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June 16, 1920, by Various and Owen Seaman**

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI,
VOL. 158, JUNE 16, 1920 ***

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Punch,
or the London Charivari
Volume 158, Jan-Jul 1920
June 16, 1920

CHARIVARIA.

"The Bolsheviks," says a gossip writer, "do not always rob Peter to pay Paul." No, they sometimes just rob Peter.

A Yarmouth report anticipates a shortage of herrings. It is said that the PRIME MINISTER has a couple of second-hand red ones for disposal which have only been drawn across the path once or twice.

"One of the Kaiser's mugs," says a news item, "has just been sold in New York for forty pounds." We have suspected for some time that he was a double-faced fellow.

"There should be no temptations to crime in so beautiful a spot," said Mr. Justice COLERIDGE when presented with white gloves at the Anglesey assizes. The sentiment is thought to be as old as ADAM.

"If it is necessary to strengthen the hands of the military in Ireland," said Mr. LLOYD GEORGE, "the Government will certainly do so." Our own view is that they should be protected even if it means sending the Reserve of Special Constables to do it.

According to the Ministry of Transport, there is only one motor-car to every one hundred and twenty people in Great Britain. The necessity of fixing a maximum bag of pedestrians per car does not therefore arise.

A purple-eyed fish, eleven feet long, with a horn on its nose and no teeth, has been caught at San Diego, California. That is the sort of thing that makes Prohibition a secondary issue.

As the result of some remarks let drop by the crew and repeated by the ship's parrot, several

hundred bottles of liquor were found on board the *S.S. Curaçao* by the San Francisco port authorities. It is now suggested, in the interests of philology, that the parrot should be put back to hear how the crew takes it.

A young man while fishing on the Wye landed a wallet containing twenty-two one-pound Treasury notes. A correspondent writing from North of the Tweed inquires what bait the fellow was using.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL points out that five hundred new telephones are to be erected in rural districts. Local residents should at least be grateful for this little friendly warning.

It is reported that M. KRASSIN told the PREMIER all about Russia. Mr. LLOYD GEORGE was very interested, as he had often heard of the place.

With the letter postage at twopence, we read, it is in many cases just as cheap to telephone. And in some cases just as quick.

"Will Wilde meet Beckett?" asks a headline. We can only say that we do not intend to stand in their way.

General VON KLUCK has been telling somebody that he lost the battle of the Marne by a fluke. As we can't have the War over again we must let the matter remain at that.

According to an evening paper a temperance speaker fainted during a procession in a Kentish town, and was immediately carried into a shop and brought round by whisky. The report that on being informed of this fact he again went off into a faint is happily without foundation.

A man aged seventy-six was charged last week with threatening to shoot a West-End family of six. It is said that his parents intend to plead the baneful influence of the cinema.

The fact that at least seven people have expressed their intention of swimming the English Channel this year draws attention once more to the lack of accommodation on our cross-Channel steamers.

A wheelbarrow has been presented to the parishioners of Hornchurch, Essex. We have maintained all along that the motor-car craze would wear itself out in time.

On April the 21st the Maharajah of BIKANIR shot his hundredth tiger. All efforts to induce him to join the R.I.C. have so far failed.

The case is reported of a hen which lays an egg each morning on her master's bed and then pecks his cheek to wake him up at the proper time for breakfast. Guess where this happens. America? Right.

We understand that in view of the paper shortage the West Drayton man who managed to get through on the telephone last week has abandoned the idea of writing a book about it.

Much annoyance is said to have been caused to one bricklayer last week. It seems that just before the dinner hour somebody kicked away the brick he had laid and the unfortunate fellow had to start the day all over again.

According to *The Manila Bulletin* the cost of living is going to fall. Not on us, we trust.



'Arty. "THEY'RE TALKIN' ABAHT DOIN' GREEK PLAYS AN' PAGEANTS AN' ALL SORTS O' LOOPY STUNTS AT 'AMPSTEAD ON BANK 'OLIDAYS."
'Arriet. "LUMME! IT'LL GIT THE PLACE A BAD NAME."

The Hire Education.

"Required, an Assistant Teacher (Lady), with option of purchase."—*Australian Paper*.

"Ex-Soldier's Tale.

NOTE TO WAR PRISONER HIDDEN IN CHEESE."
National News.

We should like to hear more of the prisoner and his novel hiding-place.

MAY-WEEK.

[Addressed affectionately to the author of "May-Week Then and Now" in *The Times* of last Wednesday.]

Though forty years have done their worst
To change us to the sere and brown,
Since we in verdant freshness first
Assumed the triple-chevroned gown,
As I perused *The Times* this very day week
Your statement thrilled me through and through—
How people still go gathering nuts in May-week
Much as they used to do.

The courts their dun-grey habit keep,
Their velvet-green the sacred lawns;
The rooks that marred our matin sleep
Still devastate the golden dawns;
Beneath my westward windows still the same bridge
Sags in the centre as of old;
In fact, in all essential matters Cambridge
Preserves its ancient mould.

Slight innovations have occurred
That rudely on your senses strike;
Our innocence had never heard
The hooting of the motor-bike;
And though you might approve, with your rich tresses,
The vogue of leaving off your hat,
I with a crust that loathes the wind's caresses—
I should revolt at that.

But for the rest there's little strange;
Still Cam pursues his torpid way;
'Tis we alone who suffer change
(I could not stick the course to-day);
New generations lash the same old river,
Spurt up the Long Reach, bump and sup;
What if we pass, through weight of years or liver?
Somebody keeps it up.

Time may have weaned us long ago
With even sterner heights to win
Than when the once resilient toe
Was apt to dance the daylight in;
No doubt we've grown in wisdom since we started,
But I would give my head (with brain)
Just to be back there, young and agile-hearted,
Just for one June again.

O. S.

AUTHORSHIP FOR ALL.

[In this series Mr. Punch presents a few specimens of the work of his newly-established Literary Ghost Bureau, which supplies appropriate Press contributions on any subject and over any signature. Terms and simple self-measurement form on application.]

I.—THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF GENIUS.

By Miss Dinkie Devereux, the renowned Film Favourite.

The Editor of *The Weekly Newsbag* has kindly asked me to write an article on the duty which we denizens of Flickerland owe to the public. This, it happens, is a subject that has long given me "furiously to think," as a witty Frenchman once said in French. It may be of interest, by the way, to state that I am myself partly of Gallic extraction, my mother having been a Lyons girl before she was enabled to open a tea-shop of her own; and, although born and bred in what I am proud to call my native country, I can even now act just as fluently in a French film as in an all-British production.

But I must not let my thoughts run away with my pen, fascinating though such cross-country excursions may be. To return to my appointed topic, heavy indeed is the burden that is laid on the back of a cinema star. You who know me only as the reigning queen of countless Palaces may possibly imagine that my life is spent in flitting butterfly-fashion from film to film, existing only for the golden moment. But one is not born a butterfly, nor does one remain so without constant effort. The strenuous nature of my labours indeed necessitates frequent periods of recuperation, which I seek either in my Highland fastness, or on my Californian peach-farm, or amid the lotus-bushes of my villa on the Riviera. This, then, is one of my first duties to the public—to preserve that Heaven-sent talent which, in the words of mighty MILTON, "is death to hide." (MILTON, I may say, is my favourite poet next to GEORGE R. SIMS, and "Odont" is my favourite mouth-wash.)

