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PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.

Vol. 150.

March 15, 1916.

CHARIVARIA.

The Zeppelin which was "winged" while flying over Kent last week has not yet been found, and is believed to be still in hiding in the densely wooded country between Maidstone and Ashford. Confirmation of this report is supplied by a local farmer, who states that on three successive nights the cat's supper has been stolen from his scullery steps. This strange circumstance, considered in the light of the Germans' inordinate passion for cats' meat, has gone far to satisfy the authorities that the capture of the crippled monster is only a question of time.

Mr. WILLIAM AIRD, in a lecture upon "Health, Disease and Economical Living," insisted that we should all be much healthier if we lived on "rabbit food." Possibly; but the vital question is—would not this diet induce in us a tendency to become conscientious objectors?

"It is most necessary," stated a Manchester economics expert last week, "that the Government should release more beef for civilian needs." Yet a cursory view of the work done by the military tribunals seems to indicate that they are releasing altogether too much.

A Chertsey pig-breeder has been granted total exemption. The pen, it seems, is still mightier than the sword.

Some slight irritation has been caused by the announcement of Sir ALFRED KEOGH that Naval men engaged on the home service cannot be supplied with false teeth at the expense of the Government. Nevertheless we may rest assured that, come what may, these gallant fellows will uphold the traditions of the Navy and stick to their gums.

For many days past the condition of our streets has been really lamentable owing to the fact that so many of our crossing-sweepers are serving with the colours; and a painful report is going about that the Government's object in recognizing the V. T. C. is at last becoming apparent.

A prehistoric elephant has recently been discovered at Chatham and is now mounted in the British Museum. In palæontological circles the report that the monster's death was occasioned by the consumption of too much seed-cake is regarded as going far to prove that our neolithic ancestors were not without their



Mistress. "WELL, JONES, I HOPE WE SHALL GET MORE OUT OF THE GARDEN THIS YEAR. WE HAD NEXT TO NOTHING LAST YEAR."

Jones. "AY—'TWERE THEY PLAGUEY PHEASANTS 'AD MOST ON IT LAST YEAR."

Mistress. "IF YOU ASK ME, I SHOULD SAY IT WAS TWO-LEGGED PHEASANTS!"

From a Parliamentary report: "In his reply Mr. Asquith stated that the 'Peace Book' which was being prepared to meet problems which would arise after the War corresponded with the 'War Book' which was compiled years ago in anticipation of the War." This ought to put heart into the enemy.

The Court of Appeal has decided that infants are liable to pay income tax. It is reported that Sir JOHN SIMON is preparing a stinging remonstrance.

The Turkish New Year has been officially postponed so as to begin on March 14th, instead of on March 1st, as before. This simple but satisfactory method of prolonging the existence of a moribund empire has proved so successful that ENVER PASHA and a number of other Young Turks have indefinitely postponed their next birthdays.

Up to the moment of writing there has been no confirmation of the report that Turkey has given her consent to the making of a separate peace by Germany on account of the economic exhaustion of the latter country.

Extract from letter to *The Westminster Gazette*:—

"'M.D.' cannot have studied dietetics, or he would know that far greater strength and endurance are produced by a fruit and herb diet than by what is termed a 'mixed diet,' *e.g.*, the elephant, the horse and the gorilla."

In the circumstances it is fortunate that the scarcity of gorillas puts them out of the reach of all but millionaire *gourmets*.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"HORSE MARINE."—You say you are intrigued about *The Evening News* poster, which announced

"ASQUITH ON A MORATORIUM,"

and you are curious to know more about this animal. We have pleasure in informing you that it is distantly related to the megatherium, and, since the extinction of the latter, has been very generally used for hack

purposes. The PREMIER may be seen any morning in the Park taking a canter on one of these superb mammals.

"WINSTONIAN."—The rumour that Colonel the late First Lord of the Admiralty has offered himself the command of a mine-sweeper or, alternatively, of a platoon in the 1/100 battalion of the Chilterns, lacks confirmation.

"PEER OF THE REALM."—We agree with you in regretting that Lord FISHER was unable to accept Lord BERESFORD'S invitation to come and hear him speak in your House about the Downing Street sandwichmen and other collateral subjects arising out of the Air Service debate. You will be glad however to know that Lord FISHER'S absence was not due to indisposition, but to a previous engagement to take tea on the Terrace with Mr. BALFOUR.

"A LOVER OF THE ANTIQUE."—Your idea of making a collection of antebellum fetishes is a happy one. Examples of the Little Navy and Voluntary System fetishes are now rather rare, but you should have no difficulty in securing a well-preserved specimen of the Free Trade fetish at the old emporium of antiquities kept by the firm of John Simon and Co.

"A SINGLE MAN."—When you say that you are forty years old, that you have practically built up a business which will be ruined if you leave it, that you are the sole support of a stepmother and a family of young half-brothers and sisters, but that you have felt it your duty to attest without appealing for exemption, we applaud your patriotism. But, when you go on to complain that your neighbour, aged twenty-two, living in idleness on an allowance, and married to a chorus-girl still in her teens and childless, should be free to decline service if he chooses (as he does), we cannot but disapprove of your irreverent and almost immoral attitude towards the holy condition of matrimony. If the tie of wedlock is not to take precedence of every other tie, including that of country, where are we?

"A CRY FROM MACEDONIA."—In answer to your question as to when we think it likely that the KAISER will take advantage of his recently-conferred commission in the Bulgarian Army and lead his regiment against Salonika, we are unable to fix a date for this movement. Our private information is that he is detained elsewhere by a previous engagement which is taking up more time than was anticipated.

"BULGAR."—We sympathise with you in your natural desire to have your TSAR FERDINAND home again, and we share your sanguine belief that the tonic air of Sofia (never more bracing than at the present moment) ought speedily to cure him of his malignant catarrh. His Austrian physicians however advise him to remain away, and he himself holds the view, coloured a little by superstition, that his return should be at least postponed till after the Ides of March, a day that was fatal to the health of an earlier Cæsar.

"YOUNG TURK."—Your anxiety about ENVER PASHA is groundless. The news that he has been recently seen at the PROPHET'S Tomb at Medina conveyed no indication that the object of his visit was to select a neighbouring site for his own burial. Indeed, our information is that since his recent assassination (as reported from Athens) he has been going on quite as well as could be expected.

O. S.

BUILDING WITHOUT TEARS.

The enthralling correspondence in the columns of our contemporary, *The Spectator*, on the subject of cheap cottages and how to build them, has evoked a vast amount of correspondence addressed directly to us. We select a few specimens which are recommended by their practical and businesslike character:—

THE MERITS OF "POSH."

DEAR SIR,—The question of Land Settlement after the War resolves itself in the last resort into the employment of cheaper methods of cottage building. Will you allow me to put in a word for the revival, in the neighbourhood of the sea, of the old Suffolk plan of building with what is locally known as "posh," after the name of the original inventor, who was an ancestor of FITZGERALD'S friend. "Posh" is a mixture of old boots—of which a practically unlimited supply can be found on the beaches of seaside resorts—and seaweed, boiled into a jelly, allowed to solidify, and then frozen hard in cold storage. "Posh" is not only (1) impenetrable but also (2) hygienic, the iodine in the seaweed lending it a peculiarly antiseptic quality, and (3) picturesque, the colour of the compound being a dark purple, which is exceedingly pleasing to the eye. Lastly, the cost of production is slight, as the raw material can be obtained for nothing, and the compound can be sawn into blocks or bricks to suit the taste of the tenant. I am convinced that cottages of "posh" could be built for less than a hundred pounds a-piece; and at that figure cheap housing becomes a practical proposition.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

DECIMUS DEXTER.

"STOOTING" AND "MARMASH."

