. Milne meant me to feel like that. Miss Barbara Hoffe's *Melisande*—a difficult part, because she was the only other-worldly person in the play and the only one in desperate earnest—was very cleverly handled. In her most exalted moments of poetic rapture she was never too precious, and when called upon for a touch of corrective humour was quick to respond.

Miss Lottie Venne laid herself out in her inimitable way for a broad interpretation of the visionary's very earthly mother; indeed once or twice she almost laid herself out of the picture; but she still remained irresistible. As a pair of light-hearted young lovers Miss Dorothy Tetley and Mr. John Williams played really well in parts that were not nearly so easy as they looked. And there was the dry humour of Mr. Bromley-Davenport, as the father (I fear he must have missed the romance of twin souls) and the open-air charm of Mr. Nicholson's performance as *Gentleman Susan*, the pedlar. In a word, my grateful compliments embrace as good a cast as ever caught—and held—the spirit of an author.

"Priscilla and the Profligate."

When you have been jilted by *Cynthia* at the church-door and, two days afterwards, in a fit of pique marry *Priscilla* at sight (of course you can't always get a *Priscilla* to consent to this arrangement; but *Mr. Bensley Stuart Gore* had a young ward at school who wanted her freedom; so that was all right), you may think to persuade the Faithless One that you have given solid proof of your indifference to her. But you mustn't dash off to Africa an hour after your wedding with the declared intention of being eaten by wild men or wilder beasts, because, if you do that, you give your scheme away and *Cynthia* will have the satisfaction of knowing that she has driven you to desperate courses. Yet that is what *Mr. Bensley Stuart Gore* did (he was the "Profligate" of the title, though he never gave any noticeable sign of profligacy).

After this strain on my credulity I felt prepared for anything, and was not in the least surprised to find him, six years older and still intact, on the terrace of the Hotel Casa Bellini, by the dear old shores of Lake Maggiore, which, as the programme advised me, is in Italy. It seemed, too, the most natural thing in the world that the author, Miss Laura Wildig, should have collected *Priscilla* and *Cynthia* (the latter in tow of a third-rate millionaire husband whom she loathed) at the same address.

It was at this juncture that *Mr. [pg 337]Bensley Stuart Gore* was inspired with a Great Thought. In order to set *Priscilla* free (I ought to say that he hadn't recognised her) he would elope with *Cynthia*. How *Priscilla* set out to frustrate this noble sacrifice and secure her husband for herself; how she bribed the caretaker to lock him up with her in the "Bloody Turret" of an adjacent ruin; how subsequently, at 2 a.m., in the public lounge of the hotel, she tried to work upon his emotions by appearing in a black night-dress (surely this rather vulgar form of allurements is *démodé* by now even in the suburbs, or, anyhow, is not so freshly daring as she seemed to think it), I will leave you to imagine. Even Miss Iris Hoey's nice soft voice and pleasant *câlineries* could not quite carry off this rather machine-made trifle. If anything saved it, it was the acting of Mr. Frank Denton as *Jimmy Forde*. Starting as *Bensley's* "best man," he missed the wedding ceremony through going to the wrong church, but after that he stuck close to his friend for the remainder of the plot, and greatly endeared himself to the audience by the excellent way in which he played the silly ass.

As for *Bensley* himself, you might have thought that he had a sufficiently chequered career, yet Mr. Cyril Raymond got very little colour out of the part. For the rest, Mr. H. de Lange, as the millionaire, got a certain amount out of the subject of his wife's indigestion, which was a sort of *leit-motif* with him; but most of the colour seemed to have gone into the scenery, admirably designed and painted by Mr. McCleery and Mr. Walter Hann.

O. S.



Diner. "I say, waiter, I've asked three times for potatoes."

Waiter (still under the influence of military discipline). "Beg pardon, Sir, but I'm told off to concentrate on the cabbage."

"LOGS TO BURN."

*"Logs to burn; logs to burn;
Logs to save the coal a turn."*

Here's a word to make you wise
When you hear the wood-man's cries;
Never heed his usual tale
That he has splendid logs for sale,
But read these lines and really learn
The proper kinds of logs to burn.
Oak logs will warm you well
If they're old and dry;
Larch logs of pine woods smell,
But the sparks will fly.
Beech logs for Christmas-time,
Yew logs heat well;
"Scotch" logs it is a crime
For anyone to sell.
Birch logs will burn too fast,
Chestnut scarce at all;
Hawthorn logs are good to last
If cut in the Fall.
Holly logs will burn like wax,
You should burn them green;
Elm logs like smouldering flax,
No flame to be seen.
Pear logs and apple logs,
They will scent your room;
Cherry logs across the dogs
Smell like flowers in bloom.
But Ash logs, all smooth and grey,
Burn them green or old;
Buy up all that come your way,
They're worth their weight in gold.