But the intervals between pictures are not all play. When I receive notice of a forthcoming production in which my services are entreated (and I owe it to humanity not to refuse my co-operation provided certain bothersome preliminaries of a financial nature are successfully negotiated), I spend a considerable time steeping myself in the atmosphere of the part I am to fill. One of my most famous rôles, as I need hardly mention, is that of *Lilian the Lift-Girl*, in the great Solomonson six-reeler, *Ups and Downs*. In order to prepare for this momentous undertaking I used to visit Whiteridge's Stores daily and devote an hour or so to travelling in the elevators; only thus could I hope to attain the proper perspective. The attendants of course knew me well and used to ply me with gifts of chocolates, etc.; but after a time I was compelled to refuse these touching offerings because my chauffeur has a tendency to biliousness.

Then there is the sacred duty of looking after what my Press agent is good enough to call my "unearthly charm." I do not agree with the *dictum* that "we are as Heaven made us," and I am sure no film enterprise could carry on successfully on those lines. Of course you must have something to work upon, and for the bare edifice of my beauty, which in all humility I admit was raised by other hands than mine, I claim no special praise. But I think I may justly take credit for the structural alterations I have effected and for the self-sacrificing labours I have willingly undergone to maintain each of my features at its maximum efficiency; to these the advertisement columns of the papers bear constant testimony.

(In passing let me observe that I have always found Mrs. Phipps's Face-Fodder of invaluable assistance in "that fierce light which beats upon the screen," as dear old TENNYSON—another great favourite of mine—so nearly said.)

Naturally enough the public is always ravenous for information concerning the minutest details of

my life, and to prevent disappointment in this respect I send the Press a daily budget of my doings, entitled *Dinkie Day by Day*. That is another burden I cheerfully shoulder, and by this method my admirers are kept fully acquainted with what I may call the real me—with the heart that beats beneath the shadowed counterfeit. Nevertheless at times the most absurd rumours get abroad. Recently, for example, I saw it stated in quite a reputable organ that my favourite jam is blackberry-and-apple; as a matter of fact I find all jams ruinous to the figure, and as a tea-relish I usually limit myself to the more ascetic bloater-paste, with salmon-and-shrimp as an occasional variant.

My pet hobby is collecting precious stones, and my favourites among these are pearls and diamonds, especially of the larger variety. Frequently admirers of my art who know of this harmless foible are good enough to add to my collection, and these spontaneous tributes are among the compensations of a life dedicated at every moment of the day to the public service.

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DIRECT REACTION.

LABOUR EXTREMIST. "HE'S A BIT TOO QUICK ON THE REBOUND."

[Mr. LLOYD GEORGE gave a very straight answer to the representative of those members of the National Union of Railwaymen who had refused to handle munitions intended for the defence of the Royal Irish Constabulary against murderous attack.]

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HOLIDAY GOLF.

Landlady (showing apartments in the vicinity of famous links). "OH, YOU'LL BE QUITE COMFORTABLE HERE, SIR; YOU SEE, WE'RE USED TO GOLFERS."

ANOTHER DOG DISPUTE.

As far as was revealed by the torn remnants of posters adhering to Farmer Pyke's barn, the only event of importance in Little Spudsey since the letting by auction of fifty-seven acres of summer keeping in April, 1918, was the Rural District Council Election in March, 1920. Conspicuous mention was made of Pyke, Cluttrel and Gedge, Coalition Candidates, who had apparently coalesced to crush one Winch, Independent. I was endeavouring to discover his fate when old William Trimble doddered along.

"Marnin', Mr. Lomax," he said; "you be back at last?"

I could not deny the fact.

"There be only Hosea Bennett an' George Riley to coom now, an' the toll'll be complete."

"Where are they now?" I asked.

"George be in India, or leastways 'e was, an' Hosea's at Cogny. They'm both expected back by Saturday fortnit, an' th' question which on 'em really owns th' Yorkshire tARRIER'll have to be settled once an' for all. Yon election hinged on it."

"I'm afraid I've forgotten the details, William," I confessed lamely.

"You'll surely remember th' little Yorkshire tARRIER as strayed into th' village in the summer o' '14," said William. "Hosea claimed it as his'n by right of hollering it first, but George rackened him givin' it a bit o' bacon-rind from 'is lunch med 'im th' rightful owner. It stayed a few days wi' Hosea, then George 'ticed it away, an' generally it hung to the one as happened to have th' biggest bone. Feeling ran high atween them till, after the harvest 'ad bin got in, Mr. Gedge, at The Chequers, axed George what about j'ining up.

"'What, an' give Hosea a free run wi' th' tARRIER?' said George. 'Not blessed likely.'

"Hosea for his part said 'e weren't going to budge while th' village were infested wi' dog-stealers; so Mr. Gedge 'e says, 'Hand th' dog to me. I'll howd it wi'out fear nor favour, an' when you both cooms back we'll have it properly arbitrated on.'

"So Hosea j'ined the Infantry an' George went into th' Yeomanry. There was some friction when George first coom on leave an' Mr. Gedge let 'im have th' tARRIER for a day's rattin'. Th' Bennett family said it were breaking the agreement, but Mr. Gedge said it were a patriotic duty to give th' lads a bit of amusement when they came on leave, an' 'e 'd undertake the Rileys 'ud make no objection when Hosea coom home. But it made a lot 'o coolness atween th' families, an' when Hosea were wounded in '15 the Bennettses as good as said th' Rileys weren't no better nor pro-Germans in not giving up their claim to th' tARRIER. Public opinion were with Hosea at that time, but it veered round to George when 'e won th' Military Medal in '16.

"However, George got orders to go East in '17, an' Hosea had pretty frequent leaves and were allus parading th' dog outside the Rileys' cottage. About the end o' '18 owd Ephraim Riley got tired of it and went to see Mr. Gedge on th' subject.

"'Fair's fair,' he says, 'an' Hosea ain't no right to be worming 'is way into that dog's affections while George can't get home.'

"'There's summat in that,' said Mr. Gedge; an' next time Hosea cooms home 'e finds the dog in pound, so to speak.

"'Very good,' says he; 'I don't coom home again till George is here.'

"In th' spring of '19, 'bout the time as the tarrier—which was getting owd and cantankerous—bit Wilfred Browitt in th' leg, we heerd that George weren't likely to be back for a longish time, an' Hosea wrote to say in that case he'd take on in th' Army for another year. Then we had mower excitement, for it was said that Winch, a new-comer, had put up for th' Council, an' it 'ud mean an election. Fowks were so used to Farmer Pyke an' Mr. Gedge and Mr. Cluttrel setting that they rackened they didn't need to be voted on, but would go in automatic. However, there were a meetin' in th' parish-room, an' when Chairman axed if anyone 'ad any questions Wilfred Browitt got up an' said:

"'Who owns tarrier, Hosea Bennett or George Riley?'

"It were well known that Wilfred were a mean-sperrited crittur as only wanted to know from which one 'e 'd be likely to get compensation for th' bite on his leg. So Mr. Gedge 'e rose an' answered:—

"'It's well known Mr. Pyke nor Mr. Cluttrel nor self can't say anything on the matter, as it is sub-judish till th' lads coom home.'

"'What do you say, Mr. Winch?' persisted Wilfred.

"'I declare for George Riley,' said Winch boldly, 'him being the first to give it sustenance.'

"There were a great sensation at that, an' it showed the cunningness o' Winch. He knew the Rileys were intermarried wi' half th' village and all George's relations 'ud be bound to vote for 'im after he'd declared for them. And so it proved, for, though th' Bennettses rallied everyone they could for th' Coalitioners, they weren't strong enough, an' Winch got in in place o' Mr. Cluttrel."

"Still," I remarked, "the question of ownership isn't settled."

"No, that'll be settled Saturday fortnit. It'll be a rare set-back for Winch if the verdict goes to Hosea."

"But in any case the terrier is sure of a good home," I said.

"Well, as to that," replied William, "it were the principle o' the thing that were at stake. When th' tarrier bit Wilfred Browitt in '19 he chased it out of th' village wi' his stick, an' nobody ain't seen it since."



