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Transcriber's Note: typo "thundebrolt" changed to thunderbolt on page 267. Underlining was used to indicate where text appeared upside down in the original.

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# **PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.**

**VOL. 158.**

**April 14, 1920.**

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## **CHARIVARIA.**

"Hat-pins to match the colour of the eyes are to be very fashionable this year," according to a Trade journal. This should be good news to those Tube-travellers who object to having green hat-pins stuck in their blue eyes.

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Enterprise cannot be dead if it is really true that a well-known publisher has at last managed to persuade Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL to write a few words concerning the Labour Question.

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"I have never been knocked down by a motor omnibus," says Mr. JUSTICE DARLING. The famous judge should not complain. He must take his turn like the rest of us.

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"Never pull the doorbell too hard" is the advice of a writer on etiquette in a ladies' journal. When calling at a new wooden house the safest plan is not to pull the bell at all.

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"American bacon opened stronger yesterday," says a market report. If it opened any stronger than the last lot we bought it must have "gone some."

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Five golf balls were discovered inside a cow which was found dead last week on a Hertfordshire golf course. We understand that a certain member of the Club who lost half-a-dozen balls at Easter-time has demanded a recount.

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"An Englishman's place is by his own fireside," declares a writer in the Sunday Press. This is the first intimation we have received that Spring-cleaning is over.

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A serious quarrel between two prominent Sinn Feiners is reported. It appears that one accused the other of being "no murderer."

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*The Commercial Bribery and Tipping Review*, a new American publication, offers a prize of four pounds for the best article on "Why I believe barbers should not be tipped." The barbers claim that what they receive is not a tip, but the Price of Silence.

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According to an evening paper, crowds can be seen in London every day waiting to go into the pit. Oh, if only they were miners!

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"It is the last whisky at night which always overcomes me," said a defendant at the Guildhall. "A good plan," says a correspondent, "is to finish with the last whisky but one."

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The British Admiralty are offering two hundred and fifty war vessels for sale. This is just the chance for people who contemplate setting up in business as a new country.

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"A good tailor," says a fashion writer, "can always give his customer a good fit if he tries." All he has to do, of course, is to send the bill in.

---

Mr. ALLDAY, a resident in Lundy Island for twenty years, who has just arrived in London, states that he has never seen a tax-collector. There is some talk of starting a fund with the object of presenting him with one.

---

Dunmow workhouse is offered for sale. A great many people are anxious to buy it with the object of putting it aside for a rainy day.

---

A Houndsditch firm has just had a telephone installed which was ordered six years ago. This, however, is not a record. Quite a number of instruments have been fitted up in less time than this.

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We understand that the thunderbolt which fell at Chester is not the one that the PREMIER intended to drop this month.

---

SIGNOR CAPRONI, lecturing in New York, says that aeroplanes capable of carrying five hundred passengers will shortly be constructed. We can only say that anybody can have our seat.

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Since *The Daily Express* tirade against the officials of the Zoo visitors are requested not to go too near the Fellows.

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"The French army," says the *Berliner Tageblatt*, "will soon be all over." It does not say what; but if our late enemy continues the violation of the Peace Treaty the missing word should be "Germany."

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Birds, says *The Times*, are nesting in the plane-trees of Printing House Square. Some of the fledglings, we are informed, are already learning to whistle the familiar Northcliffe air, "LLOYD GEORGE Must Go," quite distinctly.

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The National Portrait Gallery, occupied by the War Office since 1914, has just been reopened. The rumour that a Brigadier-General who had eluded all attempts to evacuate him was still hanging about disguised as a portrait of Mrs. SIDDONS attracted a large attendance.

---

The Corporation of Waterford has refused to recognise "Summer" time. One gathers that it is still the winter of their discontent down there.

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Sinn Feiners are now asking for the abolition of the Royal Irish Constabulary, and it is feared that, unless their request is granted, they may resort to violence.

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"THOUGH THE MATERIAL, SIR, IS SOMEWHAT MORE EXPENSIVE, THE LEATHER BRACE HAS THE GREAT ADVANTAGE THAT IT LASTS FOR EVER; AND, MOREOVER, WHEN IT WEARS OUT IT MAKES AN EXCELLENT RAZOR-STROP."

"Mrs. — Requires useful Ladies' Maid, for Bath and country; only ex-soldier or sailor need apply."—*Provincial Paper*.

A job that will obviously need a man of proved courage.

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## WISDOM UP TO DATE—12TH EDITION.

[*The Times* has announced, in two consecutive issues, that Mr. HUGH CHISHOLM has retired from the control of its financial columns in order to resume his editorship of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. One seems here to catch a faint echo of the proprietary booming of the 10th Edition by *The Times* and Mr. HOOPER. The present publishers are the Cambridge University Press.]

It is a common object of remark  
 How many things in life are periodic,  
 Some punctual (like the nesting of the lark,  
 Or Derby-day), and others more spasmodic,  
 Recurring loosely when the hour is ripe;  
 And here I sing a sample of the latter type.

Nine years have coursed with their accustomed speed  
 Since England hailed its previous apparition,  
 Since every man and woman who could read,  
 Wanting the nearest way to erudition,  
 Bought as an ornament of her (or his) home  
 The monumental masterpiece of Mr. CHISHOLM.

Much has occurred meanwhile of new and strange;  
*E.g.*, in matters purely scientific  
 Great Thinkers, eager to enlarge our range,  
 Have (on the lethal side) been most prolific;  
 Ten tomes would scarce contain what might be said on  
 Their contributions to the recent Armageddon.

What wonder if the Editor forsakes  
 The conduct of *The Times'* financial pages?  
 An even weightier task he undertakes  
 Than to report on bullion; he engages  
 To let us know, by 1922,  
 All things (or more) that anybody ever knew.

Why should he care if Oil-cakes fall or jump?  
 He has the Total Universe for oyster;  
 Yankees may yield a point or Rubbers slump,  
 Yet not for such things shall his eye grow moister,  
 Save when, by force of habit, he admits

"A heavy tendency to-day in Ency. Brits."

Could but *The Times* revive its ancient part,  
Repeat its famous turn of dollar-scooping!  
O memories of the urgent boomster's art,  
And that persistent noise of HOOPER whooping,  
Down to the Last Chance and the Closing Door,  
And then the Absolutely Last, and then some more!

Those shrill appeals to get the Work TO-DAY  
(With the superb revolving fumed-oak garage)—  
How well they followed up their fearful prey  
Till the massed thunders of the final barrage  
Such pressure on your tympanum would bring  
That you could bear no more, and *had* to buy the thing.

O. S.

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## The Giant's Robe—Cheap.

"FOR SALE.—Superior Dress Suit, 37 chest, City made, silk facings and lining, worn twice, no further use, suitable for individual 7 ft. 8 in. Price 4 guineas."—*Local Paper*.

"PAYING GUESTS WANTED—From 1st June, married couple with no children; also at once, single married lady or gentleman for three single rooms or one single married couple."—*Indian Paper*.

To be in keeping with the inhabitants the house, no doubt, is "semi-detached."

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"250 WORDS.

TWO GUINEAS.

THE YOUNG WIFE'S ALLOWANCE."

*Daily Paper*.

The young husband who tries to get off for two guineas will find that the young wife regards two hundred and fifty words as entirely inadequate.

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## OUR SUPER-PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

The meagre and tantalizing report of Lord Northsquith's great journey through Spain and North Africa which has been issued through Reuter's agency has stimulated but not allayed curiosity. It is therefore with unfeigned pleasure that we are able to supplement this jejune summary with some absolutely authentic details supplied us by a Levantine detective of unimpeachable veracity who shadowed the party.

Of the journey through Spain he has little to say. Lord Northsquith attended a bull-fight at Seville, at which an extraordinary incident occurred. At the moment when the distinguished visitor entered the ring and was taking his seat in the Royal Box, the bull, a huge and remarkably ferocious animal, suddenly threw up its hind legs and, after pawing the air convulsively for a few seconds, fell dead on the spot. No reason could be assigned for this rash act, which caused a very painful impression, but it is a curious fact that it synchronized exactly with the issue of the special edition of the Seville evening *Tarántula*, with the placard "Strange behaviour (*extravagancia*) of the British Prime Minister."

At a subsequent interview with Count ROMANONES, Lord Northsquith was reluctantly obliged to confirm the statement that Mr. LLOYD GEORGE was still under the impression that the Spanish Alhambra was a late replica of a theatre in London, but begged him not to attach undue importance to the misapprehension.

