Punch, or the London Charivari, Vol. 159, July 28th, 1920 eBook

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BOOKRAGS

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Page 1

CHARIVARIA.

"The public will not stand for increased railway fares," says a contemporary. They have had too much standing at the old prices.

* * *

A Mile End man writes to *The Daily Express* to say that one of his ducks laid four eggs in one day. It seems about the most sensible thing the bird could have done with them.

* * *

As a result of the recent Tube extension, passengers can now travel from the Bank to Ealing in thirty-five minutes. It is further claimed that the route passes under some of the most beautiful scenery in England.

* * *

Mersey shipyard workers have made a demand on their employers for five pounds ten shillings a week when not working and seven pounds a week when working. This proposal to discriminate between the men who work and those who don't is condemned in more advanced trade union circles as savouring dangerously of capitalism.

* * *

"One evening at Covent Garden," says M. *Abel* HERMANT in *Le Temps*, "will teach more correct behaviour than six months' lessons from a certified professor of etiquette." Opinion among the smart set is divided as to whether he means Covent Garden Theatre or Covent Garden Market.

* * *

The Bolshevists in Petrograd are finding a difficulty in the appointment of a public executioner. This is just the chance for a man who wants a nice steady job.

* * *

On looking up our diary we find that the *mad mullah* is just about due to be killed again. We wonder if anything is being done in the matter.

* * *

A German merchant is anxious to get into touch with a big stamp-dealer in this country. Our feeling is that the *postmaster-general* is the man he wants.

* * *

We are asked to deny the rumour that Sir *Philip sassoon* has been appointed touring manager to the Peace Conference.

* * *

A Newbury man has succeeded in breeding pink-coated tame rats. It is said that the Prohibitionists hope to exterminate these, as they did the green ones.

* * *

A blunder of thirty million pounds in the estimates for British operations in Russia is revealed in a White Paper. It is expected that the Government will bequeath it to the nation.

* * *

Owing to the high cost of material we understand that a certain pill is to-day worth L1 11s. 6d. a box.

* * *

The Sinn Feiners now threaten to capture one of our new battleships. We sincerely hope that the Government will place a caretaker on board each of our most valuable Dreadnoughts.

* * *

A Lanarkshire magistrate the other day doubted whether a miner could remember details of an accident which happened two years ago. It is said that the miner had vivid recollections of the affair as it happened to be the day he was at work.

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* * *

It is urged that all taxi-cabs should have a cowcatcher in front in case of accidents. We gather that the drivers are quite willing provided they are allowed to charge for anyone they pick up as an “extra.”

* * *

It is reported that the muzzling order may come into force again in South Wales. We understand that a dog which thoughtlessly attempted to bark in Welsh in the main street of Cardiff was responsible for the belief that rabies had broken out again.

* * *

During a brass-band contest a few days ago three members of the winning band were taken ill just after they had finished playing. It was at first feared that they had overblown themselves.

* * *

“A true lover of nature is nowadays very hard to find,” complains a writer in a Nature journal. Yet we know a golfer who always shouts “Fore!” on slicing a ball into a spinney.

* * *

The two African lions which escaped from the Zoo in Portugal have not yet been captured, and were last seen near the border-line of Switzerland. It is thought that they are endeavouring to walk across Europe as a reprisal for the flight across Africa by two Europeans.

* * *

The Dublin Trades Council called a one-day strike last week “to secure the release of Mr. *James Larkin*.” So successful was the strike, we understand, that the United States authorities have decided that the presence of Mr. *Larkin* at forthcoming celebrations of a similar character would be quite superfluous.

* * *

Speaking to an audience of miners at Morpeth Mr. *Ramsay* MACDONALD said he dreamed of a time when the miners would govern the country. Not even the miners, on the other hand, would dream of letting Mr. *Ramsay* MACDONALD govern it.

* * *

“Does the Government realise,” asks a newspaper correspondent, “that as regards the situation in Ireland we are on the edge of a crater or with a thunderbolt over our heads?” We rather imagine that the Government, like the writer, isn’t quite sure which.

* * *

Oswestry Guardians have accepted an offer to supply Bibles to tramps. This is the first occasion on which the current belief that the tramp class is nowadays being recruited largely from the ranks of the minor clergy has received formal recognition.

* * *

A bricklayer has been summoned for not sending his son to school. It appears that the father, finding his boy could count up to twenty and wishing him to follow his own occupation, thought further schooling unnecessary.

* * *

“When the country really understands the need of the Government,” says an essayist, “we shall travel far.” But not at twopence a mile, thank you.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *True politeness*.

“*Your eel*, I *think*, *sir*?”]

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* * * * *

A *criminal type*.

To-day I am MAKing aN inno6Lvation. as you mayalready have gessed, I am typlng this article myself Zz1/2lnstead of writing it, The idea is to save time and exvBKpense, also to demonstyap demonBTrike= =damn, to demonstratO that I can type *ust as well as any blessedgirl 1f I give my mInd to iT"" Typlng while you compose is realy extraoraordinarrily easy, though composing whilr you typE is more difficult. I rather think my typing style is going to be different froM my u6sual style, but Idaresay noone will mind that much. looking back i see that we made rather a hash of that awfuul wurd extraorordinnaryk? in the middle of a woRd like thaton N-e gets quite lost? 2hy do I keep putting questionmarks instead of fulstopSI wonder. Now you see i have put a fulllstop instead Of a question mark it nevvvver reins but it pours.*

the typewriter to me has always been a musteryL? and even now that I have gained a perfect mastery over the machine in gront of me i have npt th3 faintest idea hoW it workss% &or instance why does the thingonthetop the klnd of overhead Wailway arrrangement move along one pace afterr every word; I haVe exam@aaa ined the mechanism from all points of view but there seeems to be noreason atall whyit shouould do tLis . damn that L, it keeps butting in: it is Just lik real life. then there are all kinds oF attractive devisesand levers andbuttons of which is amanvel in itself, and does somethI5g useful without lettin on how it does iT.

Forinstance on this machinE which is A mi/et a mijge7 imean a mi/dgt, made of alumium,, and very light sothat you caN *carry* it about on your Lolidays (there is that L again) and typeout your poems onthe Moon immmmediately, and there is onely one lot of keys for capITals and ordinay latters; when you want todoa Capital you press down a special key marked cap i mean *cap* with the lefft hand and yo7 press down the letter withthe other, like that abcd, no, ABCDEFG . how jolly that looks . as a mattr of fact th is takes a little gettingintoas all the letters on the keys are printed incapitals so now and then one forgets topress downthe SPecial capit al key. not often, though. on the other hand onceone Las got it down and has written anice nam e in capitals like LLOYdgeORGE *it is very difficult to* REmemBER *to put it down again* ANDTHE N *you get this sort of thing wich spoils the* LOOOK *of the hole page* . or els insted of preSSing down the key marked *cap* onepresses down the key m arked *Fig* and then insted of LLOYDGEORGE you find that you have written 1/21/296% :394:3. this is very dissheartening and Lt is no wonder that typists are sooften sououred in ther youth.

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Apart fromthat though the key marked *Fig* is rather fun, since you can rite such amusing things withit, things like % and [Symbol: face] and dear old & not to mention = and 1/4 and 3/4 and!!! i find that inones ordinarry (i never get that word right) cor orrespondenLc one doesn't use expressions like @@ and % % % nearly enough. typewriting gives you a new ideaof possibilities of the engliLh language; thE more i look at % the more beautiful it seems to Be: and like the simple flowers of england itis perLaps most beautiLul when seeen in the masss, Look atit

% % % %

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Of curse the typewriter itself is not wolly giltless 1/2ike all mac&ines it has amind of it sown and is of like passsions with ourselves. i could put that into greek if only the machine was not so hopelessly MOdern. it ’s chief failing is that it cannot write m’sdecently and instead of h it will keep putting that confounded L. as amatter of fact ithas been doing m’s rather better today butthat is only its cusssedussedness and because i have been opening my shoul ders wenever we have come to an m; or should it be A m? who can tell; little peculiuliarities like making indifferent m’s are very important & wLen one is bying a typewiter one sLould make careful enquiries about themc; because it is things of that sort wich so often give criminals away. there is notHing a detective likes so much as a type riter with an idiosxz an idioynq damit an idiotyncrasy . for instance if i commit a murder i sLould not thinq of writing a litter about it with this of all typewriters becusa because that fool ofa L would give me away at once I daresay scotland Yard have got specimens of my trypewriting locked up in some pigeonhole allready. if they Lavent they ought to; it ought to be part of my dososier.

i thing the place of the hypewriter in *art* is inshufficiently apreciated. Modern art i understand is chiefly sumbolical expression and straigt lines. a typwritr can do strait lines with the under lining mark) and there are few more atractive symbols thaN the symbols i have used in this articel; i merely thro out the sugestion

I dont tkink i shal do many more articles like this it is tooo much like work? but I am glad I have got out of that L habit;

A.P.L.

