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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI, VOL. CLVIII, JANUARY 7, 1920 ***



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NEW WELLS FOR OLD.

Over the top of Part II. of *The Outline of History* I caught the smiling glance of the man in the opposite corner of the compartment.

"Good stuff that," he said, indicating the History with a jerk of his head.

"Quite," I agreed, maintaining my distance.

"Immense," he continued. "And it means the dawn of a new life for me. I'm WELLS's hero. Every time I've appeared in his half-yearly masterpiece, ever since *Tono Bungay*. And look at the mess he's made of my life. Often I've had to start it under the cloud of mysterious parentage. Invariably I have been endowed with a Mind (capital M). Think of those uphill fights of mine against adverse conditions. And my unhappy marriages. He has led me into every variation of infidelity. When I *did* hit it off with my wife for once, he sent us to the Arctic regions as a punishment. In the depth of winter, too.

But, now he's taken up this History, I'm free. The dam has burst and strange things come floating down ..."

He sprang to his feet in his excitement. He was wearing a loose-fitting suit and what his master might call a lower middle-class hat.

"And now I'm going to do all the things I've always wanted to do. A happy marriage; well-ordered life in the suburbs; warm slippers in the fender, and all that that stands for; cinemas, perhaps, and bowls. An allotment ..."

"But," I objected, "this History won't occupy him for ever. There should be only about sixteen more parts. He'll have you out again next autumn."

"But WELLS is getting the Suburban idea too." He was standing right over me, glaring horribly with excitement. The train had entered a tunnel and he was shouting bravely against the din. "Look in Part I. He acknowledges the help he has received from Mrs. WELLS. And her watchful criticism. That from *him!* I tell you I am free—free!"

He was shaking me by the shoulders now, his face close to mine. "I shall have my allotment. Prize parsnips—giant marrows!"

"Don't be too sure," I yelled—the tunnel seemed endless. "Remember poor old *Sherlock*. DOYLE raised *him* from the dead. And you"—my voice rising to a scream—"he'll have you out—out—OUT!"

* * * * *

As I came to I heard my dentist remark to the doctor that I always had been a bad patient under gas.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—Your article about Christmas presents was a great success. I took your advice about the silk stockings, and sent the following verses with them, which some of your married readers may care to cut out and keep for future use:—

Your stockings once, on Christmas Eve,
Would hang, your cot adorning,
And Father Christmas, we believe,
Would fill them ere the morning;
But since he spied your dainty toes
To exchange the parts he's willing:
He thinks it's his to send the hose
And yours to find the filling.
He lays his offerings at your feet
And hopes you won't deride them,
For he has nothing half so neat
As you to put inside them.

There! I can only repeat that the results were excellent, and express my gratitude to you for the same.

Yours obediently,
GRATEFUL HUSBAND.

P.S.—The ties I got this time were quite all right; she too must have read your article.

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NATURE AND ART.

To Betty, who can afford to defy the laws of symmetry.

[Being reflections on the old theory, recently developed before the Hellenic Society by Mr. JAY HAMBRIDGE, that certain formulæ of proportions found in nature—notably in the normal ratio between a man's height and the span of his outstretched arms ($2 : \sqrt{5}$)—constituted the basis of symmetry in the art of the Greeks and, earlier, of the Egyptians.]

Betty, I fear you don't conform
Precisely to the female norm
From dainty foot to charming noddle,
But, closely measured, span by span,
Seem built upon a private plan
Not found in ANNIE KELLERMAN
Or in the well-known Melos model.

If you compare your width and height—
Arms horizontal, left and right—
With ancient types of pure perfection,
The ratio may not, it's true,
Be as the root of 5 to 2,
But what, my dear, has that to do
With laws of natural selection?

Let Mr. HAMBRIDGE to your shape
Apply his T-square and his tape,
And wish that you were more archaic;
Why should I care? I love you best
For what no compasses can test,
For graces not to be expressed
In terms however algebraic.

I love you for the lips and eyes
That none may hope to standardize
On any system known to Hellas;
And what I like about your smile
Has no relation to the style
Of any pyramid of Nile
Figured by mathematic fellahs.

Though your proportions mayn't agree
With FECHNER'S pedant formulæ,
I don't complain of such disparity;
Too flawless that perfection shows;
For me a larger comfort flows
From human failings (take your nose—
I like its quaint irregularity).

Indeed I love you best of all

For those defects by which you fall
Short of the pattern you should follow;
As I would fain be loved for mine,
Speaking as one whose own design
Lacks something of the perfect line
Affected by the young Apollo.
O. S.

HOW TO GAIN A JOURNALISTIC POSITION.

Young aspirants are always endeavouring to secure posts on our leading newspapers, and complain bitterly that their letters of application are ignored by obtuse editors. To help them in this sad ambition Mr. Punch has composed a series of letters to divers editors which he guarantees will prove eminently satisfactory.

To the Editor of "The Daily News."

SIR,—I regard the insufferable LLOYD GEORGE as the most dangerous, the most malignant, the most incompetent politician who has ever attempted to misrule this country. The iniquity of the Coalition will make enlightened rulers like LENIN and TROTSKY blush for the human race. I feel with you that till the real Liberal party returns to power England will never know peace and prosperity. Then and then only will brotherly friendship between England and Germany be renewed. Then and then only shall we see cheap milk, cheap coal, abundant housing, the Free Breakfast Table and the Large Cocoa Cup. To show my devotion to the cause you so nobly advocate I may say that I have actually read every article contributed by Mr. MASTERMAN to your paper. I am strongly in favour of an *entente* with Labour, by which Labour should agree not to contest any seats where the true Asquithians stand a chance. I enclose as a specimen of my work the first of a series of articles on "How Lloyd George lost the War," which I am sure will be invaluable at by-elections.

To the Editor of "The Daily Mail."

SIR,—I am young and, if possible, growing younger daily. My motto is "Hustle and Bustle" and not "Dilly and Dally." I live on standard bread, in a wooden hut embowered, when feasible, with sweet peas. My ear is always close to the ground, and I can confidently predict what the man in the street will be thinking about the day after tomorrow. Politically, I am opposed to the Wastrels, the Wee Frees and the Bolsheviks, and am not prepared as yet to back Labour unreservedly. I can express myself brightly and briefly on any topical subject. Herewith I send specimen articles (length three hundred words) on "Poker Bridge," "Are we having Wetter Washdays?" and "The Woggle-Wiggle Dance." Should there be no vacancy on your staff I should be prepared to accept one on any other of your publications—*The Weekly Dispatch*, *The Times* or *The Rainbow*.

To the Editor of "The Manchester Guardian."

SIR,—I was a Conscientious Objector during the War. I conscientiously object to everything still, including the Peace Treaty. I speak and write fifteen languages and dialects, including Oxford English. I have a comprehensive knowledge of social and political life in Continental Europe, Asia, Africa, America and Polynesia. I have also resided in England. I have a deep conviction that under all conditions, everywhere and at all times, England is invariably and absolutely in the wrong. In home politics I am resolutely opposed to all the Coalition has done, is doing or will do. It is my firm opinion that the actions of England would become less deplorable, less criminal if Mr. ASQUITH returned to power. I enclose as specimens of my mentality two intensely human articles which I doubt not will find a home in your columns: "Proportional Representation in Jugoslavia" (length four thousand five hundred words) and "Futurism under TROTSKY" (length five thousand words).

To the Editor of "The Spectator."

SIR,—In offering my services to you I may point out how happily my up-bringing and mental training have fitted me for a post on your staff. The child of an Archdeacon (who was also honorary chaplain to a rifle club), I was born in a house with earth-filled walls and brought up in intimate association with a large number of most intelligent animals. If desired I am prepared to relate anecdotes of the family bull-dog and a pet she-goat which will verify my description. I feel with you that England can only be saved by relying on a Free-Trading, Non-Socialist, Church Establishment. I loathe alike Mr. ASQUITH and Mr. LLOYD GEORGE, and think that the intellect of England, which blossoms so luxuriously in country rectories and deaneries, finds its best expression in Lord HUGH CECIL. As a specimen of my literary ability I enclose a middle article on "The Sense of Obligation in Tom-Cats."