Host (to guest, who is helping him to make a pergola). "DON'T LEAN ON IT, YOU SILLY ASS! YOU'LL HAVE IT DOWN."

Our Modest Advertisers.

"TO BE LET.—Charming Little Gentleman's Pleasure Farm."—*Field*.

"A Northampton Corporation report states that contractor's workmen have applied for permission to work longer hours."

Daily Chronicle.

We understand that the Labour Party will at once order the Ministry of Health to take steps to isolate these cases, and that there is little danger of a spread of the epidemic.

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A PRISCILLA DIALOGUE.

There is probably some way by which a young female child can be led through easy stages of Socratic dialogue to the idea of ultimate truth in morals as well as art. There is probably some way of talking to such a child without being badly scored off. But I do not seem to have the gift. This is the more unfortunate because the thing usually happens before I have finished my breakfast, and nothing is quite so damaging to my self-esteem as to be soundly snubbed in my own house before the day's work has begun.

Mind you I do not honestly believe that my logic is at fault. I believe that there is usually a flaw in the reasoning of the child. But you cannot very well say to an infant of three, "You are now being guilty of an undistributed middle or a *petitio elenchi* or whatever it is." She would do what I have heard even older women do in like circumstances. She would change the subject at once. Perhaps the MONTESSORI system ... But let us take a typical case.

I found her sitting at a large table by the dining-room window, in a high chair that left her red shoes eighteen inches from the ground, a complete doll's tea service in front of her and a small stuffed lamb on her right-hand side. The tea-pot appeared to contain real water and the sugar-basin real sugar, and although she was supremely busy watering and sugaring and rearranging her cups and jugs and spoons she greeted me with the composure of an experienced *châtelaine*. Our conversation went something like this:—

She. Will you have any cup of tea?

I (*having drunk a small cup of water with a very little real sugar and a large quantity of real grit in it*). Thank you. How delicious! But I must go and have my breakfast now.

She (*taking no notice at all and offering me a small fragment of moist toast*). Will you have any piece of cake?

I. Thank you. What lovely plum-cake!

She (*with infinite scorn*). Ho! that isn't *plum*-cake. There isn't any plums in it. It's *chocolat* cake.

I (*humiliated*). Oh, well, I don't think I will have any more tea, thank you.

She (*coldly*). I'm going to give my lamb tea now.

[*The method of giving tea to a lamb, in case it is not generally known, is to plaster the lamb's nose with spoonfuls of sugar and then lick off the sugar with one's tongue. At least that is the way Priscilla does it.*]

I (*reprovingly from the breakfast-table*). What a funny way to give your lamb tea, Priscilla.

She. My lamb says he likes having his tea like this. (*A longish pause*.) Please will you draw me a picsher?

I. What kind of a picture?

She. A picsher of a house.

I. What kind of a house?

She (*in one long breath*). A purple house with a yellow roof and blue curtains and a green door and rose-trees with red roses and hollyhocks and a dear little pussy-cat and a motor-car coming up the drive.

[*This is executed in coloured crayons with a rapidity born of hunger and long practice, and passed to the Hanging Committee for inspection.*]

She (*examining it critically*). Ho! that isn't a *door*.

I. Yes, it is, Priscilla. It's a very nice *door*.

She. It isn't a door. It hasn't any knocker.

[*After all, when is a door not a door? I finish the joinery job and carry on with my bacon.*]

She (suddenly). There isn't any sun.

[*I sketch in the regulation pattern of circular sun, with eyes, a nose and a smile complete.*]

She. That isn't a sun. It hasn't any hair.

I. The sun doesn't have any hair, Priscilla.

She (decisively). Nurse has hair.

[*This really seems unanswerable. Having amended Phoebus Apollo I start in with my marmalade. After a lapse of a few minutes a low hammering is heard from somewhere on the floor at the far side of the table.*]

I. Whatever are you doing, Priscilla?

She. Soothing my horse.

[*She is discovered beating the wheels of a grey wooden flat-backed animal on a stand with a hammer procured from heaven alone knows where.*]

I. Well, don't hit him on the wheels, anyhow. (*A pause, subdued noises and a sigh.*) What are you doing now, Priscilla?

She. Soothing him on his back.

I. Doesn't that hurt him?

She. It hurts him very much, but he doesn't say anything.

[*I come round to give veterinary advice.*]

I. Don't you love your horse, Priscilla?

She. Yes, he's my friendly horse.

I. Well, don't bang him about like that; all the paint's coming off him.

[*The carpet is in fact bestrewn with small flakes of grey paint from the unhappy creature's flanks.*]

She (derisively). Ho! that isn't paint. That's snorts.

I (helplessly). Whatever do you mean?

She. That's snorts. Snorts from his mouf. White snorts.

I. But why is your horse snorting from his mouth, Priscilla?

She. He's snorting from his mouf because I'm soothing him on his back.

Well, there you are, you know; what is one going to do about it? There is a sort of specious plausibility about these replies after all; I am no farrier, but I should think it quite likely that if you shod a cart-horse long enough on the back with a large enough hammer he *would* snort white snorts from his mouth; and it's no use telling the girl that she can't jump from realism to romance in that disingenuous manner. Besides she might start hammering the wheels again. Or else she would say that her horse *said* he was snorting, and who am I to contradict a British horse? I used to consider myself pretty good at what are called back-answers and I still believe that with a little practice I could hold my own in Whitechapel or the House of Commons, but there are subtle transitions about Priscilla's method of argument with which only a Prime Minister could cope. It carries too many guns for me. It cramps my style.

V.

A CORNISH COTTAGE.

Beside the clock two spaniels stand,
Two china spaniels golden-spotted;
On a lace d'oyley (contraband)
Beams a red-faced geranium (potted).

Framed portraits rest on woollen mats,
Black-bearded smugglers with their spouses;
The gentlemen wear bowler hats,
The ladies sport their Sunday blouses.

Two pictures decorate the wall,
Vesuvius spouting sparks and ashes,
The brig *Calypso* in a squall,
Full-sailed despite the lightning flashes.

Without, the dark Atlantic flings
Against the cliff its booming surges,
And, as a shell, the snug room rings
With its reverberating dirges.

Against the door the night winds rave
Like outcast dogs, their lot deploring;
Triumphant over wind and wave
Rises my landlord's lusty snoring.

PATLANDER.

"There was one summer when he lived by himself in a lonely old houseboat on the Thames, from which he paddled himself ashore every morning in a top-hat.—*Daily Paper*."

The drawback to this kind of craft is that it only accommodates a single skull.

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MANNERS AND MODES.

MR. GILEAD P. BLOGGS (U.S.A.) ORDERS FOR HIS NEW DINING-ROOM AT PITTSBURGH A COLOSSAL PICTURE REPRESENTING A HOSPITABLE SIDEBOARD, TO KEEP ALIVE HIS MEMORIES OF "WET" AMERICA.

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Accused (just dismissed). "MANY THANKS! WHAT SHOULD I HAVE DONE WITHOUT YOU?"
Counsel. "OH, ABOUT SIX MONTHS."

LITTLE BITS OF LONDON.

BILLINGSGATE.

In order to see Billingsgate properly in action it is necessary to get up at half-past four and travel on the Underground by the first train East, which is an adventure in itself. The first train East goes at three minutes past five, and there are large numbers of people who travel in it every day; by Charing Cross it is almost crowded. It is full of Bolshevists; and I do not wonder. One sits with one's feet up in a first-class carriage, clutching a nice cheap workman's ticket and trying hard to look as if, like the Bolshevists, one did this every day.