The tour in Morocco was not attended by any specially untoward incidents, but at Marrakesh a group of Berbers evinced some hostility, which was promptly converted into effusive enthusiasm on their learning that Lord Northsquith was not of Welsh origin. Similar assurances were conveyed to the sardine-fishers of the coast, with beneficial results. The Pasha of Marrakesh expressed the hope that Lord Northsquith was not disappointed with the Morocco Atlas, and the illustrious stranger wittily rejoined, "No, but you should see my new morocco-bound *Times* Atlas." When the remark was translated to the Pasha he laughed very courteously.

Always interested in the relics of the mighty past Lord Northsquith made a special trip to the East Algerian Highlands to visit Timgad, and spent several minutes in the *tepidarium* of the Roman baths. It was understood from the expression of his features that he was profoundly impressed by the superiority of the arrangements over those contemplated by the Coalition

Minister of Health in the new bath-houses to be erected in Limehouse.

Lastly the tour included a flying visit to Carthage. The French archæologists in charge of the excavations had recently dug up a colossal statue of HANNIBAL, and the resemblance to Lord Northsquit was so extraordinary that many of them were moved to transports of delight. They were however unanimous in their conviction that the deplorable state of the ruins was largely, if not entirely, due to Mr. LLOYD GEORGE's ignorance of Phœnician geography.

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## A Startling Disclosure.

From "Answers to Correspondents" in a Canadian Paper:

"Q.—Is it not a fact, that all of Lipton's challengers were built stronger and heavier than the American cup defenders, to enable them to cross the Atlantic?—A. D. B., Montreal.

A.—Yes, they were built stronger as they had to cross the ocean under their own steam."

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"Serious injuries were sustained by —, aged 54, while assisting in discharging cargo. Shortly before one o'clock, it is stated, a cheese struck him and knocked him down."—*Provincial Paper.*

We have always maintained that these dangerous creatures should not be allowed to run loose.

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### THE "WITHDRAWAL" FROM MOSCOW.

CHORUS OF HALF-REVOLUTIONISTS SUPPORT MESSRS. SNOWDEN AND RAMSAY MACDONALD BY SINGING "THE RED (BUT NOT TOO RED) FLAG."

[The Independent Labour Party by a large majority has voted in favour of withdrawing from the Moscow Internationale.]

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TENNIS PROSPECTS.

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## LITTLE BITS OF LONDON.

### THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

The guide-books have a good deal to say about the Houses of Parliament, but the people who write guide-books never go to the really amusing places and never know the really interesting things. For instance they have never yet explained what it is that the House of Commons smells of. I do not refer to the actual Chamber, which merely smells like the Tube, but the lofty passages and lobbies where the statues are. The smell, I think, is a mixture of cathedrals and soap. It is a baffling but rather seductive smell, and they tell me that the policemen miss it when they are transferred to point-duty. Possibly it is this smell which makes ex-Premiers want to go back there.

But let us have no cheap mockery of the Houses of Parliament, because there is a lot to be said for them. They are much the best houses for hide-and-seek I know. The parts which are dear to the public, the cathedral parts, are no good for that, but behind them and under them and all round them there are miles and miles of superb secret passages and back staircases, the very place for a wet afternoon. They are decorated like second-class waiting-rooms and lead to a lot of rooms like third-class waiting-rooms; and at every corner there is a policeman; but this only adds to the excitement. Besides, at any moment you may blunder into some very secret waiting-room labelled "Serjeant-at-Arms."

If you are seen by the SERJEANT-AT-ARMS you have lost the game, and if you are seen by a Lord of the Treasury I gather from the policemen that you would be put in the Tower. Or you may start light-heartedly from the Refreshment Department of the House of Commons and find yourself suddenly in the bowels of the House of Lords, probably in the very passage to the LORD CHANCELLOR'S Secretary's Room.

Still, there is no other way for Private Secretaries to take exercise and at the same time avoid their Members without actually leaving the building, so risks of that sort have to be faced.

While the Private Secretary is playing hide-and-seek in the passages and purlieus his Member waits for him in the Secretaries' Room. The Secretaries' Room is the real seat of legislation in this country, and it is surprising that Mr. BAGEHOT gave it no place in his account of the Constitution. It is also surprising, in view of its importance, that it should be such a dismal, ill-furnished and thoroughly mouldy room. It is a rotten room. Mr. ASQUITH, when a Private Secretary, is reported to have said of it, "In the whole course of my political career I can recall no case of administrative myopia at all parallel to the folly or ineptitude which has condemned the authors of legislation in His Majesty's Parliament to discharge their functions in this grotesque travesty of a legislative chamber, this sombre and obscure repository of mouldering archives and forgotten records, where the constructive statesmen of to-morrow are expected to shape their Utopias in an atmosphere of disillusion and decay, in surroundings appointed to be the shameful sepulchre of the nostrums of the past." If that is what Mr. ASQUITH said, I agree with him; if he didn't say it, I wish he had.

The room is pitch-dark always, and it is full of tables and tomes. The tables are waiting-room tables and the tomes are as Mr. ASQUITH has described them. It is divided into two by a swing-

door. One part is the female Private Secretary part, the other is the male Private Secretary part, and it is lamentable to record that no romance has ever occurred between a male Private Secretary and a female one.

The room is plentifully supplied with House of Commons' stationery, which disappears at an astonishing rate. This is because the Members come in and remove it by the gross, knowing full well that the SERJEANT-AT-ARMS will suspect the Private Secretaries. It is a hard world.

However, this is where the Members come to their Private Secretaries for instructions. They come there nominally to dictate letters to their constituents, but really they come to be told what amendments to move and what questions to ask and what the Drainage Bill is about, and whether they ought to support the Dentist Qualification (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill, or not. It is awful to think that if the Private Secretaries downed tools the whole machinery of Parliament would stop. No questions would be asked and no amendments moved and no speeches made. The Government would have things all their own way. Unless, of course, the Government's Private Secretaries struck too. But of course the Government's Private Secretaries never would, the dirty blacklegs!

After the Secretaries' Room perhaps the most interesting thing in the two Houses is the House of Lords sitting as the Supreme Court. Everybody ought to see that. There is a nice old man sitting in the middle in plain clothes and several other nice old men in plain clothes sitting about on the benches, with little card-tables in front of them. Two or three of them have beards, which is against the best traditions of the Law. But they are very jolly old men, and now and then one of them sits up and moves his lips. You can see then that he is putting a sly question to the barrister who is talking at the counter, though you can't hear anything because they all whisper. While the barrister is answering, another old man wakes up and puts a sly question, so as to confuse the barrister. That is the game. The barrister who gets thoroughly annoyed first loses the case.

They have quite enough to annoy them already. They are all cooped up in a minute pen about eight feet square. There are eight of them, four K.C.'s and four underlings. They have nowhere to put their papers and nowhere to stretch their legs. They sit there getting cramp, or they stand at the counter talking to the old men. In either position they grow more and more annoyed. Four of them are famous men, earning thousands and thousands. Why do they endure it? Because lawyers, contrary to the common belief, are the most long-suffering profession in the world. That is why they are the only Trade Union whose members have only half-an-hour for lunch. Well, it is their funeral; but if I were a K.C. sitting in that pen, with the whole of the House of Lords empty in front of me, I should get over the counter and walk about. Then the LORD CHANCELLOR might have a fit; and that alone would make it worth while.

The only other interesting place in the Houses of Parliament is the Strangers' Dining Room. This is interesting because the Members there are all terrified lest you should hear what they are going to say. They never know who may be at the next table—a journalist or a Bolshevik or a landowner—and they talk with one eye permanently over their shoulder. It must be very painful.

But of course the best time to visit the House is when it is not sitting, because then, if you are lucky, you may sit with impunity on the Front Bench and put your feet up on the table. If you are unlucky you will be shot at dawn.

A. P. H.



*Excitable Tenor (during dispute about the bill).*  
"BUT, MY FRIEND, YOU NOT KNOW ME WHO I AM—NO? I AM  
SPOFFERINO. TO-NIGHT I SING AT ZE OPERA—'BUTTERFLY.'"  
*Waiter (unimpressed).* "UM—YOU LOOK LIKE A  
BUTTERFLY!"