* * * * *

> “*Prison for flat landlords*.”—*Evening Paper.*

Good. But is nothing going to be done about the landlords with round figures?

* * * * *

> “With favourable weather, Thatcham can look forward to a pre-war show this year.”—*Local Paper.*

Apparently Thatcham carries its eyes in the back of its head.

[Illustration: A *sea-view of the situation*.

Indignant lodging-house keeper. “*And to think of that there Eric wanting to squeeze the poor holiday-makers before* I *gets at ’em*.”]

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Outraged Batsman.* "*Jarge*, OI *do believe* YOU'M *Bowlin*' *deliberate at* MOI GAMMY *leg*."

Jarge (feeling that something ought to be said). "*Why*, WILLYUM, OI *thought they was both* GAMMY."]

* * * * *

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Elizabeth goes on holiday.

“Please, ’m, may I go for my ’olidays a week come Thursday?” asked Elizabeth. She was evidently labouring under some strong excitement, for she panted as she spoke and so far forgot herself in her agitation as to take up the dust in the hall instead of sweeping it under the mat.

“But you promised to go on your holiday when we have ours in September,” I protested, aghast. (You will shortly understand the reason of my dismay.) “I don’t see how I can possibly manage—”

“I’m sorry, ’m, but I *must* take ’em then,” interposed Elizabeth with a horrid giving-notice gleam in her eye which I have learnt to dread. “You see, my young man is ‘avin’ ’is ‘olidays then an’—an’”—she drew up her lank form and a look that was almost human came into her face—“’e’s arsked me to go with ’im,” she finished with ineffable pride.

I am aware that this is not an unusual arrangement amongst engaged couples in the class to which Elizabeth belongs; nevertheless I felt it was the moment for judicious advice, knowing how ephemeral are the love-affairs of Elizabeth. No butterfly that flits from flower to flower could be more elusive than her young men. Our district must swarm with this fickle type.

“Do you think it right to go off on a holiday with a stranger?” I began diffidently.

“’Im! ’E isn’t a stranger,” broke in Elizabeth. “’E’s my young man.”

“Which young man?”

“My *new* young man.”

“But don’t you think it would be better if he were not such a new young man—I mean, if he were an old young man—er—perhaps I ought to say you should know him longer before you go away with him. It’s not quite the thing—”

“Why, wot’s wrong with it?” demanded Elizabeth, puzzled. “All the girls I know spends their ‘olidays with their young men, an’ then it doesn’t cost them nothink. That’s the best of it. But it’s the first time I’ve ever been arsked,” she admitted, “an’ I wouldn’t lose a charnce like this for anythink.”

Further appeal was useless, and with a sigh I resigned myself to the inevitable; but when, ten days later, Elizabeth departed in a whirl of enthusiasm and brown paper parcels I turned dejectedly to the loathsome business of housework.

It is a form of labour which above all others I detest. My *metier* is to write—one day I even hope to become a great writer. But what I never hope to become is a culinary

expert. Should you command your cook to turn out a short story she could not suffer more in the agonies of composition than I do in making a simple Yorkshire pudding.

My household now passed into a condition of settled gloom. My nerves began to suffer from the strain, and I came gradually to regard Henry as less of a helpmate and more of a voracious monster demanding meals at too frequent intervals. It made me peevish with him.

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He too was far from forbearing in this crisis. In fact we were getting disillusioned with each other.

One evening I was reflecting bitterly on matters like washing-up when Henry came in. Only a short time before we should have greeted each other cordially in a spirit of *camaraderie* and affection. Now our conversation was something like this:—

Henry (gruffly). Hullo, no signs of dinner yet! Do you know the time?

Me (snappily). You needn't be so impatient. I expect you've gorged yourself on a good lunch in town. Anyhow it won't take long to get dinner, as we are having tinned soup and eggs.

Henry. Oh, damn eggs. I'm sick of the sight of 'em.

You can see for yourself how unrestrained we were getting. The thin veneer of civilisation (thinner than ever when Henry is hungry) was fast wearing into holes.

The subsequent meal was eaten in silence. The hay-fever from which I am prone to suffer at all seasons of the year was particularly persistent that evening. A rising irritability engendered by leathery eggs and fostered by Henry's face was taking possession of me. Quite suddenly I discovered that the way he held his knife annoyed me. Further I was maddened by his manner of taking soup. But I restrained myself. I merely remarked, "You have finished your soup, I *hear*, love."

Henry, though feeling the strain, had not quite lost his fortitude. My hay-fever was obviously annoying him, but he only commented, "Don't you think you ought to see a doctor about that distressing nasal complaint, my dear?" I knew, however, that he was longing to bark out, "Can't you stop that everlasting sniffing? It's driving me mad, woman."

How long would it be before we reached that stage of candour? I was brooding on this when the front-door bell rang.

"You go," I said to Henry.

"No, you go," he replied. "It looks bad for the man of the house to answer the door."

I do not know why it should look bad for a man to answer his own door, unless he is a bad man. But there are some things in our English social system which no one can understand. I rose and went to open the front-door. Then my heart leapt in sudden joy. The light from the hall lamp fell on the lank form of Elizabeth.

"You've come back!" I exclaimed.

“I suppose you didn’t expect to see me inside of a week,” she remarked.

“I didn’t; but oh, Elizabeth, I’m so glad to see you,” I said as I drew her in. Tears that strong men weep rose to my eyes, while Henry, at this moment emerging from the study, uttered an ejaculation of joy (it sounded like “Thank God!”) at the sight of Elizabeth.

“An’ ’ow ’ave you got on while I’ve bin away?” she inquired, eyeing us both closely. “Did every think go orf orl right?”

I hesitated. How was I to confess my failures and muddling in her absence and hope to have authority over her in future? Would she not become still more difficult to manage if she knew how indispensable she was? I continued to hesitate. Then Henry spoke. “We’ve managed admirably,” he said. “Your mistress has been wonderful. Her cooking has absolutely surprised me.”

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I blessed Henry (the devil!) in that moment. “Thank you, dear,” I murmured.

Then Elizabeth spoke and there was a note of relief in her voice. “Well, I’m reerly glad to ’ear that, as I can go off to-morrer after all. I ’aven’t been for my ’oliday yet, like.”

“What do you mean?” I gasped.

“Well, you see, ’m, my young man didn’t turn up at the station, so I went and stayed with my sister-in-law at Islington. She wants me to go with ’er to Southend early to-morrer, but I thort as ’ow I’d better come back ’ere first and see if you reerly could manage without me, for I ’ad my doubts. ‘Owever, as everythink’s goin’ on orl right I can go with an easy mind.”

I remained speechless. So did Henry. Elizabeth went out again into the darkness. There was a long pause, broken only by my hay fever. Then Henry spoke. “Can’t you stop that everlasting sniffing?” he barked out. “It’s driving me mad, woman.”

* * * * *

[Illustration: OUR VILLAGE SOLOMON.

First Rustic. “D’YE ’EAR OLD DADDY SMITH’S COTTAGE WAS BURNT DOWN LAST NIGHT?”

Second Rustic (of matured wisdom). “I BEAN’T SURPRISED. WHEN I SEES THE SMOKE A-COMING THROUGH THE THATCH I SEZ TO MYSELF, ’THERE’S SELDOM SMOKE WITHOUT FIRE.’”]

* * * * *

> “REQUIRED an English or French resident governess for children from 30 to 45 years old, having notions of music.”—*Standard (Buenos Ayres).*

We are glad they have picked up something during their prolonged juvenescence.

* * * * *

AUTHORSHIP FOR ALL.

> [Being specimens of the work of Mr. Punch’s newly-established Literary Ghost Bureau, which supplies appropriate Press contributions on any subject and over any signature.]