On arriving at the Monument Station one walks briskly past the seductive announcement that "THE MONUMENT IS NOW OPEN," and plunges into a world of fish. I have never been able to understand why fish is so funny. On the comic stage a casual reference to fish is almost certain to provoke a shout of laughter; in practice, and especially in the mass, it is not so funny; it is like the Government, an inexhaustible source of humour at a distance, and in the flesh extraordinarily dull.

Over the small streets which surround the market hangs a heavy pall of fishy vapour. The streets are full of carts; the carts are full of fish. The houses in the streets are fish-dealers' places, more or less full of fish. The pavements are full of fish-porters, carrying fish, smelling of fish. Fragments of conversation are heard, all about fish. Fish lie sadly in the gutters. The scales of fish glitter on the pavements. A little vigorous swimming through the outlying fisheries brings you to the actual market, which is even more wonderful. Imagine a place like Covent Garden, and nearly as big, but entirely devoted to fish. In the place of those enchanting perspectives of flower-stalls, imagine enormous regiments of fish-stalls, paraded in close order and groaning with halibut and conger-eel, with whiting and lobsters and huge crabs. Round these stalls the wholesale dealers wade ankle-deep in fish. Steadily, maliciously, the great fish slide off the stalls on to the floor; steadily the dealers recover them and pile them up on their small counters, or cast them through the air on to other counters, or fling them into baskets in rage or mortification or sheer bravado.

The dealers are men with business-faces, in long white coats, surprisingly clean. Every now and then they stop throwing crabs into baskets or retrieving halibut from the floor, and make little entries in long note-books. I do not know exactly what entries they make, but I think they must all be in for some competition, and are making notes about their scores; one man I watched had obviously just beaten the record for halibut-recovery. He recovered so many in about a minute that the tops of his boots were just beginning to show. When he had done that he made such long notes in his book about it that most of the halibut slid on to the floor again while he was doing it. Then he began all over again. But I expect he won the prize.

Meanwhile about a million fish-porters are dashing up and down the narrow avenues between the fish-stalls, porting millions of boxes of fish. Nearly all of them, I am glad to say, have been in the army or have had a relative in the army; for they are nearly all wearing the full uniform of a company cook, which needs no description. On their heads they have a kind of india-rubber hat, and on the india-rubber hat they have a large box of fish weighing about six stone—six *stone*, I

tell you. This box they handle as if it was a box of cigars. They pick it up with a careless gesture; they carry it as if it was a slightly uncomfortable hat, and they throw it down with another careless gesture, usually on to another box of fish; this explains why so many of one's herrings appear to have been maimed at sea.

When they have finished throwing the boxes about they too take out a note-book and make notes about it all. This, it seems, is to make sure that they are paid something for throwing each box about. I don't blame them. It must be a hard life. Yet if I thought I could pick up six stone of salmon and plaice and throw it about I should sign on at Billingsgate at once. It is true they start work about five; but they stop work, it seems, about ten, and they earn a pound and over for that. Then they can go home. Most of them, I imagine, are stockbrokers during the rest of the day.

And they are a refined and gentlemanly body of men. I hope the old legend that the fish-porter of Billingsgate expresses himself in terms too forcible for the ordinary man is now exploded; for it is a slander. In fact it is a slander to call him a "porter;" at least in these days I suppose it is libellous to connect a man falsely with the N.U.R., if only by verbal implication. But, however that may be, I here assert that the Billingsgate fish-porter is a comparatively smooth and courteous personage, and, considering his constant association with fish in bulk, I think it is wonderful.

At the far end of the market is the river Thames; and on the river Thames there is a ship or two chockful of fish. Fish-porters with a kind of *blasé* animation run up and down a long gangway to the ship with six-stone boxes of fine fresh whiting on their heads. These boxes they pile up on a chute (carefully noting each box in their note-books), after which an auctioneer auctions the boxes. This is the really exciting part of the show. The dealers or the dealers' agents stand round in a hungry ring and buy the boxes of fish as they slide down the chute. The dealers seem to detail a less cultured type of man for this purpose, and few of the bidders come up to the standard of refinement of the fish-porters. But the auctioneer understands them, and he knows all their Christian names. He can tell at a glance whether it is Mossy Isaacs or Sam Isaacs. He is a very clever man.



Connoisseur (smoking cigarette stump just thrown away by passer-by). "EITHER TERBAKKER ISN'T WOT IT WOS—OR THESE 'ERE TOFFS AIN'T."

They stand round looking at the boxes of fish, and when one of them twitches the flesh of his nose or faintly moves one of his eyelashes it means that he has bought six stone of whiting for thirty shillings. That is the only kind of sign they give, and the visitor will be wise not to catch the auctioneer's eye, or blow his nose or do any overt action like that, or he may find that he has bought six stone of salmon and halibut for forty-five shillings. At an auction of fish it is true to say that a nod is as good as a wink; in fact it is worse.

The dealers are silent motionless men; but nobody else is. Everybody else is dashing about and shouting as loud as he can. As each box of fish is sold the porters dash at it and shout at it (of course in a very gentlemanly way) and carry it off in all directions. It is quite clear that nobody knows who has bought it and where it is going. The idea of the whole thing is to impress the visitor with the mobility of fish, and this object is successfully attained. No doubt when the visitors have gone away they settle down and decide definitely whom the fish belongs to.

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It is now about half-past six. Fish is still rushing in at one end from the ship and is rushing in at the other from the railway-vans. The porters are throwing the fish at the dealers' stalls (registering each hit in their note-books), and the dealers are throwing it on to the floor or throwing it at each other or trying to throw it at a retailer, who always puts on a haughty air and passes on to the next stall, till he too gets entangled in the game and finds that he has bought twenty-four stone of whiting at twopence a pound; then he throws it at some more porters, and the porters dash outside and throw it at the carts, and the carts clatter away to Kensington, and my wife buys a whiting at tenpence a pound, and the circle of fish organisation is complete.

At about this point it is a good thing to pass on to Covent Garden and buy some flowers.

A. P. H.



Aspiring Solicitor (speaking in telephone with the idea of impressing supposed client).
 "YES, TELL THE LORD CHANCELLOR I WILL LUNCH WITH HIM, AND SHALL BE VERY HAPPY TO GIVE HIM THE BENEFIT OF MY ADVICE IN THE MATTER HIS LORDSHIP MENTIONED. GOOD-BYE. NOW WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, SIR?"

Supposed Client. "WELL, I'VE COME ABOUT YOUR TELEPHONE, SIR, WHICH I UNDERSTAND FROM YOUR LETTER TO US HAS BEEN COMPLETELY OUT OF WORKING ORDER SINCE YESTERDAY."

A Record Crash.

From "Sayings of the Week" in a Sunday paper:—

"With the aerial world at our feet we are making no effort to grasp it.—*G. Holt Thomas.*"

CAPUA.

(*A Bolshevist's lament, designed to show that though we may appear to be giving way rather easily to the Russian Government we have a deep purpose in it all.*)

Silken ways and softer manners
 Bend the barbarous victor down;
 Woe unto the Soviet banners!
 M. KRASSIN is in town.

Hark! the Lydian lute is thrumming
 Roses fall about his feet;
 He shall pardon each shortcoming,
 Conqueror he shall taste defeat.

Puzzled, maybe slightly baffled,
 He shall get to like it all,
 Overlook the absent scaffold
 At the windows of Whitehall.

Piccadilly, though it warps his
 Sense of justice, he shall see
 Unencumbered by the corpses
 Of a bloated *bourgeoisie*;

Quite forget the stern aspirants
 To a nobler newer world;
 Tread the Birdcage Walk with tyrants,
 Have his hair by Bond Street curled;

Lulled by scented airs and graces,
 Feel the Scythian ardours fade;
 Purchase underwear and braces
 In the Burlington Arcade;

Losing for a mess of pottage
 TROTSKY'S wireless apothegms,
 Take a little country cottage
 And a houseboat on the Thames.

