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February 2, 1916

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI,
VOLUME 150, FEBRUARY 2, 1916 ***

PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.

Vol. 150.

February 2, 1916.

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CHARIVARIA.

According to the Correspondent of *The Daily Mail* who described the festivities at Nish, the King of BULGARIA "has a curious duck-like waddle." This is believed to be the result of his effort to do the Goose-Step while avoiding the Turkey-Trot.

Owing to the extraction of benzol and toluol from gas for the purpose of making high-explosives it is stated that consumers may have to put up with some decrease in illuminating power. It is expected, in view of the good object involved, that the announcement will be received in a spirit of toleration.

We cannot agree with the actor who complains that his manager forbids him to wear his armlet on the stage. The sympathies of the audience might be entirely deranged by the discovery that the elderly villain was an attested patriot while the young and beautiful hero was either ineligible or a slacker.

Describing the depressed condition of the laundry trade a witness at the Clerkenwell County Court said, "We are eight million double collars short every week." It is shrewdly conjectured that they are in the neighbourhood of the Front.

Nothing in the course of his Balkan pilgrimage is reported to have pleased the KAISER so much as a steamer-trip on the Danube. It was looking so sympathetically blue.

The Government is going to close Museums and Picture-galleries to the public. No one shall accuse us of being Apostles of Culture.

It is said that the Australian and New Zealand soldiers now in London are very fond of visiting the British Museum, and take a particular interest in the Egyptian antiquities. But it is not true that they now refer to England as "The Mummy Country."

Austrians and Hungarians are said to be quarrelling as to whether the occupied Serbian territory should eventually belong to the Monarchy or the Kingdom, and the jurists on either side are ransacking the history of the past for arguments to support their respective cases. Here we have another instance of the fondness of learned men for disputing about purely academic questions. Serbia will belong to the Serbians.

An American gentleman, who started out to visit his wife when she was staying with her mother and failed to find her after three days' search, excuses himself on the ground that he had forgotten her maiden name. He puts it down to absence of mind; and his mother-in-law is inclined to agree with him.

Soap is the latest article to be placed on the list of absolute contraband; and it is now more certain than ever that the Germans will not come out of the War with clean hands.

In view of the impending paper-famine a widely-circulated journal announces its readiness to receive back from the public any parcels of old copies marked "waste paper." In the opinion of its trade-rivals the inscription is superfluous.

A suggestion has been made by a Registrar in Bankruptcy that the Tercentenary of SHAKESPEARE'S death should be celebrated by the performance in every large town of one of the Bard's plays; and some regret has been expressed that anybody should take advantage of a national celebration to boom his own business.

"How many of us realise that, were it not for America, the War to-day in Europe, as fought, could not even exist?" is the question put, according to a New York correspondent, "by Mr. Gutzon Borglum, the great American sculptor." Still the War has its compensations. But for its existence we might never have heard of Mr. GUTZON BORGLUM, the great American sculptor.

A correspondent, describing the recent food riots in Berlin, says that they were chiefly due to "women who were fed up with the difficulty of providing meals for their families."

The following notice was found affixed to a building somewhere near the Front: "SIR OFFICERS,— Ask the bathroom's key to the office. The bathroom shall be wash by the servant after bath. Sir Officer without servant shall not have the key." It sounds rather abrupt.

Owing to the Government demand that nothing in the way of unnecessary expenditure should be allowed, it is expected that all paid lecturers on War Economy and National Thrift will be given a week's notice.

Opposing a suggestion of the Wandsworth Borough Council to discontinue the issue of fiction from the free libraries, a member of the Women's Freedom League said that a novel was to a woman what a pipe was to a man. Well, not quite, perhaps. We never saw a man begin a pipe at the wrong end.



"THEY OUGHT TO BE AT THE FRONT. THAT'S THE SORT THEY WANT THERE."

"THEY WON'T GO, SIR. THEY'RE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS."

From an article by Mr. AUSTIN HARRISON in *The Sunday Pictorial*:—

"A few strange gentlemen attitudinise in Westminster on principle, but these men would cut capers of principle in any case, like Mr. Snodgrass when he went skating."

Or *Mr. Winkle* when he wrote verses.

"In the Continental boat-trains the warning, '*Licht liniauslehnen*,' has not been removed from the windows.... Occasionally you see that '*Nicht liniauslehnen*' has been indignantly pasted over."—*Provincial Paper*.

The latter is certainly a little more German than the other.

After a description of the new lighting order:—

"The regulations will impose a great deal of work on the police, and it is the duty of the public to make it as light as possible."—*Hampshire Observer*.

Lux, in fact, *a non lucendo*.

A Lonely Life.

"Nothing but margarine has entered my door since the War began."—*Dr. C. W. SALEEBY* in "*Daily Chronicle*."

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THE WATCH DOGS.

XXXIV.

MY DEAR CHARLES,—We're having a great time with our new arrival, one of those confounded civilians, who are only let into the business because the business, in these modern and highly complicated days, cannot be carried on without them. He's a jolly old Lieutenant of about fifty years; he has a concentrated experience of the world but doesn't remember having been mixed up in a big European war before. At first I kept on telling him that business is one thing and war is another, but he wouldn't see it and persisted in doing and saying and thinking things which were bound to land us in a national disaster. He had no respect whatever for the Pass Memo., his central and sole idea being to push along with the elimination of the Bosch. When he wanted something done, he just went to the Top-man of the department, called him "I say," and went straight to the point. The Top-man had never been asked to do business this way before.

He put up with it a dozen times or so, but finally he had to take steps. So he wrote a little note on a Buff slip and addressed it, very rightly of course, to the Top-man but one; and the Top-man but one read it and passed it very carefully to the Top-man but two; and so, with that inevitability which is the hall-mark of the system, it was passed and passed until it came (in less than a week) to the office of the ancient Lieutenant on the opposite side of the street. And it ran: "Lieutenant So-and-So should be notified that it is neither necessary nor desirable that he should call personally at this office to transact his business. Matters should be put forward by him through the usual course of correspondence." The ancient Lieutenant, who wouldn't hurt anybody's feelings for the world, felt that it was up to him to put the matter right. So he stepped across to the Top-man's office, and when the Top-man asked him, somewhat pointedly, if he had received his note, the Ancient very genially replied, "Yes, thank you," and explained that he had just looked in personally to acknowledge receipt of same.

It sounds as if a dreadful quarrel would be raging between the Ancient on one side and on the other the Top-man, the whole series of under-Top-men and all persons in any way representing the military system. You'd expect to hear that the Ancient's conversation at mess is insubordinate, rebellious, or at least bitterly sarcastic. No such thing; the old gentleman becomes a more ardent militarist every day; wants to see once for all an end of all lawyer-politicians, and all so-called "business-men." "We have made a poor show of being civilians," is his point; "let's try being soldiers for a generation or two."

On the whole he thinks we should find it easier to carry on as a British Empire in uniform than as a German province in mufti. He says that what's wrong with Prussian Militarism is that it is Prussian; to succeed, the thing has to be run by gentlemen.