IV.—WHAT’S WRONG WITH THE DRAMA?

By Marcus P. Brimston, the gifted producer of “Shoo, Charlotte!"

I have been invited to say a few words to readers of *The Sabbath Scoop* on the alleged decay of the British drama. There is indeed some apparent truth in this allegation. On all sides I hear managers sending up the same old wail of dwindling box-office receipts and houses packed with ghastly rows of deadheads. No “paper” shortage there, at any rate.

Sometimes these unfortunate people come to me for counsel, and invariably I give them the same admonition, “Study your public.”

There is no doubt that, with a few brilliant exceptions (among which my own present production is happily enrolled), the playhouses have recently struck a rather bad patch. Useless to lay the blame either on the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER or on the weather. Give the playgoing public what it wants and no consideration of National Waste or of Daylight Saving will keep it from the theatre.

And that brings me to my point. Whence comes the playgoing public of to-day, and what does it want?

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From the commercial point of view (and in the long run as in the short all art must be judged by its monetary value) the drama depends for its support on what used to be known as the better-dressed parts of the house. Now-a-days the majority of the paying patrons of these seats come from the ranks of the new custodians of the nation's wealth. These people, who have the business instinct very strongly developed, insistently and very rightly demand value for their money; and the problem is how to give them value as they understand the meaning of the word. My friend Mr. ARTHUR COLLINS gives it to them in sand; but that is a shifting foundation on which to build up a prosperous run.

Those who, like myself, have studied closely the tastes and intelligence of this new force that is directing the destiny of the modern theatre must have come to the conclusion that the essential factor in dramatic success is "punch," or, as our cross-Atlantic cousins would term it, "pep." The day of anaemic characterisation and subtle dissection of motives is past. The audience (or the only part that really counts) has no desire to be called upon to think; it can afford to pay others to do its thinking for it. There is much to be said for this point of view. The War and its effects (especially the Excess Profits Duty) have imposed on us all far too many and too severe mental jerks; in the theatre we may well forget that we possess such a thing as a mind.

As a charming and gifted little actress said to me only yesterday, "We want something a bit meatier than the dry old bones of IBSEN'S ghosts." Well, I am out to provide that something; my present success certainly does not lack for flesh.

In producing *Shoo, Charlotte!* I have taken several hints from that formidable young rival of the articulate stage known as the Silent Drama. There effects are flung at the spectator's head like balls at a cocoanut; if they fail to register a hit it is the fault of the shier, not of the nut. My aim throughout has been to throw hard and true, so that even the thickest nut is left in no doubt as to the actuality of the impact. *Shoo, Charlotte!* makes no high-sounding attempt at improving the public taste. As the dramatic critic of *The Sabbath Scoop* pithily remarked, it is just "one long feast of laughter and *lingerie*," and its nightly triumph is the only vindication it requires.

The fundamental mistake of the British drama of to-day lies, in my humble opinion, in its perpetual striving after the unexpected. The public, such as I have described it, fights shy of novel situations; it isn't sure how they ought to be taken. But give it a play where it knows exactly what is going to happen next and you are rewarded with the delighted applause that comes of prophecy fulfilled. The thrill or chuckle of anticipation is succeeded by the shudder or guffaw of realisation. Father nudges Mother and says, "Look, Emma, he's going to fall into the flour-bin." He does fall into the flour-bin, and Father slaps his own or Mother's knee with a roar of triumph. After all, the old dramatic formulae were not drawn up without a profound knowledge of human nature.

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Let managers take a lesson from these few observations and they will no longer go about seeking an answer to the riddle, “Why did the cocoanut shy?”

* * * * *

THE BEST LAID SCHEMES.

[A contemporary declares that the side-car stands unrivalled as a matchmaker. It would seem, however, that opinion on the subject is not unanimous.]

We motored together, the maiden and I,
And I was delighted to take her,
For, frankly, I wanted my side-car to try
Its skill as a little matchmaker;
Though up to that time I had striven my best,
I’d more than a passing suspicion
The spark I was anxious to light in her breast
Still suffered from faulty ignition.

We started betimes in the promptest of styles
For scenes that were rustic and quiet;
I opened the throttle; we ate up the miles
(A truly exhilarant diet);
Till sharply, as over a common we went,
Gorse-clad (or it may have been heather),
The engine stopped short with a tactful intent
To leave the young couple together.

’Twas instinct (I take it) directing my course
That named as my first occupation
A fruitless endeavour to track to its source
The cause of this sudden cessation;
And so I had tinkered with tools for a space
Ere I thought of my favourite poet,
And said to myself, “Lo! the time and the place
And the loved one in unison; go it.”

I might have remembered man seldom appears
Alluring in look or in manner
With a smut on his nose, oleaginous ears
And frenziedly clutching a spanner;
Though down by the cycle I fell to my knees
And ported my heart for inspection,

I only received for my passionate pleas
A curt and conclusive rejection.

* * * * *

"Gentlewoman, good family, small means, musical, devoted to parish work, wishes to correspond with clergyman with view to being 'an helpmeet for him.'"—*Church Times.*

The *Matrimonial News* must look to its laurels.

* * * * *

"The Picturedrome, ——, and —— Cinema, have been acquired by a London Syndicate, in which are several gentlemen."—*Provincial Paper.*

We do not profess to know much about the film-trade, but is this so very unusual?

* * * * *

[Illustration: MANNERS AND MODES.

POST-WAR SIMPLICITY IN BATHING-GEAR.]

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Urchin (outside Club).* "I BET IT WAS THE FAULT OF 'IM ON THE RIGHT."]

* * * * *

WAYS AND MEANS.

I have read somewhere that when and/or if railway fares are increased it will cost a man travelling with his wife and two children (the children being half-fares) as much as twenty pounds to take third-class return tickets to St. Ives.

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Presumably this refers to the Cornish St. Ives, and to show how serious the problem will be for quite large families I need only refer my readers to the well-known poetical riddle which is generally supposed to refer to the Cornish St. Ives too. It will be seen at once that in the case of a septuagamist going to or returning from St. Ives with his family the cost will be vastly greater, even if no special luggage rates are leviable for the carriage of excess cats.

Fortunately there is a much nearer St. Ives in Huntingdonshire, and if I was going to St. Ives at all, with or without encumbrances, I should certainly choose that one. As a matter of fact the Huntingdonshire St. Ives is a very pleasant place indeed, with a lot of red-and-yellow cattle standing about, if one may take the authority of the County Card Game in these matters. It is almost as pleasant as Luton, where there is a fellow in a blue smock with side-whiskers and a reaping-hook, and Leicester, which consists solely of a windmill and a house where RICHARD III. slept on the night before the Battle of Bosworth Field. Not a word about RAMSAY MACDONALD.

But we are not talking about RAMSAY MACDONALD and the County Card Game; we are talking about Sir ERIC GEDDES and his railway fares, and talking pretty sharply too. What is to be done about this monstrous imposition? And how are we going to show the Government that you cannot play about with ozone as you can with margarine and coal? If only all passengers were prepared to act in concert it would be easy enough to bring Sir ERIC to his knees. The best and simplest plan would be for everybody to ask at the booking-office for a half-fare, stating boldly that his or her age was exactly eleven years and eleven months. It might not sound very convincing, of course, even if you had a red-and-black cricket-cap on the back of your head and covered your beard or what not with one hand; but a constant succession of people all demanding the same thing would most certainly cause the booking-clerk to give way. It might occur to him besides that, since so many people insisted on giving their wrong ages for the pleasure of fighting in war-time, they had a perfect right to do the same for the pleasure of travelling in peace-time; and in the case of the women his reputation for gallantry would be imperilled if he had the impudence to doubt their word.

But would everybody be prepared to take up this strong and reasonable line? I doubt it, and we must turn to the consideration of other economical devices.

One plan which I do not honestly recommend is travelling under the seats of the railway compartment, like *Paul Bultitude* in *Vice Versa*. I say this partly because the accommodation under the seats is not all that it ought to be, and even where there is no heating apparatus a tight fit for large families, and partly because you have to face the possibility that your tickets may be demanded on the platform

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at the other end. Nor do I favour the method invariably adopted by people in cinema plays, which is to sit on the buffers or the roofs, or conceal yourself among the brakes or whatever they are underneath the carriages. Unless you drop off just before the terminus, which hurts, the same objection arises as in the under-the-seat method; and in any case you are practically certain to be spotted not only by the officials of the railway company concerned but with axle-grease.