Oh to think that as he lingers
Hour by hour he needs must hook
Round imperial palms the fingers
Of a hand that LENIN shook.

Commerce like an iron girder
Props the new world and the old;
All men know the stains of murder
May be lightly washed with gold.

Ah, but when the bright-eyed vulture,
Fresh from feasting on the slain,
Learns the way of foreign culture
Shall his claws grow sharp again?

So for him we weep, the Tartar
Blood-bedabbled to his wrists,
When his free soul sinks to barter
With abhorred capitalists.

Silken ways and softer manners
Bend the sturdiest victor down;
Woe unto the Soviet banners!
M. KRASSIN is in town.

EVOE.

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AIR-CRAFTINESS

BRITISH LION. "HALLO! STARTED FLYING AGAIN ALREADY?"

GERMAN EAGLE. "OH, PURELY A COMMERCIAL FLUTTER."

BRITISH LION (*to himself*). "I REMEMBER HEARING THAT SAME YARN ABOUT THEIR NAVY. TIME I DEVELOPED MY WINGS AGAIN."

[*"In Germany there are millions of men firmly determined to win back by the air what they have lost by sea and on land."* General Seeley.

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ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

Monday, June 7th.— "Has the right hon. gentleman any experience of Sunday School treats?" asked Mr. INSKIP after the MINISTER OF TRANSPORT had announced that the railway companies, while conceding reduced fares for these outings, could not extend the facilities to more than one adult for every ten children. Sir ERIC GEDDES admitted that his experience was "many years ago." There must have been "giants in those days" among the Sunday School teachers if one of them was able to "moderate the transports" of ten little ERICS.

The PRIME MINISTER had discarded the jaunty grey suit which he wore last week, and in his "blacks" looked rather like a Scottish elder. Nevertheless, when requested by Mr. MACCALLUM SCOTT to interpret the articles of the "Auld Kirk" he declined to rush in where Mr. BONAR LAW had

feared to tread, and contented himself with the remark that this was "a very dangerous question for a mere Southerner."

The negotiations with M. KRASSIN caused many inquiries. Mr. WILLIAM SHAW, for example, sought a guarantee that the Bolsheviks should not be allowed to pay for the goods they might now order with the stores that they had seized from His Majesty's Government. One is reminded of PHIL MAY's publican, who took the theft of his pewters philosophically, but was moved to strong protest when the thief brought them back in the form of bad half-crowns.

Coalitionist anxiety in regard to the PRIME MINISTER'S flirtation with the Soviet emissary took shape in a motion for the adjournment moved by Colonel GRETTON, who was shocked at the idea of negotiating with a Government that depended on violence, and seconded by Admiral Sir R. HALL, who doubted whether there was anything to be got out of Russia. Mr. LLOYD GEORGE replied that, according to the evidence of anti-Bolshevist refugees, there were quantities of grain and raw materials awaiting export, while in regard to the general question he poured much rhetorical contempt on the argument that we were never to trade with a country that was misgoverned. What about Turkey? What about Mexico? "You cannot always examine the records of your customers."



"MANY YEARS AGO."
SIR ERIC GEDDES AT A SUNDAY SCHOOL TREAT.

Earlier in the day Sir A. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN had moved the Second Reading of the Agriculture Bill with so much vigour and enthusiasm that one wondered why a Bill so vital to the national well-being had not been introduced a little earlier. Later speakers were less friendly. Mr. ACLAND declared that the measure was only necessary because the Government could not keep the country out of international difficulties. Captain FITZROY complained that the Bill did too much for the tenant-farmer; whereas Mr. CAUTLEY described it as the tenant-farmer's death-knell.

Tuesday, June 8th.— The prevalent belief that Mr. CHURCHILL is always spoiling for a fight, and is mainly responsible for all the wars now going on in various parts of the world, is, I am ready to believe, entirely erroneous. But there is no doubt of his desire to "see red" so far as His Majesty's Army is concerned. The report that the Government intended to spend three millions in putting our soldiers back into the traditional scarlet inspired a multitude of questions to the WAR SECRETARY this afternoon. Mr. CHURCHILL declared it to be grossly exaggerated. Nevertheless, in political circles it is believed that at the next election the Government can rely with confidence upon the nurserymaids' vote.



MR. CHURCHILL SEES RED.

ARMY UNIFORM (1) AS IT IS; (2) AS IT WAS BEFORE THE WAR AND WILL BE AGAIN; AND (3) AS TO SUIT MR. CHURCHILL'S MARLBOROUGH TRADITIONS, IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN.

In resisting the proposal to make a levy on capital Mr. CHAMBERLAIN covered the ground so exhaustively that, as Sir F. BANBURY subsequently observed, the chief complaint to be made of his

speech was that it was not delivered three months before, when it would have saved the money-market great anxiety and prevented much depreciation of capital. For, according to the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, a levy on war-wealth was never really practicable, and even if it had been would have had no effect upon the amount of the floating debt, his most pressing problem. But, if so, why not have said it at the start, instead of setting up a Committee to try to find a solution for the insoluble?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN'S contention that by the income-tax and super-tax wealth was already heavily conscripted would have perhaps been better left without illustration. His case of the gentleman with £131,000 a year, who after paying his taxes had only £42,500 to spend, left Mr. STEPHEN WALSH quite cold. Sir DONALD MACLEAN, by some odd process of reasoning, came to the conclusion that the Government's decision would be welcomed by all the enemies of capital, and announced his intention of joining the Labour Party in the Lobby.

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Wednesday, June 9th.—The Air Navigation Bill passed through the usually serene atmosphere of the Upper House, but not without encountering a certain number of "bumps." Lord MONTAGU, calling to mind the nursery saying, "if pigs could fly," was alarmed by the possibility that "air-hogs" might interfere with the amenities, and might even endanger the lives, of earth-bound citizens by flying over them at unduly low altitudes. He suggested two thousand feet as a minimum. Lord LONDONDERRY resisted the Amendment on the ground that it was difficult to gauge the height at which aircraft flew, and thought few airmen would care to risk the penalties provided in the Bill—a fine of two hundred pounds and six months' imprisonment—by indulging a taste for forbidden stunts.

At first blush you would hardly think it necessary to include the City Corporation among the local authorities who may establish aerodromes. The "one square mile" does not offer much encouragement to the airman who wishes to make a safe landing. But you never can tell what may happen. The "Old Lady of Threadneedle Street," who is said to be contemplating an upward extension of her premises, may perhaps welcome aeroplanes to her hospitable roof, and thereby give a new significance to "banking" in the aviator's vocabulary.

In the Commons the anomalous position produced by President WILSON'S undertaking to delimit the boundaries of Armenia, although his country has refused to accept the mandate for its administration, elicited from Mr. BONAR LAW the curious explanation that the invitation to delimit was addressed to Mr. WILSON "in his personal capacity." But when Mr. BOTTOMLEY sought further light on this phrase Mr. LAW was unable or unwilling to supply it. He did, however, vouchsafe the information that, whatever America might do, this country would not add Armenia to its existing share of "the white man's burden."



Resourceful Spokesman of Picnic Party (anticipating trouble). "DELIGHTED YOU WERE ABLE TO TURN UP! YOU DON'T MIND OUR HAVING STARTED WITHOUT YOU?"

Thursday, June 10th.—It seems a pity that since Count DE SALIS left Montenegro and made his famous secret report the British Government has had no representative in that distracted country. In the absence of official information the most diverse descriptions of its present state gain currency. According to Lord SYDENHAM the Serbians, who wish to incorporate Montenegro in the new Jugo-Slavia, are taking every step to intimidate their opponents (described as ninety per cent. of the population) and have incidentally imprisoned a number of ex-Ministers. Lord CURZON agreed that this was quite probable, inasmuch as ex-Ministers bore a considerable ratio to the whole population, but otherwise challenged Lord SYDENHAM'S allegations. His own information (source not named) was that the Montenegrin majority was in favour of Yugo-Slav union. The debate confirmed the impression that all statements emanating from the Black Mountain should be taken *cum grano* DE SALIS.