DEAR SIR,—The choice of material matters little so long as it is properly treated. Any sort of earth will do, or, failing earth, a mixture of ashes with a little mustard and marmalade, the waste of which in most households is prodigious. But it must be properly pounded and allowed to set in a frame. For the former process there is no better implement than the old Gloucestershire stoot, or stooting-mallet, or in the alternative a disused niblick. The earth, or the "marmash" mixture, as I have christened it, should be poured into a bantle-frame—which can be made by any village carpenter—and vigorously pounded for about three hours. Then another bantle-frame is placed on the first, and the process is repeated. No foundation is required for walls erected by the plan of stooting, but a damp-course of mulpin is advisable, and it is always best to pingle the door-jambs, and binge up the rafters with a crumping-block.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

THE BEAUTY OF "BAP."

DEAR SIR,—When I was an under-graduate at Balliol more years ago than I care to remember, I not only took part in the road-making experiment carried out under RUSKIN's supervision, but assisted in the erection of a model cottage, the walls of which were made of "bap," a compound which is still used in parts of Worcestershire. The receipt is very simple. You mix clinkers, wampum and spelf in equal quantities and condense the compound by hydraulic pressure. I have a well-trained hydraulic ram who is capable of condensing enough "bap" in twenty-four hours to provide the materials for building six four-roomed cottages. I am sorry to say that the "bap" cottage at Hinksey was washed away by a flood a few years ago, and the spot where it stood is no longer identifiable. But the facts are as I have stated them.

Truly yours, ROLAND PHIBSON.

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THE JUNIOR PARTNERS.


FERDIE. "THINGS SEEM TO BE AT A STANDSTILL IN MY DEPARTMENT."

SULTAN. "I ONLY WISH I COULD SAY THE SAME OF MINE."

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AT THE FRONT.

I wonder if the chap who first thought out this shell business realized the extraordinary inconvenience it would cause to gentlemen at rest during what the Photographic Press alludes to as "a lull in the fighting."

Once upon a time billets were billets. You came into such, and thereafter for a spell of days forgot about the War unless you got an odd shell into the kitchen. But now—well, about noon on the first day's rest, seventy odd batteries of our 12, 16, and 24 inch guns set about their daily task of touching up a selected target, say a sap-head or something new from Unter den Linden in spring barbed-wirings which has been puzzling a patrol. This is all right in its way; but the Hun still owns one or two guns opposite us. And by 12.5 all is unquiet on the Western Front. This is all right in its way; but about 3 P.M. the Hun is roused to the depths of his savage nature, and one wakes up to find Hildebrand and Hoffelbuster, the two guns told off to attend to our liberty area, scattering missiles far and wide, but mostly wide, and a covey of aeroplanes bombing the local cabbageries. This again is all right in its way, but in the meantime the mutual noise further up the line has become so loud that Someone very far back and high up catches the echo of it, and a bare hour later we receive the order to stand-to at once, ready to move off twenty minutes ago.

Within three minutes of our first stand-to I was up with the company, hastily but adequately mobilized with my servant's rifle, five smoke helmets, (I took all I could see; this is *camaraderie*), a biscuit, the Indispensable Military Pocket Book (8 in. by 10 in.), a revolver (disqualified for military uses owing to absence of ammunition), Russian Picture Tales, and a tooth-brush. I find a general opinion prevalent in the company that "if Fritz knew *we* was standing-to 'e'd pack in." Word must have come through to Fritz somehow, for he shortly packs in—say about 1 A.M.—and we follow suit after the news has spent a couple or hours or so flashing round the wires in search of us. And we go to sleep until to-morrow midday, when the day's play begins again.

When we had been thus "rested" for some days we went and took over a nice new line, with lots of funny bits in it. The front line had three bits.

Left sector—Mine (exploded; possibly held by Bosch on far side).

Central sector—Mine? (unexploded; not held by Bosch anywhere).

Right sector—Mine (exploded; possibly held by Bosch on far side).

Our position seemed a little problematical. The left and right we satisfied ourselves about at once, but the centre was in a class by itself. We demanded an investigator, somebody with wide mine-sweeping experience preferred.

About 2 A.M. on our first day in, a figure loomed up through a snow-storm from the back of the central trench and asked forlornly if there might be any mines hereabouts. We admitted there might be, or again there might not. He questioned us precisely where it was suspected, and we told him "underneath." He scratched his head and announced that he was sent to look for it. His qualifications consisted apparently in his having coal-mined. But he seemed confident of detecting the quicker combustion sort, until he asked for necessary impedimenta. It seems that no good collier can detect an H.E. or any sort of mine without a pail of water, and a hole about 2,000 feet deep, and a pulley, and a rope ladder and a bratting-slat.

It's true we had some good holes in parts of the trench, where you probably go down 2,000 feet if you step off the footboards, and the rest of the stuff we might have contrived to improvise. But for the moment we had somehow run clean out of bratting-slats.

So we had to return the poor fellow with a request that all experts should be completed with bratting-slats before being sent to the front line. This request only produced the senseless interrogation, "What *is* a bratting-slat?" to which we have not yet bothered to reply. In the meantime if we are really sitting on a mine it seems quite a tame one. It hasn't as much as barked yet.

Just in our bit we aren't very well off for dug-outs; it isn't really what you'd call a representative sector from any point of view. But during a blizzard the other night a messenger who had mislaid himself took us for a serious trench. He made his way along, looking to right and left for some seat of authority until he came to a hole in the parados, two feet by one, where some fortunate fellow had ejected an ammunition box and was attempting to boil water on a night-light. The messenger bent low and asked huskily—

"Is this 'ere comp'ny edquarters?"

The water-boiler looked up. "No," he replied, "it ain't. It's G.H.Q., but DUGGIE 'AIG ain't at 'ome to no one this evenin'."



First Tommy. "THE C.O.'S RECOMMENDED YOU FOR A V.C"

Second Tommy (half asleep and thinking of C.B.). "OH LUMME! WHAT 'AVE I DONE NOW?"

"GERMANS' TERRIBLE LOSSES.

WHOLE CORPS WIPED OUT.

BY LORD NORTHCLIFFE."

Belfast News Letter.

Yet, with commendable modesty, his lordship said nothing about this in his recent despatch.

The Daily News reports the case of a conscientious objector at York who said he could not take life—he "would not even eat an egg." We ourselves have conscientious objections to that sort of egg.



First Boy. "I SAY, YOUR DAD SEEMS TO BE GETTING IT PRETTY HOT."

Second Boy. "WELL, YOU SEE, THIS IS HIS FIRST WAR."

TO THE KING OF SPAIN.

YOUR MAJESTY, There is a little village in England nestling among wooded hills. It has sent forth its bravest and best from cottage and farm and manor-house to fight for truth and liberty and justice. The news of grievous wounds and still more grievous deaths, of men missing and captured, comes often to that quiet hamlet, and the roll of honour in the little grey stone church grows longer and longer. In the big house on the hill, at sunrise and at sunset, the young Lady of the Manor stands at the bedside of her little son, and hears him lisp his simple prayers to God, and they always end like this:—

"And God bless Father and Mother and Nurse, and send Father back soon from his howwid prison in Germany. And God bless 'specially the dear King of SPAIN, who found out about Father. Amen."

The kings of the earth have many priceless possessions; they are able to confer upon each other various glittering orders of merit and distinction; but we doubt if any one of them has a dearer possession or a more genuine order of merit than this simple prayer of faith and gratitude offered at sunrise and at sunset on behalf of Your Majesty by the bedside of a little English child.

THE OLD SOLDIER.

By a "Temporary" Sub.

There are some men—and such is Jones—

Who love to vent their antique spleens
On any subaltern that owns
He's not a soldier in his bones

(*I'm not, by any means;*

Who fiercely watch us drill our men
And tell us things were different when
(In, I imagine, 1810)

They joined the Blue Marines.

I like them not, yet I affect

That air of awed humility
Which I should certainly expect,
If I were old and medal-deck'd,

From young men under me;

But when they hint their wondrous wit
Is what has made them feel so fit
To do their military bit,

I simply can't agree.