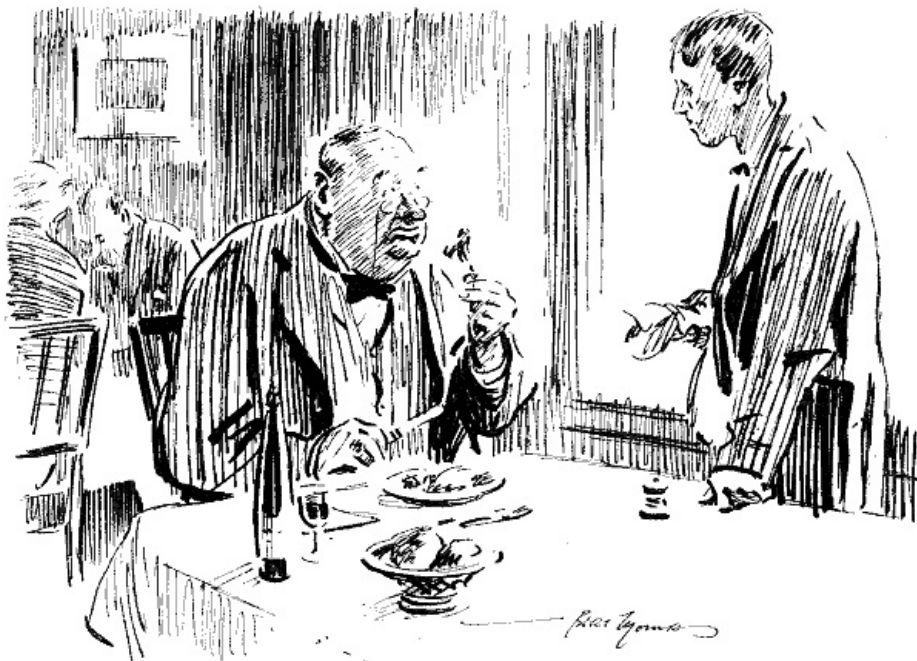


A "POSITIVELY LAST" APPEARANCE.

MR. PUNCH. "ACCEPT THIS POOR TRIBUTE IN RECOGNITION OF MUCH GOOD ENTERTAINMENT IN THE PAST. I DON'T KNOW WHAT MY ARTISTS WOULD HAVE DONE WITHOUT YOU."

[The recent withdrawal of horsed cabs from certain ranks in the London district foreshadows the final extinction of this venerable type.]

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Club Grouser. "WHAT DO YOU CALL THIS?"

Waiter. "THAT'S GAME PIE, SIR."

Club Grouser. "UMPH! THINK I MUST HAVE GOT A BIT OF THE FOOTBALL."

CHARIVARIA.

It is rumoured that Professor PORTA has sent a message to Mr. LLOYD GEORGE, wishing him a Happy New World.

Mr. Justice ROWLATT has decided that photography is not a profession. With some actresses, of course, it is just a disease.

The gentleman who drew 1920 in a fifty-pound sweepstake as the date of the ex-Kaiser's trial is now prepared to sell his chance for sixpence-halfpenny.

"He is not a politician," says Mr. R. HARCOURT in *The Times*, referring to Sir AUCKLAND GEDDES. It will be interesting to see how Sir AUCKLAND accepts this compliment.

A letter posted at Hull for Odessa in July, 1914, has just been returned to the sender. The postal authorities are thought to take the view that the sender should be given an opportunity of adding a few reasonable observations to his previous remarks.

It is all nonsense to say that there can be no change in the present high prices. They can always go higher.

Owing to the strike of cabmen in Glasgow a number of people had to walk home on New Year's Eve. It is not said how the others got home, but we have made a guess.

On enquiry about the erection of huge new premises in the Strand by the American Bush Terminal Company, we gather that London is not to be removed, but will be allowed to remain next door.

Inspector Moss of the Great Eastern Railway Police has just had his pocket picked and thirty pounds stolen. It is only fair to say that he was in plain clothes and the thief did not know he was a police officer.

A history of the Ministry of Munitions is to be compiled at a cost of £9,648. To keep the expense down to this modest sum by economy in printing Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL will be referred to throughout as "X."

A man has been charged with damaging a London omnibus. He pleaded that the vehicle pushed him first.

Mrs. PAYNE, the only woman mouse-trap-maker in London, has retired from the business. It is said that a number of mice hope to arrange a farewell cheese.

At a recent meeting of the Peace Conference it was decided that the troubles in Egypt and India should in future be referred to as Honorary Wars.

The Indians much appreciate CHARLIE CHAPLIN, says *The Weekly Dispatch*. We felt confident that this film comedian would come into his own some day.

Only two minor railway accidents were reported in December, but a South Coast train which started that month is reported to have run into the New Year.

It is estimated that *The Outline of History* by Mr. H. G. WELLS will be concluded this year. It would be a pleasing compliment to the author if at the end of that time Parliament made it illegal for any more history to happen.

The Thames angler who was asked in the Club at night if he had had any luck that day, and replied that he had not had a bite, is thought to be an impostor.

An Insurance official states that thin people live longer than stout. This is probably due to the fact that when thin people stand sideways the motor-car doesn't get a real chance.

"It is just twenty months since we experienced the last hostile air-raid," states an evening paper. Should this indiscreet statement reach the ears of certain Government Officials it is feared that one or two of our picturesque anti-aircraft stations may be dismantled.

According to an American paper, a lawyer has left New York for Mexico, in order to try to explain to the inhabitants the meaning of Peace and the benefits to be derived from joining the League of Nations. We understand he has made full arrangements for leaving a widow and two young children.

Our heart goes out to the tenant of an experimental paper-house who discovered, on going up-

stairs, that his two-year-old son in a fit of ungovernable passion had torn up his nursery.

A man has written to *The Daily Mail* advocating the alteration of the calendar to thirteen months of twenty-eight days each, *with two Christmas Days in Leap Year*. The writer—to do him justice—did not sign himself "Paterfamilias."

The New Poor Dance Club, which has opened in the West End, is having its vicissitudes. Last week, it is reported, a distinguished stranger mistook a waiter for one of the members, and the waiters have threatened to strike if it occurs again.

Los Angeles, California, says a New York cable, is suffering from an unprecedented crime wave. A proposal by President CARRANZA to draw a *cordon sanitaire* round the place has not yet reached Washington.

"Are dark people cleverer than fair?" asks a contemporary. These clumsy attempts to destroy the Coalition spirit are too transparent to be successful.

Intending visitors to the Zoological Gardens in Phoenix Park, Dublin, are now required to get a permit from the military authorities. A daring attempt by a Sinn Feiner to approach the Viceregal Lodge under cover of a cassowary is said to be responsible for the order.

The ex-Kaiser, it is stated, has asked the Prussian Government if there would be any objection to his settling in Peru as a cattle-raiser. The probability that the Crown Prince will settle in France for a spell as a watch-lifter is thought to have fired the ex-Imperial imagination.

A report from Chicago states that, as a result of the prevailing taste for wood-alcohol, a number of citizens successfully revived the ancient custom of seeing the Aurora Borealis in.



"HURRY UP, JOHNSON—WHAT A TIME YOU TAKE!"
"I CAN'T GET THROUGH THESE BEASTLY TROOPS."

"The charm of a pleasing figure depends upon an uneasy fitting corset."
Advt. in Canadian Paper.

Il faut souffrir pour être belle.

"There would also be great competition for carniferous timber from other countries."
Scotch Paper.

Not so much now that the meat-shortage is over.

"Dundee leads the way in Scotland in a new phase of sport for ladies.

The innovation was created by the City Magistrates to-day, when an application for a billiard-room license in the new City Hall was granted.

Under the license ladies will be permitted to cross cues with gentlemen partners in a public billiard-room."—*Local Paper*.

It is supposed that their worships were under the impression that billiards was a new form of shinty.

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THE TUBE CURE.

[It has been observed that employees in the Tubes never catch cold while at work, and doctors, questioned by an evening paper, have said that "the Tube atmosphere should be quite likely to cure a cold if breathed long enough—say for an hour at a stretch."]

To-day, when I acquire a cold
(Rude Boreas having blustered),
I do not, as in times of old,
Immerse my feet in mustard;
I put a penny in a slot
At some Tube railway station
And draw a ticket for a not
Far distant destination.

I shun the crowded lifts, although
They're right enough in their way,
And make my calm, unruffled, slow
Descension by the stairway;
'Tis there a man can be alone,
Immune from all intrusion;
I doubt if there was ever known
Its equal for seclusion.

Where no invading footsteps fall
I quaff the healthy vapours,
While glancing at my ease through all
The illustrated papers;
And since I've found the bottom stair
A place they don't upholster,
I always take when going there
A small pneumatic bolster.

Not till an hour or twain have gone,
Thus pleasantly expended,
Do I proceed to carry on,
And, when my journey's ended,
I find all dread bacilli slain—
No germ shows his (or her) face—
And so, my cherry self again,
Come blithely to the surface.

A BUNCH OF POETS.

Mr. Obadiah Geek has broken his long silence to some purpose. Those who remember his pre-war achievements in the field of polychromatic romanticism will hardly be prepared for his present development, which lifts him at a bound from the overcrowded ranks of lyric-writers to the uncongested heights whereon recline the great masters of epic poetry. And yet it was perhaps inevitable. The thunder and the reek of war (the last two years of which, we believe, were spent by Mr. Geek in the Egg Control Department) could scarcely have failed to imprint their mark on the author of *Eros in Eruption*; and so he has given us a real epic, whose very title, *Ad Astra*, is symbolic of the high altitudes in which he so triumphantly and so securely navigates. Outwardly it is a story of the War, but there is little difficulty in probing the allegory; and those who follow the hero's vicissitudes as a private in the Gasoliers, right through to his victorious advancement to the rank of Acting Lance-Corporal, unpaid (and there is a symbolism even in the "unpaid"), will readily supply the application to the affairs of everyday life.