"GIRL EYE-MAKER."

Picture-title in Daily Paper.

Perhaps we ought to mention that the eyes she makes are artificial, not "glad."

Our Discreet Press.

"Mystery surrounds the Russo-Polish peace negotiations at Riga. According to a Central News message from Warsaw Marshal Pilsudski has had a conference with?????????, the Premier, as to whether demobilisation should take place shortly."—*Evening Paper*.

"When he [Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree] was prepared to play *Martin Chuzzlewit* he wrote to me (and doubtless explained to others) that he was going to present *Mr. Micawber* as 'a sort of fairy.'"—*Sunday Paper*.

We suppose if Sir Herbert had staged *David Copperfield* he would have cast himself for the husband of *Mrs. Harris*.

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THE PRIVATE FILM.

My attention has been drawn to the most recent and perhaps the most terrible development of the Cinema by an advertisement, from which I take the following extracts:—

"HAVE YOUR OWN FILM TAKEN.

The most Modern Method of gaining Publicity.

To Members of Parliament, Mayors, Lecturers and other Public Men and Women.

"The Cinema has become the cheapest, the surest and most rapid road to publicity. It is estimated that a third of the population attend the Cinema once a week. Messrs. Mump and Gump have therefore fitted up a special studio for film work, in which you can now have your own film taken, representing you in any action you may desire. This method of publicity is specially recommended to Members of Parliament. For instance one can be filmed writing a letter, which can be closed down and handed to a messenger, which action can be followed by the letter itself being thrown on the screen.... Think what this means to a prospective Candidate when he goes to a constituency where he is unknown. He takes with him twenty or more films. Your constituents must see and know you before you can hope for their vote. The Cinema introduces your personality and your policy.

"Your film will cost you—
First reel ... Three guineas.
Each extra reel. One guinea."

The more I see of business-men the less they seem to me to know about business. I never read an advertisement without thinking, "How much better I (or even you) could have done that!" Yet they will tell you that it is their advertisements which make the money. It only shows.... However. Messrs. Mump and Gump, for instance, have scarcely skimmed the surface possibilities of their brilliant notion. This invention is going to make politics tolerable at last. No man minds being in the House of Commons; it is being in his constituency which is so dreadful. *And now he need never go there.*

For instance, when the constituency is tired of the letter-film, he can be filmed making a speech, which can be taken down and handed to a typist, which action can be followed by the speech itself being thrown on the screen—in instalments. The constituency will enjoy this, because it will take much less time to read it than it would to listen to it, and they can argue out loud about the meaning of Early English phrases like Datum-line and Functional Representation. In fact they can go on arguing during the *Whips of Sin* which will follow.

As for the public man, it won't take him two minutes to be filmed making the speech, unless, of course, he has any very complicated gestures; and it won't take him any time at all to compose it, because the private secretary will do that; and the private secretary will be able to make sure that his joke about Jereboam is not turned into a joke about Jehoshaphat at the last minute, or simply shelved in favour of a peroration on rainbows. After the speech the M.P. can be filmed opening a flowershow and, if necessary, writing a cheque to the local hortiphilist society, which cheque can be thrown on the screen amid loud applause, but need not, of course, go any further.

There is one other point, but it is rather a delicate matter: Messrs. Mump and Gump say to the prospective Candidate, "Your constituents must see and know you before you can hope for their vote." Are they quite right? I have seen a good many Candidates in my time, and I can think of some to whom I should have said, "Your constituents must *never* see you if you hope for a single vote." I mean, when one looks round the present House of Commons, one really marvels how.... But perhaps I had better not go on with that. The point is that a Candidate of that kind never *need* be seen by his constituents now. A handsome young private secretary, uniformed and beribboned, and the film does the rest.