It is of course possible to travel without concealment and without a ticket either, merely discovering with a start of surprise when you are asked for it that you have lost the beastly thing. But this involves acting. It involves hunting with a great appearance of energy and haste in all your pockets, your reticule, your hatband, the turn-ups of your trousers, *The Rescue* (for you certainly used something as a book-marker) and finally turning out in front of all the other passengers the whole of your note-case, which proves that you cannot have been going to stay at the "Magnificent" after all, and the envelopes of all the old letters which you were taking down to the sea in the hopes of answering them there; and even after that you have to give the name and address of somebody you don't like (say Sir ERIC GEDDES) to satisfy the inspector.

On the whole I think the best way is the one which I mean to adopt myself at the earliest opportunity. Let us suppose that you are going to Brighton. At Victoria Station you will purchase (1) a return ticket to Streatham Common, (2) a platform ticket. The platform ticket entitles you to walk on to the platform from which the Brighton train starts, and, when it is just moving out and all the tickets have been looked at, you will leap on board. This brings you to Brighton, and all you have to do there is to accost the man who takes the tickets in a voice hoarse with fury. "Look here," you will say, "I had an important business engagement at Streatham Common, worth thousands and thousands of pounds to me, and one of your fool porters told me a wrong platform at Victoria. What are you going to do about it?" Now you might think that the porter would reply, "Come off it, Mister; you don't kid me like that," or make some other disappointing and impolite remark; but not a bit of it. Bluster is the thing that pays. First of all he will apologise, and then he will fetch the station-master, and he will apologise too, and after a bit they will offer you a special train back to Streatham Common, probably the one the KING uses when he goes to the seaside. But you will of course refuse to be pacified and wave it away, saying, "Useless, absolutely useless. Now that I am in this awful hole I shall spend the night here. But I shall certainly sue your Company for the amount of the business that I have lost."

That is what I mean to do, and with slight variations the ruse can be applied to almost any non-stop run. Now that I have given the tip I shall hope to find quite a little crowd of disappointed business men round the station exits at holiday time when and/or if railway fares are increased.

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[Illustration: *Racing Tout (arrested the day before).* “CAN YER TELL ME WOT WON THE THREE-THIRTY?”

Magistrate. “SILENCE!” *Tout.* “W’Y, THERE WASN’T NO SUCH ’ORSE RUNNING.”]

* * * * *

OUR NATURAL HISTORY COLUMN.

Letters to the Editor.

THE HYDE PARK MONUMENT.

DEAR SIR,—The experience of the Parisian scavenger who recently discovered a crocodile in a dustbin encourages me to write to you on a similar subject. I note with profound dismay the proposal to turn Hyde Park into a Zoological Garden. At least this is not an unfair deduction from the scheme to instal a huge python in the neighbourhood of Hyde Park Corner. I do not profess to know much about snakes, but I believe the python is a most dangerous reptile, and I see it stated that the pythons which have just arrived at Regent’s Park are “large and vigorous, already active and looking for food.” Surely this monstrous suggestion, threatening the safety of the peaceful frequenters of the Park, calls for a national protest. Can it be that the PREMIER is at the back of this, as of every invasion of our rights?

Yours faithfully, MATERFAMILIAS.

P.S.—My son says it is a pylon, not a python, but that only makes it worse.

STRANGE EXPERIENCE OF A HERMIT.

DEAR SIR,—My grandfather, who died in the ’fifties, used to tell a story of a hermit who lived in Savernake Forest, an extraordinarily absent-minded man with a beard of such colossal dimensions that several of the feathered denizens of the forest took up their abode in its recesses. This curious phenomenon was, I believe, commemorated in verse by an early-Victorian poet, but I have not been able after considerable research to trace the reference. I have the honour to remain,

Yours faithfully, ISIDORE TUFTON

(Author of *The Growth of the Moustache Movement, The Topiary Art as applied to Whiskers*, and the article on “Pogonotrophy” in *The Hairdressers’ Encyclopaedia*).

PRESENCE OF MIND IN A PORBEAGLE.

DEAR SIR,—The following verses, though not strictly relevant to the crocodile incident, commemorate an occurrence illustrating the extent to which piscine intelligence can be developed in favourable circumstances:—

"There was an unlucky porbeagle
Who was picked up at sea by an eagle;
On reaching the nest
It began to protest
On the ground that the speed was illegal."

I am Sir, Yours faithfully,
GEORGE WASHINGTON COOK.

* * * * *

"Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy said it had been advocated in *The Times*.

The Premier: I will be prepared to believe anything of *The Times*, but really I do not tink it has ever suggested tat."—*Daily Mail*.

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Mr. LLOYD GEORGE is always ready to give *The Times* tink-for-tat.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Guest* (*to Fellow-Guest at garden-party who has offered to introduce her to well-known Socialist*). "I DON'T THINK SO, THANKS. HE LOOKS RATHER FEARSOME."

Fellow-Guest. "MY DEAR, HE'S ONE OF THE FEW DECENT PEOPLE HERE—-BELONGS TO AN OLD ENGLISH LABOURING FAMILY."]

* * * * *

I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER.

(*Carefully imitated from the best models, except that it has somehow got into metre and rhyme.*)

Four-and-ninety English winters
  Having flecked my hair with snows,
I am ready for the printers,
  And my publishers suppose
That these random recollections
  Of a mid-Victorian male,
Owing to my high connections,
  Ought to have a fairish sale.

Comrades of my giddy zenith,
  Gazing back in retrospect,
I should say Lord Brixton (Kenneth)
  Had the brightest intellect;
Though of course no age enfeebles
  James Kircudbright's mental vim
(Now the seventh Duke of Peebles)—
  I have lots of tales of Jim.

We were gilded youths together
  In our Foreign Office days;
Used to fish and tramp the heather
  At his uncle's castle, "Braes;"
I recall our wild elation
  One day when we stole the hat,
At the Honduras Legation,
  Of a Danish diplomat.

James had scarcely any vices,
  His career was made almost
When the Guatemalan crisis
  Caused him to resign his post;
He possessed a Gordon setter
  On whose treatment by a vet
I once wrote *The Times* a letter
  Which has not been published yet.

Politics were dry and dusty,
  Still they had their moods of fun,
As, for instance, when the crusty
  Yet delightful Viscount Bunn
Broke into the Second Reading
  Of a Church Endowment Bill
With a snore of perfect breeding
  Which convulsed the Earl of Brill.

Through my kinship with the Gortons
  I was much at Widnes Square;
People of the first importance
  Often came to luncheon there;
GLADSTONE, DIZZY, even older
  Statesmen used to throng the hall;
PALMERSTON once touched my shoulder—
  Which one I do not recall.

Then I went to routs and dances,
  Ah, how fine they were, and how
Different from the dubious prances
  That the young indulge in now;
There I first encountered Kitty,
  Told the girl I was a dunce,
But implored her to have pity,
  And she said she would, at once.

Eh, well, well! I must not linger
  On those glorious halcyon days;
Time with his relentless finger
  Brings me to the second phase;
Politics were always creeping
  Like a ghost across my view—
I contested Market Sleeping
  In the Spring of Seventy-Two.

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GLADSTONE—[No, please not. ED.]

EVOE.

* * * * *

"BRIGHTON.—The ——. One minute sea, West Pier, Lawns. Gas fires in beds."—*Advt. in Daily Paper.*

Thanks, but we prefer a hot-water bottle.

* * * * *

[Illustration: MORAL SUASION.

THE RABBIT. "MY OFFENSIVE EQUIPMENT BEING PRACTICALLY *NIL*, IT REMAINS FOR
ME TO FASCINATE HIM WITH THE POWER OF MY EYE."]

* * * * *

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

[Illustration: THE INCOHERENTS.

The reply of the Soviet Government to the Spa Conference was described by Mr. LLOYD GEORGE as "incoherent; the sort of document that might be drawn up by a committee composed of Colonel WEDGWOOD, Commander KENWORTHY, Lord ROBERT CECIL, Mr. BOTTOMLEY and Mr. THOMAS." It is understood that these hon. Members intend to hold an indignation meeting to discuss means—if any—of refuting this charge.]