A Top-man honoured our mess the other night. Under the mellowing influence of our Curried Bully he unbent somewhat and encouraged the Ancient on his pet subject. Under the influence of the latter's theories he unbent still further. He discoursed upon the true inwardness of the military method of running an office, pausing at last for the Ancient to say a few words. "Oh," said he, "I don't allow myself to be put off by a trifle like that. There's many a kind heart behind a Buff slip, and we all have our little weaknesses." The idea of having a little weakness was so novel to the Top-man that it caused him to choke and to be led from the mess, eventually, in a state of nervous exhaustion.

The latest information from the trenches goes to support the maxim that all one requires to wage war is a bold face and a gas helmet. A very distinguished O.C. went up the other day to inspect the trenches of his command and to express such views of their faults and the faults of their inmates as might occur to him from time to time. He had progressed some way up the communication trench, when it struck him that, whereas his recent order had been particularly

menacing to everyone of whatever rank who was discovered there or thereabouts without a gas helmet, nevertheless he himself was at that moment innocent of such furniture. Fortunately there came from the opposite direction an odds-and-end private, with nothing in his favour except the wearing of the well-known satchel so much in vogue in Flanders society for the carrying of gas helmets. That was enough for the Commander; this was essentially one of those privates to be called "My man," and treated as such. Politely but firmly he was requested to part with his satchel as a temporary loan to his General. Firmly, if respectfully, he refused to comply. Them was his orders. The Commander congratulated him on his very proper attitude, explained to him the nature of the higher commands and demanded the satchel. The man looked like being stony about it, but the Commander became irresistibly commanding and got the satchel at last. He buckled it on, and the party proceeded, characterising the reluctance of the private to part with his treasure as almost an exaggerated sense of obedience to printed orders.

Gas helmets always exercise a peculiar fascination for people who inspect trenches, and the matter was now especially prominent in the mind of the Commander as he marched along, outwardly appearing to be at his happiest here, inwardly thanking goodness that his home was elsewhere. Conceive his delight to discover a subaltern, fresh from ablutions, with no satchel upon him! The subaltern, distinctly aware of this amongst his many failings, was all for being passed by as insignificant; the Commander was all for a scene. Everybody halted, and the air became pregnant with possibilities.... It was a nicely calculated speech, leading up gradually to the pointed contrast between (*a*) overworked Commander, weighed down with responsibilities, absorbed day and night in momentous matters of large principle, nevertheless infallible on smallest detail and now in possession of gas helmet, one, and (*b*) very junior subaltern, free to enjoy the open-air irresponsible life of the trenches, yet neglecting even the few small matters entrusted to him, without same.

"And what's more, Sir," he concluded, "I doubt very much whether, if someone gave you a helmet now, you'd know what to do with it. Here, take mine." (The attendant Brass-hats liked the "mine," but very discreetly kept their emotions to themselves.)

It was not a peculiarly clean or remarkably well-packed satchel which the trembling hand of the disgraced subaltern took from the Commander, and the latter did not intend to let attention dwell too long upon the grimy details of its exterior. Fixing the steel eye of conscious rectitude on his victim, he leant slightly towards him and very unmistakably shouted at him the one dread word, "Gas!".... Unfortunately for the Commander the subaltern not only knew what to do next, but also had just the physical strength remaining in his fingers to start doing it. With the eyes of all upon him (and by this time there had gathered round quite a nice little crowd, thoroughly conversant with the event in progress), the subaltern opened the satchel alleged to belong to the Commander and took from it—no, Charles, not a gas helmet, but a pair of socks—and *such* socks too!

Yours ever, HENRY.



SINKING.

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ON BELLONA'S HEM.

THE MISFIRE.

When I entered the third smoker there was, as there now always is, a soldier in one corner.

Just as we were starting, another soldier got in and sat in the opposite corner. The freemasonry of Khaki immediately setting to work, within two minutes they knew all about each other's camp, destination and regiment, and had exchanged cigarettes.

The first soldier had not yet left England and was stolid; the newcomer had been in the trenches, had been wounded in the leg, had recovered, was shortly going back, and was animated. His leg was all right, except that in wet weather it ached. In fact he could even tell by it when we were going to have rain. His "blooming barometer" he called it. Here he laughed—a hearty laugh, for he was a genial blade and liked to hear himself talk.

The first soldier did not laugh, but was interested. He thought it a convenient thing to have a leg that foretold the weather.

"Which one is it?" he asked.

"The left."

The first soldier was disproportionately impressed.

"The left, is it?" he said heavily, as though he would have understood the phenomenon in the right easily enough. "The left."

Completely unconscious of the danger-signals, the second soldier now began to unload his repertory of stories, and he started off with that excellent one, very popular in the early days of the War, about the wealthy private.

For the sake of verisimilitude he laid the scene in his own barracks. "A funny thing happened at our place the other day," he began. He had evidently had great success with this story. His expression indicated approaching triumph.

But no anticipatory gleam lit the face of his new friend. It was in fact one of those faces into which words sink as into a sandbank—a white, puffy, long face, with a moustache of obsolete bushiness.

"I thought I should have died of laughing," the other resumed, utterly unsuspecting, wholly undeterred.

In the far corner I kept my eye on my book but my ears open. I could see that he was rushing to his doom.

"We were being paid," he went on, "and the quartermaster asked one of the men if he did not wish sixpence to be deducted to go to his wife. The man said, 'No.' 'Why not?' the quartermaster asked. The man said he didn't think his wife would need it or miss it. 'You'd better be generous about it,' the quartermaster said; 'every little helps, you know.'"

He paused. "What do you think the man said to that?" he asked his new friend. "He said," he hurried on, "I don't think I'll send it. You see, I allow her four thousand a year as it is."

The *raconteur* laughed loudly and leaned back with the satisfaction—or at least some of it—of one who has told a funny story and told it well.

But the other did not laugh at all. His face remained the dull thing it was.

"You see," said the story-teller, explaining the point, "there are all sorts in the Army now, and this man was a toff. He was so rich that he could afford to allow his wife four thousand pounds a year. Four thousand pounds! Do you see?"

"Oh, yes, I see that. He must have been very rich. Why was he just a private?"

"I don't know."

"Funny being a private with all that money. I wonder you didn't ask him."

"I didn't, anyway. But you see the point now. No end of a joke for the quartermaster to try and get a man who allowed his wife four thousand a year to deduct sixpence a week to send to her! I thought I should have died of laughing."

The first soldier remained impassive. "And what happened?" he asked at last.

"What happened?"

"Yes, what was done about it? The sixpence, I mean. Did he agree to send it?"

The second soldier pulled himself together. "Oh, I don't know," he said shortly. "That's not the point."

"After all," the other continued, "the regulations say that married men have to deduct sixpence for their wives, don't they?"

"Yes, of course," the other replied. "But this man, I tell you, already gave her four thousand a year."