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"—'S BOOTS  
HAVE BEEN  
IN EVERYBODY'S MOUTH."

*Advt. in Local Paper.*

We fear the advertiser has put his foot in it.

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## LABOUR AND THE RUSSIAN BALLET.

I wasn't present at the station when Madame PAVLOVA arrived in London, bringing with her, as I have been assured by six different newspapers, no fewer than three hundred and eighty-five pieces of luggage. But I have seen, thanks to Sir J. M. BARRIE, the transformation which a Russian *prima ballerina* makes in an English country home, so I happen to know exactly what occurred. I think it deserves to be recorded. Very well then.

*SCENE—A Metropolitan railway terminus, though you wouldn't perhaps recognise it, because it looks a little like the interior of a Greek cathedral and a little like the fair at Nijni Novgorod, and the posters have obviously been painted by Mr. WYNDHAM LEWIS or somebody like that. One porter is discovered leaning against an automatic sweet machine designed by an Expressionist sculptor. He is wearing a long mole-coloured smock, and looking with extreme disfavour at his luggage-truck, which has somehow got itself painted bright blue and green, with red wheels. Music by J. H. Thomaski.*

*[Enter L., puffing slowly, the boat-train. The engine and carriages resemble Early-Victorian prints. Madame PAVLOVA descends, and in a very expressive dance conveys to the Porter that she has one or two trunks in the guard's van which she wants him to convey to a taxicab.*

*Porter.* 'Ow many is there, lady?

*[PAVLOVA pirouettes a little more and points three hundred and eighty-five times at the station-roof with her right toe.*

*Porter.* Can't be done nohow.

*[PAVLOVA dances a dance indicative of absolute and heartrending despair, terminating in an appeal to the heavens to come to her aid. Enter R. an important-looking personage with a long white beard, wearing a costume which might be, called a commissionaire's if it wasn't so like a harlequin's.*

*Porter (impressively and with evident relief).* The Stazione Maestro!

*The Stazione Maestro.* What's all this?

*[PAVLOVA dances an explanation of the impasse. The S.-M. and the Porter remove their caps and scratch their heads solemnly, to slow music.*

*The S.-M. (after deep cogitation).* This must be referred to the N.U.R.

*[Enter suddenly, R. and L., dancing, the Central Executive Committee of the N.U.R. There is thunder and lightning. PAVLOVA repeats her appeal. The C.E.C. confabulate. The Chairman finally announces that the thing is entirely contrary to the principles of their Union, and if the Station-master permits it he must take the consequences. The C.E.C. disappear.*

*The S.-M.* What about it, Bill?

*Porter.* We'll do it. (*He dances.*) Here goes, Mum.

*[Enter, suddenly, chorus of porters with multi-coloured trucks. (They are the same as the C.E.C. really, but they have changed their clothes.) Aided by the S.-M. and Bill they remove the three hundred and eighty-five packages, and wheel them, walking on their toes, to the station exit, R. Here is seen a taxicab whose driver is wrapped in profound meditation and smoking a hookah, the bowl of which rests on the pavement. It is represented to him that a lady with some luggage desires to charter his conveyance and proceed to Hampstead. He comes forward to the centre and explains:*

*1. That it is near the dinner-hour.*



2. *That he has no petrol.*

3. *That he wouldn't do it for LLOYD GEORGE himself.*

*He retires to his vehicle and resumes his hookah. PAVLOVA dances some dances expressive of Spring, of Butterflies, of Flowers, of Unlimited Gold. In the midst of the final passage the driver leaps from his seat, rushes on to the platform, jumps three hundred and eighty-five times into the air, whirls PAVLOVA off her toes and dashes from side to side, carrying her in one hand. He finally flings her into the taxicab and returns to his seat. The luggage is piled upon the roof by dancing porters and tied with many-coloured ribbons. The taxi departs in a cloud of petrol, the driver steering with his toes and manipulating the clutches with his hands. Farewells are waved and finally, surrounded by the rest of the porters, the Station Master and Bill dance a dance of Glad Sacrifice, stab themselves with their hands, and die.*

CURTAIN OF SMOKE.

Mind you, as I said at the beginning, I wasn't there myself, but I helped to steer three boxes to the seaside during the Easter holiday without the blandishments of Art. So I know something.

EVOE.

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## LABUNTUR ANNI.

TO A CHITAL HEAD ON THE WALL OF A LONDON CLUB.

Light in the East, the dawn wind singing,  
Solemn and grey and chill,  
Rose in the sky, with Orion swinging  
Down to the distant hill;  
The grass dew-pearled and the *mohwa* shaking  
Her scented petals across the track,  
And the herd astir to the new day breaking—  
Gods! how it all comes back.

So it was, and on such a morning  
Somebody's bullet sped,  
And you, as you called to the herd a warning,  
Dropped in the grasses dead;  
And some stout hunter's heart was brimming  
For joy that the gods of sport were good—  
With a lump in his throat and his eyes a-dimming,  
As the eyes of sportsmen should;—

As mine have done in the springtime running,  
As mine in the halcyon days  
Ere trigger-finger had lapsed from cunning  
Or foot from the forest ways,  
When I'd wake with the stars and the sunrise meeting  
In the dewy fragrance of myrrh and musk,  
Peacock and spurfowl sounding a greeting  
And the jungle mine till dusk.

You take me back to the valleys of laughter,  
The hills that hunters love,  
The sudden rain and the sunshine after,  
The cloud and the blue above,  
The morning mist and creatures crying,  
The beat in the drowsy afternoon,  
Clear-washed eve with the sunset dying,  
Night and the hunter's moon.

Not till all trees and jungles perish  
Shall we go back that way  
To those dear hills that the hunters cherish,  
Where the hearts of the hunters stay;  
So you dream on of the ancient glories,  
Of water-meadows and hinds and stags,  
While I and my like tell old, old stories ...  
Ah! but it drags—it drags.

H. B.

Accountant would write up Books, also Tax Returns; moderate charges."

*Liverpool Paper.*

This is much more delicate than the usual crude stipulation that the lady must have means.

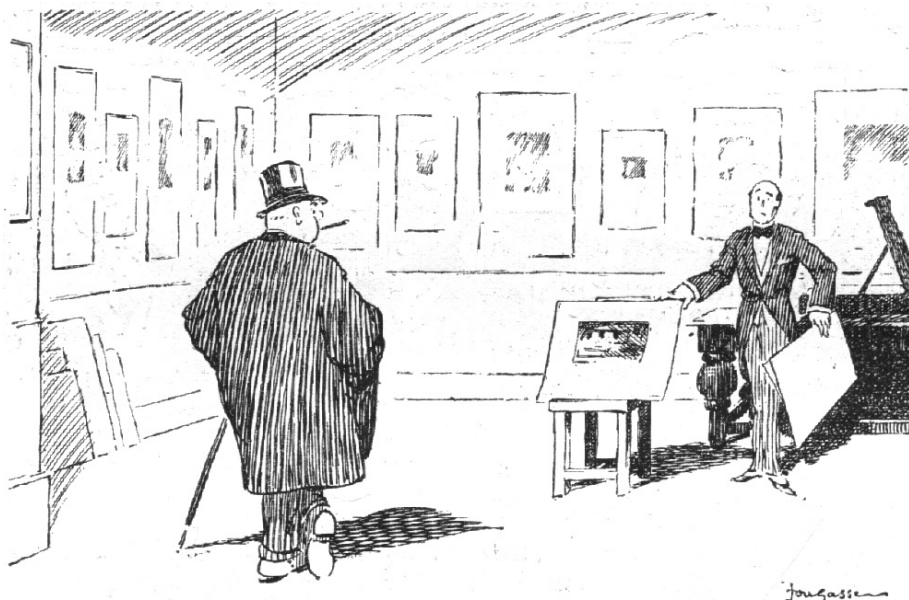
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### MANNERS AND MODES.

A NEO-GEORGIAN TRIES TO MAKE THEM UNDERSTAND.

[pg 274]



*Art Patron (who has heard something about a Modern Movement).* "Now you're not going to tell me that's a valuable bit of work? Why, hang it all, I can recognise the place."

### PEACE WITH HONOUR.

This is the story of Mr. Holmes, the Curate, and of how he brought peace to our troubled house. The principal characters are John, my brother-in-law, and Margery, my unmarried sister, and, at the bottom of the programme, in large letters, Mr. Holmes, the Curate. I have a small walking-on part. The story will now commence.