The ten thousand odd lines of this inspired poem are liberally enlivened with those characteristic flashes which Mr. Geek's previous efforts have led us to expect. Nothing could be happier than the following, descriptive of the hero's early days on the barrack-square:—

The Sergeant rolled his eyes toward the azure
And called down curses on my bloody head...
"You buzz about," his peroration ran,
"Like a bluebottle in a sugar-bowl.
Thank God we have a Navy!" and my feet,

Turned outward, as they had been drilled to turn,
At forty-five degrees or thereabouts,
Itched to join issue with his swollen paunch;
But I refrained.

Or again:—

Fame, the skyscraper, hath a thousand floors;
And some toil slowly upward, stair by stair,
And stagger and halt and faint upon the way;
Others, more fortunate, achieve the top
At one swift elevation, by the lift.

Mr. Geek, whatever his method of progression may have been, has certainly "achieved the top"—if indeed he has not gone over it.

In *Throbs*, Miss Gramercy Gingham-Potts reveals a depth of feeling and delicacy of expression that should secure her the right of entry to every art-calendar and birthday-book. Her Muse is, perhaps, a trifle anæmic, but to many none the less interesting on that account; its very fragility, in fact, constitutes its chief appeal. She has an engaging gift of definition that, combined with a keen appreciation of the obvious, makes her verses particularly susceptible to quotation. For instance:—

The maiden asked, "What is a kiss?"
The poet wrote:
"Kisses are stamps that frank with bliss
Love's contract-note."

While for effectively studied simplicity it would be difficult to match the lyrical gem to which Miss Gingham-Potts has given the arresting title, "Farewell":—

The birds sing sweet in Summer;
The daisies hear their song;
But Winter's come, and they are dumb
So long.

I told my love in Summer,
So pure and brave and strong;
But frosts came on; my love is gone;
So long!

A new volume by the author of *Swings and Roundabouts* is something of an event; and in *Bottles and Jugs* Mr. Ughtred Biggs makes another fascinating raid on the garbage-bins of London's underworld. Mr. Biggs is a stark realist, and his unminced meat may prove too strong for some stomachs; but those who can digest the fare he offers will find it wonderfully sustaining. Here is no condiment of verbiage, no dressing of the picturesque. Life is served up high, and almost raw. By way of illustration we cannot do better than quote from the opening poem, "Bill's Wife," in which the calculated roughness of the rhythm is redolent of the pervading atmosphere:—

At the corner of the street
Stands the Blue-faced Pig;
Outside a barrel-organ is playing
And the people are dancing a jig.

A woman waits there grimly;
Her eyes are set and her lips drawn thin;
For Bill, her man, is in the public,
Soaking his soul in gin.

Students of sociology might do worse than devote careful attention to these gaunt chronicles of Slumland.

The following stanzas, taken from a poem entitled "Reconstruction," are a favourable example of Mr. Thor Pinmoney's somewhat unequal genius:—

By strife we live, but boredom slays;
My mind from out this office strays
And takes me back to the spacious days
When I counted socks in Ordnance.

I hate my pen; I hate my stool;
What am I but a nerveless tool?
But we did not work by rote or rule
When I counted socks in Ordnance....

There are times even now when it really seems
I'm back in a suburb of shell-shocked Rheims;
But the office echoes my waking screams
When I find it was only in my dreams

I was counting socks in Ordnance.

Unfortunately, all Mr. Pinmoney's efforts do not come up to this standard, and we should be almost inclined to wonder whether the writer has not after all mistaken his vocation, were it not for the really brilliant piece of work which brings the volume (*Pegasus Comes Home*) to a close. We make no apology for reproducing this masterpiece in full:—

Man comes
And goes.
What then?
Who knows?

Here we have the whole philosophy of life and the life hereafter summed up. If he never writes another line Mr. Pinmoney is by this assured of a permanent place in the anthology of post-bellum poetry.

"Replying to the toast of his health, Mr. Lloyd George said it was a great boon that a large industrial community should have been founded amongst these lovely surroundings, a boon not only for the workers, but also for their little children, who would have the advantage of being reared in georgeous mountain air."—*Daily Paper*.

Lloyd-Georgeous, in fact.

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MANNERS AND MODES.

HORRIBLE NIGHTMARE OF A LADY WHO DREAMS THAT SHE HAS GONE TO A BALL IN HER NIGHT-GOWN AND FOUND HERSELF SHOCKINGLY OVERDRESSED.

THE "FIRST HUNDRED" OF LOEB.

[The Loeb Classical Library, founded by a munificent American millionaire, Mr. JAMES LOEB (*prononcez "Lobe"*), and edited by Dr. E. CAPPS, Mr. T. E. PAGE and Dr. W. H. D. ROUSE, has now reached its hundredth volume.]

When ways are foul and days are damp,
When agitators rage and ramp,
And SMILLIE, with the aid of CRAMP,
Threatens to rend the globe;
When margarine is scarce, or beef,
And drinks are dear and few and brief,
I find refreshment and relief
And comfort in my LOEB.

Good print, good company, a text
By no vain annotations vexed
Which call from students sore perplexed
The patience of a Job;
And, page by page, a first-rate crib,
Neither too faithful nor too glib—
That, without fulsomeness or fib,
Is what we get in LOEB.

Let scientists on various fronts
Indulge in their atomic stunts,
Or harness to our prams and punts
The puissant radiobe;
Me rather it delights to roam
Across the salt Ægean foam
With old Odysseus, far from home,
And bless the name of LOEB.

To soar with PLATO to the heights;
To find in PLUTARCH'S kings and knights
The human touch that more delights
Than crown or regal robe;
To taste the fresh Pierian springs,
To see CATULLUS scorch his wings
With the fierce flame that sears and stings—
For this I thank thee, LOEB.

I've made no fortune out of beer;
I'm not a plutocrat or peer,
Nor yet a bloated profiteer,
An OM or e'en an OBE;
But if I'd thirty pounds to spare
I'd go and blow them then and there
Upon the Hundred Books that bear
The sign and seal of LOEB.

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BEHIND THE SCENES IN CINEMA-LAND.

The Rescuer. "I'M NOT A VERY GRACEFUL DIVER, YOU KNOW. WHAT ABOUT EMPLOYING A PROFESSIONAL SWIMMER FOR THIS PART OF THE SHOW?"

A NEWSPAPER SCOOP.

(With the British Army in France.)

"I spotted him by the fountain-pen stains on his vest and the thunderbolts sticking out of his pockets," said Frederick. "So I went up to him and said, 'You are Wuffle of *The Daily Hooter*, the man who wiped-up Whitehall and is now engaged in freezing-out France?'"

"What did he say?" asked Percival.

"Whipped out a note-book and asked me to tell him all about it. I said I was pining for the white cliffs of Albion and that the call of the counting-house and cash-box was ringing in my ears, but that I couldn't get demobilised because the Colonel's pet Pomeranian had conceived a fancy for me and wouldn't take its underdone chop from anyone else. I also hinted that I and a few friends could tell him things that would make his biggest journalistic scoops look like paragraphs in a parish magazine, so he invited me to bring you round this afternoon to split an infinitive with him."

"Wuffle?" said Binnie. "That's the man who wrote about 'gilded subalterns loafing luxuriously in cushioned cars in a giddy round of useless and pampered ease'?"

"Well, I won't say he wrote it, but he signed it. No single man living could write all the stuff Wuffle signs. It's turned out as they turn out cheap motor-cars. One man roughs it out, passes it to the adjective department, thence to the punctuation-room, where they sprinkle it with commas and exclamation marks, and then Wuffle touches it up, fits it with headlines and signs it. Oh, I forgot. Before it goes to press the libel expert looks it over to see that it isn't actionable."

"Anyway, he's the responsible party," said Binnie, "and I would fain have converse with the Wuffle. That 'gilded subaltern' bit was ringing in my head like a dirge the other night when I was wearily trudging the seven kilometres from St. Denis camp because there was no one to give me a lift."

That afternoon Frederick introduced his friends to Wuffle.

"Sorry we're late," he said, "but Percival and Binnie here have been engaged with the Pioneer-Sergeant discussing the best method of converting a whippet-tank into a roller for the tennis-courts."

At that moment a motor-lorry rumbled by, and Binnie, recollecting a passage in Wuffle's latest article about "motor-lorries rushing madly about with apparently no purpose in view," jumped excitedly to the door.