"That doesn't really touch it," said the first soldier. "The principle's the same. Now——"

But I could stand the humiliation of the other honest fellow, so brimming with anecdote and cheerfulness, no longer; and I came to his rescue with my cigarette case. For I have had misfires myself too often.

you do not care to share your dainties, you can hang them from the roof.

In the trenches themselves the rat is almost a domestic animal. Town rats are lean, persecuted and vicious; nobody loves them. But those who hobnob with us here are fed, like our Army, on Army rations, together with more than their share of private luxuries, and consequently are stout and contented-looking, and display none of the ill-bred and disconcerting haste of the hereditary fugitive of our drains and cellars. If you happen to stand still and silent for a few moments, you will hear some cheery old rascal come sniffing and grunting along the parapet, not so much in search of food as to enjoy the air—or so his manner would indicate.

Between the Army and these other dwellers in earths and burrows there must henceforth be a bond of true sympathy.



Customer. "I SAY, THIS CHICKEN'S A BIT TOUGH. WHERE DID YOU GET IT?"

Manager. "THEY COME UP IN FRESH LOTS FROM THE COUNTRY THREE TIMES A WEEK, SIR."

Customer. "WELL, THIS MUST BELONG TO GROUP 45!"

La Grèce Antique: Hellas. *La Grèce Moderne:* Hélas!

To be added to our collection "Glimpses of the Obvious":—

"We feel more than ever that the Past is all behind us and the Future all in front."—*Reading Standard.*

From a trade circular:—

"We are installing 15 of our largest size Patent Fool-proof Steam Kettles at Woolwich Arsenal."

Zeppelin crews please note.

LAST THOUGHTS ON GALLIPOLI.

Once more sits Mahomet by Helles' marges
And smokes at ease among his cypress-trees,
Nor snipes from scrubberies at British targes
Nor views them wallowing in sacred seas,
But cleans his side-arms and is pleased to prattle
Of that great morning when he woke and heard
That in his slumbers he had fought a battle,
A bloody battle, and a little bird

Piped (in the German) at his side, and said,
"The something infidels have been and fled."

Cautious he crept from out his mountain-ditches,
Down the long gully, past the Water Towers;
By Backhouse Point he nosed among the niches,
But they were hushed, and innocent of Giaours;
Still fearful found the earthy homes we haunted,
Those thirsty stretches where the rest-camps were,
Then to the sea slunk on, a trifle daunted
By wreathéd wires and every sort of snare,
And came at last, incredulous, to find
The very beach all blasphemously mined.

Now on each hand he eyes our impious labels,
BOND STREET and REGENT STREET, those weary ways;
Here stands the PINK FARM, with the broken gables,
Here OXFORD CIRCUS marks a winding maze;
But most, I ween, in scarred grave-ridden regions
O'er many a battle-scene he loves to brood,
How Allah here was gracious to his legions,
How here, again, he was not quite so good,
Here by the BROWN HOUSE, when the bombs began,
And they—don't mention it—they turned and ran.

And we no more shall see the great ships gather,
Nor hear their thundering on days of state,
Nor toil from trenches in an honest lather
To magic swimmings in the perfect Strait;
Nor sip Greek wine and see the slow sun dropping
On gorgeous evenings over Imbros' Isle,
While up the hill that maxim will keep popping,
And the men sing, and camp-fires wink awhile,
And in the scrub the glow-worms glow like stars,
But (hopeless creatures) will not light cigars;

Nor daylong linger in our delvéd lodges,
And fight for food with fifty thousand flies,
Too sick and sore to be afraid of "proj's,"
Too dazed with dust to see the turquoise skies;
Nor walk at even by the busy beaches,
Or quiet cliff-paths where the Indians pray,
And see the sweepers in the sky-blue reaches
Of Troy's own water, where the Greek ships lay,
And touch the boat-hulks, where they float forlorn,
The wounded boats of that first April morn;

Nor wake unhappily to see the sun come
And stand to arms in some Cimmerian grot—
But I, in town, well rid of all that bunkum,
I like to think that Mahomet is not;
He must sit on, now sweltering, now frozen,
By many a draughty cliff and mountain holt,
And, when rude fears afflict the Prophet's chosen,
Gird on his arms and madly work his bolt,
While round the heights the awful whispers run,
"The bard of PUNCH is landing with his gun."

Condescension.

"THROUGH STRESS OF WAR Baronet's Niece will ORDER a Gentleman's HOUSEHOLD."—*The Times*.

UNWRITTEN LETTERS TO THE KAISER.

No. XXXIV.

(From the *Frau Professor TINTENKLECKS*.)

ALL-MIGHTIEST KAISER,—With the humblest assurance of my everlasting respect I desire to lay bare to you, since you are without doubt the Father of your People, my inmost thoughts as to this terrible War in which we have now for eighteen months been engaged. I have some right, I think, for my husband is that same Professor Tintenklocks whose *opusculum* on "International Law in

Relation to World Power" was received with special favour by your Majesty, who summoned the beloved writer to your Palace, and with your own gracious right hand were pleased to beat him with some force on his back, saying that "this Tintenklecks is a tremendous fellow, and there should be more such in the world." How well I remember that evening—it was a year before the War—and how in honour of the Professor we had a Poetry supper, at which each guest recited some verses of praise, and at the end little Amalie Siegeltisch, the daughter of our colleague, placed on the brows of the Professor a laurel-wreath which, however, pricked his with-much-hair-unadorned head, and had therefore, after a great deal of pleasant witticisms, to be taken off.

So when the War at last broke out my husband and I were amongst the loudest Hosannah-shouters and singers of true German patriotic songs, for we believed then that the War would be a short one, and that after a few great victories we should make a brilliant peace on our own terms, having utterly smashed all our enemies and having taken England's war-ships and her colonies for our own. "Long he cannot last," said my Professor, speaking of the War. "The French are a degenerate race, and we shall be in Paris in a month. The English are given up to games, and their mercenary army—I have it on the highest authority—cannot for a moment stand against our German heroes. The Russians are slow and disorganised and useless for war. For me you need not be afraid, my dear. In this war a man of my age will not be required." So he spoke; and now where is he and what has become of him? He has lost a leg, his right hand has been shot through, and he is in a hospital in Poland. Shall I ever see him again, I wonder.

Well, we have had victories in plenty, according to the Generals. Every time we move from one place to another we gain, it seems, an overwhelming triumph and cause to fly every one who is opposed to us. Twice already your Majesty has announced that before the leaves fell from the trees there would be peace, and our brave soldiers would return safely to their homes; but, alas, it has not so happened, and the dreadful fighting still goes on, and many thousands of our women lose their fathers, their husbands, and their sons. With every victory (as they call it) peace, which should be nearer at hand, seems to retire further and further away, and only sorrow and wretchedness come close to us. And that is not all. Our food, like everything else we have to buy, is so dear that we women find it above all things difficult to provide ourselves with what we need for our daily life, and the worst of it, they say, has not yet come. I could understand that if we had been defeated; but we have been ever victorious and yet we are in want. It is useless for Pastor Hassmann to tell us on Sundays that we must endure to the end. We are prepared to do what we can, but we think, too, that since we have been so magnificently victorious we should have peace quickly, so that we may all once more try to have some happiness in this world.