John and Margery went out for a walk in the beautiful Spring sunshine as friendly as friendly.

They came back three hours later—well, Cecilia (his wife) and I heard them at least two villages away.

They both rushed into the room covered with mud and shouting at the tops of their voices.

"Cecilia," roared John, "order this girl out of my house. She shan't stay under my roof another hour."

"Cecilia," shrieked Margery, "he's an obstinate ignorant wretch, and thank Heaven he isn't *my* husband."

I put a cushion over my head.

Cecilia kept hers.

"If you will both go out of the room," she said, "take off your filthy boots and come back in your right minds and decent clothing I'll try to understand what you are both talking about."

They crawled out of the room abjectly and I came out into the open once more.

"Good Lord! What a family to be in!" I said.

---

"Cecilia," said John at tea, "harking back to the question of Hairy Bittercress——"

"Hazel Catkin," said Margery.

"What on earth——?" began Cecilia.

"I'll tell her," said Margery quickly. "Cecilia, we had a competition this afternoon, seeing who could find most signs of Spring. Well, I found a bit of Hazel Catkin——"

"Hairy Bittercress," said John.

"I tell you——" went on Margery.

"If you will calm yourself," interrupted John with dignity, "we will discuss the point."

"There's nothing to discuss. What do you know about botany, I'd like to know?"

"My dear child," said John, "when you were an infant-in-arms, nay, before you existed at all, it was my custom to ramble o'er the dewy meads, plucking the nimble Nipplewort and the shy Speedwell. I breakfasted on botany."

"Talking of botany," I broke in "there was a chap in my platoon——"

John groaned loudly.

"Do you suggest," I asked, "that he was not in my platoon?"

"I suggest nothing," he answered; "I only know that they can't all have been in your platoon."

"All who, John?" asked Cecilia.

"All the chaps he tells us about. Haven't you noticed, since he came home, it's impossible to mention any type or freak or extraordinary individual that wasn't like somebody in his platoon? It must have been about five thousand per cent. over strength."

"I treat your insults with contempt," I said, "and proceed with my story. This chap had the same affliction that has taken Margery and yourself. He spent his life searching for specimens of the Bingle-weed and the five-leaved Funglebid. At bayonet-drill he would stop in the middle of a 'long-point, short-point, jab' to pluck a sudden Oojah-berry that caught his eye. In the end his passion got him to Blighty."

"How?" asked Margery.

"Well," I continued, "it was the morning of the great German attack. My friend—er—I will call him X—and myself were retiring on the village of—er—Y, followed by about six million Germans. Shots were falling all round us, when suddenly X saw a small wild flower at his feet. He bent down to pick it up and—er——"

"That is quite enough, Alan," said Cecilia.

"That is all, Cecilia," I said; "that is how he got to Blighty."

"We will now proceed with the subject in hand," said John after a moment's silence. He produced a small crushed piece of green-stuff from his pocket.

"The question before the house is, as we used to say in the Great War, '*Qu'est-ce-que c'est que*

*ceci?* Any suggestions that it is of the Lemon species will be returned unanswered. For my part I say it is Hairy Bittercress."

"And I say it's Hazel Catkin," said Margery.

"And what says Hubert the herbalist?" asked John, handing the weed to me.

I examined it carefully through the ring of my napkin.

"Well," I said, "speaking largely, I should say it is either Mustard or Cress, or both as the case may be."

I was howled down and retired.

---

We heard lots of the weed during the next few days. Each morning at breakfast it sprouted forth as it were.

"And how is the Great Unknown?" I would ask.

"The Hairy Bittercress is thriving, we thank you," John would answer.

"Hazel Catkin," Margery would throw out.

"Catkin yourself," from John, and so on *ad lib*.

They kept it carefully in a small pot in the window, and if one looked at it the other watched jealously for foul play.

"On Saturday," said John, "the Curate is coming to tea. He is a man of wisdom and a botanist to boot—or do I mean withal? On Saturday the Hairy Bittercress shall be publicly proclaimed by its rightful name."

"Which is Hazel Catkin," said Margery.

Saturday came and Saturday afternoon, and, about three o'clock, the Curate. I saw him coming and met him at the door.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Holmes," I said. "You come to a house of bitterness and strife. Walk right in."

"Indeed I trust not," he said.

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"Come with me," I replied; "I will tell you all about it." And I led him on tip-toe to a quiet spot.

"Mr. Holmes," I said, "you know the family well. We have always been a happy loving crowd, have we not?"

"Indeed you have," he said politely.

"Well," I continued, "a weed has split us asunder. My brother-in-law and my younger sister are on the point of committing mutual murder."

I explained the whole situation and drew a harrowing picture of its effect on our family life. "Unless you help us," I said, "this Hazel Catkin or Hairy Bittercress will ruin at least four promising young lives."

"But I hardly see how I am to——" began Mr. Holmes.

I told him what to do.

"But surely," he said, "they will know better than that."

"No, they won't," I said. "Neither of them knows anything about it, really. Come, Mr. Holmes, it is for a good cause."

"Very well," he said. "Perhaps the end justifies the means. We will see what we can do."

"Good man," I said. "Children unborn will bless your name for this day's work."

I took him to the dining-room, where Margery and John were sitting.

"Here is Mr. Holmes," I said.

They both made a dash at him.

"Mr. Holmes," said John, "we seek your aid. You have a wide and deep knowledge of geography—that is botany, and you shall settle a problem that is ruining my home."

"Certainly I will do my best," said Mr. Holmes. And then without a blush: "What is the problem,

may I ask?"

"We have found a piece of——" began John.

"Don't tell him," shrieked Margery. "Let him see for himself."

They fetched the weed and handed it reverently to the Curate.

Mr. Holmes looked at it carefully. He breathed on it and moistened it with his finger. At last he looked up.

"This is a very rare specimen indeed," he said; "I never remember to have seen one quite like it. It is in fact a hybrid." He stopped and beamed at us.

"What's it *called*?" shrieked Margery and John together.

Mr. Holmes chose his words carefully.

"It is called," he said, "Hairy Catkin."

There was a pause while Margery and John gazed at each other.

"Hairy Catkin," said John solemnly.

"Then—then we're both right!" said Margery.

They looked at each other again and then did the only thing possible in the circumstances. Each fell on the other's neck.

Mr. Holmes and I shook hands silently.



"GET UP, DEAR, AND GIVE YOUR SEAT TO THIS LADY. REMEMBER YOU LOSE NOTHING BY BEING POLITE."  
"OH, DON'T I? I LOSE MY SEAT."

## The Wool Shortage.

"Blankets, guaranteed all wood."

*Provincial Paper.*

"Antique Carved Ebony Carpet."

*Another Provincial Paper.*

"Within there is the delicious scent of burning logs, and all the fragrance of only a 1½d. stamp."—*Daily Paper.*

We have tasted the backs of these stamps—a delicious bouquet.

"Berwick Guardians on Euesday favour-tarining in Ireland, was more able to deal

receive their votes. The candidate, Mr. D. opinion. The ballot for position of places accompanied feasting and jollification, and sentation what elections were like in the the the business of auctioneer."

*North-Country Paper.*

Portions of the paragraph are not too clear, but we should say there was no doubt about the jollification.

[pg 276]



### STAGE AMENITIES.

"HELLO, CISSIE! SO YOU'RE ASSISTING AT DAISY DARLINT'S BENEFIT TOO?"  
"YES—THE CAT!"

## CHIPPO'S SCENARIO.

*(With the British Army in France.)*

It was the Société Grand Guignol de Cinéma's busy day. On the beach at Petiteville cameras were rattling away like machine guns, orders from the producer were hissing through the air with the vicious hum of explosive bullets, and weary supers were marching and counter-marching in a state of hopeless apathy.

At the very height of these operations Chippo Munks wandered into the camera barrage and got firmly entangled in the picture. As "crowd in background" was indicated by the scenario, the producer refrained from killing Chippo out of hand—in fact he invited his co-operation for another crowd a little later on. Thus it was that Chippo earned the right to describe himself as a "fillum actor," with licence to speak familiarly of his colleagues, CHARLES CHAPLIN and MARY PICKFORD, and full powers to pose as the ultimate authority of the camp whenever cinemas were mentioned.

At the Café des Promeneurs it was generally assumed that Chippo was merely waiting for a fat contract from the Société Grand Guignol, and pending its arrival he explained that he was constructing a suitable scenario.