In the Commons Mr. BONAR LAW was taking a day off, and, as usually happens when the PRIME MINISTER is in charge, "a certain liveliness" prevailed. The renewed offensive of General WRANGEL

incited the Bolshevik sympathisers to start one on their own account. An attempt to move the adjournment was nipped in the bud by the SPEAKER. Colonel WEDGWOOD made a gallant effort to usurp the functions of the Chair by declaring that the matter was both definite and urgent; but Mr. LOWTHER replied that unfortunately the decision rested with him and not with the hon. Member.

The House then settled down to business, and gave a Third Reading to two Bills, and a Second Reading to five others. On the Women, Young Persons and Children (Employment) Bill Mr. BARNES took exception, not unnaturally, to a clause permitting "the employment of women and young persons in shifts up to ten o'clock at night," and Major BAIRD undertook to consider the withdrawal of this equivocal piece of draftsmanship.

"'The time has come,' the walrus said,
'To speak of many things:
Of shoes and ships and sealing-wax,
Of cabbages and kings.'—(O. Henry)."

Free State Paper.

Where did LEWIS CARROLL? Apparently not in the Free State.

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Curate (discussing the drink question). "MIND YOU, I'M FOND OF A GLASS OF BEER. MYSELF, BUT I CAN'T INDULGE. IT DOESN'T AGREE WITH ME."

Rustic (sympathetically). "DEAR, DEAR! AIN'T THERE NO CURE?"

THE FUTURE OF APSLEY HOUSE.

CONFLICTING STATEMENTS.

The possibility of a super-dancing-saloon being erected on the site of Apsley House is, we fear, likely to be relegated to the limbo of lost opportunities.

It will be remembered that a few weeks ago London in general and the West-End in particular was excited and delighted by the announcement that Apsley House had been sold to an influential syndicate and would shortly be converted into a massive and monumental block, forty storeys high, crowned with the dancing-saloon and including a concert-hall with the most powerful organ in the world, and a swimming-bath with salt water conveyed by a special pipe from Brighton.

It will also be remembered that Mr. Chumpley Swope, the chairman of the syndicate, issued a powerful manifesto in which he explained the purely humanitarian motives of the enterprise—to obliterate the militaristic associations of the site; to replace an unsightly building by a fabric which would be one of the architectural glories of London, and simultaneously to cheer the patients in St. George's Hospital with the sounds of harmony by night.

Unhappily the realisation of these beneficent and artistic designs seems likely to be indefinitely postponed, to judge from the authoritative statements made to our representative by Mr. Doremus Pomerene, architect to the owners, and by Mr. Chumpley Swope himself.

"There never was any idea," said Mr. Pomerene, "in the minds of the present owners, Mr. Otis Flather and Mr. Virgil Onderdonk, of converting the site of Apsley House to the uses of a super-

dancing-saloon. Mr. Flather is a convinced opponent of the dancing mania and President of the Anti-Tarantulation League, while Mr. Onderdonk has always been a profound admirer of the great Duke of WELLINGTON. Subject to the approval of the present Duke it is our intention to re-erect Apsley House on the Playing Fields at Eton, and utilise the site for the building of flats for the New Poor."

"The erection of a Neo-Georgian super-dancing-saloon on the Piccadilly frontage of Apsley House," said Mr. Chumpley Swope, "has long been the dearest dream of my heart. My first negotiations with Messrs. Shumway and Prudden were conducted for the express purpose of facilitating the realisation of this project. Moreover, when Mr. Flather joined me in the purchase of the entire site his representative, Mr. Onderdonk, was fully aware of my plans and expressed his cordial approval thereof.

"Eventually my friends and I accepted offers made to us by Mr. Flather whereby the entire site was vested in him, subject to an agreement that the Piccadilly frontage to a depth of two hundred kilowatts should be reserved for the erection of the dancing-saloon, the concert-hall and the swimming-bath.

"Owing however to the difficulties connected with the laying of the pipe from Brighton and the unaccountable and irrational hostility displayed by the Governing Body of St. George's Hospital the plan of erecting this Temple of Terpsichore has fallen into abeyance and the West-End is threatened with the loss of an educational asset of incomparable value. I may add, however, that negotiations have been opened with the Dean and Chapter of WESTMINSTER and that I do not altogether despair of obtaining an alternative site and making a fresh start with my plans for beautifying and humanising London."

Limitations.

There was a young lady of Clacton
Whose knowledge was wide and exact on
Jazz, jumpers and plays
And the cinema craze;
But she never had heard of Lord Acton.

"Obregon signed the flag as did others at the convention,' said Villa. 'He kissed the mlag, and cried as he kissed it. Then those who wanted to break the agreement stole the blag with the signatures of the delegates."

American Paper.

This helps us a little to appreciate the confusion of Mexican politics.

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PERSISTENCE OF THE MILITARY.

In pre-war days, when one's health was tested at the order of a verbally polite but fundamentally distrustful insurance company, the examination was a pleasant affair, conducted by a benign old gentleman who behaved like one's own family physician.

Now all that is changed. I lately took the liberty of offering to bet a Company that I would not live for ever, in spite of my present rude health. In reply I was invited "to meet our medical advisers at our office."

I arrived obediently at the appointed time and was ushered into a room in which sat behind a table two elderly gentlemen of ultra-military appearance. When, later, they addressed each other as "Colonel" and "Major" I knew that they were civilian dug-outs militarised by the War.

Colonel drew himself up and spoke to me in a C.O. voice: "Well, what is the general state of your health?"

I felt that it was up to me to play the old war-game, even if it ruined my chance of getting insured. I therefore started to enumerate the various minor ailments from which I suffered.

"To begin with," I explained, "I've sprained my wrist rather badly and—"

"That won't prevent your holding a rifle," interrupted Colonel severely.

"Then," I continued, "sometimes I have a headache."

"Ah," said Major, "and I suppose when you run uphill your heart palpitates like a pea in a drum?"

"Yes," I replied quickly, "it does do that. How did you know?"

Major laughed a laugh such as HINDENBURG himself might have delivered. It was cold and mirthless and must have hurt his face.

"Come," said Colonel sharply, "let's have no more of this humbug. Drink and smoke less and keep yourself fit; and don't come whining before us, complaining of this and that. A few route marches will soon set you up."

"But, seriously," I objected, "my health is not of the best and I feel I ought to warn you that there are slight disabilities in my constitution which——"

"Which make you," interjected Major, "of course unfit to do your duty." His voice was like steel wire and I hated him.

"Very well, then," I answered calmly, "I will say no more."

"You'd better not," roared Colonel. "It's no use your thinking you can impose on us. I've marked you down A1. I'm sick to death of you fellows who try to get behind a doctor directly your comfort is threatened. That disposes of *your* case. About—turn!"

Mechanically I left their presence....

I don't know what the Insurance Company will make of it when they find all their candidates passed as first-class lives. Somebody ought to tell these doctors that the War is over.

ANOTHER POST-OFFICE HOLD-UP.

Our post-office is to be found taking cover in one corner of the village's general shop. Poetically it may be described as between the lard and the lingerie. In prose the most interesting thing to be said of it is that I was there this morning.

It was while I was buying a box of matches that the thought came to me that I might as well enjoy myself thoroughly and have some stamps as well. There was quite a crowd in the shop at the time, and we both moved to the postal counter together. She, however, got in the first word.