I remain, in the deepest devotion,

Your loyal, KUNEGUNDE TINTENKLECKS.

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MR. PUNCH'S POTTED FILMS. THE DOMESTIC DRAMA.

WHAT A LITTLE CHILD CAN DO.



"MUMMY, WHERE DOES DADDY GO EVERY NIGHT AFTER DINNER?"



ALAS! HE GOES TO THE ELYSIAN CLUB—NUMBER 301A, SOHO SQUARE.



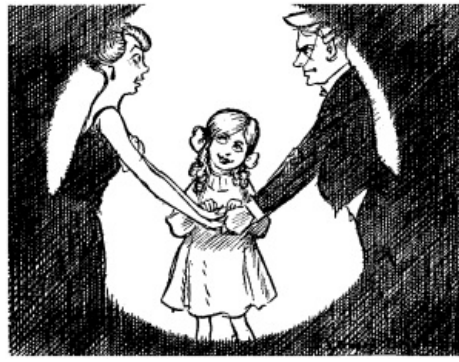
"HULLO, DADDY! I'SE COME TO SEE 'OO."



THE CLUB IS SURROUNDED BY THE POLICE.



"WE ARE THE CARETAKER'S LITTLE CHILDREN."



WHAT A LITTLE CHILD CAN DO.

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"WOT'S COME OVER YOUNG GINGER?"

"OW! THERE'S NO TORKIN' TO 'IM SINCE 'IS BRUVVER TOOK UP WIV LORD DURBY."

MEDITATIONS OF MARCUS O'REILLY.

LUCY.

We called her Lucy because she came from the country and "dwelt on a wide moor." We never knew her real name.

She came like a ray of sunlight into our dull sordid town once a week with immaculate white apron, wearing a cap of an older, honester world, carrying a basket of delicious country butter made up in appetising rolls. On the clean napkin which covered the top of the basket always reposed a huge door-key, "to keep," she said, "the butter from turning." And the white hair of her and those wonderful blue eyes which looked you through and through! No wonder my wife was in love with her and refused from that time to eat the dull town-grocer's wares.

My wife often muses as to the real cause of the general superiority of dwellers in the country over the apologies for humanity who live in towns. She says it is moral fibre. She comes from the country herself and is quite unbiassed. For me I think it must be living so much amongst sheep and lambs and woolly things.

I shouldn't have said myself that our town butter was without fibre, but this is a matter of taste.

My wife would often close her eyes when eating Lucy and conjure up pictures of her own simple girlhood days, of the country rectory, of the rooks singing matins and vespers in the trees. Country people often get like this over an egg at breakfast. I didn't eat Lucy myself, as my taste is ruined by my vicious town breeding; besides, Lucy was a luxury in war-time, and Dossett's Genuine Creamery has for me a meatier savour.

Cecilia always gave Lucy more than the market value for her butter and a cup of tea besides, while they chatted occasionally over things dear to rural hearts, accidents by flood and field, turnips and parochial vestries. My wife used to marvel at the superior firmness of Lucy's butter, which was ever the same, Lucy's explanation being that she had a wonderfully cool hand.

Our local inspector, a man of the latest and most scientific knowledge, confirmed this statement.

In introducing Lucy to our resident magistrate he said she was the coolest hand he had ever known. It was a bad case. It had ten per cent. too much of this, and fifteen per cent. too much of that, and the rest was the cheapest margarine and stirring. There wasn't a cow within five miles of her place and he didn't believe she had ever seen one.

We haven't met Lucy since. My wife says that WORDSWORTH was often taken in, just like that. And she has heard, anyhow, that Lucy was born in Bradford. So that it proves nothing.

Hymn for Volunteer Corps digging trenches for the defence of London:—

"O Parados! O Parados! 'tis weary working here!"

"The baby should go out every day, except when it is storming."—*New York Sunday Herald*.

In that case try a wind-pill.

"To-day's Russian communiqué says:—

In Persia, on the road to Kermanshah, we have occupied the town of Kangavar.

Note.—Kangavar is a town of 15¾¾ inhabitants in the Province of Ardilan."—*Aberdeen Evening Express*.

This is carrying accuracy to an extreme, even for Scotland.



THE CHALLENGE.

"HALT! WHO COMES THERE?" "NEUTRAL." "PROVE IT!"

["What I would say to Neutrals is this: Do they admit our right to apply the principles

which were applied by the American Government in the War between North and South—to apply those principles to modern conditions and to do our best to prevent trade with the enemy through neutral countries? If the answer is that we are not entitled to do that, then I must say definitely that it is a departure from neutrality."—*Sir EDWARD GREY.*]

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

(EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.)

House of Commons, Monday, January 24th.—At Question time House crowded in response to urgent Whip issued in anticipation of division on Third Reading of Military Service Bill. Members ready to vote; disinclined to remain to hear speeches, delivered on Second Reading and Committee stages, reiterated by small minority on Report. Thus it came to pass that when on stroke of half-past nine this milestone passed, Benches were almost empty.

Filled up when Third Reading moved, and debate lamely set on foot again. WALTER LONG, who has greatly helped BONAR LAW in his successful management of Bill, set good example by moving Third Reading without additional word of comment or argument. Example thrown away. More last words spoken under embarrassing accompaniment of private conversation and other signs of impatience.

Shortly after eleven o'clock division taken, revealing existence of solid minority of three dozen. Oddly enough, whilst rattling majority on Second Reading was hailed with enthusiastic cheering, that on Third Reading was heard in silence, Members hurrying off in search of taxis.

Business done.—By majority of 347, in House of 419 Members, Military Service Bill read a third time and passed on to Lords.

House of Lords, Tuesday.—Military Service Bill turned up for Second Reading. Full attendance and a gathering of Commoners in their pen above Bar seemed to indicate important debate. Turned out to be only less dull than that which slumbered round closing stage in the Commons. LANSDOWNE pluckily endeavoured to give note of novelty to topic by saying "not what the Bill was but what it was not." Even this ingenious device did not succeed in investing proceedings with anything approaching animation.

The WEARY WEARDALE, who through long public life has tried in succession both branches of the Legislature and found them equally withered, was doubtful whether the measure would appreciably affect its avowed purpose of increasing number of men with the Colours. With instinct of good Liberal—in his time PHILIP STANHOPE was known in the Commons as an almost dangerous Radical—he turned and rent "certain leaders who have surrendered a precious principle and in so doing are undermining the authority and existence of the whole Liberal Party." Still, though prospect was gloomy, he would not despair.

"The Liberal Party," he said, "will rise again" (HALSBURY shook his head doubtfully) "and will shed the leaders who have deserted it."

Having thus delivered his soul WEARY ONE did not challenge a division.

Business done.—Military Service Bill read second time without division.