"'Magneto Maggie' leading," he shouted, "and 'The Sparking Spitfire' is just behind. Care to double your bet on 'Maggie' at evens, Percival?"

"Not yet," replied Percival cautiously. "It's only the first lap yet, and 'Maggie' sometimes jibs a bit when she passes the Remount Depôt."

Wuffle had his fountain-pen at the alert and looked inquiringly at Frederick.

"I suppose it *is* another example of deliberate waste," said the latter. "But we've got the lorries eating their heads off in the garages and the petrol is simply aching to be evaporated, so we give the drivers exercise and ourselves some excitement over organising these Area Circuit Steeplechases."

"Why not trans-ship the lorries?" suggested Wuffle.

"That would never do, old prune," said Frederick. "The troops would have nothing to guard."

"Send the men home," persisted Wuffle.

"Come, my willowy asparagus," replied Frederick in horrified tones, "we must have troops to find us work to do. Of course it's sometimes difficult to keep the men employed, and then we have to make dumps of empty biscuit tins and things for them to guard."

"I fixed up a real beauty at Le Glaxo, not ten kilometres from here," chipped in Percival. "If you'd like to see it there's a train going in about twenty minutes."

Wuffle jumped up with alacrity.

"I'd be awfully glad to get a snapshot of it," said he, disappearing in search of his hat and coat.

Frederick took the opportunity to make a few scathing remarks to Percival.

"It's just like you, you mouldy old citron," he said. "I start a little experiment in *tirage de jambe*, and you put your heavy hoof in and spoil the whole business. You know jolly well that Le Glaxo was completely closed down months ago."

"Oh, put another penny in your brain-meter and try to realise that you aren't the only one who's grown up," replied Percival impatiently. "Your brain-waves move about as quick as G.P.O. telegraph messages. I'd got the scheme worked out while you were putting over your old musical-comedy gags."

Since the departure of the British, Le Glaxo's only excitement is the arrival of its one train per day. Ignoring the sensation caused by the detraining of four persons simultaneously, Percival led his party along a muddy rough lane.

"The dump is about four kilometres away and the road gets rather bad towards the end," he said, maliciously edging Wuffle into a bit of swamp. "Sorry; I was going to warn you about that."

Wuffle scraped mud from his trousers and followed the leader over a rough wall into a hidden ditch. A breathless climb up a hill and a steady trudge over plough-land found Wuffle still game, but, after he had got his camera ready for action on the cheerful assurance that they were nearing their quarry, a disappointed cry from the leader dashed his hopes.

"Hang it!" said Percival, "I forgot. The dump was moved to Pont Antoine last Tuesday. Come along; it's only three kilometres away."

Strangely enough, Pont Antoine was also a blank. Binnie suggested trying Monceau, two kilometres further on; but when they arrived there, fatigued and dirty, a thin drizzle was falling and it was almost dark. Percival confessed himself baffled.

"I'm awfully sorry," said he to Wuffle; "I can't find it now, and the point is how are we going to get back? There isn't a railway for miles."

"Don't any of our lorries or cars pass here?" asked Wuffle.

[pg 9]

"Oh, yes. But they won't give *you* a lift. The orders are dead strict against civilians riding in W.D. vehicles."

"It's the result of the articles in the papers about waste," said Frederick sympathetically. "But I don't suppose there would be any objection to your hanging on and running behind."

Wuffle looked round disconsolately. In the gloom the lighted windows of the tiny Hôtel de l'Univers blinked invitingly.

"I think I'll stop here for the night," he said, "and telephone for a car to fetch me to-morrow."

"Right-o!" said Percival. "And when it's thoroughly light you might—you *might* be able to find the dump. So long."

As they rumbled uncomfortably home on a fortuitous three-ton lorry, Percival looked round for applause.

"*C'est bien fait, mon vieux*," chuckled Binnie. "I'll bet the Wuffle won't go dump-hunting again in a hurry. And he won't be able to do any damage from that little estaminet for a day or two."

The well-advertised series of articles in *The Daily Hooter* commenced a few days later. The conspirators studied them diligently in gleeful anticipation of finding their contribution to journalistic enterprise. It came at the end, in a brief paragraph.

"When I had collected my material for this powerful indictment, etc., etc." (ran the article), "I met a party of irresponsible subalterns bent on the old, old army pastime of leg-pulling. For the sake of exercise and amusement I permitted them to conduct me on a wild-goose chase after an imaginary dump, which luckily led me to a sequestered little hotel where I was able to write my articles in peace and quietude. But to return to the main question. I unhesitatingly affirm..."

Percival, who was reading aloud, let the paper fall limply from his hand.

"Frederick," he said, "put your biggest boots on and kick me. The word-merchant was laughing at us all the time."



COMMERCIAL CONSCIENTIOUSNESS.

"The letter about the Bloomsbury cat that bought her own cat's meat in your issue of December 6th is interesting."

A Correspondent in "The Spectator."

The cat would, however, have shown more regard for the feelings of our justly-esteemed contemporary if it had wrapped up its purchase in some other publication.

"In his defence, — said that he had really intended marrying the girl, but that he came to the realization that she was extremely ejaljoujs, hence his bjreach.

jThe court found that this was sufficient ground to justify jjjustify jujjj jstjjjfy his breach of promise."—*Canadian Paper.*

It is evident, however, that the Court did not arrive at this decision without considerable hesitation.

More Headaches for Historians.

"The revellers passed the time in dancing and singing until St. Paul's clock struck midnight. Then 'Auld Lang Syne' was sung with enthusiasm and, after repeated cheers, the crowd dispersed."—*Times.*

"It was typical of the largest crowd that has watched round the cathedral the passing of the year that at the moment when midnight struck it should be engaged in one tremendous jostle and push, rough and tumble, and that no one thought to strike up the tune—traditional to the occasion—of 'Auld Lang Syne.'"—*Star.*

"The gigantic Hindenburg figure of Militarism in the centre of the room melted away with the appearance of the Peace Angel, reputed to be the fairest lady in Chelsea, who had climbed a ladder within his leviathan bulk."—*Times.*

"When twelve o'clock struck The God of War *should* have collapsed gracefully to give place to the most beautiful artist's model in Chelsea, draped as the Goddess of Peace. But something went wrong with the ropes, and the God of War floated a yard or two into the air, just sufficiently high to show us the feet and knees of the Goddess of Peace."—*Evening Standard.*

"The famous flood-test of the Parisian, the stone ouave on the Bridge of Alma, is in water up to his waist."—*Provincial Paper.*

Surely an understatement. The "ouave" seems to have had his Z washed away.

From a *feuilleton*:—

"James put his cold hands in his pockets and buttoned up his coat collar before turning out to his work."—*Weekly Paper.*

This is not so easy as it sounds.



Teuton (released after internment for the duration, to old business friend who is trying to avoid him).

WORDS OF WISDOM.

"Come, all you young seamen, take heed now to me,
A hard-case old sailorman bred to the sea,
As sailed the seas over afore you was born,
An' learned 'em by heart from the Hook to the Horn.

"Don't hold by the ratlines when going aloft
(Which I've told you afore but can't tell you too oft),
Or you'll strike one that's rotten as sure as you live,
And it's too late to learn when you've once felt it give;
If you don't hit the bulwarks you'll sure hit the sea,
For them rotten ratlines—they're the devil," says he.

"Now if you should see, as you like enough may,
When tramping the docks for a ship some fine day,
A spanking full-rigger just ready for sea,
And think she's just all that a hooker should be,
Take 'eed you don't ship with a skipper that drinks—
You'd better by half play at fan-tan with Chinks!—
For that'll mean nothing but muddle an' mess,
It may be much more and it can't be much less,
What with wrangling and jangling to drive a man daft,
And rank bad dis-cip-line both forrard and aft,
A ship that's ill-found and a crew out of 'and,
And a touch-and-go chance she may never reach land,
But go down in a squall or broach to in a sea,
For them drunken skippers—they're the devil," says he.

"And if you go further and pause to admire
A ship that's as neat as your heart could desire,
As smart as a frigate aloft and alow,
Her brasswork like gold and her planking like snow,
Look round for a mate by whose twang it is plain
That his home port is somewhere round Boston or Maine,
With a jaw that's the cut of a square block of wood,
And beat it, my son, while the going is good!
There'll be scraping and scouring from morning till night
To keep that brass shiny and keep them decks white,
And belaying-pin soup both for dinner and tea,
For them smart down-easters—they're the devil," says he.

"But if by good fortune you chance for to get
A ship that ain't hungry or wicked or wet,
That answers her hellum both a-weather and lee,
Goes well on a bowline and well running free,
A skipper that's neither a fool nor a brute,
And mates not too free with the toe of their boot,
A sails and a bo'sun that's bred to their trade,
And a slush with a notion how vittles is made,
And a crowd that ain't half of 'em Dagoes or Dutch,
Or Mexican greasers or niggers or such,
You stick to her close as you would to your wife,
She's the sort that you only find once in your life;
And ships is like women, you take it from me,
That, if they *are* bad 'uns, they're the devil," says he.