"The public," he said, "is fed up with Texas rancheros in Anzac 'ats and antimacassar trousers playing poker dice with one 'and and keeping a sustained burst of rapid fire against their opponents with the other. They wants something true to life. Now, my fillum opens at the Café de l'Avenir, where a stout old British soldier runs a Crown an' Anchor board at personal loss, but 'appy in the knowledge that 'e is amusing his comrades."

"The same answering to the name of Chippo Munks?" interjected Chris Jones.

"The name on the programme is *Reginald Denvers*," said Chippo firmly. "Acrost the way, at the Café de la Vache Noire, a drunken unprincipled gambler named *Jim Blaney*—which you will also reckernise is an alias—regularly pockets the pay of 'is fellow-soldiers under pretence of a square deal at banker an' pontoon. One night, 'aving sucked 'is victims dry for the time being and also largely taken 'is cawfee *avec*, *Blaney* goes acrost to the Avenir an' sets 'is stall out there. *Reginald* remonstrates.

"I'm the Great White Chief in this 'ostelry,' says he, 'an' we don't want no three-card-trick sharks butting in.'

"My modest shrinking vi'let,' says *Blaney*, 'I'll play where I blinking well please.'

"*Reginald* thereupon remarks that sooner than allow 'is innocent patrons to be swindled by a six-fingered thimblerrigging son of a confidence trickster 'e'd start in an' expose 'im.

"At this point *Blaney* swears to be revenged, an' there is a hinterval of a minute while the next part of the fillum is bein' prepared.

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"The following scene shows *Blaney* all poshed up and busy trying to worm 'is way into the confidence of *Suzanne* (the daughter of the *patron* of the Café de l'Avenir), who cherishes a secret passion for *Reginald*. 'E kids 'er to drop the contents of a white packet into *Reginald's* *vang blanc*, telling her it's a love lotion—I should say potion—that will gain 'er *Reginald's* everlasting affections. *Reggie*, being thirsty, scoffs off the whole issue an' finds to his dismay that 'is voice 'as been completely destroyed. That's a thrilling situation, *Chris*, a *professeur de Crown* an' *Anchor* not being able to do his patter."

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"'E might as well shut up shop right away," agreed *Chris*.

"Jest so. *Reginald* rushes after *Blaney* and tells him off good an' proper—"

"'Ow could 'e when 'e'd lorst his voice?" asked *Chris*.

"Oh! burn it. This is a fillum drama. 'E sees 'is extensive *clientèle* drifting away to the *Vache Noire* an' *Blaney* getting so rich 'e can afford *Beaune* an' eggs an' chips for 'is supper every night. In the interests of the misguided victims *Reginald* tells the Military Police that drinking goes on during prohibited hours at the *Vache Noire*, an' gets the place put out of bounds. All the speckerlaters thereupon return to the *Avenir*, an' Part II. finishes with *Reginald* recovering 'is voice an' carolling 'Little Billy Fair-play, all the way from 'Olloway' while he rakes in the shekels with both hands and feet."



**A LEVY ON PATRIOTISM.**

"I'm getting the 'ang of this a bit," said *Chris*; "I recollect there was a chap named *Slaney* as once did you down on a deal, an' I remember a red-'aired girl at the *Avenir*. But all this talk about love lotions and voice dope gets me guessing."

"A fillum drama that's true to life ain't bound to be absolutely true as to facts. The trimmings is extra. We opens next with a little slow music an' *Jim Blaney* meeting *Reginald* an' telling 'im 'e 's reformed an' given up gambling. Instead 'e's running a very respectable football sweep, the prize to be given to the one as draws the team that scores most goals, an' 'e offers *Reginald* a commission an' a seat on the drawing committee if he'll recommend it amongst 'is clients. Such is 'is plausibleness that 'e even sells *Suzanne* a ticket, though she's not rightly sure if *Aston Villa* is a race-horse or a lottery number. *Reginald*, however, suspects treachery.

"Take your breath reg'ler,' 'e says, or makes movements to that effect. 'The matches for this sweep is played on Saturday, an' I seems to recollect that you an' a lot of the crowd is due for demob on Wednesday, an' I'm going for leave on Tuesday. What guarantee 'ave we that you weigh out before you go?"

"I pays out *immédiatemong* on receipt of the Sunday papers, which will be Sunday night," says *Blaney*. 'That's good enough, ain't it?'

"*Reginald* therefore invests an' participates in the drawing, though still a bit doubtful. 'Is fears is justified, for on Friday night, 'aving got all the money, *Blaney* steps outside the *estaminay* an' hits a Military Police over the ear."

"Whatever for?" asked *Chris*. "The War's over."

"That's a mystery; but the mystery is solved when they 'ear that *Blaney* 'as gone to clink to do ten days F.P. No. 2.

"'E's just gauged it to a nicety,' says someone; 'e won't come out till we're demobbed, an' 'e'll be orf before *Reginald* gets back from leave.'

"It's 'ere the finest scene in the fillum ought to 'appen. Imagine a crowd of defrauded an' infuriated soldiery, led by *Reginald*, marching up to the F.P. compound and demanding that the miserable *Blaney* an' their stakes should be 'anded over to them.

"'Never!' says the Provost-Sergeant, twirling his moustaches to needle points.

"'As a sportsman I appeal to you,' says *Reginald*, 'or we'll wreck the blinkin' compound.'

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"'I'll not give him up while I have breath in my body,' says the Provost-Sergeant. 'I've drawn Chelsea in the sweep.'

"Then should ensue the gloriosest shemozzle that ever was; but this scene is spoiled by some miserable perisher who says it ain't worth while making a rough house till they know who's won.

What really happens is that they wait till the Sunday papers arrive, when it is found *Suzanne* 'as won the sweep, 'er 'aving drawn Sunderland, what was top-scorer with seven goals.

"It is then that *Reginald's* noble nature shows itself. Instead of telling 'er that she's won an' then disappointing 'er by saying the prize money is in custody, 'e buys 'er ticket for 'alf-price. Then 'e goes to the compound an' bribes the sentry to let 'im talk to *Blaney* through the barbed wire.

"'There's the winning ticket, *Blaney*,' 'e says; 'now pay out.'

"'Pay out?' says *Blaney*, grinning hideously. 'Why, what do you think I got into clink for?'

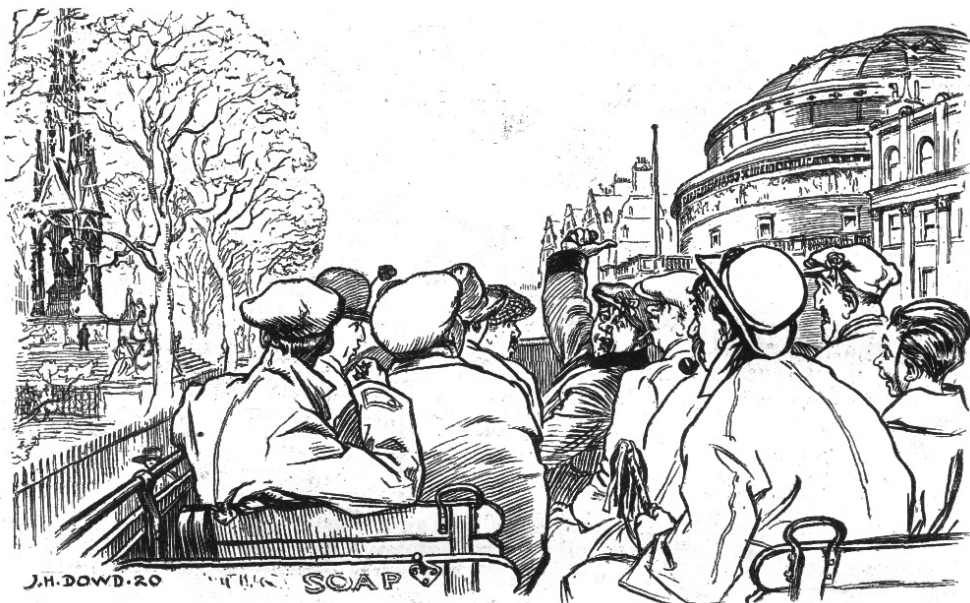
"And the end comes with *Reginald* stalking 'elplessly outside the wire, an' *Blaney* laughing an' taunting 'im from inside."