House of Commons, Wednesday.—Once more, the last time in history of session of unparalleled length and importance, House crowded. Peers' Gallery full. From Diplomatic Gallery the United States, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Holland, represented by their Ministers, looked on, eagerly listening.

Resolution, moved by SHIRLEY BENN, urged Government to enforce against enemy a blockade as effective as possible. In one of his comprehensive, quietly delivered and powerful speeches EDWARD GREY showed that situation is not so easily managed as amateur diplomatists below the Gangway believe, or as fractious newspapers, bent on damaging the Government even if the Empire falls, assert. Explained in detail steps taken by Foreign Office to deal with it. House listened critically but approvingly. Took note of fact that FIRST LORD OF ADMIRALTY emphatically cheered denial of one of the malicious rumours current—that in the task of preventing supplies reaching the enemy the Foreign Office spoils the work of the Navy.

Sharp, almost angry burst of cheering greeted passage towards close of speech in which FOREIGN SECRETARY declared that maximum effort in this country, whether military, naval or financial, is at the disposal of our Allies in carrying on the War against Prussian militarism.

"With them," he confidently but still quietly said, "we will see it through to the end."

Speeches following expressed general satisfaction with this statement, supplemented by one addressed to neutrals. Courteously assured them of desire not to make things unnecessarily irksome. But pointed out that in the matter of preventing supplies reaching the enemy by circuitous routes Great Britain has her own work to do and means to do it thoroughly.

Business done.—Resolution advocating effective blockade talked out.

THURSDAY.—Parliament prorogued. Reversing CHARLES LAMB'S conscientious habit at the India Office, where, having arrived late, he made up for it by going away early, Parliament, having toiled through exceptionally long Session, treats itself to briefest possible recess. Reassembles 15th February.



**REDUCED IMPORT OF PAPER:
WHAT WE MAY COME TO.**

Mr. Runciman. "AH, WELL, ONE MISSES THE OLD WEALTH OF FLATTERY; STILL, ONE MUST MAKE SACRIFICES FOR ONE'S COUNTRY!"

Diana Up to Date.

"MANAGERESS (35), thorough business woman, accustomed to control stag."—*Women's Employment.*

From an account of the reception of British soldiers in Rome:—

"As the hour for departure approached the band played alternately the 'Marcia Reale' and 'Rule, Britannia,' while our men sang 'Tipperary.'"—*The Times.*

We fear the proceedings were not so harmonious as we had been led to suppose.

"GENTLEMAN'S SHOOTING ESTATE for Sale, 240 acres, or would Let on Lease; near London Bridge."—*Advt. in "The Standard."*

Shooting the arches is splendid sport.

"2.45 A.M.—When Grossmith lit a cigarette someone said, 'This is all right. We bring a civilian here, and he lights up within hailing distance of the Germans.'

2.46 P.M.—Grossmith put out his cigarette."—*Daily Mirror.*

Now that tobacco is going up again it would be a boon to smokers if Mr. GROSSMITH would tell us how he keeps a cigarette going for twelve hours.

"The fire which broke out at Bergen on Saturday was mastered by three o'clock on Sunday morning. About 400 buildings, mostly very valuable property, were destroyed. The value of the houses which were burnt down is about £1,111,111, and the total damage is estimated at £5,555,555."—*Edinburgh Evening News.*

The exactitude of these figures would convince even an insurance company.



First Lady. "THAT'S ONE OF THEM AUSTRALIAN SOLDIERS."

Second Lady. "HOW DO YOU KNOW?"

First Lady. "WHY, CAN'T YOU SEE THE KANGAROO FEATHERS IN HIS HAT?"

THE PLEA OF THE HOMELESS.

Most of the petitions from natives which find their way into print for the removal of the white man's gravity hail from our Indian Empire. But the Babu's monopoly can be assailed. The following recent and genuine example is from West Africa:—

"To Sir — — —, Commander of the New Work Shops.

"Sir, read to the end!

"DEAR BRITISH COMMANDER OF INFLUENCE,—I am with cordial gratitude to put this pen before you, saying since I came down from my native land I had been trie for a house, even by rentable, but none for me in that village, where I lieve still. But a certain friend of mine do advice me to stay with him, during the last December up to now. And yet that young man's wife has come from his native land, with these there is no room before me at all. Therefore I wish with my lowly voice to beg your honour to find me even a half house of your kitchen at any place where you like, or either the same place where I am. By your own desire. Please Sir if not! try and get me a boards such as a glass packing cases and a few planks for poles. But Sir I know myself very well, that it will be very difficulty before you, simple because you have none of carpenters. Therefore do try by your own authority to supply me those boards and planks, and I shall find myself a joiner as a day contract to build it for me! because my elder brother also shall help. Therefore dear Lord I hope you shall give ear for my lowly speak and then have mercy on your meekly servant with good reply. I have the most honour to be Sir

"Your humble Clerk."

For "Ineligibles" only.

"WANTED, Bricklayers for pointing 12 houses at Belvedere; peacework."—*Provincial Paper.*

Commercial Modesty.

"M. JACOB & CO.,
CONFECTIONER AND GLACIER.
Pastry of sorts."

Madras Mail.

The Zeal of the Convert.

Sir THOMAS WHITTAKER, M.P., as reported by *The Yorkshire Evening Post*:

"Objection to compulsion on principle was all nonsense. Compulsion was the only safeguard we had against anarchy, barbarism, law, order, justice, and freedom."

Cromwelliana.

"On Friday last a centenarian passed away at Whithall, Galway, in the person of Mrs. Catherine Hynes, who had attained the remarkable age of 102. The old lady had a remarkably retentive memory, recalling with ease incidents which occurred three generations ago. Her recollection of Cromwell's campaign was particularly clear."—*Connacht Tribune*.

"The other alien peer is the twelfth Viscount Taaffe, of the Irish peerage, an Austrian subject, as his predecessors have been since their estates were confiscated by Cromwell after the Battle of the Boyne."—*Sunday Times*.

The late Mrs. HYNES was perhaps the authority for this statement.

"ALLIES' WARSHIPS
KEEP TURKS ON TENDER HOOKS AT GALLIPOLI."
Express and Echo (Exeter).

This is rather hard on the enemy, who thought the Allies had taken their hook long ago.

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AT THE FRONT.

Home again! The base softened its heart on the very morning on which I had practically decided to attend a parade next day if I were called in time, and released me with an enormous command to conduct to the War. I told the senior N.C.O. at the station of entrainment that I would regard him as personally responsible if he dropped any of the men on the line or under the engine on the way up, and was just off to look for food when the R.T.O. told me the train was due out in two minutes. After making quite sure that he wasn't a Major I reminded him that for that matter the War had been due to be over last September; also that I had used some of his trains before and that he couldn't teach me two-pennyworth about them I hadn't known from childhood. This I said courteously but firmly, and thereafter felt better and bought eight boiled eggs, a ham sandwich made so hastily that the ham came to be altogether omitted, three oranges, and a large mineral-water. The train was in the station for three-quarters-of-an-hour after I returned. I passed the time pleasantly by walking up and down in front of the R.T.O.