C. F. S.

"With regard to prison labour, it is stated that the manufacture of war stories had continued to employ every available inmate."

Christian Science Monitor.

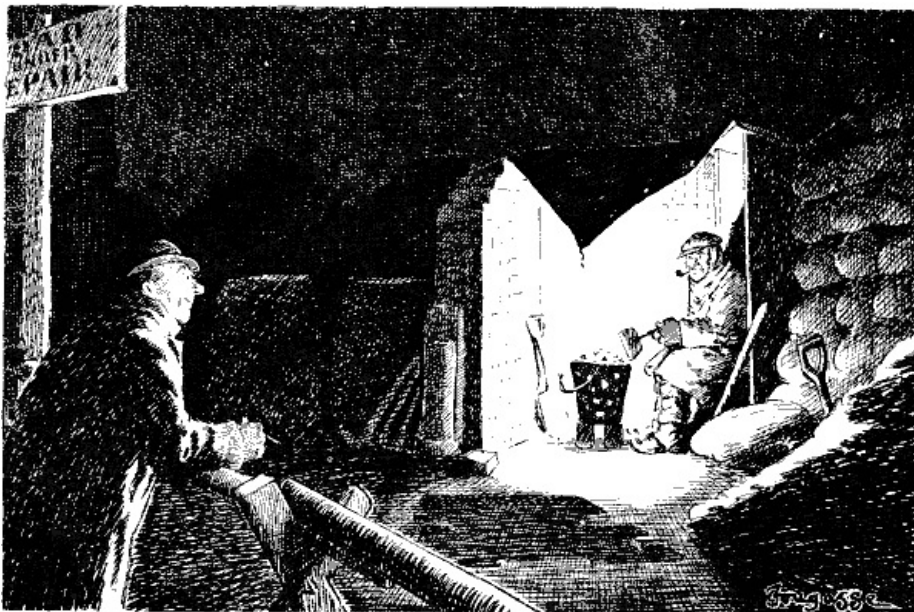
We had wondered where some of them came from.



SOUNDING THE "ALL CLEAR."

WITH GRATEFUL COMPLIMENTS TO THE GALLANT VOLUNTEERS OF THE
BRITISH MINE CLEARANCE FORCE.

[pg 13]



"HULLO, GEORGE! AND WHEN'S THE WAR GOING TO BE OVER, EH?"

THE QUESTIONABLE ALIEN.

William, my hitherto unventuresome friend William, is going abroad. I cannot be certain why. Perhaps he no longer feels his heroism equal to the strain of living in a country fit for heroes. It may be that he has unwittingly incubated a bacillus which figures in novels as the "Call of the Wild." Anyhow, William is going abroad—so much so that, if he went any farther, he would be on his way home again.

I need not say that I felt called upon to help William through this trying period, and our preparations proceeded satisfactorily until the clever geographers who arrange these things nowadays discovered that William could fetch the Far East by way of the Far West. Then the international complications set in. First, William's passport—a healthy enough document at the start—had to be carried round the diplomatic quarter of London until it broke out into a thick rash of supplementary *visas*. Next we sought out the moneychangers in their dens, to transmute William's viaticum bit by bit into four foreign currencies. Then a Great Power through whose territory William will have to pass apparently was nervous of his approach and instituted a grand inquisition into the status and antecedents of the Alien (William).

We unfolded the paper on our table and stared at it aghast. Its area was rather less than a square yard; in colour it favoured the yolk of bad eggs; while all over its broad expanse were ruled compartments, half of them filled with questions that no gentleman would ask another, the other half left blank for William's indignant replies. We managed with great difficulty to squeeze into the panel provided all his baptismal titles—there are four of these besides "William"—and then attacked the first real poser:—

Are you in possession of 100 dollars, or less? If less, by how much?

William groaned. "Reach me down Todhunter's Arithmetic, will you?" said he.

I did so, and turned up the Money Market page of our daily paper. Nothing was heard for the next five minutes but grunts and sighs of despair. We then gave it up on the understanding that William must make a point of winning heavily at bridge—or would it be euchre?—on the way across.

Have you ever been in the territory of the Great Power before?

"No," breathed William devoutly, "and, please Heaven, it shan't occur again!"

What is your reason for coming now?

"I suppose I'd better tell the truth," he said; "they'll never believe me if I say I've come to put DEMPSEY up to that right drive of CARPENTIER'S."

Were you ever in prison, an almshouse, or an institution for the treatment of the insane? If so, which?

"Take your time, William," I said; "think carefully."

He gave a bitter laugh. "Do they want to know *all* the gaols and asylums I've been in," he asked, "or only the more recent?"

Are you a polygamist?

William turned deathly pale. He then fixed me with a terrible stare of accusation and reproach.

"No, no, William," I protested frantically, "I assure you on my honour that *I* haven't been talking."

[pg 14]

This assurance calmed him somewhat. Bit by bit the colour came back to his cheeks and at length he was able to remark more hopefully: "Well, there's this to be said for it, most of my wives are sportswomen. I don't *think* they'll give me away."

Are you an anarchist?

"No," answered William frankly, "but I possess a brother-in-law who has leanings towards Rosicrucianism. Next, please."

The next was a very searching, legally-worded inquiry. It demanded at great length to be informed whether William was a person who advocated the overthrow by force or violence of the Government of the Great Power, or all forms of Law, or believed in the propriety of assassinating any or every officer of the Great Power because of his official character.

William took up the paper-knife with an expression of sheer animal ferocity. "Yes," he hissed, "the whole lot. Torturing them, too!"—and fell back into his chair with peal upon peal of maniacal laughter.

* * * * *

William was practically a wreck before the inquisition came to an end. He had not even sufficient spirit left to fly at me for entering his distinguishing marks as "a general air of honesty, tempered by a slight inward squint."



Runner. "BEAUTIFUL SCENT IN COVER TO-DAY, SIR."

Post-War Sportsman. "OH—ER—IS THERE? I HAVEN'T NOTICED IT, BUT I'VE GOT A COLD IN MY HEAD."

"The Board of Trade have awarded a silver cup to Mr. John Bruce, D.S.C., skipper of the steam drifter *Pansy*, of Wick, in recognition of the promptitude and ability with which he rescued the domestic servant, Strawberry Bank, Hardgate, pleaded guilty to having bemusic, stolen a gold safety pin, a fountain pen, two pairs of gloves, two blouses and several other articles of clothing."—*Fishing News*.

We never believe these fishing stories.

SONGS OF THE HOME.

II.—THE DIAGNOSIS.

When Jimmy, our small but significant son,
Is prey of a temper capricious and hot,
And tires of a project as soon as begun,
And wants what he hasn't, and hates what he's got,
A dutiful father, I ponder and brood,
 Essaying by reason and logic to find
The radical cause of the juvenile mood
 In the intricate growth of the juvenile mind.

But women and reason were never allies;
The rule of a mother is logic of thumb;
The trouble concerns, she is quick to surmise,
 His rum-ti-tiddily-um-ti-tum.

O woman (though angel in moments of pain,
 When angels of pity are most *à propos*),
Why, why won't you listen when husbands explain
 The things they have thought and the knowledge they know?
And why do you smile when they beg to repeat?
 And why are you bored when they make it all clear?
And why do you label their emphasis "heat,"
 And bid them "Be careful; the servants may hear"?

The argument leaves me, though ever more sure,
 Reproachful and angry and sullen and dumb:
It leaves her reforming my diet, to cure
 My rum-ti-tiddily-um-ti-tum.

HENRY.

ANIMAL HELPS.

(By a Student of Domestic Economy.)

Living in a remote country district, where the difficulty of obtaining servants is at present insurmountable—the nearest "pictures" are twelve miles off—I have been much impressed and encouraged by two letters in recent issues of *The Spectator*. One describes a Bloomsbury grocer's cat that bought her own cat's-meat; another recounts the exploits of a spaniel belonging to a house painter and glazier at Yarmouth (Isle of Wight), which, if given a penny, would immediately amble off to a grocer's shop and purchase a cake.

Viewed in their true perspective, these exhibitions of animal intelligence seem to indicate fruitful possibilities of the employment of our dumb friends to assist us in these trying times. Many years ago I remember reading of a baboon which discharged the duties of a railway porter at a station in Cape Colony with great efficiency. I have unfortunately mislaid the reference, but so far as I can remember no mention was made of wages or tips; consequently the importation and employment of skilled simian labour on a large scale might go a long way towards reducing the expenses of our railway system.