"I don't think much of it," said Chris critically. "I know that Slaney—'im what you call *Blaney*—did actually do you down real proper, but as a fillum it ain't a good ending."

"P'r'aps it ain't—as it stands," admitted Chippo, "but when I'm demobilized—when *Reginald* is demobilized, I should say, an' 'e 'appens to meet that *Jim Blaney* there'll be the finest fillum finish that's ever been released, if the police don't interfere."



*Mabel (to dentist). "BE CAREFUL, WON'T YOU? I'M DREFFLY TICKLISH."*



*Informative Visitor (member of party viewing sights of London). "ERE Y'ARE, BOYS. ON OUR LEFT IS THE STATOO OF THE FAMOUS SINGER, ALBERT 'ALL, AND ON THE RIGHT WE 'AVE THE KENSINGTON GAS WORKS."*



## THIS FOR REMEMBRANCE.

[The Government is reported to have three million empty rum jars for sale.]

I've long mused on buying a rifle,  
A chunk of an aeroplane's gear  
Or other belligerent trifle  
By way of a small souvenir;  
I've thought 'twould be fine (and your pardon  
I beg if this savours of swank)  
If the grotto that graces my garden  
Were topped by a tank.

But only this morn I decided  
Exactly the thing I preferred  
To call back the prodigies I did  
When the call for fatigue men was heard;  
Though my life is again a civilian's,  
Martial glories shall come back to view  
If I buy from these derelict millions  
A rum jar or two.

Though the spirit's long since been a "goner,"  
Though the uttermost heel-tap be drained,  
I will give them a place of high honour,  
Well knowing that once they contained  
My solace when seasons were rotten,  
When the cold put my courage to flight,  
Or the sergeant, perchance, had forgotten  
To kiss me good-night.

In a world that is apt to be trying,  
When things are inclined to go ill  
And I'm sitting despondently sighing,  
Perhaps they will comfort me still;  
At the sight of these humble mementoes  
It may be once more I shall know  
From the crown of my head to my ten toes  
That radiant glow.

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### Journalistic Candour.

"CHANCES MISSED.

By *The Daily Mail* correspondent recently in France."—*Daily Mail*.

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"'The Trojan Person in Pink' will fill the bill at the Haymarket."—*Evening Paper*.

Is this intended for a description of the lady to whom Paris gave the golden apple?

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### THE WORM TURNS.

A JUGGLER'S COMIC ASSISTANT REFUSES TO MUFF HIS TRICKS.

### PRESENCE OF MIND.

Proud is not the word for me  
 When I hear my 8-h.p.  
 Latest model motor-bike,  
 Having dodged the latest strike,  
 Is awaiting me complete  
 At the garage down the street.

Joyfully I take my way  
 (And a cheque-book too to pay  
 The two hundred odd they thought it  
 Right to charge the man who bought it).  
 Still, it is a lovely creature,  
 Up-to-date in every feature,  
 And a side-car, painted carmine—  
 Joy! to think they really *are* mine!

Time is short; I don't lose much in  
 Starting, and I let the clutch in;  
 Lest I should accelerate  
 Passing through the garage-gate,  
 Feeling certain as to what'll  
 Happen, I shut off the throttle,  
 When—my heart begins to beat—  
 I'm propelled across the street  
 In a way I never reckoned,  
 Gathering speed at every second.

Frantic, I apply the brake,  
 Realising my mistake  
 With my last remaining wit:  
*I've not shut, but opened it!*  
 In another instant I  
 Hit the curb and start to fly.  
 Aeronautic friends of mine  
 Say that flying is divine;  
 Now I've tried it I confess  
 Few things interest me less,  
 Still, I own that in a sense  
 It is an experience.

These and other thoughts are there  
 As I whistle through the air,  
 And continue till I stop  
 In an ironmonger's shop

(Kept by Mr. Horne, a kind  
Soul, but deaf and very blind).  
Still—I mention this with pride,  
For it shows how well I ride—  
I have left the bike outside.

---

Little Mrs. Horne is sitting  
In the neat back-parlour, knitting.  
Mr. Horne, who hears the din  
Which I make in coming in,  
Leaves the shop and says to her:  
"Martha, here's a customer.  
From the sound of clinking metal  
I should judge he wants a kettle."

Mrs. H. shows some surprise  
At the sight that greets her eyes,  
And, in answer to her shout,  
Mr. H. comes running out.

---

Now, it's something of a strain  
On the busy human brain  
Passing through a window-pane  
To decide what it will do  
When at last it's safely through.  
As I gaze around I find—  
Horror! why, I must be blind!  
Blind or dead, I don't know which—  
All about is black as pitch;  
Thick the atmosphere as well  
With a dank metallic smell....

Guessing that I am not dead  
I attempt to loose my head  
From a kettle's cold embrace;  
And, meanwhile, to save my face  
(Finding I can't get it out),  
Say politely—up the spout—  
"Lovely morning, is it not, Horne?  
Think I'll take this little lot, Horne;  
It is such a perfect fit,  
And I'm so attached to it  
That I find I cannot bring  
My own head to leave the thing.  
So you will oblige me greatly  
If you'll pack them separately."

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## **The Housing Stringency.**

"House for Sale 12 ft. by 1 ft., suitable for bed-sitting-room."—*Provincial Paper.*

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## **Commercial Candour.**

"We claim that we can do you anything in our line as well, or perhaps a little bit less than you will get it at many other places."

*Advt. in Local Paper.*

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"ALLEGED WALLET-SNATCHER TAKES TWO OMNIBUSES."

*Evening News.*

No wonder there is a shortage in London travelling facilities.

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## **THE WORD-BUILDERS;**

A SHORTAGE OF STRAW.

Aitchkin has been doing great things in forage, but prosperity has not spoilt him. Although he

must be aware that I remember him in pre-war days, when he used to strap-hang to the City with his lunch in a satchel, nevertheless he often invites me round on those rare occasions when he dines quietly at home.

The other evening, as he toyed with a modest eight-course dinner, I perceived that his cheerfulness was a trifle forced, and I thought that probably he was worrying over the behaviour of his little son, who, tiring that afternoon of his motor scooter, had done incalculable damage to the orchid-house with a home-made catapult.

When we were left alone with our cigars he unburdened his soul. It appears that, ever since the Armistice, ambition has spurred Aitchkin to be something more than the "& Co." of a firm which has become torpid with war profits. He had decided to start in business "on his lonesome," and to make "Aitchkin" and "forage" synonymous terms. Already he had taken over the premises of a sovereign purse-maker at a "reasonable figure." (When Aitchkin is "reasonable" somebody loses money.) But his bargain did not include a Telegraphic Address, and that morning, working from his letter-heading, "Alfred Aitchkin," he had brought himself to compose an appropriate word. To the "Alf" of the Christian name he added "Alpha" representing the initial of the surname (I suspected the assistance of his lady-typist), making the complete word "Alf-Alpha" or, written phonetically, "Alfalfa"—Spanish for lucerne. It was a word which could not fail to fix itself indelibly in the minds of his clients, for it recalled not only Aitchkin's name, but the commodity he dealt in. Full of the pride of authorship he had driven round to the G.P.O. in his touring car.

"But they crabbed it at once," he said sadly. "Telegraphic addresses nowadays have to conform to a lot of rotten new rules."

He handed me a slip of paper on which, over the dead body of "Alfalfa," he had jotted down the following notes:—

- (1) Not less than eight, not more than ten letters.
- (2) Must not be composed of words or parts of words.
- (3) Words or parts of words may be accepted if they appear in the middle.
- (4) Must not look like a word.
- (5) Must be pronounceable.
- (6) Russian names, on account of their unusual spelling might be accepted.

"And what's more," Aitchkin continued, "even when you've got a word which the Department will accept, it has to be submitted to a Committee who take 'ten to fourteen days' to make up their minds."

A faint tinkling of the piano came to our ears. Mrs. Aitchkin was waiting to sing to us. I produced pencil and paper and threw myself heart and soul into Aitchkin's problem.

"Rules 2 and 3 are a little contradictory," I said, "and it will require no slight ingenuity to form a combination of letters which shall be pronounceable (Rule 5) and yet avoid the damnable appearance of a word (Rule 4). The concession about Russian names reminds me of something I have read about shaking hands with murder. In any case it is a barren concession, because, as we have seen, telegraphic addresses must be pronounceable. There is something sinister here," I continued. "This is the work of no ordinary mind. Some legal brain is behind all this."