Then I rather resent the assumption that Members of Parliament, Mayors, Lecturers and Actors are the only people who require publicity. I should have thought that those who spend their time writing things in the public Press, which are read by the public (if anybody), might have had at least the courtesy title of Public Man. Anyhow, I am going to have three guineas' worth. The only question is, what sort of picture will most thoroughly "get" my personality before a third of the population once a week? The moment when I am most characteristic is when I am lying in a hot bath, and to-morrow is Sunday; but I doubt if even a sixth of the population would be really keen on that. I don't mind writing a letter or two, only, if it meant an extra reel every time I decided to write it to-morrow instead, it would be rather a costly advertisement.

Really, I suppose, one ought to be done *At Work in His Study*; but even that would require a good deal of faking. Ought one, for instance, to remove the golf-balls and the cocoa-cup (and the rhyming dictionary) from The Desk? Then I always write with a decayed pencil, and that would look so bad. Messrs. Mump and Gump would have to throw in a quill-pen.

And I have no Study. I work in the drawingroom, when the children are not playing in it. To go into The Study I simply walk over to my table and put up a large notice: "The Study. Do not Speak to Me. I am Thinking." Do you think that had better be in the film?

Or I wonder if a Comic would be more effective—a Shaving reel or a Dressing reel? It is the small incidents of every-day life that one should look to for the key to the character of a Public Man; and once a whole third of the population had seen for themselves what pain it gives me to put links and studs and all those things in a clean shirt, they would understand the strange note of melancholy which runs through this article.

But of course an author should have several different reels corresponding to the different kinds of work which he wants to publicise. (That is a new word which I have just invented, but you will find it in common use in a month or two.) People like Mr. Belloc will probably require the full politician's ration of twenty or more, but the ordinary writer might rub along with four or five.

When his *Pug, Wog and Pussy* is on the market there will be a Family reel, in which he is pretending to be a tree and the children are climbing it. And when he has just published *The Cruise of the Cow; or, Seven Hours at Sea*, he will be seen with an intense expression tying a bowline on a bight or madly hauling on the throat-halyard—at Messrs. Mump and Gump's specially-equipped ponds. And for his passionate romance, *The Borrowed Bride*— But I don't know what he will do then.

And even now we have not exhausted the list of Public Men. There are clergymen. Don't you feel that some of those sermons might be thrown on the screen—and left there? A. P. H.

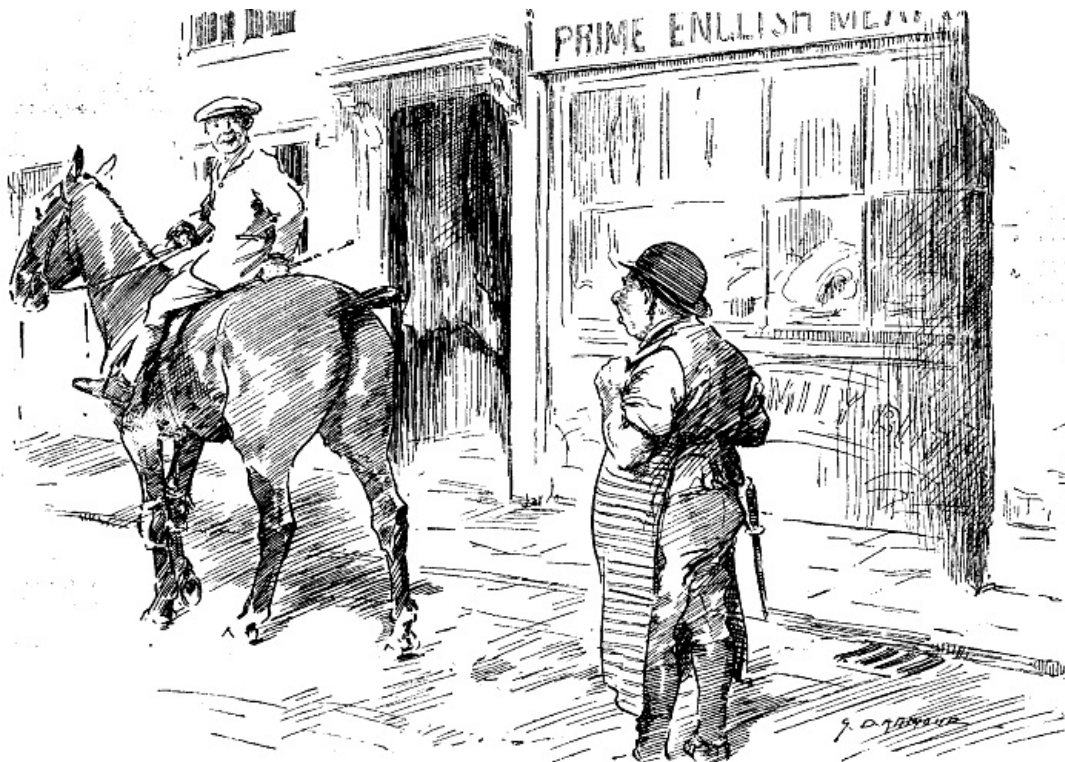
The Merry Bishop.