But in view of certain obvious difficulties it is perhaps better to restrict our attention to the sphere of domestic service and farm labour. And here I would urge with all the power at my command the employment of the elephant. The greatest burden of household work is the washing of plates, and this is a task which elephants are peculiarly well fitted to undertake; also the cleaning of windows without the use of a ladder. A well-trained and amiable elephant, again, would enable parents to dispense with a perambulator. I admit that the initial outlay might be considerable, but the longevity of elephants is notorious, and it would always be possible to hire them out to travelling menageries.

Another neglected asset is the well-known aptitude shown by poodles for digging out truffles, an accomplishment of which I often read in my youth. If truffles, why not potatoes?

The extraordinary intelligence and affectionate disposition of the runner duck has often been commented on by our serious weeklies, but so far little attempt has been made to turn these qualities to practical account. They forage for themselves. Why should they not be taught to do so for their owners as well?

One more point and I have done. Greek and Latin are going or gone, but a modicum of Mathematics seems to be indispensable to the modern curriculum. The domestic pig has on many occasions shown a capacity for mastering simple arithmetical processes, and we know that the pupil always ends by bettering his master. Under a more enlightened and humane *régime* I confidently look forward to the time when our children will learn the Rule of Three, not from highly-paid and incompetent governesses, but from unsalaried porcine instructors, trained in the best Montessorian methods.



Visitor. "HOW IS MRS. BROWN TO-DAY?"
Maid. "WELL 'M, SHE EBBS AND FLOWS."

Our Plutocratic Sportsmen.

"A gold course is being laid out in Ryde House Park, Isle of Wight."—*Sunday Paper*.

The New Rich.

"Working Man (36) requires Lodgings, full or part board; car ride or convenient Rolls-Royce."—*Provincial Paper*.

"Lady requires gentleman Chauffeur, repair and clean car; good dancer."—*Times*.

One who can "reverse," it is hoped.

"Considering the greatness of the provocation, Centralia, Wash., yesterday showed a calmness worthy of an American community. There were no farther attempts at lynching after the hanging of the secretary of the I.W.W. organisation on Tuesday night." *American Paper*.

Oh, my friends, let us strive to emulate the calmness of Centralia, Wash.

A LETTER TO THE BACK-BLOCKS.

DEAR GINGER,—A Merry Christmas to you! A bit late, you say? On the contrary, in plenty of time. It

is next Christmas I am referring to. Over there, in your tropical land, when the sun stings your skin through your shirt and the sand blisters your feet through your boot-soles, when you butter your bread with a soup-ladle and the mercury boils merrily in the barometer, then, vainly pawing the air for mosquitoes with one hand and reaching for the siphon with the other, you gasp, "Gad! it must be getting on for Christmas-time."

But over here in England, where the seasons wheel round without any appreciable difference in temperature, where, if it were not for the gentleman who writes the calendars, nobody would know whether to wear straw-hats or snow-shoes, Christmas comes sneaking up behind you and grabs you by the pocket before you have time to dodge. "Christmas Eve already!" you exclaim. "Christmas Eve! and there's dear old Tom in Penang and good old Dick in Patagonia and poor old Harry in Princetown, and I've not written a word of cheer to any of them and now have no time to do so." That's what happened to me this year, anyhow; but I'm determined it shall not occur again, so—A Merry Christmas to you, Ginger.

This my first Yule in the Old Country, after many in foreign climes, was not an unqualified success. On the morning of Christmas Eve I went for a walk and lost myself. After wading through bog systems and bramble entanglements for some hours I came out behind a spinney and there spied a small urchin with red cheeks and a red woollen muffler standing beneath a holly-tree. On sighting me he gave vent to a loud and piteous howl. I asked him where his pain was, and he replied that he wanted some holly for decorations, but was too short to reach it. I thereupon swarmed the shrub, plucked and tossed the richly berried boughs to the poor little chap. In return he showed me where I lived—which indeed was not two hundred yards distant, but concealed by the thicket.

Later in the day Edward came in to tea, much annoyed. Bolshevism, he declared, was within our gates. He had been out to collect Christmas decorations in his own private fenced spinney, and confound it if some scoundrels hadn't been and gone and stripped his pet holly-tree of every twig! Anarchy was yapping at the door.

The Aunt soothed him, saying she had that very afternoon purchased a supply of splendid holly from a sweet little boy who had come round hawking it at sixpence a bough. I asked her if by any chance the dear little fellow had worn a red woollen comforter, and was not surprised when I heard that he had.

No sooner had I fallen asleep that same night than I was aroused by an extraordinary din. I lay there, comatose and semi-conscious in the pitchy darkness, and wondered what had happened. Presently I distinguished the bray of trumps, and I knew. "Golly!" I whispered to myself, "I'm dead. Cheer-o!" Then I recollected something I had read concerning ye sports and customs of ye Ancient British and decided it must be "Waits." I crept to the window and by a glow of lanterns beheld the St. Gwithian Independent Brass Band grouped round the porch, blasting "Christians, awake!" through their brazen fog-horns. I fumbled about on the dressing-table, missed the matches but found a half-crown. "Take that and trot!" I snarled, hurling it at them with all my strength. The coin hit the trombone a glancing blow on the snout, ricocheted off the bassoon and bounded into the rockery.

The music stopped abruptly as the bandsmen swarmed in pursuit of fortune. In half-an-hour's time they had pulled all Edward's cherished sedums and saxifrages up by the roots and turned over most of the smaller rocks without discovering the treasure. A conference in loud idiomatic Cornish then took place, with the result that two musicians were despatched to a neighbouring farm for picks, crow-bars and more lanterns; the remainder squatted on the flower-beds and whiled away the time of waiting by blasting "Good King Wenceslas" to the patient stars.

In due course the messengers returned and the quarrying of the rockery began in earnest. By 4.15 A.M. they had most of it littered over the drive, but had struck some granite boulders which defied even the crowbars. A further conference was then held, but at this point Edward made a dramatic appearance, clad in lilac pyjamas, odd boots and a kimono of the Aunt's, which he had worn as King Alfred in some charades the night before, and in the darkness had donned in mistake for his dressing-gown. His address was impassioned and moving, but had no effect on the Waits, who could only be persuaded to abandon their silver mine at the price of a second half-crown.

A day or so before Christmas I began to notice that everybody was getting presents—everybody except me, that is. This caused me pain. It gave the impression that I was not appreciated. I took thought for a space, then rode into Penzance, bought several articles I had been wanting for some time, wrote a few affectionate notes in disguised handwriting, such as "With dearest love from Flossie," "With hugs and kisses from Ermystrude," etc., enclosed them with the articles, addressed and posted them to myself and rode home again.

On Christmas morning I opened them in public with a vast flourish, and left the touching little dedications lying carelessly about where anybody could read them. From the glances of wonder and respect which flashed at me from all sides I gathered that everybody did. The sensation was both novel and pleasing. One parcel, however, there was which I had not sent myself. It had been forwarded on by the "Punch" Office, marked, "Please do not crush," and carefully tied and sealed. My heart leapt. "By Jove!" said I, "a genuine Christmas present. Somebody loves me after all. Perhaps a duchess has sent me her tiara."

With trembling fingers I unlaced the strings. The household crowded about me, panting with envy and excitement. Reverently I folded the multitudinous wrappings back and revealed a very old, very dilapidated silk slipper, severely busted at the toe and stuffed with sticky sweets, a small female doll, and a note—"With all best wishes to PATLANDER for a happy Christmas, and many thanks for useful hints contained in *Punch* issue, December 10th, 1919."

I may remind you that in the issue mentioned was an epistle from me to you recommending the Post as a means of disposing of rubbish, with special reference to worn-out foot-gear. I only wish I knew who played this trick on me, Ginger; I would like to give him something in return—say an old footer-boot—with my foot inside.

Thine in sorrow,
PATLANDER

New Golfing Records.

"Mr. — then holed his fourth for a three."—*Sunday Paper*.

"— played very fine golf on the outward journey and stood 5 up at the second hole."
Evening Paper.

We suppose that in each case the player's opponent wasn't looking.

From a sale catalogue:—

"Pretty Light Grey Georgette Jumper, trimmed Grey Wool and Saxe Blue.

Usually 5 gns. 6½ gns."