"One stamp, please," she demanded, and went on, "You'll never guess what I want it for."

"Isn't it for a letter, then?" asked the post-mistress, as if, for instance, stamps might be used for holding down the butter while the bread is rubbed against it.

"Yes, but who to? That's the point. Our George!"

To me there did not seem much in this to cause a sensation, but it did. Question and answer flew backwards and forwards as thick as reminiscences at a regimental dinner.

"Not young George?"

"Yes, old George. We had a letter from him last week. First we'd heard for six years."

"Lordy, lordy," said the post-mistress, "it only seems yesterday that he went away. I remember ——" and she proved it by doing so for ten minutes with a volubility that would have made the fortune of a patter comedian. At the first sign of a pause I found the courage to ask for my stamps, but quite in vain. The conversation was only getting its second wind.

"Young George, to be sure! And how is he? Tell me all about him."

I gathered that George was in the best of health and in America, was unmarried and umpired out in a recent baseball match and wanted——" ["A dozen stamps, please." This from me.] a photograph of the old people and his brothers and sisters. From this the transition was easy to an uncle of the post-mistress's who went——" ["A dozen stamps."]—to foreign parts. He always was a rolling stone, he was. Never gathered no moss. On the other hand, there were no flies on him. Did very well for himself, he did, and when he died——"

But it was at this point that the moisture from the margarine cask against which I had been leaning began to make its presence felt, and, stampless, I left the shop.

At the edge of the village I met our policeman.

"Go quickly," I implored him; "there's a hold-up at the post-office."

Perhaps "quickly" is not quite the right word, but, at any rate, he went. I doubt if he will get promotion over the job, but I am sure he too will like to hear about our George, if there's anything left to say by the time he gets there.

SOMETIMES.

Some days are fairy days. The minute that you wake
You have a magic feeling that you never could mistake;
You may not see the fairies, but you know they're all about,

And any single minute they might all come popping out;
You want to laugh, you want to sing, you want to dance and
run,
Everything is different, everything is fun;
The sky is full of fairy clouds, the streets are fairy ways—
Anything might happen on truly fairy days.

Some nights are fairy nights. Before you go to bed
You hear their darling music go chiming in your head;
You look into the garden and through the misty grey
You see the trees all waiting in a breathless kind of way.
All the stars are smiling; they know that very soon
The fairies will come singing from the land behind the moon.
If only you could keep awake when Nurse puts out the light . . .
Anything might happen on a truly fairy night.

R. F.

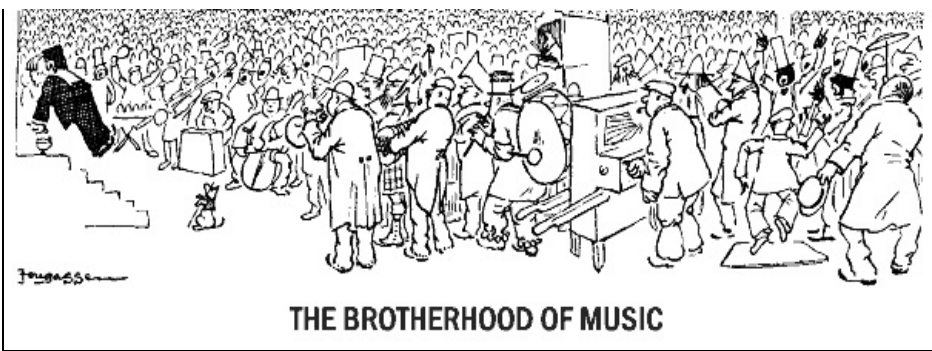
"CRICKET."

Little Snoring Ladies v. Little Snoring Lads.—*Local Paper.*

This match was played in Norfolk and not, as you might have expected, in Beds.

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THE BROTHERHOOD OF MUSIC

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A CAST.

Ghillie. "AY, SIR, THE FUSHERS ARE NO WHAT THEY WERE. YE'LL MAYBE NO BELIEVE ME, BUT THERE WAS A MAN HERE LAST MONTH THAT HAD NAETHING BUT A SUP O' COLD TEA IN HIS FLASK TO WET A FUSH WHEN HE CAUGHT YIN!"

THE PARADISE OF BARDS.

(From an Oxford Correspondent.)

Considerable resentment has been caused in various centres of poetic activity by the preference recently expressed by the PRIME MINISTER for the products of Welsh minstrelsy. In a letter addressed to HUW MENAI, the working South Wales miner poet, Mr. LLOYD GEORGE declares that he has read his poems with the "greatest delight." If the PREMIER had merely said "great delight" no untoward consequences would have ensued, but the invidious use of the superlative threatens to embroil the whole country in that internecine war recently predicted by the Editor of *The Athenæum* in his gloomy survey of Neo-Georgian literature.

Meetings of protest have been held in Hampstead, at Letchworth, Stratford-on-Avon and the Eustace Miles Restaurant, but the most remarkable and orderly of these demonstrations was that which took place at Boar's Hill on Saturday last, under the presidency of the POET LAUREATE. Boar's Hill, we need not remind our readers, is *par excellence* the fashionable intellectual suburb of Oxford, and has been called the "Paradise of Bards." Dr. BRIDGES in a brief opening address, speaking more in sorrow than in anger, dealt with the statistical side of the question. He pointed out that of the residents at Boar's Hill one in every six was a true poet, and three out of every five were masters of the art of prosody. There were no miner poets on Boar's Hill. Their motto was *Majora canamus*.

Professor GILBERT MURRAY, who followed, laid stress on the perfect harmony which reigned amongst the residents, in spite of the fact that all schools of poetry were represented, from the austere of classicists to the most advanced exponents of Neo-Georgian *vers libre*. They were a happy family, linked together by a common devotion to the Muses, and in their daily output of verse showing a higher unit of production than that recorded of any other community in either hemisphere.

Mr. JOHN MASEFIELD moved the only resolution, which was carried unanimously, to the effect that Mr. FISHER, the Minister of Education, should be requested to convey to the PRIME MINISTER the

regret of the meeting that he should have overlooked the paramount claim of Boar's Hill to be regarded as the Parnassus of Great Britain. In *Murray's Guide to Oxfordshire* it had been spoken of as "a health resort for jaded students," but that was an obsolete libel. Constitutionally vigorous and daily refreshed by draughts from the pellucid springs of the Pierides, they led a life of exuberant health, as the vital statistics of the neighbourhood would abundantly show. On Boar's Hill people began to write poetry earlier and continued to do so later than in any other spot in the British Isles.

Sir ARTHUR EVANS, in proposing a vote of thanks to the Chairman, made the gratifying announcement that Mr. MASEFIELD was already engaged on a companion poem to his "Reynard the Fox," commemorating the *genius loci* under the inspiring title of "The Sticking of the Pig."

A Very Free Translation.

"Have you come to make peace?"

'*Nous verrons pour cela* ('That is what we have come for),' replied Krassin at once."
Daily Paper.

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Martha (to ancient spouse, who has narrowly escaped being run over by passing car).
"AN' SERVE YER RIGHT TOO IF IT 'AD A-KNOCKED YER. YER DU GO RACIN' A'EAD—NO SENSE."

OUR BOOKING OFFICE.