The Dean of Cape Town with a critical frown
To the jests of St. Albans' gay Bishop demurs;
But the Bishop denies the offence and implies
'Tis the way of all asses to nibble at Furse.

"Harvest Festival celebrations took place at St. John's Church on Sunday evening, when the choir rendered the anthem 'Praise the young ladies of the choir.'"—*Yorkshire Paper*.

And we have no doubt they deserved it.

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Butcher (at conclusion of scathing criticism of horse). "Well, that's my opinion, anyway. And I ought to know something by now about a bit of 'orseflesh when I sees it."

Groom. "Yes—and so ought your customers too."

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

How you regard Miss May Sinclair's latest story, *The Romantic* (Collins), will entirely depend upon your attitude towards the long-veiled question of the permissible in art. If you hold that all life (which in this association generally means something disagreeable) is its legitimate province and that genius can transmute an ugly study of morbid pathology into a romance, you will admire the force of this vivid little book; otherwise, I warn you frankly, you are like to be repelled by the whole business. The title, to begin with, is an irony as grim as anything that follows, in what sense you will find as the story reveals itself. *The Romantic* is a picture—what do I say? a vivisection—of cowardice, seen through the horrified eyes of a woman who loved the subject of it. The scene is the Belgian battlefields, to which *John Conway*, being unfitted for active service, had taken out a motor-ambulance, with *Charlotte Redhead* as one of his drivers. All the background of this part of the tale is wonderfully realised, a thing of actual and unforgettable experience. Here gradually the first tragedy of *Conway* is made clear, though shielded and ignored as long as possible by the loyalty of fellow-workers and the obstinate disbelief of the girl. Perhaps you think I am making too much of it all; treacherous nerves were the lot of many spiritually noble men in that hell. But little by little conviction of a deeper, less understandable, horror creeps upon the reader, only to be explained and confirmed on the last page. To be honest, *The Romantic* is an ugly, a detestably ugly book, but of its cleverness there can be no question.

It would appear that Mr. A. E. W. Mason is another of those who hold that the day of war-novels is not yet done. Anyhow, *The Summons* (Hodder and Stoughton) shows him dealing out all the old familiar cards, spies and counter-spies, submarines and petrol bases and secret ink. It must be admitted that the result is unexpectedly archaic. Perhaps also Mr. Mason hardly gives himself a fair chance. The "summons" to his hero (who, being familiar with the Spanish coast, is required when War breaks out to use this knowledge for submarine-thwarting) is too long delayed, and all the non-active service part of the tale suffers from a very dull love-interest and some even more dreary racing humour. Archaic or not, however, *Hillyard's* anti-spy adventures, in an exquisite setting that the author evidently knows as well as his hero, are good fun enough. But the home scenes had (for me at least) a lack of grip and conviction by no means to be looked for from a writer of Mr. Mason's experience. His big thrill, the suicide of the lady who first sends by car to the local paper the story of her end and then waits to confirm this by telephone before making it true, left me incredulous. I'm afraid *The Summons* can hardly be said to have found Mr. Mason in his customary form.

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"To write another person's life-history in the first person, and yet give to it the verisimilitude of a genuine autobiography, would under ordinary circumstances be a difficult if not impossible undertaking." So Mr. C. E. Gouldsbury tells us in a note to *Reminiscences of a Stowaway* (Chapman and Hall), and most of us will cordially agree with him. But, after reading this volume of reminiscences, I think you will also agree that Mr. Gouldsbury has acquitted himself admirably of a most difficult task. The man into whose skin, if I may so express it, he has temporarily tried to fit himself was Mr. Alexander Douglas Larymore, who started his adventurous career as a stowaway in an "old iron tub," and eventually became Inspector-General of Jails in India. For nearly forty years Mr. Gouldsbury was Mr. Larymore's intimate friend, and has had sufficient data at his disposal to do justice to what was a remarkably full and interesting life. Possibly those of us who retain a tender spot in our hearts for stowaways may regret that Mr. Larymore grew tired of the sea; but his adventures were as numerous and amusing on land as on water, and they are also valuable for the strong light they throw on the India of some years ago. Mr. Gouldsbury has at once provided a lasting tribute to the memory of his friend and written a book which both in style and matter would be hard to beat.