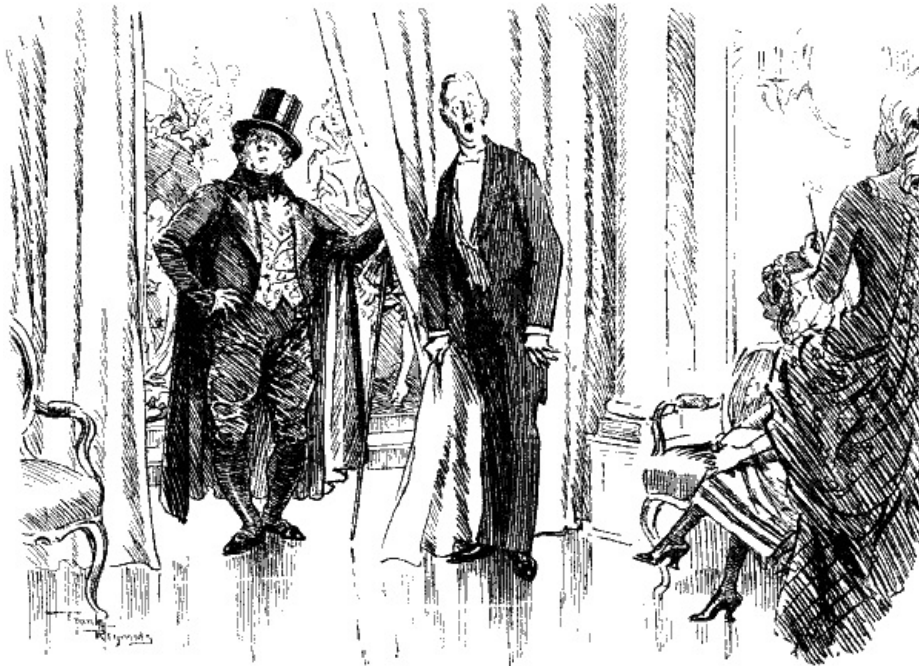
No wonder they call it a jumper.

"ST. —'S CHURCH.
6.30 p.m.—Preacher: The Vicar.
7.45 p.m.—Bach's Church Cantata,
'Sleepers, Wake!'"

Provincial Paper.

We suspect the organist of being a bit of a wag.

[pg 17]



Slightly deaf Footman (announcing each guest in character). "MR. JONES—THE LAST OF THE BANDIES."

THE WHAT-NOT.

"Look here," I said, "this is indeed serious. The what-not's moulting."

"It's been like that for a long time," said Anna. "But I suppose it's getting worse."

"I'm afraid so. And we *must* have something reliable," I said, "to stand dishes and things on at

meals. We can't pile them all on the table at once like a cairn. To tell you the truth," I added, "I've had my eye on an old oak dresser at Smalley's for a long time. It would be a good investment—at a price."

"Yes," said Anna; "but I suppose the price would be the earth and the fulness thereof."

"That is precisely what I propose to find out, and if they'll take anything less than thirty pounds it's ours. In the meantime," I added, "we'll dope the poor old what-not with furniture cream and see about driving it to market."

There are two accepted methods of dealing at old furniture shops. The first is to approach them, well-groomed, be-ringed and perfumed, smoking a jewelled gasper and entering the shop with a circular movement of the arm to expose the gold wrist-watch that *will* crawl up the sleeve at wrong moments, and to ask in a commanding voice, "How much is the—ah—oak-dresser—what?"

The presiding genius (and being a dealer he is usually a genius), who had really ticketed the article thirty pounds, approaches it, removes the ticket by a little sleight-of-hand and says, "Thirty-eight guineas, Sir," without a blush (the dealer who blushes is hounded from the ring). This method of dealing is direct action of the most dangerous kind.

The other method, and the one I most usually adopt, I can best illustrate by detailing my interview with the proprietor of Smalley's on the occasion when I went dressering.

I sidled into the shop in garments carefully selected from my pre-wardrobe and wearing a vacant expression. Picking up a piece of china I examined it carefully, turning it upside down, as though to search for a pottery mark, which I probably should never have recognised.

"H'm, not bad," I said.

"One of the best bits of Dresden I've ever had," said the dealer. "I want——"

"Ah, German," I said, putting the thing down hurriedly as though it might be mined. "It may be a good piece, but—what is the price of that brass fender?"

"Seven-ten, old Dutch and a bargain," said the dealer laconically.

"But probably wouldn't fit the fireplace in my mind. Though," I added to myself, "it might fit the one in our dining-room."

I thought it about time to notice the dresser, not to attempt to buy it yet—oh dear no, but merely to fire the first shot in the campaign as it were.

"What kind of a dresser do you call this?" I said. "Slightly moth-eaten, isn't it?"

"That's nothing; merely age. It's Welsh," he added, "and a beauty. I wish I could get hold of more like it. Look at those legs; I'll guarantee you won't—Excuse me, Sir."

An immaculately dressed individual had entered the shop, and the gentleman trading as Smalley called an assistant to serve him. By the time he returned to me I had wandered far into the recesses of the emporium and was busily examining a walnut stool with a woolwork seat.

"You haven't one like this in oak, I suppose? This one," I said, "would hardly suite my suit. That sounds wrong, but you apprehend my meaning."

"I haven't," he said simply. I could see that he was tiring rapidly, but wasn't absolutely ripe for plucking.

So I priced about a dozen pieces of china, admired several pictures and pieces of Stuart needlework, descanted on the beauties of a set of wheatear chairs, pulled a small rosewood table about until its claw and ball feet nearly dropped off from exhaustion, and finally led him back to the Welsh dresser.

"What's the price of the Scotsman?" I said easily, having seen thirty guineas on the ticket during the preliminary examination.

"Twenty-nine pounds to you," he said wearily. He evidently knew the strict rules of the game.

"But look at those legs," I said. "They're frightfully bent, aren't they?"

"That's one of the best features about it," he said. "Real Queen Anne, those legs are."

"Oh, were hers like that? I didn't know," I said. "Look here, I'll give you twenty-eight pounds, spot cash."

"Very well," he said. "I like to do business."

"I beg pardon," said a voice behind me, which, in turning, I discovered to belong to the assistant, "but that dresser's sold. The gentleman who's just left bought it."

As I was looking for the ticket (which had disappeared), I couldn't help overhearing the assistant's aside to his employer.

"Thirty-five guineas cash," he said.

There is something, after all, to be said for direct action.

"OLD FOLKS' TEA.

On the day of the party the Chief Constable has arranged for a staff of Special Constables to escort home any person requiring assistance."—*Provincial Paper*.

This bears out what has recently appeared about the terrible results of the tea-drinking habit.

"WANTED.—Skates and Boots for Leghorn Pullets."—*Advt. in Canadian Paper*.

They need a lot of exercise in the cold weather.

AT THE PLAY.

"CINDERELLA."



A HORSE-SENSE OF HUMOUR.

Pipchin

MR. STANLEY
LUPINO.

*Baroness
Beauxchamps*

MR. WILL EVANS.

It is a very delicate task that the annual pantomime imposes upon Mr. ARTHUR COLLINS. He has to "surpass himself," but he must not do it once for all or he would rob the critics of their most cherished phrase. He reminds me of the constructors of our Atlantic "greyhounds," each longer by a yard or two than the last, each swifter by a fraction of a knot, each with a few more tons displacement, all pronounced to be the final word in scientific invention, yet all reserving something for the next time.

Certainly the present year marks an advance in one respect at least—that the grotesque and the beautiful are kept reasonably apart; the lovely colour-scheme, for instance, of the garden in Fairyland is undisturbed by any element of buffoonery. There was a revival too of topical allusiveness after the reticence proper to war-time; and the GEDDES family must be justifiably flattered by their admission to a choric refrain.

The humour, of which Mr. STANLEY LUPINO bore the brunt, was here and there a little thin, and it is time that somebody let the Management of Drury Lane into the open secret that the pun, as an instrument of mirth, has long been a portion of the dreadful past. Mr. WILL EVANS, as the *Baroness Beauxchamps*, seldom let himself go, being no doubt held in restraint by a consciousness of his resemblance to Miss ELLEN TERRY. Not enough chance was given to Miss LILY LONG (the *Elder Sister*), who has a very nice sense of fun. As for Mr. CLAFF, who played the operatic *Baron*, his most humorous moment was when he meant to be most serious. This was in a song in praise of *Prince Charming*, "featuring" H.R.H. in a portrait curiously unlike the original.

The two most effective incidents were borrowed from the Circus and the Halls. Mr. DU CALION, who had no other very obvious claims to play the part of a humorous courtier, did his famous ladder-feat—a perfectly gratuitous performance, for, though he was supposed to be rescuing *Cinderella* through a top-storey window, she had the good sense to descend by the staircase, having ignored, as is the way of Love, the locked door that made this impossible.

The other imported business was the work of a black horse, who preserved an expression of extreme gravity and detached boredom during the play of human wit around his person, dissimulating his own superior gifts of humour until called upon to illustrate them with some excellent circus-tricks.

On the sentimental side, Miss MARIE BLANCHE, obedient to the inexorable tradition that a young hero of pantomime must be a woman, played *Prince Charming* with the right manners that makyth man; and as *Cinderella* Miss FLORENCE SMITHSON once more breathed that air of innocence which still remains unstaled by years of steady addiction to the heroine habit. Her vocal intrusions, always well received, were not always well timed; certainly it was an error of judgment to insert a solo at the cross-roads after she had told us that she hadn't a moment to spare if she was to get home from the ball before the rest of the family. But here again it was a matter of obedience to some unwritten and inscrutable law of pantomime which it is not for us, the profane, to question.