And now I am here. Glory apart, I could think for a long time without hitting on anywhere beastlier to be except perhaps just the other side of a breastwork thirty yards off where the Bosch has been dropping heavy crumps in threes with monotonous regularity since an indecent hour this morning. I have been partly asleep, partly waiting for one to drop thirty yards short. There is no one to talk to except a chaffinch, who thinks of nothing but his appearance. If I thought of mine I should go mad. I am wet under and through and over everything—wet, not with rain, but with mud. You have heard that there is mud in Flanders?

But the worst part really is the number of hours in a day; we have as many as ten nowadays in which movement is simply not done. Where dawn finds you, dusk releases you. That is here; I believe we have some real trenches somewhere behind. But we of the ten hours' stretch run out of employment early in the morning and remain there the rest of the day. Of course you can eat—if your rations really came up last night—but not, I think, continuously for ten hours. A very inferior officer—not I—has invented a recipe for the ten-hour day which may appeal to some similarly loose-ended officer. You take an air-pillow and lie with your gum-booted feet on it till the position becomes intolerable; then you remove the pillow, sit up and pick the mud off it. When it's clean you do the same thing again. One tour of this duty will take an hour if you are conscientious. Its inventor claims that it makes the sun fairly bustle down the sky.

There are advantages in solitary feeding. Haven't you ever wanted, when confronted with a lunch tongue, to hack out all the nice tonguey bits for yourself and leave the bully beef parts to be used for soup or some other domestic economy? Well, I hack out the tonguey bits every day. True, I usually have to eat the bully beef parts next meal, but—*à la guerre comme à la guerre*—I always might have been casualties between meals, and then think what a fool I'd feel over my failure to make the most of the first.

I've come to the conclusion that this Army isn't really fair. Some regiments I've met always seem to be doing three weeks' rest down Boulogne or Nice or somewhere like that. Thrice and four times have I come and come back to this battalion, and every blessed time they've been either in trenches when I arrived, or situated directly behind the trenches and going up, it might be, to make some more.

Sometimes we go up to dig, sometimes to carry, sometimes both. On the night of my re-arrival I went up with the digging party, and have the honour to report the following conversation

between a certain one of our diggers and a friend who loomed up carrying about four engineer dug-outs, two coils of barbed wire, and a maul. You could just make out the man under it all as he stumbled erratically along a mud-ridden track.

"'Ello, Steve," says the digger, "wot's yer game to-night?"

Steve stopped for a second to look at his interrogator and then observed genially as he moved on,

"Oh, just killin' time, you know."



Officer. "WHY DO YOU THINK HE WOULDN'T MAKE A GOOD CORPORAL?"

Sergeant (indicating sentry). "I'M A CORPORAL! LOR LUMME! WHY, 'IS NAME'S CLARENCE!"

TERCENTENARY TWITTERINGS.

The letters that follow are only a small selection from those that have been inadvertently forwarded to us in response to the appeal of *The Westminster Gazette* for suggestions as to the most appropriate method of celebrating SHAKSPEARE'S tercentenary:—

A HINT TO GREATER BRITAIN.

The name of the new capital of the Australian Commonwealth is not irrevocably fixed, and it seems to me that a splendid opportunity is now offered our brethren overseas to commemorate the genius of the foremost British man of letters by linking his name with the new Antipodean metropolis. I should not venture to dictate the exact form which it should take, but "Willshake" seems to me to meet the requirements of the case very happily, though the claims of "Avonbard" also deserve consideration.

PHILLIBERT HARKER.

BIRD AND BARD.

AS SHAKSPEARE overtopped all other men, so should his memorial tower over all other monuments. I cannot help thinking that the re-erection of the Wembley Tower in the form of a gigantic swan soaring into the empyrean to the height of say two or three thousand feet would prove a satisfactory solution of the problem. Whether it should be black or white is a question which might be referred to a small committee of experts, such as Sir SIDNEY LEE, Sir HERBERT TREE and Miss MARIE CORELLI.

MILE END.

P.S.—A good alternative method of celebrating the tercentenary of SHAKSPEARE would be the execution on Shakspeare Cliff, at Dover, of a colossal portrait of the immortal dramatist, somewhat on the scale of the famous "White Horse." Once the outline had been marked out by a competent artist the rest of the work could be easily completed *gratis* by the Volunteers, and the total cost would be negligible.

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A FRUGAL SUGGESTION.

I venture to think that no better way of paying homage to the genius of SHAKSPEARE could be devised than for all the newspapers throughout the country to devote their best pages on the day to suitable extracts from his works. This arrangement has the extra inducement of being economical as well as appropriate.

REGINALD JOBSON,
Registrar in Bankruptcy.

A GREAT SCIENTIST SPEAKS OUT.

What we want is to convert SHAKSPEARE into a genuine educational instrument, and that is impossible so long as he is only available in his present archaic form. A new edition of the Plays, purged of their classicism and romanticism and expressed in language of scientific accuracy, is peremptorily demanded in the interests of national efficiency.

A FASTIDIOUS CRITIC.

You ask me, "What are my own personal plans in connection with the anniversary?" It is on record that a very distinguished divine stayed in bed on the day following the announcement of the death of Lord BEACONSFIELD, so as to avoid the horrid temptation of reading what was said about him in the newspaper, which was the divine's pet aversion. I propose to follow this excellent example on Shakspeare Day.

T. H.

AMERICA'S GREATEST POET SENDS GREETING.

From across the stormy ocean,
 Prompted by a deep emotion,
 I despatch my salutation on a card;
 For although I cannot meet thee
 In the flesh, I still can greet thee,
 WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, as a worthy brother bard.

In these times of stress and passion,
 When the sword is all the fashion,
 Only minstrelsy can keep the world in tune;
 For the poet is a healer,
 And both WILL and ELLA WHEELER
 Are a blessing and a comfort and a boon.

A CEMETERIAL CELEBRATION.

No memorial to SHAKSPEARE can be adequate which does not express in some concrete shape the universality of his appeal. This end might be attained by erecting a cenotaph in his honour in every churchyard and cemetery in England. I admit that such a scheme would cost money and so might be contrary to the spirit of economy which ought to animate everyone at this hour. But a beginning might be made even now, and I have composed a Funeral March in *Hamlet* the proceeds of which I would gladly devote to the purpose,

ALGERNON BROOKWOOD.



HOW TO TALK TO THE WOUNDED.

"WHAT THE BOSCHES CAN'T STAND, YOU KNOW, MA'AM, IS COLD STEEL."
 "YES, I SUPPOSE IT GETS *VERY* COLD THIS TIME OF YEAR."

A Short Way with Lecturers.

"To-morrow the Central Methodist Mission will celebrate the anniversary of its rescue and social work. The Sisters of the people are to take part in the morning service, and in the afternoon Mr. — is killed for an address on 'The Social Outlook.'"—*Sydney Daily Telegraph*.