I said to Jones—or should have said

But feared the Articles of War—
"You must not think you have a head
Because you know from A to Z

This military lore,

By years of study slowly gat
(And somewhat out-of-date at that),
When lo, I had the whole thing pat

In six small months—not more."

Maybe the mystic art appals

Unlearned souls of low degrees,
But men to whom the high Muse calls,

Men who are good enough for Smalls,
Imbibe it all with ease;
While where would Jones, I wonder, be
If someone took the man for me
And asked him for some *jeu d'esprit*,
A few bright lines (like these)?

Possibly Jones will one day tire
Of fours and fights and iron shards,
Will seize his pencil and aspire
To court the Muse and match the fire
Of us poetic cards;
Then I shall mock his meagre strain
And gaily make the moral plain,
How barren is the soldier's brain
Compared with any bard's.

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A QUESTION OF THE NUDE.

They scrambled into the carriage in a tremendous hurry, all talking at once at the tops of their voices, all very excited and very dirty. They had mud on their boots which had evidently come from France, and their overcoats had that rumpled appearance which distinguishes overcoats from the Front from those merely in training.

There seemed to be about ten of them as they got into the train, but when they had deposited various objects on the rack, such as rifles, haversacks, and kit-bags like partially deflated airships, the number resolved itself into three.

The compartment already contained—besides myself—a naval warrant officer, reading *Freckles* with a sentimental expression, and a large leading seaman with hands like small hams and a peaceful smile like a jade Buddha. It said "H.M.S. Hedgehog" round his cap, but when I ventured to remark that I once in peacetime saw and visited that vessel he observed with indifference that "cap-ribbons was nothin' to go by these days; point o' fact, he never see that there ship in his puff." Otherwise they maintained that deep and significant silence which we have learned to associate with our Navy.

The Tommies, however, were in very talkative vein. "Now," I thought, "I shall doubtless hear some real soldiers' stories of the War, even as the newspaper men hear them and reproduce them in the daily prints: the crash of the artillery, the wild excitement of battle—in short, the Real Thing...."

A momentous question had evidently been under discussion when they entered the train, and as soon as they were settled in their seats they resumed it.

"Wot I want to know is," said the largest of the three, a big man with a very square face and blue eyes,—"wot I want to know is—is that there feller to go walkin' about naked?" The last word was pronounced as a monosyllable.

He set his fists squarely on his knees and glared around him with a challenging expression.

"No, it's agin the law," said a small man with a very hoarse voice.

"Course it is," rejoined the other. "Well, wot's the feller to do? That's wot I ast you. If 'e walks about naked, well, 'e gets took up for bein' naked; if 'e doesn't, why, 'e gets 'ad for not returnin' 'is uniform."

He looked round again and decided to take the rest of us into consultation.

"This 'ere's 'ow it stands—see? 'Ere's a feller got the mitten along o' not bein' able to march, through gettin' shot in the leg. 'E goes 'ome pendin' 'is *discharge*, an' o' course e' walks about in 'is uniform. Then 'e gets 'is *discharge*, an' they tells 'im to return 'is kar-kee *an'* small kit—"

"An' small kit?" burst out the third member of the party indignantly—a sprightly youth with a very short tunic and a pert expression. "Do they want you to return your small kit when you get the mitten? Watch me returnin' mine, that's all!"

"You'll 'ave to," said the voice of Discipline.

"'Ave to, I don't think!" said the rebel ironically; "I couldn't if I'd lorst it."

"I ain't got no small kit, any 'ow," said the small and husky one; "I put my 'aversack down when we was diggin' one of our chaps out of a Jack Johnson 'ole, and some bloomin' blighter pinched it! Now that's a thing as I don't 'old with. Rotten, I call it. I wouldn't say nothing about it, mind you, if I was dead; I like to 'ave something as belonged to a comrade, myself, an' I know as 'e'd feel the same, seein' as 'e couldn't want it 'imself. But, if you take a feller's things w'en 'e's alive, why, you don't know 'ow bad 'e might want 'em some day."

"Corporal 'e ses to me, las' kit inspection," broke in the fresh-faced youth, disregarding this nice point of ethics, "'W'ere's your tooth-brush?' 'e ses. 'Where you won't find it,' I ses. "'Oo're you talkin' to?' 'e ses. 'Dunno,' I ses; 'the ticket's fell off!... Wot d'yer call yourself, any'ow,' I ses, 'you an' yer stripe?' I ses. 'Funny bundle,' I ses, 'that's what I call you!'"

"Well, I don't see wot a feller's got to do," said the propounder of the problem, returning to the charge. "Granted as 'e can't walk about naked; granted as 'e 'asn't got a suit o' civvies of 'is own—wot *is* 'e to do?"

"'Ang on to 'is kar-kee" said the hoarse-voiced man. The setter-down of corporals retired within himself, probably to compose some humorous repartee.

The warrant officer came out of *Freckles* and suggested writing a letter.

"'E 'as done. 'E's wrote an' told 'em 'as 'e can't send 'is kar-kee back until 'e gets a suit o' Martin 'Enry's or thirty bob in loo of same. An' all as they done was to write again an' demand 'is uniform at once."

The warrant officer sighed and opined that orders were orders.

"Yes, but 'e 'd 'ave to carry 'em to the Post Office naked, wouldn't 'e? An' 'ow about goin' to buy new ones? That's if 'e 'd drawed 'is pay, which 'e 'asn't. Unreasonable, that's wot I calls it."

"'Asn't 'e got no civvies at all?" said the small man, beginning to look sceptical. "'Asn't 'e got no one as 'd lend 'im a soot? Anyways, 'e could get some one to post 'em for 'im, an' then stop in bed till 'is others come."

"'E's a very lonely feller," said the champion of the unclad; "'e lives in lodgin's, an' 'e 'asn't got no friends. If 'e 'adn't got no clothes for to fetch 'is pay in, wot then?"

A gloomy silence, a silence fraught with the inevitability of destiny, settled on the party.

The warrant officer, who had been pretending to resume *Freckles*, presently looked up and suggested that he could go in his uniform to a tailor, explain the position and obtain clothes on credit.

The originator of the problem thought hard for a minute.

"'E isn't a man as I'd care to trust myself," he said rather unexpectedly, "an' I don't think no one else would neither."

It was at this point that the man from H.M.S. *Hedgehog* (or, to be precise, H.M.S. *Something Else*) fell into the conversation suddenly, like a bomb.

"'E wouldn't be naked," he said earnestly; "'e'd 'ave 'is shirt."

This was a staggerer. One of those great simple truths sometimes overlooked by more abstruse thinkers. But the owner of the problem made one more stand.

"'Oo'd walk about in a shirt?" he said scornfully.

"Me," said the large seaman, "time I was torpedoed...."

He didn't say another word; but the problem was irretrievably lost. There had been something magnificently daring about the idea of a man walking about like a lost cherub; partly clothed, nobody cared very much what became of him.

Besides, we all wanted to hear Admiralty secrets. We sat there in respectful silence while the train rattled on its way; but the large seaman only went on smiling peacefully to himself, as if he were ruminating in immense satisfaction upon unprecedented bags of submarines.