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

Recent developments have given an unexpectedly topical interest to a new book by Professor PAUL MILIUKOV, L.L.D., entitled *Bolshevism: an International Danger* (ALLEN AND UNWIN). The whole question of the *de facto* Government of Russia is so fiercely controversial that it is not to be expected that such a work should escape violent criticism from those for whom that Government can do no wrong, though the writer justly claims that (however obvious his own views) he has striven to be strictly fair to those of the enemy. The scheme of his work has been "to trace the evolution of Bolshevism from an abstract doctrine to a practical experiment." One may excusably find the history a grim and menacing one. In the course of it Professor MILIUKOV tells again the tragedy of the great betrayal (which it will do no one harm to ponder upon just now), when the Commander of the 1st corps of the Siberian Army reported: "A brilliant success crowned our efforts ... there remained before us only a few fortifications, and the battle might soon have taken the character of a complete destruction of the enemy." But the work of M. LENIN had been too thorough; instead of a victory that might have ended the War and saved thousands of lives, we saw this already triumphant army, equipped through British industry, melt into a disorganised rabble. Nor is the writer less interesting on other aspects of his theme; in particular an exposition of the notorious Third International and a survey of the present-moment activities of Bolshevik propaganda, notably in our own country. No one who wishes to read and keep for reference a clearly written and understandable survey of the most urgent problem in modern politics need go further than this short but highly concentrated study.

The March to Paris and the Battle of the Marne, 1914 (ARNOLD), by Generaloberst ALEXANDER VON KLUCK, is more of a soldiers', indeed a staff-officers', book than any that has appeared here from the other side. It deals exclusively with the operations of the German right wing, VON KLUCK's own (first) army and his *liaison* with the second (VON BÜLOW's), during the move forward to the Grand Morin, the allied counter-offensive and the establishment of the line of the Aisne—that is from the

twelfth of August to the twelfth of September. The principal army orders are given textually. An admirable map illustrates each day's routes and billets for his first line and second line troops, his cavalry and the extreme right of the second army. VON KLUCK's explanation of his breach of the Supreme Command's orders and the manoeuvre which exposed him to MANOURY's stroke was that, while ignoring the letter, he was acting in the spirit of those orders on the information available; that a pause to fulfil them literally would have given the enemy time to recover; that defective intelligence kept him ignorant of the fact that the German left and centre had been definitely held by the French (if he had known this he would not, he says, have crossed the Marne). An examination of the frontispiece portrait suggests that this fighting General would easily find excellent reason for disobeying other people's orders and maintain an obstinate defence of his own decisions once made, however disastrous in result. Notes by the historical section (military branch) of the Committee of Imperial Defence point out inaccuracies and contradictions which the lay reader would be unlikely to discover for himself. He will however, if I mistake not, appreciate a soldierly narrative, unspoiled by "political" parentheses or underestimation of opponents, of what was undoubtedly a great military feat. The German right wing covered the most ground and met perhaps the toughest of the fighting.

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I have found in *Lighting-up Time* (COBDEN-SANDERSON) that all too rare thing, a theatrical novel of which the vitality does not expire towards the end of the fourth chapter. Obviously Mr. IVOR BROWN knows the life of modern stageland, one would say, with the intimacy of personal experience. More important still, he commands an easy style and a flow of genial, not too esoteric, humour that combine to keep the reader chuckling and curious to the last page. His title is characteristic, *Lighting-up Time* symbolising here that period in the career of an actress when her possibly waning attractions need the illumination of a judicious boom. The two main characters are *Mary Maroon*, the leading lady, and *Peter Penruddock*, the astute publicity agent who engages to set her upon her financial and artistic pedestal. *Peter*, in other words, is *Mary's* tide, taken at the flood in chapter one, and leading her, very divertingly, on to fortune. Both the tour of *Stolen or Strayed* and the company that present it are admirably true to life, while Mr. BROWN has even been able convincingly to suggest the atmosphere of theatrical Oxford, when in due course his mummers descend upon that home of lost comedies and impossible revues. If I have a complaint against the book it is that a tale of such pleasant irony hardly needed the general pairing-off with which the author rings down his curtain; but for this Noah's Ark I should have more easily believed in a story that entertained me throughout.

There are some forty-odd bits in *A Bit at a Time* (MILLS AND BOON), and they embrace a variety of subjects, ranging from crocuses in Kensington Gardens to corpse-boats on the Tigris. They are all, whether sentimental, satirical or pathetic, fiction of the lightest type. Such literature was eminently readable during the War—most of Mr. DION CLAYTON CALTHROP's bits have to do with somebody's "bit"—when a touch of conventional pathos and pretended cynicism and a generous padding of humour, real or forced, provided sufficient relaxation from the strain of anxious hours. But the wisdom of republishing them in book form in these sober days of peace is open to question. When Mr. CALTHROP talks satirically of "perfect officials" or of an earnest young American aviator who writes letters home in a United States dialect that was never heard on land or sea outside Bayswater, or of the war-time adventures of one *Mr. Mason*, skipper, and *Mr. Smith*, his mate, he is tolerably amusing. When he becomes serious, as in "The Prayer of the Classical Parson" and "When the Son Came Home," his limitations become increasingly apparent. Yet it is in this vein that he gives us what is by all odds his best bit, "The Chevalier of Carnaby Row." When he writes of Cupids and fauns and Columbines and rose-leaves and the sort of young females that find this environment congenial (in books) I like Mr. CALTHROP least. Perhaps it is because the publishers have put his picture on the paper cover. He looks much too stalwart and sophisticated to be toying with such gossamer fantasies.



LIFE'S LITTLE ANOMALIES.

HOW MANY THOUSANDS OF POUNDS HAVE BEEN OFFERED TO CARPENTER AND DEMPSEY TO FIGHT, AND NOW
HERE IS A KIND OLD LADY GIVING TWO BOYS SIXPENCE EACH IF THEY'LL PROMISE *NOT* TO.

I doubt whether the complications which attend the devolution of dead men's property were created for the confusion of survivors or for the convenience of novelists. In the case of *The Lost Mr. Linthwaite* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON), *Mrs. Byfield* had married *Mr. Byfield*, or at least she thought she had, and *Mr. Byfield* had died, supposedly intestate. Previously *Mrs. Byfield* had married *Mr. Melsome*, or again she thought she had, and *Mr. Melsome* had disappeared and was assumed to be dead, leaving nothing behind him except a brother as vile as himself. The following discoveries were made by her in due sequence: That *Mr. Melsome* was not dead and that therefore she was not *Mrs. Byfield* but *Mrs. Melsome*; that *Mr. Melsome* was already married when he purported to marry her, and that therefore she was not *Mrs. Melsome* but *Mrs. Byfield*; and that a solicitor's clerk was absconding with the bulk of the *Byfield* estate, which, of course, was what the bother was all about. Her son, bitten with the craze for discoveries, then discovered on his own that the late *Mr. Byfield* hadn't died intestate. I wonder myself if he ever really died at all.... These are what Mr. J. S. FLETCHER very aptly calls the mere legalities; the plot, which thickens and thickens from first page to last, concerns the handling of them by the evil but talented *Melsome* brothers, the accidental intervention of *Mr. Linthwaite*, and the rescue work of his admirable nephew, *Mr. Richard Brixey*, of *The Morning Sentinel*. Mr. FLETCHER tells his story well, but up to the very last moment I was looking and hoping for a surprise and was suspecting those legalities of being a deception invented to make the surprise all the greater. A first-class adventure, in my opinion spoilt by the sacrifice of originality to technicality.

"The girls, to the number of 116, escaped in their night attire, and displayed great coolness."—*News of the World*.

Very natural.

"Baron Evence Coppee, a Belgian, has been arrested on the charge of furnishing coal to the enemy during the war."—*Daily Paper*.

With a name like that the copper could hardly miss him.

"Sir Robert is now satisfied, I understand, that there is considerable merit in the adage 'all comes to he who waits.'"—*Daily Paper*.

SIR ROBERT seems easily pleased.

"ORCHESTRA (small), or few Instrumentalists, for sea-handling Margarine and Butter in up-to-date style."—*Advt. in Provincial Paper*.

But we fear that some of the stuff met with nowadays would "beat the band."

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI, VOL.
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