"I have begged your Majesty to accept the dignity of Prussian Field-Marshal, and I am with my Amy happy that you, by accepting it also in this sense, have become one of us."—*Irish Paper*.

GERMAN EMPRESS, to her husband: "And who is Amy?"

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AT THE PLAY.

"PLEASE HELP EMILY."

The date at which *Emily* needed so much assistance was clearly *ante bellum*, for there is no mention of hostilities, no gun-fire is heard from the direction of Westende, and Belgium is still bathing. But it must have been only just before the War, for the emancipation which the female sex here enjoys is marked by an extreme modernity. A decade or two ago we might have been shocked at the spectacle of a young lady turning up at a bachelor's flat at 9 A.M. on a Sunday in a ball-frock, after a night out at a dancing-club. Lately we have learnt to bear such escapades without flinching. But it was not so with *Emily's* guardian, *Sir Samuel Lethbridge*, very Victorian in his stuffy prejudice in favour of the decencies; and it was necessary to put him off with a tale of her sudden departure to Brussels to render first aid to an aunt stricken with mumps. In order to give colour to this fabrication *Emily* urges *Dick Trotter*, the bachelor of the flat (as soon as he returns from his own night out), to conduct her to the alleged invalid. He consents, but not without protest, for he is a *roué* of the old school and cannot approve of these platonic adventures; besides, he is about to *se ranger* by marriage with somebody else and (a matter of detail, but most inconvenient) is under contract to take her to Brighton for the day.

A fairly preposterous start, you will say; yet the delightful naturalness which Miss GLADYS COOPER and Mr. CHARLES HAWTREY bring to the situation gives it almost an air of possibility. But, once we are at Ostend, and have been introduced to *Trotter's* incredibly inappropriate fiancée (she is a niece of the same aunt and has followed under protection of a tame escort), we are prepared to launch freely and fearlessly into the rough and tumble of farce.

It is in vain that Miss GLADYS COOPER, over her *petit déjeuner*, preserves a natural demeanour, even to the point of talking with her mouth full; the light humour of the First Act declines to the verge of buffoonery. The devastating confusions which ensue in the matter of identity and relationship (in our author's Ostend you assume, till corrected, that all couples are married); the intervention of the local gendarmerie, headed by a British detective; the arrest of half the party (including the aunt, arrived in perfect health and ignorance *en route* for England) on a nameless charge in connection with *Emily's* suspected abduction—all this is in the best Criterion manner.

In the Third Act, though we never recover the rapture of the First, the humour touches a higher level; but what it gains in *finesse* it loses in spontaneity. Here we meet *Emily's* father, returned from lecturing in the States on social ethics. The scandal of his daughter's conduct leaves him indifferent, for a long and varied experience of the morals of many lands, in the course of which he has married as many as eighteen wives, having made a point of adopting for the time being the system—polygamous or other—of the country in which he happens to find himself, has taught him that nothing is right or wrong except as local opinion makes it so. We are allowed to gather that heredity may have had some influence in the moulding of *Emily's* character; and if we may hope for its continuance into the next generation there seems every prospect that the children she may bear to *Trotter* (now released from *Julia* and free to marry the right woman) will not have their development hampered by excess of prudery.

Mr. CHARLES HAWTREY as *Trotter* played with his old easy skill and seemed to take a more than usual interest in the play. He was supported (as they say) by a particularly brilliant cast, including Miss LOTTIE VENNE as the aunt, Mr. ERIC LEWIS as *Emily's* father, Mr. FREDERICK KERR as *Sir Samuel*, Miss HELEN HAYE in the thankless part of *Julia*, and Mr. NIGEL PLAYFAIR as a self-effacing phantom of a lover. All were in great form; but, next to Miss GLADYS COOPER, whose natural charm and ingenuous *espièglerie* were a perpetual delight, I offer my profoundest compliments to the short but extraordinarily clever performance of Mr. H. R. HIGNETT as *Trotter's* man *Francis*. This is the day of stage valets, but he was an exceptional treasure. To a quiet taste for philosophy he added an infinite tact; and by the lies which he poured into the telephone to cover his master's breach of engagement to *Julia* he moved *Emily*, herself a gifted artist, to admiration.

The author, Mr. H. M. HARWOOD, must be congratulated on a farce that at its best was really excellent fun. And he may take it for flattery, if he likes, when I say that a good deal of his dialogue might be adapted into the French without offending our gallant Allies on the ground of a too insular squeamishness.



EMILY GIVES DICK THE
GLADYS EYE.

Richard Trotter Mr. CHARLES
HAWTREY.
Emily Delmar Miss GLADYS COOPER.

THE INDURATION.

Think not, dear love, because my cheek
 With grief grows neither grey nor hollow,
 Because no pharmacist I seek
 In quest of arsenic to swallow,
 Because I do not wince and weep
 By day and night for cardiac pains,
 That my fond passion falls on sleep,
 Or, secondly, my worship wanes.

For these are strenuous days of strife
 That steel the soul of every Briton;
 Sterner and stronger grows our life
 Till simple bards become hard-bitten;
 So when, each Thursday, I propose
 (As usual) to wed my fair,
 I frankly find her changeless "No's"
 Not half so poignant as they were.

From an almanack of appropriate quotations:—

"JANUARY 27.
 Thursday.
German Emperor born, 1859.

O welcome, pure-ey'd Faith, white-handed Hope,
 Thou hovering angel, girt with golden wings.—*Milton.*"

"If men well up in years would cultivate a habit of breathing properly and always holding themselves erect when walking and sitting, we would find fewer elderly people bent double when we do."—*Daily Express.*

Our gay contemporary has been caught bending on this occasion.

"He asked the Government not to muzzle the ox that laid golden eggs."—*The Daily Argosy (Demerara).*

It wasn't really an ox; it was a bull.

From a country retail chemist's appeal to the Local Tribunal for his son's exemption from Military Service:

"I cannot dispense with him"—or, presumably, without him.



ONCE BIT, TWICE SHY.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

When *Hargrave Ladd*, who was a solicitor in a very fair way of business, with an agreeable but unemotional wife, happened to be getting into an omnibus at the moment when *Stella Rayne* fell off the top of it, he unconsciously put himself in the way of a lot of bother. Naturally, as a gentleman and the male protagonist of a novel—*Let Be* (METHUEN)—he could do no less than pick the girl out of the mud and see her home in a cab. Whether, quite strictly speaking, he need have called next day to see how she was getting over the accident is another matter. Certainly his interfering aunt, *Mrs. Dering*, was of the opinion that *Hargrave*, as a married man, was displaying an excess of courtesy towards the pretty tumbler. As for Miss SYBIL CAMPBELL LETHBRIDGE, who has written the tale, she gives no indication of her views one way or the other. Indeed this attitude of humorous tolerance for humanity is Miss LETHBRIDGE'S most striking characteristic. It is at once a source of strength and weakness to the book, making, on the one hand, for the reality of the characters, and, on the other, for a certain non-conductiveness of atmosphere that robs their emotions of warmth. Anyhow, the inevitable happens, and *Hargrave* falls in love with *Stella*, who in turn reciprocates his passion up to almost the last page in the book, when, having come to the edge of the precipice and made every preparation for her leap into the gulf of elopement, she does a mental quick-change and walks away as the contented betrothed of Another. So *Hargrave*, making the best of a good job, rejoins *Mrs. H.*; and one may suppose that, if any more distressed damsels fall off omnibuses in his presence, he will prudently "let be." You may think with me that this abrupt finish lessens the effect of an otherwise well-written and entertaining story.