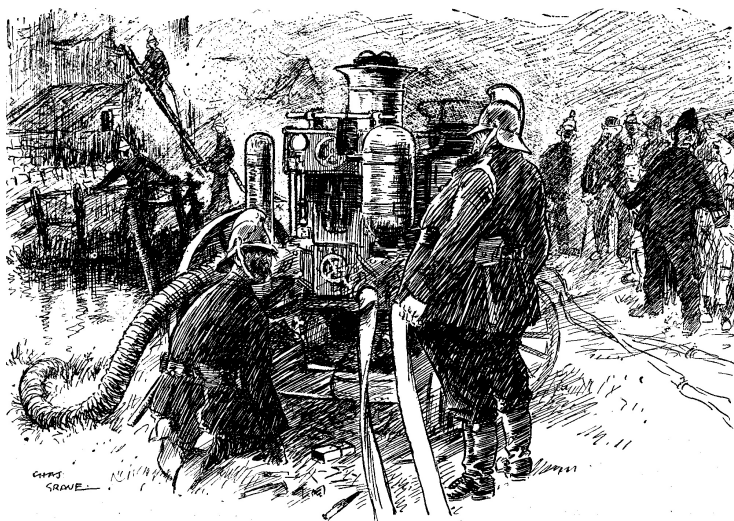
"The architect for the new building left nothing out that would at all hamper the comfort of those who make this hotel their stopping place."—*New Zealand Paper*.

We know that architect.

"The *Severn* was moored in a position 1,000 miles closer to the enemy than on July 6, which made her fire much more effective." *Natal Mercury*.

We can well believe this.

ANOTHER INDISPENSABLE.



Chief of Village Fire Brigade. "WE'RE ALL READY. IS STEAM UP?"
Engineer (temporary). "IF YOU WANT STEAM IN THIS ENGINE YOU'LL HAVE TO GET THOMPSON 'OME FROM FRANCE TO SHOW ME 'OW TO LIGHT THE BLOOMIN' FIRE."

TO MY COLD.

Lord of the rheumy eyes and blowing nose,
On whom no fostering sun has ever shone,
What mak'st thou here? Didst thou in sooth believe
Thy presence would be welcome? Hast thou come
Thinking to please me—me who, not at all
Wanting to catch, have caught thee full and fair,
And, loth to get, have got thee none the less?
Why couldst thou not in thine own realms have stayed?
Thou mightst have found—I can't go on like this;
These second persons singular of verbs
Are far too tricky; once involved in these,
For instance, "lovedst" and "spreadst" and "stillst" and "gapest,"
And thousands more—once, as I say, involved
In these too clinging tendrils one is done;
And so I find I cannot write an ode,
Not even a ten-syllabic blank-verse ode,
In second persons singular of verbs,
In "snifflest" and in "wheezest" and the rest,
For I am sure to trip and spoil the thing,
And bring grammatic censure on my head.
Be, therefore, plural—"you" instead of "thou"—
Which makes things simpler. Now we can get on.
O fain-avoided and most loathsome Cold,
You with the sneezing, teasing, wheezing airs,
What make you here at such a time as this,
Melting my snowy store of handkerchiefs,
Rasping my throat and bringing aches to range
At large within the measure of my head?
Platoon-Commanders of the Volunteers,
Who now are recognised (three cheers!) at last,
And of whose number I who write am one,
Should be immune from colds; they sound absurd
When bidding men to "boove to th' right id Fours,"
Or "order arbs" (or slope) or "stad at ease,"
Or "od the left" (or right) to "forb platood."
Even the most submissive men begin
To lose respect when such commands ring out.
Wherefore, my cold—*atchoo, atchoo*—be off,
Lest I report you and your deeds aright
To Mr. TENNANT at the War Office.

In the cast of *The Real Thing at Last*:—

"Nearly murdered ... Mr. Godfrey Tearle (by permission of the Adelphi Theatre Co.)."—*Daily Telegraph*.

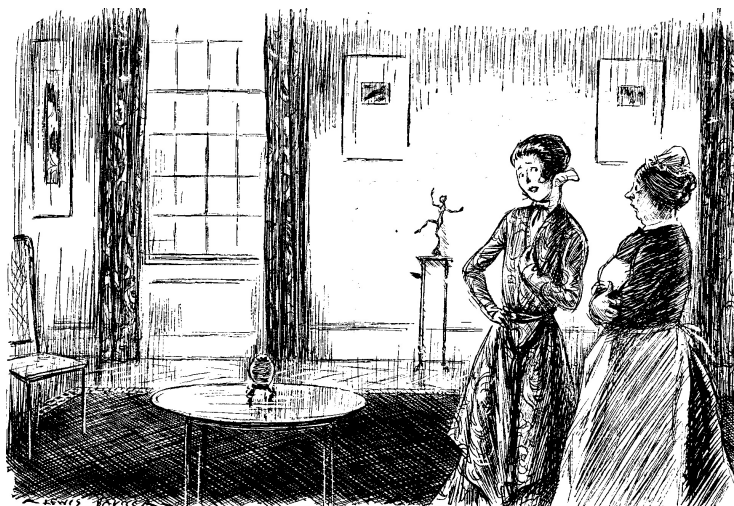
A sorry return for Mr. TEARLE'S excellent work.

"THE FLOODS IN HOLLAND.

General Goethals states that he cannot predict a date for reopening the Panama Canal on account of the uncertainty of the movement of the slides."—*North China Daily News*.

It looks like an infringement of the Monroe doctrine.

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Artistic Lady (who has just had her drawing-room redecorated). "WELL, COOK, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT?"

Cook. "IT'S A BIT BARE-LIKE, ISN'T IT, MUM? I DESSAY I'M OLD-FASHIONED, BUT I NEVER

RECIPROCITY IN FICTION.

Forthcoming Masterpieces.

"It is not often," says a writer of what is called "Literary Intelligence," "that a novelist adopts a living fellow-worker as the central figure of his story. This is, however, the case with *My Lady of the Moor*, which Messrs. LONGMANS will shortly publish for Mr. JOHN OXENHAM. While wandering on Dartmoor he stumbled into a living actual romance, of which Miss BEATRICE CHASE, author of several popular books about Dartmoor, was the centre. This book tells the tale, which is named after Miss CHASE, *My Lady of the Moor*, and it has of course been written with her full consent and approval."

But the "Literary Intelligencer" did not know that Mr. OXENHAM is not the dazzling innovator that he might be thought. Why, even at the moment that Mr. OXENHAM was serving up Miss CHASE on toast, but always, of course, with perfect taste, Miss CHASE was performing the same culinary business for him. For her next novel, to be entitled with great charm *My Gentleman of the Cheek*, will present a faithful picture of the gifted JOHN and the figure he cut on Dartmoor all among the thikkies and down-alongs and tors.

Mr. HALL CAINE, having just been pleading in public for more War realism from literary artists, has in preparation a fascinating new romance entitled *Marie of Stratford*, which depicts, with all this master's restraint, power and genius, various phases in the life of a sister-novelist of whose existence he has recently heard. Nothing at once so charming and so arresting has been published for days.

It is announced that Miss MARIE CORELLI, who for too long has vouchsafed nothing fresh to her countless admirers, has just completed the (Isle of) Manuscript of a story which, like all her works, is epoch-making. Connoisseurs of literature, always eager for a new *frisson*, will be fascinated to learn that this novel has for its subject a fellow-novelist of whose retired existence she has but lately become aware. It takes the form of a saga and is entitled *Hall of the Three Legs*. Editions of a size commensurate with the scarcity of paper are being prepared.

Meanwhile we are informed that Mr. TASKER JEVONS is at work upon a trilogy of vast dimensions and meticulous detail, of which the heroine is Miss MAY SINCLAIR.

"The General Manager, in reply, said: Seeing that the privilege of addressing you in annual meeting comes to me once only in every forty-four years of service, and having regard to the vast interests included in this vote of thanks, there might be found some excuse for elaboration of acknowledgment were it not that discursiveness is entirely at variance with the habits of the staff."

Pall Mall Gazette.

After another forty-four years' silence we hope he will really let himself go.

An Exchange of Ivories.

"Wanted, piano; dentist willing to make artificial teeth for same, or part."

Edinburgh Evening Despatch.

A Hint to the Censor.

"To cool hot journals apply a dressing made of 11 lb. blacklead, 23 lb. Epsom salts, 9 lb. sulphur, 2 lb. lampblack and 5 lb. oxalic acid, mixed and ground together."—*Ironmonger.*

HIS BARK IS ON THE SEA.