The King. "Look here—this throne won't do; it is impossible for us to look dignified in it."

The Artificer. "I'm sorry, your Majesty. There must be some mistake. I got it in my 'ead that your Majesty ordered a lounge throne."

Are you a victim to the *Tarzan* habit? Perhaps your eye may have been caught by the word on bookstalls as the generic title of an increasing pile of volumes; but knowing, like myself, that all things explain themselves in time, you may have been content to leave it at that. Meanwhile, however, the thing has continued to spread, till on the wrapper of *Tarzan the Untamed* (Methuen), which now at last finds me out, its publishers are able to number its devotees in millions. Well, of course the outstanding fact about such popularity is that in face of it any affectation of superiority becomes simply silly. One has got to accept this creation of Mr. Edgar Rice Burroughs as among the definite literary phenomena of our time. In the immediate spasm before me *Tarzan* (who is, if you need telling, a kind of horribly exaggerated *Mowgli* after a diet of the Food of the Gods) is represented as placing himself at the disposal of the British forces in East Africa, and attacking the Germans with man-eating lions. The rather chastening feature of which was my own unexpected enjoyment of the idea. Even, for one disconcerting moment, like the persons in the admonitory anecdotes who taste opium "just for fun," I began to feel that perhaps.... However it passed, and the temptation has not returned. Meanwhile the real nature of Tarzanism, whether some sinister possession or simply the age-long appetite for the monstrous, just now a little out of hand, remains as far from solution as ever.

Mr. Horace Bleackley, whose last excursion into political fiction was a description of an opéra-bouffe Labour Government in action, addresses himself, in *The Monster* (Heinemann), to a more serious theme. His monster is the factory system, and if I say that this witty novel will provide the ignorant and comfortable with instruction as well as entertainment I hope I shan't have done him any harm. The author, while making his points against the system, notes truly enough that the risen ranker, the one who had been through the dreadful mill, with its ninety-hour working week for children, became the hardest master during that wonderful period of the Manchesterising of England which laid the train for the explosions of our present discontents. He reminds us also of that admirable speech, made about every ten years for the last hundred or so in the House with the same fervour and conviction, to the effect that any change in conditions or wages would surely mean the complete ruin of the country. A comforting speech, that! Perhaps Mr. Bleackley, presenting three generations from Peterloo to the Jubilee of Queen Victoria, covers too much ground for full effect, but he has pleasantly gilded a wholesome pill for pleasant people. Good luck to him.

I did not take the publishers' statement that *Pengard Awake* (Methuen) was "entirely unlike Mr. Straus's previous stories" as a recommendation, however alluring it was intended to be, for he has good and enjoyable work to his credit. I doubt, indeed, if he has yet written a book more acceptable to the novel-reading public than this tale of "action, mystery and wonderful adventures" (again I quote from the paper wrapper). Possibly in a so-called mystery book the author ought to have his readers guessing all the time, but if I was not perpetually engaged in this rather exhausting pursuit I was, at any rate, intrigued. *Pengard*, who is also *Sylvester*, and yet is neither the one nor the other, may be too much for your saner moments of credulity. But Mr. Straus tells his queer story so plausibly and with so light a touch that even though you may affect to scoff at his dashing improbabilities you cannot escape their attraction. Indeed Mr. Straus's adventure into fields hitherto strange to him has been so successful that I am inclined to ask him to continue cultivating them.

Life's Little Contradictions.

"Now mind, you know, if I kill you it's nothing, but if you kill me, by Jingo, it's murder." This remark was put by John Leech into the lips of a small Special Constable, represented as menacing a gigantic ruffian, and was not, as you might think, addressed by a Sinn Feiner to a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son.

Mr. Punch wishes to offer the most sincere congratulations to his old friends on the occasion of the centenary of their firm.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI, VOLUME 159, OCTOBER 27, 1920 ***

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