Miss MURIEL HINE in *The Individual* (LANE), essaying a problem novel, does not disdain the old-fashioned way of the woven plot and the dramatic incident. Her hero, *Orde Taverner*, surgeon by trade and eugenist by profession, falls in love with *Elizma*, a Cornish beauty and rare fiddler. His inquiries as to her eugenical fitness having been answered satisfactorily but inaccurately, he marries, to find that *Elizma's* mother really died insane. His principles conquer his desire for children, and his decision is communicated to the fiery *Elizma*, who, fierce maternalist that she is and coming of a wild stock that never stuck at anything, undertakes a desperate flirtation by way of solving the difficulty in her own heroic way—at least you will certainly make this kind of a guess, but on investigation you may find that you've been wrong! Happily in the end a deathbed confession proves the second version of her birth as inaccurate as the first. She really comes of quite untainted stock, so the eugenist is satisfied and husband and wife reconciled. That is to say the author runs away from her problem, which was perhaps, all things considered, the wisest thing to do. She has some eye for character and has made a good thing of her *Elizma*, but has let herself scatter her energies over a team too large to be driven with a sure hand. And why, oh why did she drag in the War? Or call her butler *Puffles*? But she keeps the interest of her story going, and you mustn't skip or you may be set off on a hopelessly wrong tack.

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So great is my admiration for the humorous gifts of Mr. WILLIAM CAINE and so strong my gratitude to him for such books as *Boom* and *Old Enough to Know Better*, that I have decided to erase from my memory with all possible speed his latest effort, *Bildad the Quill-Driver* (LANE.) A man with so many bull's-eyes to his credit may be forgiven an occasional miss; and, to be candid, *Bildad the Quill-Driver* seems to me to come nowhere near the target. Most of Mr. CAINE'S work would be the better for a certain amount of condensation, but this is the only occasion on which he has really lost control of his pen. He has had the unfortunate idea of writing a comic *Arabian Nights* in close imitation of the style of the original translation, even to the insertion of short poems at every possible opportunity. Now, this is one of those ideas which at first blush would seem to contain all the elements of delightful humour; but it has the deadly flaw that it involves a monotony which becomes after a few pages more than irritating. For a while the novelty is entertaining, and then the reader becomes crushed by the realisation that he has got to rely for his amusement on the same sort of joke repeated over and over again for more than three hundred pages. And, once that happens, the doom of the book is sealed, for the adventures of *Bildad* are not in themselves diverting—his love-affair with the giantess is as unfunny a thing as ever I yawned over—and if you cease to chuckle at the burlesque pomposity of the style there is nothing left. There are some things which do not lend themselves to sustained parody, and the manner of the *Arabian Nights* is one of them. But, as I say, I am not going to allow this book to shake my opinion that Mr. CAINE is one of our most engaging humorists.



HOW A PRUSSIAN ST. GEORGE WOULD HAVE DONE IT.

I recommend, absolutely without reserve, a war book entitled *Day by Day with the Russian Army* (CONSTABLE). It is written by Professor BERNARD PARES, the Official British Observer with the Russian Armies in the Field, and is the real thing. Although incidentally it is to be praised as a modest and lucid piece of writing, well in keeping with the character of an author whose habit of viewing an action from the most dangerous, because the most interesting, point can be discovered only by reading between the lines, primarily it is to be prescribed as a sovereign tonic against German-made depression. The writer, after being present at the conquest of Galicia and the triumphant advance to the top of the Carpathians, after witnessing much of the historical Russian retreat under pressure of overwhelming artillery superiority, and after conversing freely with his friends of all ranks on different sectors of the Front whilst offering greetings in the name of their English comrades in arms, announces finally, in a wholly satisfactory fashion, his unalterable conviction as to the unqualified supremacy of our Allies when on anything like equal terms with their opponents as regards munitions of war. And that is a matter which, though never in doubt, it is pleasant to hear again in tones of authority at a time when we believe the Russian lack of supplies is at last being made good. The evidence is the more complete because not only do we learn of the interrogation of many prisoners, but because a long extract from the diary of one of them, an Austrian officer, is included, to point the difference in spirit between the two armies. The demoralisation of the Austrian forces, even when advancing, is so strikingly presented that one cannot doubt their dependence on German domination and German batteries to hold them together at all. Although Professor PARES attaches several excellent maps, he is not really much concerned with questions of strategy, but has devoted himself to just two points—*moral* and munitions.

I am afraid that Mrs. HODGSON BURNETT is in a little danger of overdoing it. She knows (who better?) the briskness of the popular demand for long-lost heirs; and she may well have argued that the longer he has been lost, the more squalid his present environment, and the more brilliant his heritage, the more assured would be the heir's welcome. Perhaps indeed this may be so in America; but for this side, as I say, I have my doubts. I daresay your own intuition will tell you that the hero of *The Lost Prince* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON) is a prince who has been lost. In fact so effectually had the branch of the regal house to which *Prince Ivor* belonged been mislaid that the story opens upon him dwelling in a London slum with no companions but a mysterious father and a crippled playfellow (called *The Rat*). All sorts of mysterious things are constantly happening just out of sight; and presently the dynastic intrigues of Mrs. BURNETT launch the two boys upon a secret journey through Europe, to convey to a number of pleasantly melodramatic conspirators the message that "The Lamp is Lighted!" As their object is expressly stated to be protection for a small principality, the fact that the interviews include one with Emperor of AUSTRIA has in these days a quaintly anachronistic effect, and at least serves to emphasise the neutral origin of the story. However, they are of course successful; and in the last chapter *Prince Ivor* manages to be enormously astonished at finding that the mysterious monarch of Samavia, for whom he has been working, is none other than his own father—an obvious fact that, with truly royal tactfulness, he had contrived to ignore throughout the story. My advice to the author is to write up her villains (at present they haven't a chance) and make the whole thing into a film play. The wanderings of the two boys offer a fine opportunity for scenic variety; while the sentiment is of precisely the nature to be stimulated by a pianoforte accompaniment. As a three-reel exclusive, in short, I can fancy *The Lost Prince* entering triumphantly into his appropriate kingdom.

"UNFURNISHED ROOM to Let in Clyde Road; quiet house; convenience for washing once a week if necessary; rent 3s."—*Hastings and St. Leonards Observer*.

It sounds dirt-cheap.

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