Monday, July 19th.—Opinions may differ as to the wisdom of the Peers in reopening the DYER case, but the large audience which assembled in the galleries, where Peeresses and Indians vied with one another in the gorgeousness of their attire, testified to the public interest in the debate. At first the speakers made no attempt to "hot up" their cold porridge. In presenting General DYER'S case Lord FINLAY was strong without rage. In rebutting it the UNDER-SECRETARY FOR INDIA proved himself a grave and reverend SINHA, without a trace of the provocativeness displayed by his Chief in the Commons. Not until the LORD CHANCELLOR intervened did the temperature begin to rise. His description of the incident in the Jullianwallah Bagh was only a little less lurid than that of Mr. MONTAGU. The Peers would, I think, have liked a little more explanation of how an officer who admittedly exhibited, both before and after this painful affair, "discretion, sobriety and resolution," should be regarded as having on this one day committed "a tragic error of judgment upon the most conspicuous stage," and may have wondered

whether, if the stage had been less conspicuous, the critics would have been more lenient.

[Illustration: AN ARABIAN KNIGHT AT HOME. LORD WINTERTON.]

For as long as I can remember the French have been *partant pour la Syrie*. Now they have got there, with a mandate from the Supreme Council, and have come into collision with the Arabs. As we are the friends of both parties the situation is a little awkward. Mr. ORMSBY-GORE hoped we were not going to fight our Arab allies, and was supported by Lord WINTERTON, who saw service with them during the War. A diplomatic speech by Mr. BONAR LAW, who pointed out that the French were in Syria on just the same conditions as we were in Mesopotamia, helped to keep the debate within safe limits.

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Tuesday, July 20th.—The Lords continued the DYER debate. Lord MILNER confessed that he had approached the subject "with a bias in favour of the soldier," and showed how completely he had overcome it by finally talking about "Prussian methods"—a phrase that Lord SUMNER characterised as "facile but not convincing." Lord CURZON hoped that the Peers would not endorse such methods, but would be guided by the example of "Clemency" CANNING. The Lords however, by 129 to 86, passed Lord FINLAY'S motion, to the effect that General DYER had been unjustly treated and that a dangerous precedent had been established.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS was inundated with questions about the pylon and explained that it had been designed by Sir FRANK BAINES entirely on his own initiative. Its submission to the Cabinet had never been contemplated, and its exhibition in the Tea Room was due to an hon. Member, who said that a number of people would be interested. Apparently they were.

Asked if the scheme might be regarded as quite dead, Sir ALFRED MOND replied that he certainly thought so. In fact, to judge by his previous answer, it was never really alive.

There is still anxious curiosity regarding the increase of railway fares, but when invited to "name the day" Mr. BONAR LAW remained coy. Suggestions for postponements in the interests of this or that class of holiday-maker finally goaded him into asking sarcastically, "Why not until after Christmas?" Whereupon the House loudly cheered.

Wednesday, July 21st.—Tactful man, Lord DESBOROUGH. In urging the Government to call a Conference to consider the establishment of a fixed date for Easter he supported his case with a wealth of curious information, some of it acquired from the Prayer-book tables, as he said, "during the less interesting sermons to which I have listened." You or I would have said "dull" *tout court*, and in that case we should not have deserved to receive, as Lord DESBOROUGH did, the almost enthusiastic support of the Archbishop of CANTERBURY.

In spite of this Lord ONSLOW, for the Government, was far from encouraging. He quite recognised the drawbacks of the movable Easter, and agreed that it was primarily a matter for the Churches. But he feared the Nonconformists might dissent, and displayed a hitherto unsuspected reverence for the opinion of the Armenians. Besides, what about the Dominions and Labour? And with Europe in such a state of unrest ought we to throw in a new apple of discord? With much regret the Government could not see their way, *etc*. Whereupon Lord DESBOROUGH, who seems to be easily satisfied, expressed his gratitude and withdrew his motion.

In an expansive moment Mr. MONTAGU once referred to Mr. GANDHI as his "friend." He did so, it appears, in the hope that the eminent agitator would abandon his disloyal vapourings. But the friendship is now finally sundered. Mr. GANDHI has been

endeavouring to organise a boycott of the PRINCE OF WALES' visit to India, and, as Mr. MONTAGU observed more in sorrow than in anger, "Nobody who suggests disloyalty or discourtesy to the Crown can be a friend of any Member of this House, let alone a Minister."

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If anyone were to take exception to the accuracy of some of the PRIME MINISTER'S historical allusions in his post-Spa oration he would doubtless reply, "I don't read history; I make it." He was tart with the Turks, gratulatory to the Greeks, peevish with the Poles and gentle to the Germans. The German CHANCELLOR and Herr VON SIMONS were described as "two perfectly honest upright men, doing their best to cope with a gigantic task." Their country was making a real effort to meet the indemnity; it was not entirely responsible for the delay in trying the war-criminals, and even in the matter of disarmament was not altogether blameworthy. The Bolshevists also were handled more tenderly than usual. Their reply was "incoherent" rather than "impertinent"—it might have been drawn up by a WEDGWOOD-KENWORTHY-CECIL-BOTTOMLEY-THOMAS syndicate. Still they must not be allowed to wipe out Poland, foolish and reckless as the Poles had been.

A well-informed speech was made by Mr. T. SHAW, evidently destined to be the Foreign Minister of the first Labour Cabinet. Having travelled in Russia he has acquired a distaste for the Soviet system, both political and industrial, and is confident that no amount of Bolshevist propaganda will induce the British proletarian to embrace a creed under which he would be compelled to work.

Thursday, July. 22nd.—The Peers held an academic discussion on the League of Nations. Lords PARMOOR, BRYCE and HALDANE, who declared themselves its friends, were about as cheerful as JOB'S Comforters; Lord SYDENHAM was frankly sceptical of the success of a body that had, and could have, no effective force behind it; and Lord CURZON was chiefly concerned to dispel the prevalent delusion that the League is a branch of the British Foreign Office.

The Commons had an equally unappetising bill-of-fare, in which Ireland figured appropriately as the *piece de resistance*. Sir JOHN REES' well-meant endeavour to furnish some lighter refreshment by an allusion to the Nauru islanders' habit of "broiling their brothers for breakfast" fell a little flat. The latest news from Belfast suggests that in the expression of brotherly love Queen's Island has little to learn from Nauru.

* * * * *

A SCENE AT THE CLUB.

I never liked Buttinbridge. I considered him a vulgar and pushful fellow. He had thrust himself into membership of my club and he had forced his acquaintance upon me.

I was sitting in the club smoking-room the other day when Buttinbridge came in. His behaviour was characteristic of the man. He walked towards me and said in a loud voice, "Cheerioh, old Sport!"

I drew the little automatic pistol with which I had provided myself in case of just such an emergency, took a quick aim and fired. Buttinbridge gave a convulsive leap, fell face downwards on the hearthrug and lay quite still. It was a beautiful shot—right in the heart.

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The room was fairly full at the moment, and at the sound of the shot several members looked up from their newspapers. One young fellow—I fancy he was a country member recently demobilised—who had evidently watched the incident, exclaimed, “Pretty shot, Sir!” But two or three of the older men frowned irritably and said, “Sh-sh-sh!”

Seeing that it was incumbent upon me to apologise, I said, in a tone just loud enough to be audible to all present, “I beg your pardon, gentlemen.” Then I dropped the spent cartridge into an ash-tray, returned the pistol to my pocket and was just stretching out my hand to touch the bell when old Withergreen, the *doyen* of the club, interposed.

“Pardon me,” he said, “I am a little deaf, but almost simultaneously with the fall of this member upon the hearthrug I fancied I heard the report of a firearm. May I claim an old man’s privilege and ask if I am right in presuming a connection between the two occurrences, and, if so, whether there has been any recent relaxation of our time-honoured rule against assassination on the club premises?”

Shouting into his ear-trumpet, I said, “I fired the shot, Sir, which killed the member now lying upon the hearthrug. I did so because he addressed me in a form of salutation which I regard as peculiarly objectionable. He called me ‘Old Sport,’ an expression used by bookmakers and such.”

“Um! Old Port?” mumbled old Withergreen.

“OLD SPORT,” I shouted more loudly. Then I stepped to the writing-table, took a dictionary from among the books of reference, found the place I wanted and returned to the ear-trumpet.