MR. PUNCH. "AND WHAT DID YOU THINK OF COLONEL CHURCHILL'S SPEECH, SIR?"
 ADMIRAL JELlicOE. "I'M AFRAID I DON'T UNDERSTAND THESE THINGS. I'M NOT A POLITICIAN."
 MR. PUNCH. "THANK GOD FOR THAT, SIR!"

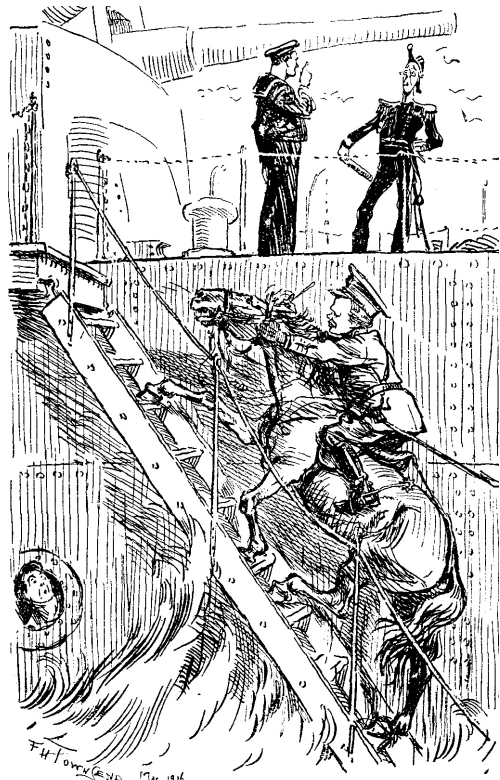
ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

Tuesday, March 7th.—The House of Commons to-day devoted itself to the process curiously known as "getting the SPEAKER out of the Chair." The phrase suggests reluctance on the part of the occupant to leave his seat; though I cannot recall any occasion when the employment of force has been necessary to persuade Mr. LOWTHER to resign to the Chairman of Committees the duty of listening to dull speeches. But this afternoon I can imagine that the SPEAKER would have been well content to remain. For there was fun brewing. Mr. BALFOUR was to introduce the Naval Estimates, and his dear friend and ex-colleague, Colonel WINSTON CHURCHILL, was announced to follow him. The conjunction of these highly-electrified bodies is always apt to produce sparks. The House was well filled, and over the clock could be seen Lord FISHER, like "a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft to keep watch for the life of poor Jacky." The last time Mr. CHURCHILL spoke of Naval affairs in the House he was not quite nice to Lord FISHER. Would he be nicer this time?

I think Mr. BALFOUR must be something of a thought-reader. Intermingled with his narration of the varied and wonderful achievements of the Fleet, past and present, his description of the constant efforts to increase it both in ships and men, and his quietly confident prophecy that with this sure shield we might face the future in cheerful serenity, there were little sidethrusts at an imaginary critic. Some people had been silly enough to suggest that the new Board of Admiralty was so content with what had been done by "my right hon. and learned—I beg his pardon—gallant friend" that it had adopted a policy of "rest and be thankful". But there was no justification for "a certain kind of sub-acid pessimism that sometimes reaches my ears", and he must be a poor-spirited creature who, having been happy about the Navy in August, 1914, could be depressed about in March, 1916.

Then Colonel CHURCHILL proceeded to put the cap on. He has been studying the problems of sea-power in the trenches of Flanders, and the process has led him to gloomy conclusions. Suppose the Germans have been building more ships than we have: suppose they have put into them bigger guns than we wot of; suppose they were to come out at their selected moment and found us at our average moment.... The House was beginning to be a little weary of these depressing hypotheses when it was suddenly brought up all standing by the discovery that the orator was delivering a eulogy on Lord Fisher. He was the man who got things done in a hurry. He was the man who had the driving power. They had "parted brass-rags" over Gallipoli, it was true; but by-gones were by-gones. Having been away for some months, his mind was now clear (irreverent laughter), and he had come to recognise that his former foe was the only possible First Sea Lord.

It must have been a little embarrassing for Lord FISHER to sit still and hear his praises thus chanted. But it is difficult to escape from the seat over the Clock without treading upon other people's toes, and this Lord FISHER is notoriously averse from doing. The moment, however, that



WINSTON ON LEAVE.
 Bluejacket. "A PARTY COMING ABOARD, SIR, TO SEE IF THE FLEET'S ALL RIGHT."
 Admiral Balfour. "WHAT SORT OF PARTY?"
 Bluejacket. "WELL, SIR, HE'S GOT SPURS ON."

Colonel CHURCHILL had finished he left the Gallery; but before he could wholly emerge he had to suffer the further shock of being cheered by some over-enthusiastic admirers behind him. It was a pity he left so soon, for later Sir HEDWORTH MEUX, fresh from Portsmouth, had some things to say which would not have compelled his blushes.

Wednesday, March 8th.—Members wondered yesterday why no reply to Colonel CHURCHILL was forthcoming from the Treasury Bench. Mr. BALFOUR made ample amends to-day for the omission. There is something in the personality of his critic—memories of Lord RANDOLPH, perhaps—that seems to put on extra polish on Mr. BALFOUR'S rapier when he deals with him. Who that heard it will ever forget his inimitable description of the then HOME SECRETARY superintending—"with a photographer"—the historic Siege of Sidney Street? This afternoon his sword-play was equally brilliant; and there was even more force behind the thrusts. If there had been delay in the progress of the new Dreadnoughts why was it? Because his right hon. predecessor had diverted the guns and gun-mountings intended for them into his new-fangled monitors. He had boasted of his own rapid shipbuilding. It had indeed been rapid—so much so that some of the vessels thus hastily constructed had now been remodelled. Coming to the proposed "remedy"—the recall of Lord FISHER to the Board of Admiralty—Mr. BALFOUR assumed a sterner tone. He reminded the house that Lord FISHER had been accused by his present champion of not having given him clear guidance or firm support over the Gallipoli Expedition. Colonel CHURCHILL'S present opinion of Lord FISHER was totally inconsistent with that which he had expressed a few months ago: possibly they were both remote from the truth. But it was an amazing proposition that the Government should be asked to dismiss Sir HENRY JACKSON, an officer who was everything that Lord FISHER according to Colonel CHURCHILL was not. He himself would not yield an inch to such a demand.

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Spontaneous debate has never been the Colonel's strong point. His oratorical engines are driven by midnight oil. Wisely, therefore, he did not attempt an elaborate *réplique* to Mr. BALFOUR'S "sword-play," but contented himself with a brief restatement of his case.

Thursday, March 9th.—Prophets swarm in both Houses of Parliament, but the House of Lords is unique in possessing one who confines himself to subjects which he has at his fingers' ends and whose prophecies have a habit of coming true. What Lord MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU does not know of the petrol engine, and its use on land or sea or in the air, is not worth knowing. Seven years ago he warned his countrymen of the bomb-dropping possibilities of the new German air-ships. A little later he pointed out that it was very doubtful if dirigible balloons could be successfully attacked by gunfire from the ground, and that the only effective way of opposing them was to meet like with like. Again in 1913 he dwelt upon the inadequacy of our aerial defences.

His object to-day was not to extol his own merits as a prophet, but to get the Government to act on the motto "One Element One Service" and establish a single Ministry of the Air. Lord HALDANE thought we ought to do some "violent thinking" before adopting the proposal, but quite agreed (with a reminiscent glance at the Woolsack) that we had not made sufficient use of lighter-than-air machines. That was Lord BERESFORD'S view, too; we must oppose Zeps to Zeps. Then, having evidently done some violent thinking over the recent debate in the Commons he launched out into a wholly irrelevant attack upon Colonel CHURCHILL for trying to create anxiety about the Fleet, and appealed to Lord FISHER (who was not present though Lord BERESFORD had particularly invited him) to repudiate the agitation conducted by the honourable Member for DUNDEE, a few newspapers and twenty sandwichmen. Lord LANSDOWNE subsequently noted that this most irregular digression appeared to be "not wholly distasteful" to the peers assembled. Turning to Lord MONTAGU'S proposal he pointed out that the Government had gone some way to meet it by setting up Lord DERBY'S Committee. But, though prepared to see the Cabinet increased to a round couple of dozen, he was not convinced that the only way to remove imperfections was to appoint a new Minister to deal with them.