Love of the bizarre and the latitude of the Russian Rule led me to make my first attempt with the name of that all-round Bolshevik sportsman, BLODNJINKOFF, and I was endeavouring to abridge it to not less than eight and not more than ten letters without spoiling the natural beauty of the name when Aitchkin stopped me rather brusquely. And my next effort, "PLUCRÆS," he quashed, because he said that the implacable suspicion of the G.P.O. would be at once aroused by the diphthong. I fancy, though, from the narrowing of his eyes that he had some misgivings as to the derivation of the word.

I then set to work with alternate consonants and vowels (which must give a pronounceable word), dealing with difficulties under the other rules as they might arise. Meanwhile Aitchkin, after the manner of an obstructionist official of the worst type, sat over me with the rules, condemning my results. Even "Telegrams: HAHAAHAAA London," merely caused him to sniff contemptuously.

"You'll like this one," I exclaimed—"ARLEYOTA. This is a combination of the word 'barley' (the 'b' being treated as obsolete like the 'n' in 'norange') and the word 'oat' with the 'a' and 't' transposed."

Aitchkin was interested. Breathing heavily, he tested the word with each rule in turn, while I sat relaxed in my chair. I pictured ARLEYOTA passed by the Department and brought into a hushed chamber before a solemn conclave of experts. How they would probe and analyse it during those momentous ten to fourteen days. And what a sensation there would be when they discovered that ARLEYOTA begins and ends with the indefinite article.

Aitchkin thrust the papers into his pocket and rose abruptly, jamming the stopper more tightly into a decanter with his podgy hand.

"Not too bad, ARLEYOTA," he said loftily; "I'll get them to polish it up at the office to-morrow." (So I was right about the lady-typist).

He opened the door and we passed out.

"But it ends in TA," he shouted against the *Roses of Picardy* which now came with unbroken force from the drawing-room. "'TA' is a word, you know."

"You may use it as such," I bawled, "but they've never heard of it among the staff of the G.P.O."

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## THE WANDERER IN NORFOLK.

*A Fantasia on East Anglian Place-Names.*

Tired by the City's ceaseless roaring  
I fly to Great or Little Snoring;  
When crowds grow riotous and lawless  
I seek repose at Stratton Strawless;  
When feeling thoroughly week-endish  
I hie in haste to Barton Bendish,  
Or vegetate at Little Hautbois  
(Still uninvaded by the "dough-boy").  
The simple rustic fare of Brockdish  
Excels the choicest made or mock dish;  
Nor is there any *patois* so  
Superb as that of Spooner Row.  
PETT-RIDGE'S lively *Arthur Lidlington*  
Might possibly be bored at Didlington;  
And I admit that it would stump SHAW  
To stir up a revolt at Strumpshaw.  
The spirits of unrest are wholly  
Out of their element at Sloley;  
But even the weariest straphanger  
Regains his courage at Shelfanger.  
No taint of Bolshevistic snarling  
Poisons the atmosphere of Larling,  
And infants in the throes of teething  
Become seraphical at Seething.

Nor must my homely Muse be mute on  
The charms of Guist and Sall and Booton,  
Shimpling and Tattersett and Stody  
(Which, be it noted, rhymes with ruddy),  
And fair Winfarthing, where KING TINO  
Would seek in vain for a casino  
Or even a flask of maraschino.  
For here, far from the social scurry  
That devastates suburban Surrey,  
You find the authentic countryside;  
Here, taking Solitude for bride,  
The wanderer almost forgets  
The jazzing crowd, the miners' threats.

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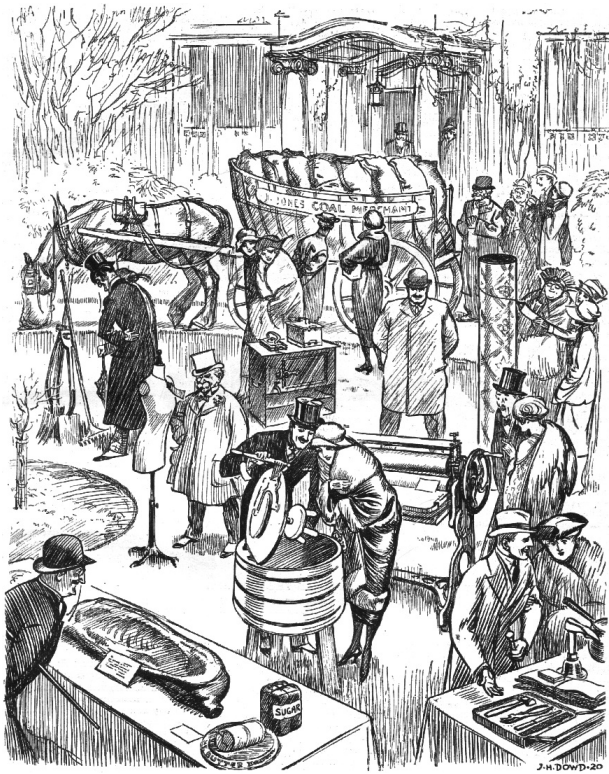
"UNAPPROACHABLE

FAMILY ALES & STOUT."

*Advt. in Provincial Paper.*

This should please Mr. "PUSSYFOOT."

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**THE NEW SPIRIT IN WEDDING GIFTS.**

[pg 283]

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## **ON THE WESTERN FRONT.**

Once again we are "for it." It is that heavy hour between five and six when the vitality is all too low for the ordeal that awaits us. On either side the far-flung battle line of clustering figures stretches away into the gloom. It is an inspiring sight, this tense silent crowd of men of every class and vocation, united by a common purpose, grimly awaiting the moment when as one man they will hurl themselves into the fray.

Is it the mere lust for fighting that has brought them here? Or is it the thought of the home that each hopes to return to that steels their courage and lends that *élan* to their resolution without which one enters the struggle in vain?

In the dim half-light I furtively scan the set faces around me and find myself wondering what thoughts those impassive masks conceal. Are they counting the cost? Most of them have been through the ordeal before. Pale faces there are—small wonder when one thinks of what lies before them. Here and there a man is puffing at his beloved "gasper" with the nonchalance that marks your bull-dog breed when stern work is afoot.

Yet one cannot keep one's thoughts from the tremendous possibilities of the next few minutes. Where shall we be a few minutes hence? Some, one knows, will have gone West—and the others? Would they effect a lodgement, or be hurled back baffled and raging and impotent, as, alas! had too often been the case before?

And what of those who were even now maybe preparing against our onslaught? Their intelligence could hardly have failed to warn them of our intentions. The position would be occupied, never fear, and in force, with seasoned men from the East.

At last a stunning roar that seems to shake the very ground, rising to a shriek. Now it is each man for himself. The long line surges forward, looking eagerly for a breach. Now we can see our opponents—hate in their eyes—as they brace themselves for the shock. Now we are into them, fighting silently, with a sort of cold fury save where a muttered curse or the sharp cry of the injured bears testimony to the fierceness of the struggle.

But see, they turn and waver. One more rush and we are through, driving them before us. The position is won.

Breathing hard we look around at the havoc we have wrought, and suddenly the glamour of victory seems to fade and one loathes the whole senseless, savage business. We do not really hate these men. After all, they are our fellow-creatures.

But what would you? One cannot spend the night on Charing Cross District platform.

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### SHAKSPEARE AND THE NEW ART.

"WHAT'S HERE? THE PORTRAIT OF A BLINKING IDIOT?"  
*Merchant of Venice, Act II. Sc. 9.*

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From a drapery firm's advertisement:

"WE NEVER ALLOW

DISSATISFIED CUSTOMER TO LEAVE THE  
PREMISES IF WE CAN AVOID IT.

IT DOESN'T PAY!"

*Scotch Paper.*

Suspiciously like a case of "Your money or your life!"

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### BY THE STREAM.

*(Featuring the Premier.)*

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE has returned from a visit to the haunts of his youth with renewed health and reinforced Welsh accent. The last day of his holiday was spent in fishing in the company of two friends; but unfortunately the newspapers failed to supply any details of the scene, a lack of enterprise which it is difficult to understand, especially on the part of the journals known to employ Rubicon experts on their staff. Happily we are able to give information which we have reason to believe will not be officially contradicted.