“I find here,” I said, for the benefit of the room at large, for all were now listening, though with some impatience, “that in calling me a ‘*sport*’ the deceased member called me a plaything, a diversion. If he had called me a *sportsman*, which is here defined as ‘one who hunts, fishes or fowls,’ he would have been not necessarily more accurate but certainly less offensive.”

At this point there stood up a member whom I recognised as one of the committee. “I am sure, Sir,” he said, “that all present are agreed that you fired in defence of the purity of English speech, and that the incident was the outcome of an unfortunate attempt to relieve the financial embarrassment of the club by relaxing our former rigorous exclusiveness. Speaking as one of the committee, I have no doubt that the affair will be dismissed as *justifiable homicide*.”

Having bowed my acknowledgments I rang the bell. When the waiter appeared I bade him “Bring me a black coffee and then clear away the remains of Mr. Buttinbridge.”

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Then I was awakened by the voice of Buttinbridge yelling, “Wake up, old Sport!”

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[Illustration: *Grocer.* “NOW, MY MAN, THE BUTTER YOU BROUGHT US LAST WEEK —EVERY PACKET OF IT WEIGHED ONLY FIFTEEN OUNCES.”

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Farmer's Man. "WELL, TO BE SURE, SIR, WE'D LOST OUR ONE-POUND WEIGHT; BUT WE TOOK ONE OF YOUR POUND PACKETS OF TEA TO WEIGH IT WITH."]

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THE PECULIAR CASE OF TOLLER.

Toller first floated into public notice on the fame of Rodman, who by an irony of fate is now all but forgotten. Rodman, it may be remembered, was a promising young poet during the first decade of this century. Out of a scandalous youth whose verses made their appearance in slim periodicals that expired before their periodicity could be computed, he was evolving into a reputable poet who was given a prominent position facing advertising matter in the heavy magazines when he met with his regrettably early end. Apart from his poems he left no literary remains, except a few letters too hideously ungrammatical for publication. The sole materials for a biography lay in the memory of Toller, who by a stroke of luck happened to have known him intimately.

By an equal piece of good fortune Toller had taken a course of mind training and his memory was exceptionally retentive. His *Life of Rodman* achieved instant success, a far greater than *Rodman's Collected Works*. The undomesticities of a poet's life naturally excite greater interest in the cultured than his utterances on Love, Destiny and other topics on which poets are apt to discourse. Toller, until then a struggling journalist, became all at once a minor literary celebrity, much in demand at conversaziones and places where they chatter. Sympathy for Rodman aroused curiosity which only Toller could satisfy.

His memory, continually stimulated by questions, gained further in strength. The more he was asked the more he remembered, and so on in a virtuous circle. His Rodmaniana provided him with a comfortable income. He removed from Earl's Court to luxurious chambers off Jermyn Street, from which he poured out article after article on the deceased poet.

Then suddenly, without warning, probably from overstrain, his memory gave way. Everything in the past, Rodman included, vanished from his mind. A greater calamity one could not conceive. It was as though a violinist had lost a hand, a popular preacher his voice. His livelihood was gone. Much as his babble about Rodman had bored me I could not but feel some sorrow for him, fallen from his little pinnacle of fame and affluence. Judge, then, of my surprise when I passed him about a fortnight ago faultlessly dressed and wearing an air of great prosperity. He showed of course not the smallest recollection of me.

"How does Toller manage to live?" I asked Cardew, who knows him better than I do.

"He still writes," was the reply.

“What—without a memory?”

“Yes, he finds it an advantage. You see, since the fusion of the old parties and the formation of new ones, the possession of a memory is often a source of considerable embarrassment to a leader writer. Toller now does the political articles for a prominent morning paper. The proprietors consider him a wonderful find.”

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BUCKLER'S.

To acquire an estate is, even in these days of inflated prices and competitive house-hunters, an easy matter compared with finding a name for it when it is yours. It is then that the real trouble sets in.

Take the case of my friend Buckler.

A little while ago he purchased a property, a few acres on the very top of a hill not too far from London and only half-a-mile from his present habitation, and there he is now building a home. At least the plans are done and the ground has been pegged out. "Here," he will say, quite unmindful of the clouds emptying themselves all over us—with all an enthusiast's disregard for others, and an enthusiast, moreover, who has his abode close by, full of changes of raiment—"here," setting his foot firmly in the mud, "is where the dining-room will be. Here," moving away a few yards through the slush, "is the billiard-room." Then, pointing towards the zenith with his stick, "Above it"—here you look up into the pitiless sky as well as the deluge will permit—"are two spare rooms, one of which will be yours when you come to see us." And so forth.

He then leads the way round the place, through brake fern wetter than waves, to indicate the position of the tennis-courts, and in course of time you are allowed to return to the dry and spend the rest of the day in borrowed clothes.

Everyone knows these Kubla Khans decreeing pleasure domes and enlarging upon them in advance of the builders, and never are they so eloquent and unmindful of rain and discomforts as when their listeners are poor and condemned to a squalid London existence for ever.

But that is beside the mark. It is the naming of these new country seats that leads to such difficulties.

That night at dinner the question arose again.

"As it is on the top of the hill," said a gentle wistful lady, "why not call it 'Hill Top'? I'm sure I've seen that name before. It is expressive and simple."

"So simple," said Buckler, "that my nearest neighbour has already appropriated it."

"I suppose that would be an objection," said the lady, and we all agreed.

"Why not," said another guest, "call it 'The Summit'? or, more concisely, just 'Summit'?"

“Or why not go further,” said a frivolous voice, “and suggest hospitality too—and Buckler’s hospitality is notorious—by calling it ’Summit-to-Eat’?”

Our silence was properly contemptuous of this sally.

“If you didn’t like that you might call it ‘Summit-to-Drink,’” the frivolous voice impenitently continued. “Then you would get all the Americans there too.”

The voice’s glass having been replenished (which, I fancy, was its inner purpose) we became serious again.

“As it is on the top of the hill,” said the first lady, “there will probably be a view. Why not call it, for example, ‘Bellevue’? ‘Bellevue’ is a charming word.”

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“A little French, isn’t it?” someone inquired.

“Oh, yes, it’s French,” she admitted. “But it’s all right, isn’t it? It’s quite nice French.”

We assured her that, for a French phrase, it was singularly free from impropriety.

“But of course,” she said, “there’s an Italian equivalent, ‘Bella Vista.’ ‘Bella Vista’ is delightful.”

“I passed a ‘Bella Vista’ in Surbiton yesterday,” said the frivolous voice, “and an errand-boy had done his worst with it with a very black lead pencil.”

“What could he do?” the gentle lady asked wonderingly, with big violet eyes distended.

“It is not for me to explain,” said the frivolous voice; “but the final vowel of the first word dissatisfied him and he substituted another. The capabilities of errand-boys with pencil or chalk should never be lost sight of when one is choosing a name for a front gate.”

“I am all at sea,” said the lady plaintively. Then she brightened. “Is there no prominent landmark visible from the new house?” she asked. “It is so high there must be.”

Our hostess said that by cutting down two trees it would be possible to see Windsor Castle.

“Oh, then, do cut them down,” said the lady, “and call it ‘Castle View.’ That would be perfect.”

During the panic that followed I made a suggestion. “The best name for it,” I said, “is ‘Buckler’s.’ That is what the country people will call it, and so you may as well forestall them and be resigned to it. Besides, it’s the right kind of name. It’s the way most of the farms all over England once were named—after their owners, and where the owner was a man of character and force the name persisted. Call it ‘Buckler’s’ and you will help everyone, from the postman to the strange guest who might otherwise tour the neighbourhood for miles searching for you long after lunch was finished.”

“But isn’t it too practical?” the first lady asked. “There’s no poetry in it.”

“No,” I said, “there isn’t. The poetry is in its owner. Any man who can stand in an open field under a July rainstorm and show another man where his bedroom is to be in a year’s time is poet enough.”

E.V.L.

* * * * *

TO ISIS.

Isis, beside thine ambient rill
  How oft I've snuffed the Berkshire breezes,
Or, prone on some adjoining hill,
Thrown off with my accustomed skill
  The weekly fytte of polished wheezes;
How oft in summer's languorous days,
  With some fair creature at the pole, I
Have thrid the Cherwell's murmurous ways
And dared with lobster mayonnaise
  The onslaughts of Bacillus Coli?