It seems probable therefore that there is no truth in the report that Colonel CHURCHILL has been asked to join the Government as Minister of Admonitions.



Tommy (who is learning every minute about barbed-wire defences). "WHEN I GETS HOME, NO MORE PERISHIN' CATS SHALL EVER GET INTO MY BACK GARDEN."

Painful Accident to a Clergyman.

"While the Rev. Mr. Stulting was camping out one of his calves was attacked and stung to death by a passing swarm of bees."

Cape Argus.

"I now think it is time you intermingled with your affairs a little of the wisdom of the sergent instead of the dove-like kindness which you have showed to the Germans in the past."

There is a strong feeling among our N.C.O.'s that this is sound advice.

"Lord Strachie asked in the House of Lords yesterday whether the Government proposed to restrict the importation of hope."

Evening Paper.

We understand that the answer was in the negative, as, owing to the activity of pessimists, there is still some shortage in the home-grown supplies.

THE RECONCILIATION.

It is thought that the following story may have been intended for the "Organ of Organs" (R.A.M.C.).

Charles, the young Army Medical, went down on one patella. His heart (a hollow muscular pump) was driving blood from its ventricles as it had never yet driven it in all its twenty-five years of incessant labour. Further, by flattening the arch of his diaphragm and elevating his ribs and sternum, Charles was increasing the cavity of his thorax and taking in air. Immediately the diaphragm and the sternum and costal cartilages relaxed again the air escaped. The lungs of Charles were doing their work. Fast and yet faster became his breathing.

"Mabel," he murmured, "Mabel!"

The girl made no movement. Her respiration continued, but no impulse to action reached her nerve-centres. Yet, without an effort on her part, her tissues in one minute produced enough heat to boil one twenty-fourth of a pint of water.

"Wonderful!" he whispered hoarsely, probably thinking of this, "you are wonderful."

You will not marvel that his voice was gruff when I tell you that the membrane of the larynx was inflamed. Greater men than Charles have become hoarse in such circumstances.

Immediately the blood rushed to the capillaries of Mabel's cheeks and her colour deepened. She trembled slightly.

"There, that's it!" he cried, gazing rapturously.

"What?" she gasped, startled by his passion.

"Again that artery below your ear is throbbing, throbbing, and"—his voice rose in despair—"I can never remember the name! Can you?"

"Alas," she moaned, "I do not know it! Oh, Charles, there is something I must tell you at once."

"What is it?" he cried with sudden fear. "What is it?"

"Why, I—I—Oh, I do not know how to say it. Charles, you will never forgive me!"

"What is it, dearest? Tell me—you can trust me. The medical profession—"

"Well, then, I tried to bandage little Johnny's foot yesterday, and—and—"

"Calm yourself, dear. And—?"

"I tied a 'granny' knot. Oh, Charles, *don't* be angry. I *know* it ought to have been a 'reef'!"

He looked about him dully, like a man stunned.

"Charles," she moaned, "listen! After all, I put it on the wrong foot."

He started violently.

"Mabel," he cried, "you are sure? Then I will not let you go. Had you tied that 'granny' knot on the right foot, I—we—as an R.A.M.C. man, I—"

She clung to him sobbingly.

"Charles, oh Charles," she panted, "you have proved it to me. You love me! (Is my heart throbbing now?) You love me and it will break for joy!"

The phalanges and the metacarpal bones of her left hand clicked together as if in sympathy as she flung it to her side.

Again her cerebrum flashed its joyful message, so that she repeated, "My heart!"

At the word Charles, the R.A.M.C. man, rose from his patella and placed his hands firmly on his femur bones.

His whole bearing had changed.

"This," he said slowly and ringingly, "is the end. When I entered this room I loved you—I admit it. But—you have deceived me! Look at that hand! It is covering—what? The floating costae! Your heart is not where you would have me believe. It is fully three inches higher and more to the right. That is not a small matter, or one with which you should trifle as you do. But you have deceived me in a greater than that."

"Oh, what is it? What have I done?" sobbed Mabel hysterically.

"The greater matter," continued Charles in trumpet tones, "is that *the heart is not the seat of the emotions at all*. I can only conclude that your agitation was feigned. I wish you good-day, Madam."

He had reached the door when she cried aloud.

"Charles!"

An urgent message from Charles's cerebellum, delivered to certain motor nerves by way of the spinal cord, disposed him to turn on his heel.

He waited in silence.

"Charles dearest, if it was the wrong place, and I didn't cover my heart after all, why, Charles, remember Johnny's foot and be logical!"

She was there before him, glorious, and Charles stood dazzled.

"You are right!" he cried. "Mabel! If you *had* covered your heart!!"

"Charles!!!"



Householder (with the Zeppelin obsession).

"AH, I LIKE THE SNOW. IT REDUCES THE MENACE FROM ABOVE."



!!!!!!

"Yesterday between Forges and Bethincourt, west of the Meuse, the enemy made use of suffocating gas, but did not attack with infancy."—*Timaru Herald (N.Z.)*.

We are glad to have this evidence that the Huns have given up using children to screen their advances.

"Plagues of rates have appeared at Pinsk, and in the British trenches."

Buenos Ayres Herald.

Even at home we have not entirely escaped the epidemic.

"Floating Baby Found Unarmed."

Provincial Paper.

Had the Huns known of its defenceless condition they would never have allowed it to escape.

"'Like a poet, a geographer is born, not mad,' once wrote Sir Clements Markham."

Times of India.

Some poets will be greatly relieved by this doctrine.

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Oldest Inhabitant (finally). "I TELL 'EE I BAIN'T GOIN' OUTSIDE THE DOOR. WHY, WHAT'D FOLKS THINK OF ME WITH NO BADGE, NOR HARMLET, NOR NOTHIN'?"

LINES TO AN OLD FRIEND.

Dr. GEORGE PERNET, in a recent treatise on "The Health of the Skin," discusses the continued decline in the popularity of the tall hat.

O emblem of British decorum,
Whose vogue, for a century back,
In the Mart, in the House or the Forum
Few dared to impugn or attack;
'Tis sad, though the best of our bankers
Refuse to allow such a lapse,
That our youth irrepressibly hankers
For straws and for caps.

Mr. Seagram, in Masterman Ready,
Is pictured in many a hole,
And in postures however unsteady,
With his chimney-pot hat on his poll;
And our highly respected grand-paters,
When wielding their golf-clubs or bats,
Or proving their prowess as skaters,
Wore cylinder hats.

Worn straight by the priggish or surly
Thou didst not enthuse or beguile;
But tilted a little and curly
Of brim—how seductive thy style!
And never was pride that is proper
Sartorially better expressed
Than when an immaculate topper
Sat light on one's crest.

The cult of the bicycle, tending
To foster a laxer array,
And the motor, its influence lending,
Both seriously threatened thy sway;
But the War, most unfairly combining
The motives of comfort and thrift,
Thy glory, so sleek and so shining,
Has finally biffed.

Yet I cannot observe thy dethroning
Or watch thy effulgence depart

Without unaffectedly owning
A pang of regret in my heart.
I know thou wast stuffy, non-porous,
Unstable, top-heavy and hot;
But O! thou wast grimly decorous;
The bowler is not.

Agreed.

"Original and inspiring as are Mr. Chesterton's writings, the man is very much bigger than his works."—*Everyman*.

"TOWN PLUNGED IN DARKNESS.