From his childhood Mr. LLOYD GEORGE has known intimately the romantic stream, named, for some unexplained reason, the Dwyfor river. To its musical murmur may be traced the mellifluous cadences of the statesman's voice employed so effectually in his appeals to Labour and the Paris Conference. Who can say what influences this little Welsh river, with its bubbling merriment, the flashing forceful leap of its cascades, its adroit avoidance of obstacles, may have had upon the career of the statesman of to-day, as through the years it has wound its way from the springs to the ocean? The senior fish of the Dwyfor are well known to him, and they gather fearlessly in large numbers to smile at his bait and to point it out to their friends.

Towards the end of the day a humorous incident occurred. A keeper appeared on the opposite bank of the river and excitedly warned the party that they were trespassing, requesting them to retire. To his amazement his demands were ignored, and the trespassers replied to his protests by singing "The Land Song," the PREMIER'S rich tenor voice being easily distinguished above the roar of a neighbouring cascade.

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"Lieut — proposed that Mr. —, our present vice-chairman, be elected to the chair

until the usual election of officials took place, by that time a capable member would probably be found willing to accept the position.

Mr. ——— thanked the proposer and seconders for their compliment."—*Service Paper*.

The new chairman seems to be easily pleased.

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*Sunday School Teacher.* "DEAR ME, MAGGIE, YOU'RE NOT GOING AWAY BEFORE THE SERVICE IS BEGUN?"

*Little Girl.* "IT'S OUR FREDDIE, MISS. 'E'S SWALLOWED THE COLLECTION."

## OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

Inevitably you will find a sad significance in the title of *Harvest* (COLLINS), the last story, I suppose, that we shall have from the pen of Mrs. HUMPHREY WARD. It is a quite simple tale, very simply told, and of worth less for its inherent drama than for the admirable picture it gives of rural England in the last greatest days of the Great War. How quick was the writer's sympathy with every phase of the national ordeal is proved again by a score of vivid passages in which the fortunes of her characters are dated by the tremendous events that form their background. The story itself is of two women in partnership on a Midland farm, one of whom, the senior, has in her past certain secret episodes which, as is the way of such things, return to find her out and bring her happiness to ruin. The character of this *Janet* is well and vigorously drawn, though there is perhaps little in her personality as shown here to make understandable the passion of her past. All the details of life on the land in the autumn of 1918 are given with a skill that brings into the book not only the scent of the wheat-field but the stress, emotional and economic, of those unforgettable months. Because it is all so typically English one may call it a true consummation of the work of one who loved England well. In Mrs. WARD's death the world of letters mourns the loss of a writer whose talent was ever ungrudgingly at the service of her country. She leaves a gap that it will be hard to fill.

In some ways I think that they will be fortunate who do not read *A Remedy Against Sin* (HUTCHINSON) till the vicissitudes of book-life have deprived it of its pictorial wrapper, because, though highly attractive as a drawing, the very charmingly-clad minx of the illustration is hardly a figure to increase one's sympathy with her as an injured heroine. And of course it is precisely this sympathy that Mr. W. B. MAXWELL is playing for—first, last and all the time. His title and the puff's preliminary will doubtless have given you the aim of the story, "to influence the public mind on one of the most vital questions of the day," the injustice of our divorce laws. For this end Mr. MAXWELL has exercised all his ability on the picture of a foolish young wife, chained to a lout who is shown passing swiftly from worse to unbearable, and herself broken at last by the ordeal of the witness-box in a "defended action." Inevitably such a book, a record of disillusion and increasing misery, can hardly be cheerful; tales with a purpose seldom are. But the poignant humanity of it will hold your sympathy throughout. You may think that Mr. MAXWELL too obviously loads his dice, and be aware also that (like others of its kind) the story suffers from over-concentration on a single theme. It moves in a world of incompatibles. The heroine's kindly friend is tied to a dipsomaniac wife; her coachman has no remedy for a ruined home because of the

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expense of divorce, and so on. To a great extent, however, Mr. MAXWELL'S craft has enabled him to overcome even these obstacles; his characters, though you may suspect manipulation, remain true types of their rather tiresome kind, and the result is a book that, though depressing, refuses to be put down. But as a wedding-present—no!

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*The Underworld* (JENKINS) describes life round about and down below a small coal-mine in Scotland something near thirty years ago. Its author, JAMES WELSH, tells us in a simple manly preface that he became a miner at the age of twelve, and worked at every phase of coal-getting till lately he was appointed check-weigher by his fellows, and therefore writes of what he knows at first hand. Here then is a straightforward tale with for hero a sensitive and enthusiastic young miner who draws his inspiration from BOB SMILLIE, loses his girl to the coal-owner's son and his life in a rescue-party. The villain, double-dyed, is not the coal-owner but his "gaffer," who favours his men as to choice of position at the coal-face in return for favours received from their wives. The chief surprise to the reader will be the difference between the status and power of the miner then and now. The writer has a considerable skill in composing effective dialogue, especially between his men; gives a convincing picture of the pit and home life, the anxieties, courage, affections and aspirations of the friends of whom he is "so proud." Nor does he cover up their weaknesses. Purple passages of fine writing show his inexperience slipping into pitfalls by the way, but his work rings true and deserves to be read by many at the present time when miners are so far from being victims of "the block"—the employers' device for starving out a "difficult" man—that they look like fitting the boot to another leg. One is made to realise their anxiety to get rid of that boot.

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*How They Did It* (METHUEN) may be regarded as a novel with a purpose, and, like most such, suffers from the defects of its good intentions. The object is "an exposure of war muddling at home," and it must be admitted that Mr. GERALD O'DONOVAN gives us no half-measure; indeed I was left with the idea that greater moderation would have made a better case. To illustrate it, he takes his hero, *David Grant*, through a variety of experiences. Incapacitated from active fighting through the loss of an arm, he is given work as a housing officer on the Home Front. His endeavours to check the alleged extravagance and corruption of this command led to his being "invalided out"; after which he wanders round seeking civilian war-work (and marking only dishonesty everywhere), and ends up with a post in the huge, newly-formed and almost entirely farcical Ministry of Business. This final epithet puts in one word my criticism of Mr. O'DONOVAN'S method. Everyone admits the large grain of truth in his charges; the trouble is that he has too often allowed an honest indignation to carry him past his mark into the regions of burlesque, and in particular to confuse character with caricature. But as a topical squib, briskly written, *How They Did It* will provide plenty of angry amusement, with enough suggestion of the *roman à clef* to keep the curious happy in fitting originals to its many portraits. I should perhaps add that the plot, such as it is, is held together by a rather perfunctory and intermittent love-affair, too obviously employed only to fill up time while the author is thinking out some fresh exposure. This I regretted, as *Mary*, the heroine, is here a shadow of what seems attractive and original substance. I wonder that the author did not invent for her a Ministry of Romance. He is quite capable of it.

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Among the writers who have established stable reputations for themselves during the War "KLAXON" is in the very front rank. This is partly due to an easy natural style, but most to a sound judgment and an amazingly clear eye for essentials. To those (not myself) who want to forget the last few years it may seem that we have already been given enough opportunities to read about our submarines. Well, I have read nearly everything that has been written on this subject and could yet draw great delight from *The Story of Our Submarines* (BLACKWOOD), a most informing and fascinating book. "Whatever happens," says "KLAXON," "the German policy of torpedoing merchant ships without warning must be made not only illegal but unsafe for a nation adopting it.... If these notes of mine serve no other purpose, they will, at any rate, do something towards differentiating between the submarine and the U-boat." By which it will be seen that to his many other claims on our regard "KLAXON" adds the gift, not always found among experts, of modesty.

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DISGUST OF AN ARTIST ON FINDING HIS ACADEMY SUCCESS OF 1899 AT AN AUCTION OF MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES LEFT BEHIND IN RAILWAY CARRIAGES.

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## THE VISIT.

When I went to Fairyland, visiting the Queen,  
I rode upon a peacock, blue and gold and green;  
Silver was the harness, crimson were the reins,  
All hung about with little bells that swung on silken chains.

When I went to Fairyland, indeed you cannot think  
What pretty things I had to eat, what pretty things to drink;  
And did you know that butterflies could sing like little birds?  
And did you guess that fairy-talk is not a bit like words?

When I went to Fairyland—of all the lovely things!—  
They really taught me how to fly, they gave me fairy wings;  
And every night I listen for a tapping on the pane—  
I want so very much to go to Fairyland again.

R. F.

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