Once—it was done at duty's call—
  My labouring oar explored thy reaches;
They said I was no good at all
And coaches noting me would bawl
  Things about "angleworms and breeches;"
But oh! the shouts of heartfelt glee
  That rang on thine astonished marges
As we bore (rolling woundily)
Full in the wake of Brasenose III.
  And bumped them soundly at the barges.

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That night on Oxenford there burst
  A sound of strong men at their revels,
And stroke, in vinous lore unversed,
Retired, if you must know the worst,
  On feet that swam at different levels,
Nor knew till morning brought its cares
  That, while the cup was freely flowing,
He'd scaled a flight of moving stairs
And commandeered his tutor's chairs
  To keep the college bonfire going.

Immortal youth it was that bound
  Us twain together, beauteous river;
And, though these limbs just crawl around
That once would scarcely touch the ground,
  And alcohol upsets my liver,
Still, in a punt or lithe canoe
  I can revive my vernal heyday,
Pretend the sky's ethereal blue,
The golden kingcups' cheery hue,
  Spell my, as well as Nature's, Mayday.

The evening glows, the swallow skims
  Between the water and the willows;
The blackbirds pipe their evening hymns,
A punt awaits at Mr. Tims'
  With generous tea and lots of pillows,
And of all girls the first, the best
  To play at youth with this old fossil;
Then Isis, as we glide to rest
Upon thy shadow-dappled breast,
  We'll pledge thee in a generous wassail.

ALGOL.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Mistress.* "DID EVERYTHING COME FROM THE STORES THAT I ORDERED?"

Maid. "EVERYTHINK, MUM, 'CEPT THE 'ADDICK, WHICH IS COMING ON BY ITSELF LATER."]

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ENGLAND UNBENDS.

REPORTS FROM SPA AND SHORE.

SCARGATE.—This famous Yorkshire Spa is now in a condition of hectic activity and offers a plethora of attractions. A recent analysis of the waters shows that the proportion of sapid ovaloid particles and sulphuretted trinitrotoluene is larger than ever. Lieutenant Platt-Stithers' stincopated anthropoid orchestra plays four times daily—in the early morning and at noon for the relief of the water-drinkers, and in the afternoon and evening in the rotating Jazz Hall. Special attractions this week include cinema lectures daily on the domestic life of the Solomon Islanders by Mr. Nicholas Ould; a recital on the Bolophone on Thursday by Mr. Tertius Quodling, and, at the Grand Opera House, *Pope Joan* and *The Flip-Flappers*. On Saturday the Stridcar Golf Club will hold a series of competitions in rational fancy dress for the benefit of the Phonetic Spelling Association.

FALLALMOUTH.—Visitors to this romantic resort are offered a wide field of entertainment and moral uplift. The steamer excursions embrace trips up the lovely river Fallal to Gongor, famous for the prehistoric remains of the shrine of Saint Opodeldoc, and to beauty spots in the harbour like Glumgallion, Trehenna and Pangofflin Creek. There are also excursions in armed motor-char-a-bancs to Boscagel,

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Cadgerack and Flapperack. To-day visitors can view the gardens at Poljerrick, where many super-tropical plants, including man-eating cacti, are growing in the most unbridled luxuriance. There is a fine sporting nine-hole golf-course on the shingle strand at Grogwalloe, where the test of niblick play is more severe than on any links save those of the Culbin Sands near Nairn. Among other attractive features are the brilliant displays of aurora borealis over the Bay, which have been arranged at considerable cost by the Corporation in conjunction with the Meteorological Society.

BORECAMBE.—The demand for bathing-machines and tents continues to increase, though the shopkeepers are complaining of a decreasing spending power on the part of the visitors and a disinclination to pay more than a shilling a head for shrimps. The practice of dispensing with head-gear is also much resented by local outfitters, but otherwise the situation is well in hand. On Monday last Mr. Silas Pargeter, an old resident, caught a fine conger-eel, weighing fifty-six pounds, which he has presented to the Museum. As Borecambe is a good jumping-off ground for the Lake District there are daily char-a-banc excursions to the land of WORDSWORTH and RUSKIN, each passenger being supplied with a megaphone and a pea-shooter.

* * * * *

DOWN CHANNEL.

The chime of country steeples,
The scent of gorse and musk,
The drone of sleepy breakers
Come mingled with the dusk;
A ruddy moon is rising
Like a ripe pomegranate husk.

The coast-wise lights are wheeling
White sword-blades in the sky,
The misty hills grow dimmer,
The last lights blink and die;
Oh, land of home and beauty,
Good-bye, my dear, good-bye!

PATLANDER.

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HOW TO BE LONELY THOUGH MARRIED.

"Lonely Officer (married, with three children) wants Sealyham Terrier Dog."—*Times.*

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Golfer.* “LET’S SEE—WHAT’S BOGEY FOR THIS HOLE?”

Caddie (*fed up*). “DINNA FASH YERSEL’ ABOOT BOGEY. YE’VE PLAYED FUFTEEN AN’ YE’RE NO DEID YET—(*aside*) WORSE LUCK.”]

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MY DROMEDARY.

I see by *The Times* that dromedaries are on sale at sixty-five pounds apiece.

In these days, when commodities of all kinds are so expensive, one cannot afford to overlook bargains of whatever nature they may be. And it seems to me that a dromedary at sixty-five pounds is really rather cheap.

For after all sixty-five pounds to-day is little more than thirty pounds in pre-war times. Considering their trifling cost I am surprised that more people do not possess dromedaries. Most of my neighbours during the past two years have built garages, but not one, so far as I am aware, has built a dromedary-drome.

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I think I shall buy one of these attractive pets if my pass-book encourages me. Cheaper than a motor-car and far more intelligent and responsive to human affection, a dromedary will add distinction to my establishment and afford pleasant occupation for my leisure. It brings no attendant annoyance from the Inland Revenue authorities; there are no tiresome registration fees or regulations as to the dimensions of a number-plate.

As long as I can remember I have lived in a state of uncertainty as to whether a dromedary has two humps and a camel one, or a camel two humps and a dromedary one. With one of these exotic quadrupeds tethered only a few yards away from the kitchen door that condition of doubt need not exist in the future for more than a few moments. In a good light it should be perfectly easy to count the humps or hump. Then again a dromedary will come for a walk on a fine evening without involving one in a dog-fight. It will provide quiet yet healthful exercise for the two children. If it turns out that the type possesses two humps it will be able to convey Edgar and Marigold at one and the same time, thus saving delay and inconvenience.

It will be a protection to the house. When we have gone to bed the faithful creature will lie on guard in the hall, and no amount of poisoned liver thrust through the letter-box will assuage its ferocity or weaken its determination to protect the hearth and home of its master against marauders. For the dromedary is not only a strict teetotaler and non-smoker, but a lifelong vegetarian. Famous for its browsing propensities, a dromedary about the garden will save untold labour and expense, keeping the lawn trimmed and the hedges clipped. And indoors its height will serve me admirably in enabling me, while seated on its hump or one of its humps, to attend in comfort to a little whitewashing job which will not brook further postponement.

I will look at my pass-book to-morrow.

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FLOWERS' NAMES.

COLT'S FOOT.

When the four Horses of the Sun
  Were little leggy things,
When they could only jump and run
  And hadn't grown their wings,
The Sun-God sent them out to play
In a field one July day.

Oh, the four Horses of the Sun
  They galloped and they rolled,
They leapt into the air for fun

And felt so brave and bold;
And when they'd done their gallopings
They'd grown four splendid pairs of wings.

The Sun-God fetched them in again
To draw his car of gold;
But you can still see very plain
Where each one leapt and rolled;
For from each hoof-mark, every one,
There sprang a little golden sun,
And that same little golden flower
People call Colt's Foot to this hour.

* * * * *

"The stove will stand by itself anywhere. It omits neither smoke nor smell."—*Provincial Paper.*

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We know that stove.

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[Illustration: *Lady.* “CAN YOU SHOW ME SOMETHING SUITABLE FOR A BIRTHDAY PRESENT FOR A GENTLEMAN?”

Shopwalker. “MEN’S FURNISHING DEPARTMENT ON THE NEXT FLOOR, MADAM.”

Lady. “WELL, I DON’T KNOW. THE GIFT IS FOR MY HUSBAND.”