Population Warned by Syrens and buzzards."

Evening Paper.

"Our little town," writes the correspondent who sends us the above cutting, "was warned by dryads and wombats." And of course there is the well-known case of the Roman geese and the Capitol.

"Organist (willing to help train choir) wanted for country parish. Might suit clergyman's daughter."—*Church Times*.

He might, no doubt; but it is not safe to count on these affinities.

"The Manchester City Council on Wednesday decided to accept the free use of Professor W. B. Bottomley's patients for the conversion of raw peat by means of bacteria."

Provincial Paper.

If we were the patients we should make a small charge for the loan of the germs.

"There has been a naval skirmish in the Baltic, where the elusive Goeben has been engaged by the Russians with the usual result—the escape of the fugitive battle-cruiser behind the mined defences of the Bosphorus."

The Dominion (Wellington, N.Z.)

It must have been a fine sight to see this elusive vessel jump right across Russia and back again.

"The *Cologne Gazette*, referring to the simplicity of character displayed by King Ferdinand of Bulgaria, says that frequently when walking about the streets of Sofia he purchases a sausage from a stall and eats it with his fingers as he passes along. Latest advices say he is slowly recovering from his illness."

Daily Express.

It might have been much worse if he had eaten the sausage with his mouth.

A FLAT OVERTURE.

I.

3, *Fotheringay Court Mansions, S.W. March 1st.*

Mrs. Sleight-Spender presents her compliments to Mrs. Crichton and would be obliged if she would prevent what is evidently a schoolroom piano being practised late at night, as it is most disturbing when one has friends.

II.

7, *Fotheringay Court Mansions, S.W. March 1st.*

Mrs. Crichton presents her compliments to Mrs. Sleight-Spender and would willingly oblige her, but having neither a schoolroom nor a piano in her flat she finds a difficulty in doing so. Possibly if Mrs. Sleight-Spender addressed her remonstrance to No. 12, she would discover the cause of her complaint and might thereby earn the thanks of her neighbours by inducing Mr. Bogloffsky to practise less for his concerts.

III.

3, *Fotheringay Court Mansions, S.W. March 2nd.*

Dear Mr. BOGLOFFSKY,—Please forgive me for writing on the impulse of the moment in this unconventional way, but I have only just discovered that we are neighbours, for the Directory confirms what the unmistakable tones of a certain piano had long led me to suspect.

Will you very kindly waive all ceremony and join us at a friendly little dinner on the 10th, at 7.30?

Yours sincerely,

EDITHA SLEIGHT-SPENDER.

IV.

12, Fotheringay Court Mansions, S.W. March 2nd.

Dear MRS. SLEIGHT-SPENDER,—Your amiable letter leaves me nothing but pleasure. My poor company shall be agreeable to join your hospitable family.

With respect, I am, Yours sincere,

SERGE BOGLOFFSKY.

V.

From Miss Isolt Sleight-Spender to Miss Marjorie Browne.

(EXTRACT.)

... Oh, my dear, don't reproach me for not having run round. We are simply off our heads. Bogloffsky—the Bogloffsky—is coming to dinner on Friday next, and the Mudder and I have been simply *tearing*. Even the Sticklers have accepted, and we hope to get Sir Henry Say, as the Dudder met him once at a City dinner. Of course *I* shall have to play something first. Pity me!....

VI.

From Mrs. Sleight-Spender to Messrs. Rosewood and Sons. March. 3rd.

Mrs. Sleight-Spender requires the use of a *very* good piano on the 10th. It must be a *grand*, as it is for Mr. Bogloffsky. Under the circumstances Mrs. Sleight-Spender supposes there will be only a nominal charge, if any.

VII.

From Sir Henry Say to Cuthbert Haddington. March 11th.

MY DEAR BERTIE,—Last night I skimmed some of the cream of life, and incidentally got an idea for a *lever de rideau*, of which I make you a present.

Far be it from me to glean from the crop of trouble of a man whose salt I have eaten, but the situation was a gift from the gods, which I will not spoil on a sheet of notepaper. When have you a free evening?

Always, HARRY.

VIII.

From Miss Isolt Sleight-Spender to Miss Marjorie Browne.

(EXTRACT.)

... The Mudder is quite ill. It is all through that woman at No. 7. It must be because we didn't call on her. But what an evening ruined! Bogloffsky behaved like a perfect *pig* and wouldn't play a note after all the trouble he put us to; and when we got up from the table they say he sniffed at his coffee and pulled some out of his pocket and rubbed it in his hands to make the others smell the difference. Did you ever hear of such a thing?....

IX.

From Serge Bogloffsky to Stepan Bogloffsky, Moscow.

(TRANSLATION.)

March 11th,

MY BROTHER,—The Mazurka has been found beneath the lid of thy pianoforte and is already despatched to thee—that pianoforte, alas! which must now remain silent until thy longed-for return. Greet the worthy Moschki and request him urgently to send the samples of tea, as I have now an opportunity with a wealthy family which may make great business.

That thy affairs prosper is my prayer. All the family embrace thee.

SERGE.

"The gunlayer's eye followed it through the air, saw it splash into the sea three hundred yards short of the target, and swore softly."—*Answers*.

The gunlayer would seem to have an eloquent eye.

A SOLDIER POLITICIAN.

A Biographical Note.

Considerable promise was shown in the speech delivered before the House of Commons last week by Colonel CHURCHILL. His utterance had the effect of instantly lifting that gallant gentleman from the obscurity of life "somewhere in France" to something approaching notoriety. Surely few soldiers have discovered such a gift of dialectical skill; and the Army must feel proud to learn that it possesses an officer who shows himself to be as able in the realm of politics as in the profession of arms.

Colonel CHURCHILL's sensational *tour de force* has aroused a natural interest in his personality. He is still a young man, being only just on the wrong side of forty. In choosing a military career he responded to hereditary impulse, for he is a direct descendant of that great military genius, the Duke of MARLBOROUGH. He entered the army in 1895, when little more than a boy. After seeing service in Cuba and India he fought in the Egyptian Campaign of 1898, and in a journalistic capacity took part in the South African War, the news of his capture being received in this country with much feeling. To his skill as a soldier Colonel CHURCHILL adds no small ability as a writer, and has published more than one book that has attracted favourable notice.

Following upon his remarkable speech of the other night, there has been some discussion as to whether Colonel CHURCHILL will definitely take up a political career, or return to the trenches. We have it on good authority that an old friend, Sir HEDWORTH MEUX, strongly advises him not to sacrifice his military prospects. On the other hand, his colleagues at the Front feel that in the national interest they are prepared to do their best without him, in view of the benefit likely to accrue from his remaining at home. In any case it is confidently asserted by those who know him that Colonel CHURCHILL has gone far towards making a name for himself, and that he is likely to go further still if the opportunity is given to him. His future is certain to be watched with interest.

The Delay Before Verdun.

Bosch (quoting "*unser SHAKESPEARE*"):

"If it Verdun ven 'tis done, then 't vere vell it Verdun quickly."—*Macbeth*, Act I. 7.

Music for Conscientious Objectors.

"ST. GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL.—Anthem, 'I was slack when they said unto me' (Elvey)."

Cape Times.



Sergeant. "KEEP YER DRESSIN' BY THE LEFT THERE! BLIMEY! YOU DON'T WANT N.C.O.'s—WHAT YOU WANT IS A BLOOMIN' SHEEP-DOG!"