And in this spirit I tender a grateful acknowledgment not only of the good things that my intelligence could appreciate in this lavish entertainment, but also of the other things that I can never hope to understand.

O. S.

Commercial Candour.

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No Better 37/6."



Speaker (endeavouring to cultivate a patriotic spirit in the young). "AND NOW, CHILDREN, IF YOU SAW OUR GLORIOUS FLAG WAVING TRIUMPHANTLY OVER THE BATTLE-FIELD, WHAT WOULD YOU THINK? (*Prolonged pause*) COME, COME, WHAT WOULD YOU — WELL, MY LITTLE MAN, WHAT WOULD YOU THINK?"
Small Boy. "PLEASE, ZUR, THE WIND WERE BLOWIN'."

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

"I remember, I remember...." Still on every side echoes the poet's cry, while scarce a publisher but can prove that the thoughts of age make long, long books. Certainly not the shortest of these, but among the most readable, is *A Medley of Memories* (ARNOLD), in which the Right Rev. Sir DAVID HUNTER-BLAIR has embodied the recollections of his very active career as Benedictine monk and a leading figure in the world of British Catholicism. Eton, Oxford, Rome, and (of course) his own famous monastery at Fort Augustus, are the chief scenes of it; and about them all Sir DAVID talks vividly, even brilliantly. I am not saying that all this pleasant garrulity would not have been the better for the blue pencil, especially in those chapters in which the writer's memory dwells almost to excess upon the births, marriages, deaths and dinner-parties of the orthodox Peerage. Elsewhere, however, Sir DAVID finds occasion in plenty for the exercise of a wit so dextrously handled that often his thrust is delivered before you have realized that the rapier has left its sheath. I had marked a score of examples for quotation (and now have space for none) and twice as many good stories. In the Oxford recollections it was pleasant to renew my own lively memories of a certain notorious lecture by Mr. WALTER WALSH on Ritualistic Societies, when violence was narrowly averted by the tactful chairmanship of the present LORD CHANCELLOR—a lecture from which (as Mr. BELLOC observed at the time) "each member of the large audience departed confirmed and strengthened in whatever convictions he might previously have entertained." I sincerely hope that Sir DAVID has yet in store for us those latter-day gleanings which he has been compelled to dismiss for the present as being too recent for print.

Mr. G. B. STERN has set himself to study with sympathy and a candour which extenuates nothing the Jew in England in the circumstances of war, and in particular the Jew of German origin completely loyal to the country of his adoption, but suspected and persecuted by such simple folk (and journals) as are content to put their faith in equally simple proverbs about leopards and spots. I suppose if *Children of No Man's Land* (DUCKWORTH) has a hero and heroine you will find them in *Richard Marcus* and his sister *Deborah*. Young *Richard*, passionately English, with all the simple unquestioning loyalty of the public-school boy, counts the months to the day when he can testify to this by bearing arms in his country's defence, but finds nothing open but internment or (by much wangling) a possible niche in a Labour battalion. *Deborah's* adventures are chiefly of the heart, or what passes for the heart with a common type of modern girl anxious to wring every sensation out of life that playing with fire can give. It does not do to betray one's age by expressing too confidently the idea that much of all the goings-on of *Deborah* and her friends

Gillian and *Antonia* seems impossible. Mr. STERN certainly writes as if he knew what he was writing about, and there is so rich an exuberance in the way he crowds his canvas, and so much humour expressed and repressed in his point of view, that I found this a distinctly entertaining and instructive book.

[pg 20]

Living Bayonets: A Record of the Last Push (LANE) is a fourth of the enthusiastic and fiery war-books of that eminently enthusiastic and inextinguishably fiery warrior-author, Lieutenant CONINGSBY DAWSON, of the Canadian Field Artillery. If he evinces, blatantly at times, the motives and perspective of the propagandist, he is justified by the fact that he most ardently practised the Hun hatred which he preaches. He states that he enjoyed the dangers and discomforts of so doing, and his assertion is proved to be a true one by his having returned again and again to the fray, notwithstanding every excuse and temptation to leave it. The book follows on after his *Khaki Courage*, and is also in the form of letters to his people at home. It takes up the narrative at April 14th, 1917, and carries it to the triumphant end. When, by reason of his wounds, he had to leave the Front and work in London and elsewhere, he naturally lost touch with the real business of the battle; even after his return to the Front in April, 1918, his letters lack their original sense of actuality, and I, reading them, began to wonder if he was ever going to recover his former style. Happily he does so, and with his letter of July 11th he gives a striking picture of a terrible incident of war, of which I don't remember to have read before, but, as I read it now, I seem to be witnessing it myself. From this point on he steadily develops his best, so that he ends on a fitting climax to all his writings of the War in his long final letter of October 6th—propaganda unashamed. The book should be thrust under the noses of those pacifists who now labour to minimise the past and to magnify the virtue and the value of their personal loving-kindness.

It has ever been my misfortune that the presence in a story of two characters confusably alike, or a setting within drowning distance of a tide-race, will produce in me an almost insuperable sense of its having been "made on purpose." I had therefore a double stroke of bad luck in finding both these elements present in *The Splendid Fairing* (MILLS AND BOON). But the more credit to Miss CONSTANCE HOLME that, despite my increasing conviction that the wrong prodigal would return, and that the powers of nature were throughout almost visibly preparing to engulf him, the gentle and unforced power of her story did hold my attention till the final wave. Distinction shown in apparent absence of effort would, I think, be my verdict on her writing; she clearly knows her Northern farmer-folk with the sympathy of intimate experience. I hope I have not already suggested too much of the plot, a little tragedy of the commonplace dealing with the relations between two farming brothers, of whom the younger prospers while the elder fails, and the life-long jealousies of their women. Miss HOLME works, one may say, on a minute scale; the short but simple annals of the poor interest her to the extent of providing an entire volume of three hundred odd pages from the events of a single day. But though now and then the old Northern counsel to "get eendways wi' it" does hover in the background of one's mind I repeat that sincerity carries the thing through. For all that, however, *The Splendid Fairing* did but confirm me in a previous impression that these Mary-call-the-cattle-home localities must remain more convenient to the local colourist than attractive to the inhabitants.

The publication, as a foreword, of a "Glossary of Native Words" used in the text made me wonder whether I should be bored or instructed, or both, by *The Death Drum* (HURST AND BLACKETT). Most happily I was neither. Miss MARGARET PETERSON has built her novel, perhaps a trifle hastily, about a quite uncommon theme and given it, in Uganda, a quite uncommon setting. It is the story of a half-caste who marries a white girl in order to avenge, in her degradation, his sister whom the English girl's brother had betrayed. I must not say that *Tom Davis*, the half-caste, is too much a white man—for Miss PETERSON, to do her justice, has distributed goodness and badness among her blacks and whites with a quite impartial hand—but he is too fine a fellow to carry out his own plan, and, before he has done any lasting harm to the girl he has come to love, he takes himself, by way of a native rising, to a lotus-covered lake, and so out of her life. It seems a pity that the happiness of the story's end couldn't include *Tom*, but his ancestry effectually barred the way, and Miss PETERSON has had to rely upon a very strong and not quite silent Englishman of the best type for her satisfactory finish.

Few authors have a shrewder idea than Mr. P. G. WODEHOUSE of what the British and American public want in the way of humour, and I do not know anyone more determined to supply their requirements. He would be a dull fellow indeed who did not appreciate the high spirits and humorous situations to be found in *A Damsel in Distress* (JENKINS). It is no small feat to maintain a riot of irresponsible fun for more than three hundred pages, but Mr. WODEHOUSE gets going at once, and keeps up the pace to the end without even a pause to get his second wind. If some of the characters—a ridiculous peer, his more ridiculous sister and his most ridiculous butler—are of the "stock" variety, Mr. WODEHOUSE'S way of treating them is always fresh and amusing. But in his next frolic I beseech him to give golf and its tiresome lingo a complete rest.



Customer. "MAY I LOOK AT THAT TWELVE-GUINEA SUIT IN THE WINDOW? (*Catching sight of ticket*) GOOD GRACIOUS! IT'S TWELVE POUNDS THIRTEEN NOW."

Tailor. "YESSIR—A BRIGHT LITTLE NOTION OF OURS, IF I MAY SAY SO. A TICKER ATTACHED, LIKE THOSE THINGS IN THE TAXICABS, TO KEEP THE PRICE UP-TO-DATE."

"Straying.—Wm. —, for allowing three houses to stray on the highway, was fined 20s."—*Local Paper.*

In these days landlords cannot be too careful.

Transcriber's Note:

The correction is indicated by a dotted line under the correction. Scroll the mouse over the word and the original text will appear.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI, VOL. CLVIII, JANUARY 7, 1920 ***

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