Shopwalker. “OH, PARDON, MADAM. BARGAIN COUNTER IN THE BASEMENT.”]

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OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

Not every regiment has the good luck to find for chronicler one who is not only a distinguished soldier but a practical and experienced man of letters. This fortune is enjoyed by *The Gold Coast Regiment* (MURRAY) in securing for its historian Sir HUGH CLIFFORD, K.C.M.G., from whose book you may obtain a vivid picture of a phase of the Empire’s effort about which the average Briton has heard comparatively little. The very strenuous compaigns of the G.C.R., the endurance and achievements of its brave and light-hearted troops, and the heroism and fostering care of its officers, make an inspiring story. Almost for the first time one gains some real idea of the difficulties of the East African campaign, that prolonged tiger hunt, in which every advantage of mobility, of choice of ground, ambush and the like lay with the enemy; and over very tough physical obstacles, as, for example, rivers so variable that, in the author’s incisive phrase, they “can rarely be relied upon, for very long together, either to furnish drinking-water or to refrain from impeding transport.” It is interesting to note that Sir HUGH, while giving every credit to the remarkable personality of the German commander, entirely demolishes the theory, so grateful to our sentimentalists, that the absence of surrenders on the part of the enemy’s black troops was due to any devotion to VON LETTOW-VORBECK as leader; the explanation being the characteristic German dodge of creating from the natives a military caste so highly privileged, and consequently unpopular with their fellows, that surrender, involving return to native civilian life, became a practical impossibility.

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Much the best part, and a good best, of *Sir Harry* (COLLINS) is the opening, which is not only delightful in itself but contains almost the sole example of a chapter-long letter (of the kind usually so unconvincing in fiction) in which I have found it possible to

believe as being actually written by one character to another. The explanation of which is that this one is supposed to be sent to his wife by the new *Vicar of Royd*, himself a successful novelist, on a visit of inspection to his future parish. The efforts of *Mrs. Grant*, at home, to disentangle essential facts from the complications of the literary manner form as pleasant and human an introduction to a story as

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any I remember. The story itself is one highly characteristic of its author, Mr. ARCHIBALD MARSHALL, both in charm and truth to life, as also in one minor drawback, of which I have taken occasion to speak before. Nothing could be better done than the picture of the household at Royd Castle, the boy owner, *Sir Harry*, sheltered by the almost too-encompassing care of the three elder inmates, mother, grandmother and tutor. When the fictionally inevitable happens and an Eve breaks into this protected Eden there follow some boy-and-girl love-scenes that may perhaps remind you—and what praise could be higher?—of the collapse of another system on the meeting of *Richard* and *Lucy*. I will not anticipate the end of a sympathetically told story, which I myself should have enjoyed even more but for Mr. MARSHALL'S habit (hinted at above) of following real life somewhat too closely in the matter of non-progressive discussion. How I should like him to lay his next scene in a community of Trappists!

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The Haunted Bookshop (CHAPMAN AND HALL) is a daring, perhaps too daring, mixture of a browse in a second-hand bookshop and a breathless bustle among international criminals. To estimate the accuracy of its technical details the critic must be a secret service specialist, the mustiest of bookworms and a highly-trained expert in the science and language of the American advertising business. Speaking as a general practitioner, I like Mr. CHRISTOPHER MORLEY best when he is being cinematographic; he hits a very happy mean with his spies and his sleuths, giving a nice proportion of skill and error, failure and success, to both. There is a strong love-interest which will be made much of and probably spoilt by the purchasers of the film-rights; and, though strong men will doubtless applaud hoarsely and women will weep copiously, as the bomb in the bookshop throws the young lovers into each other's arms, I feel that the book gives a more attractive portrait of *Titania Chapman*, the plutocrat's daughter, than ever can be materialised in the film-man's "close-up." I am afraid that Mr. MORLEY will not thank me for praising his brisk melodrama at the cost of his ramblings in literature. But, if he has the knowledge, he lacks the fragrance; not to put too fine a point on it, he is long-winded and tends to bore in his disquisitions upon books and bookishness; which is no proper material for a novelist. The story is all about America and is thoroughly American; inevitably therefore there is some ambitious word-coining. The only novelty which sticks in my memory and earns my gratitude is the title for the female Bolshevik, to wit, Bolshevixen.

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Wayward and capricious heroines who marry young are entitled, I think, to a certain amount of introspective treatment by their authors. Without some knowledge of their mental working it is not very easy for the reader to have patience with them. I was introduced to *Anne* (HEINEMANN) when she was fifteen, and in the act of snatching a loaf of bread from a baker's cart and running away with it merely to annoy the baker; and, as she had large blue eyes and two young men as self-appointed guardians, I was prepared for a certain amount of heart trouble later on. One of these heroes she married at the age of seventeen, and, after various innocent but compromising vagaries (including a flight to Paris after the death of her son in order to study art), she followed the other one, still innocently, to Ireland, because he had been in prison and she was sorry for him. Both these guardians discharged their duty to *Anne* at least as well as OLGA HARTLEY, who chronicles but does not explain; and this is a pity, for with a rather different treatment she might have made her heroine a very likeable person. Looked at from another point of view, *Anne* may be taken as a mild piece of propaganda against divorce. I am glad it didn't come to that, of course, but I do feel that a cross-examining K.C. would have discovered a good deal more about Anne's soul for me than I learnt from the writer of her story.

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John Fitzhenry (MILLS AND BOON) is one of those pleasant stories about people who live in big country houses, a subject that seems to have a particular attraction for the large and ungrudging public which lives in villas. We have already several novelists who tell them very ably, and I feel that some one among them has served as Miss ELLA MACMAHON'S model. The tale deals with the affairs of a showy fickle cousin and a silent constant cousin who compete for the love of the same delightful if rather nebulous young woman, and moves to its *denouement*, against a background of the great War, which Miss MACMAHON has very sensibly decided to view entirely from the home front. It contains some fine thinking and some bad writing (the phrase telling of the middle-aged smart woman who "waved her foot impatiently" gives a just idea of the author's occasional inability to say what she means), some quite extraneous incidents and some scenes very well touched in. The people, with a few exceptions, are of the race which inhabits this sort of book, and, as we have long agreed with our novelists that "the county" is just like that, I don't see why Miss MACMAHON should be blamed for it.

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Mr. COSMO HAMILTON lays the scene of *His Friend and His Wife* (HURST AND BLACKETT) in the Quaker Hill Colony of Connecticut, the members of which were typically “nice” and took themselves very seriously. So when one of them brought a divorce suit against her husband there was a feeling that the colony’s reputation had been irremediably besmirched. Mr. HAMILTON can be trusted to create tense situations out of the indiscretions of an erring couple, but he also contrives, in spite of its artificial atmosphere, to make us believe in this society, though he tried me rather hard with a scandalmongress of the type we happily meet less often in life than in fiction. I hope he will not be quite so dental in his next book. I didn’t so much mind *Mrs. Hopper’s* teeth, which “flashed like an electric advertisement,” but when he made two golfers also flash “triumphant teeth” I recoiled.

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The Golden Bird of Miss DOROTHY EASTON (HEINEMANN) is indeed lucky to set out on its flight with a favouring pat from Mr. JOHN GALSWORTHY. He asserts that these short studies of people and things in England and France are very well done indeed; that moreover, though the short sketch may look, and the bad short sketch may be, one of the easiest of literary feats, the good short sketch is in fact one of the most difficult. Now who should know this if not Mr. GALSWORTHY, and who am I that I should presume to disagree? As a matter of fact I don’t. Quite the contrary. But naturally I shall get no credit for that. I will only add that Miss EASTON has not a majority mind, that she sees the sad thing more easily than the gay, that I like her work best in her more objective moods, and that, like so many writers of perception, she finds the quintessence of England’s beauty in happy Sussex.

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[Illustration: IN OLD VERSAILLES.

Mother. “GOOD NEWS, MY SON! EVEN AS I PONDERED WHETHER I SHOULD EAT OUR LAST CRUST THE EVER-KIND ABBE CALLED TO SAY HE HAD FOUND THEE A HIGHLY-PAID APPOINTMENT AT COURT.”

Son. “YES—BUT DID HE TELL YOU IT WAS AS FOOD-TASTER TO HIS MAJESTY, WHO DAILY EXPECTS TO BE POISONED?”]