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

I never open a book by Mr. ROBERT HALIFAX without a feeling of pleasant anticipation, nor close one without a sense of quickened sympathy for my fellow-mortals, especially those of them who dwell in Camden Town. His latest story, *The Right to Love* (METHUEN), finds him again on familiar ground; but the inhabitants of Widdiford Street have all the freshness of real human beings. Perhaps more than its predecessors *The Right to Love* is a story with a purpose and a moral; in it Mr. HALIFAX has illustrated by two groups of characters the vexed question of marriage failures and the hard lot of the unwanted woman. But do not suppose that these characters are merely "cases." On the contrary, it is because they are realized as understandable creations of flesh and blood that the disasters of *Norah* and *Tom Spain* and the tragedy of *Letty Summerbee's* enforced spinsterhood move one to so personal a concern. From the moment when *Norah* and *Tom* enter their little house after the short honeymoon to that in which the tormented young wife finally leaves her worthless husband for the protection (word rightly used) of his long-suffering friend one is made to feel that exactly thus and thus the affair happened, and is happening to like persons every day. As for *Letty*, with her restraint, her practical helpfulness and her occasional outbursts of emotion thwarted and suppressed, she is a type only too convincing. Perhaps one might object that Mr. HALIFAX brings an indictment against society without suggesting any practical remedy. Also that—as I have noticed before—

his humorous characters have a tendency to edge away from the rest into the regions of farce. But for all that *The Right to Love* remains a simple, sincere and very moving study.

I like the remark that General JOFFRE made, not to the horse-marines, but to the remnants of the six thousand *Fusiliers Marins* who made up the Naval Brigade at Dixmude in November, 1914. "You are my best infantrymen," he told them; and, if you want to know why, all you have to do is read *Dixmude* (HEINEMANN), by CHARLES LE GOFFIC. For four weeks, shrapnel to right of them, "saucepans" to left of them, volleyed and thundered, and for four weeks the six thousand stood in the valley of death at Dixmude and held up six times as many Boches, who came on, as one of them said, like bugs. Forty thousand was the estimate of the number of these marines formed by a German major who was one of their prisoners; when he learnt that they were only six he wept with rage and muttered, "Ah, if we had only known!" Dixmude was not quite such a big affair as Verdun, but the men who held the town, "the young ladies with the red pompoms" on their caps, were first cousins to our own Jack Tars. Bretons or Britons, there is nothing to choose between them. Sailors all, they are the salt of the sea; and this fascinating and circumstantial epic of the French marines is not at all an exaggerated picture of the cheery courage and endurance of the Breton fisherman.

Sussex Gorse (NISBET) is a story about the fight between man and nature. It is told by Miss SHEILA KAYE-SMITH with considerable power and a quickening touch of symbolism that lifts it into romance. The ambition of *Reuben Backfield* was to enlarge the Sussex farm that he had inherited from his easy-going father till its bounds should include a certain coveted moor. The book shows how his entire life was spent in the achievement of this end; how for it he sacrificed his own ease, and the happiness of his brother, his two wives and his many children, and how finally he triumphed, and in his lonely old age, seeing the desired acres all his own, was content. It is a grim book, with only now and then a touch of suggested poetry to save it from being uniformly sordid and depressing. As it is, the long unsparring struggle takes somehow the dignity of an epic. Only one of *Reuben's* many sons makes any success out of life—*Richard*, who becomes a barrister, and treats his father to occasional visits of curiosity and amused patronage. There is a chapter of cynical humour in which the intolerant contemptuous old rustic is confronted by the art-loving triflers who gather in his son's drawing-room. Otherwise he is alone. "There's no one gone from here as has ever come back!" But I was glad that Miss KAYE-SMITH had the courage to play fair by her hero, and to give him at last his share of the hard bargain. This is only one of many qualities that make *Sussex Gorse* a novel to be remembered.

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I can't quite make out what made Mr. WILLIAM HEWLETT persist in *Introducing William Allison* (SECKER). Probably a nice general conviction (rather infectious; I caught it) of his own cleverness. If his work wants a good deal of pulling together separate bits of it are confoundedly well done. The schoolboy conversations (*William* is a Winchester man, thrown into a lawyer's clerkship straight from the sixth) and the picture of the superbly groomed associates of his friend's brother, *Marmaduke Fenton*, are cases in point, though I don't think Winchester would have been so absurdly abashed by the glories of bachelordom in Half-Moon Street. So too is the lecture of *Parbury*, the neo-decadent, on the cultivation of "that sacred and imperishable flower, the white unsullied bloom of an Intensely Useless Life," even if it be only a belated cutting from *The Green Carnation*. *William's* first boyish passion for a quite cold shop-minx, with its agonies of self-abasement and rarefied desire, is uncannily clever; and the thoroughly unpleasant episode of our *William*, minx-free, only to be caught in the toils of that insatiable sensualist, Mrs. *Daintree*, is presented with discreet vigour. There is possibly a moral in the fascinating *Marmaduke's* desperate half-hour in Dr. *Ferox's* consulting-room. But Mr. HEWLETT never wrote this flippant tale to point a moral. Rather, as I suggest, he seems to have said, "These are samples of several *genres* in which I can succeed on my head. Some day I will really finish something. Meanwhile pray be amused."

Of Miss ETHEL DELL's popularity there seems to be no possible doubt, and her publishers, Messrs. HUTCHINSON, assure me that her latest, *The Bars of Iron*, is the best novel she has written. While accepting their unprejudiced judgment I retain the liberty of remaining unimpressed. Miss DELL has an eye for a plot and she can make things move; but her methods are too feverish for my taste. A man-fight in the prologue is followed by a dog-fight in the first chapter, and through the early part of the book the *Rev. S. Lorimer* beats his numerous family again and again. It is true that, between her explosions, she introduces certain lovable characters, but they fail to correct the general atmosphere of violence. Neither the beauty of *Piers Evesham* (his naked shoulders looked "like a piece of faultless statuary, god-like, superbly strong"), nor his sympathy with children, offers adequate compensation for his volcanic temperament. If Miss DELL, who seems to have a penchant for tempestuous heroes, would devote some of her superfluous energy to a study of men, so as to get to understand them as well as she understands her own sex, it would be a good thing for the quality both of her work and of her public.

In her latest little volume of verse, modestly entitled *Simple Rhymes for Stirring Times* (PEARSON), Miss JESSIE POPE shows that she has not only the right spirit, but a sense of form beyond the common. She does not pretend to heroics and she seldom allows herself to touch a note of pathos; her mission is just to inspire other hearts with the infectious gay courage of her own. It finds a natural expression in the easy lilt of her measures. She is fluent rather than polished and never overlays her designs with excess of embroidery. Long practice has made her familiar with a craft which is not so easy as it looks; and in particular she has learnt the art of the final line. Miss POPE may possibly run the risk of over-writing herself; but so long as she brings a discriminating eye to the choice of what is worth preserving—and she has been *quite* reasonably self-critical in her present selection—the matter that she jettisons is no affair of mine. Judging only by what I see here, I recognise that, in whatever other way she may be helping the cause, through her gift of light-heart verse she is doing—and none more bravely—her share of woman's work.



Touring Stage Manager (rehearsing super). "AND WHEN YOU HEAR THE CUE, 'AH, HERE COMES THE KAISER!' YOU STRIDE SLOWLY ON TO THE STAGE LOOKING LIKE THE GUILTY MONARCH."

Journalistic Colour.

"On all hands their preparations for their ultimate victory are being pressed forward with unflagging zest, and nowhere has the white heat of their resolve grown pale"—*Daily Graphic*.

Extract from Scottish Command Orders:—

"When marriage has actually taken place, the N.C.O. or man should inform O.C. at once, so as to ensure the necessary documents for separation allowance for the wife being made out, and this casualty should in addition be inserted in Part II. Orders."

Scotsman.

This appears to confirm the belief that a Scottish marriage is a sort of accident that might happen to anyone.

It is easy to understand why the Zeppelins have a partiality for almshouses. They think it's another name for munition works.

From the report of a music-hall action:—

"In reply to Mr. Justice Darling, he sang comic songs and appeared alone on the stage."—*Morning Paper.*

After all the Bench cannot always monopolise the "star turns," even in Mr. JUSTICE DARLING'S court.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI, VOL. 150,
MARCH 15, 1916 ***

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