

Punch, Volume 156, January 22, 1919.

Various

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PUNCH,

OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.

VOL. 156.

January 22, 1919.

CHARIVARIA.

The huge waterspout observed off Guernsey last week "travelling towards France" is believed to have been making for the Peace Conference.

The Captain of a Wilson liner on being torpedoed ate his pocket-book to prevent his sailing instructions from falling into the hands of the Germans. The report that the ex-Kaiser has whiled away the time at Amerongen by chewing up three copies of the German White Book and one

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of Prince LICHNOWSKY'S Memoirs is probably a variant of this story.

"Our chief hope of control of influenza," writes Sir ARTHUR NEWSHOLME of the Local Government Board, "lies in further investigation." Persons who insist upon having influenza between now and Easter will do so at their own risk.

Writing to a provincial paper a correspondent asks when Mr. PHILIP SNOWDEN was born. Other people are content to ask "Why?"

"We think it prudent to speak with moderation on all subjects," says The Morning Post. There now!

We mentioned last week the startling rumour that a Civil Servant had been seen running, and a satisfactory explanation has now been issued. It appears that the gentleman in question was going off duty.

According to the Malin, the Bavarian PREMIER told a newspaper man that the Bavarian revolution cost exactly eighteen shillings. This seems to lend colour to the rumour that Dr. EISNER picked this revolution up second-hand in Russia.

"Springfield and Napsbury Lunatic Asylums," says a news item, "are to be known in future as mental hospitals." Government institutions which have hitherto borne that title will in the future be known simply as "Departments."

A German sailor, who is described as "twenty-seven, 6 ft. 9 1/2 in.," has escaped from Dorchester camp. A reward has been offered for information leading to the recapture of any part of him.

The servant question is admittedly acute, but whether sufficiently so to justify the attitude of a contemporary, which deals with the subject under the sinister title, "Maxims for Mistresses," is open to doubt.

The case of the North Country workman who voluntarily abandoned his unemployment grant in order to take a job is attributed to a morbid craze for notoriety.

As a result of the engineers' strike and the failure of the heating apparatus, we understand that Government officials in Whitehall have spent several sleepless days.

We gather that the mine reported to have been washed up at Bognor turns out to be an obsolete 1914 pork pie--but fortunately the pin had been removed.

The Daily Express tells us that a crowd of new monkeys have arrived at the Zoo. We are pleased to note this, because several of the monkeys there were certainly the worse for wear.

A contemporary anticipates a boom in very light motor cars at a hundred and thirty pounds each. They are said to be just the thing to carry in the tool-box in case of a breakdown.

A sensation has been caused in Scotland, says _The National News_, by the passing of a number of counterfeit Treasury notes. As we go to press we learn that most of the victims are going on as well as can be expected, though recovery is naturally slow.

Mr. WILLIAM LE QUEUX is said to be very much annoyed at the wicked way in which Russia has been appropriated by other writers.

Much regret is felt at the news that the recent outbreak of Jazz music is not to be dealt with at the Peace Conference.

Is gallantry dying out? We ask because _Tit Bits_ has an article entitled, "Women Burglars." We may be old-fashioned, but surely it should be "Lady Burglars."

On the last day for investing in National War Bonds, a patriotic subaltern was heard at Cox's asking if his overdraft could be transferred to these securities.

"The market price of radium to-day," says a Continental journal, "is L345,000 an ounce." In order to avert waste and deterioration, purchasers are advised to store the stuff in barrels in a large dry cellar.

Mr. Punch does not wish to boast unduly of his unique qualities, but up to the time of going to press he had made no offer for Drury Lane Theatre.

In view of the recent newspaper articles on spiritualism, several prominent persons are about to announce that they have decided not to grant any interviews after death.

Liverpool Licensing Justices have urged the Liquor Control Board to take steps to prevent the drinking of methylated spirits by women. It is suggested that distillers should be compelled to give their whisky a distinctive flavour.

"A box of cigarettes was all that burglars took from the Theatre Royal, Aldershot," says a news item. There is something magnificently arrogant about that "all."

"Saying 'Thank you' to a customer," says a news item, "a Wallasey butcher fell unconscious." In our neighbourhood it used to be, until quite lately, the customer who fell unconscious.

* * * * *

[Illustration: "NOW LOOK HERE, SIMPKINS--I CAN'T HAVE MY CHIEF CASHIER TURNING UP LIKE THIS. IT'S A DISGRACE TO THE OFFICE."

"WELL, SIR, I STARTED ALL RIGHT, BUT I CAME BY TUBE."]

* * * * *

THE CAREER.

My dear James,--Ere long the military machine will be able to spare one of its cogs--myself. Yes, James, soon you will once again see me in my silk hat, cerise fancy vest and brown boots (among other garments). I think I shall have brass buttons on all my coats for the sheer joy of seeing them without let or hindrance grow green from lack of polish. I shall once again train my hair in graceful curling strands under (respectively) the south-east and south-west corners of my ears. If I meet my Brigadier in the street I shall notice him or not just according to my whim of the moment. But, James, I shall have to work for my living. There's the rub.

I must say the Army tries to help one. Somebody or other has issued a whole schedule of civil occupations to assist me in my choice of a career. It offers an embarrassment of riches.

Take the "A's." I was momentarily attracted by Air Balloon Maker. It sounds a joyous job. Think of the delight of sending forth these delicate nothings inflated and perfect. My only fear is that I should destroy the fruits of my own labour. One touch of my rough hands is always inimical to an air-balloon. And if you know of any more depressing sight than a collapsed air-balloon, all moist and incapable of resurrection, for heaven's sake keep it to yourself.

Allowance Man (brewing) sounds hopeful. My only question is: Does an Allowance Man (brewing) fix his own allowance (brewed)?

Am I slightly knock-kneed or am I not? Do write me frankly on the subject. You have seen me divested of trousers. Because if I am then I don't think I will try my luck as an Artist's Model.

Athlete.--Ha! I feel my biceps and find it not so soft. It's a wearing life, though. Is there such a thing as an Athlete (indoor)? You know my speed and agility at Ludo.

I flatter myself I have musical taste, but Back and Belly Maker

(piano) I consider vulgar--almost indecent, in fact. Such anatomical intimacy with the piano would destroy for me the bewitchment of the Moonlight Sonata.

There is something very alluring about Bank Note Printer. I see the chance of continuing the Army trick of making a living without working for it. Surely a Bank Note Printer is allowed his little perquisites. Why should he print millions of bank notes for other people and none for himself? I can imagine an ill-used Bank Note Printer very easily becoming a Bolshevik.

Barb Maker (wire) I do not like. I have too many unpleasant memories of the Somme. It is a hideous trade and ought to be abolished altogether.

If I am wrong correct me, but isn't the prime function of a Bargee to swear incessantly? Not my forte, James. What you thought you heard that day in 1911, when I missed a six-inch putt, was only "Yam," which is a Thibetan expression meaning "How dreadfully unfortunate!" I knew a Major once--but that's for another article.

Beneath the heading "Bat" I find Bat Maker (brick) and Bat Maker (tennis). Under which king, James? Anyway, I hate a man who talks about a "tennis bat." He would probably call football shorts "knickers."

I am favourably inclined towards Bathing Machine Attendant (why not Bathing Mechanic, for short?) What a grand affair to ride old Dobbin into the seething waves and pretend he was a sea-serpent! Confidentially, there are lots of people to whose bathing-machines I would give an extra push when I had unlimbered their vehicles and turned Dobbin's nose again towards the cliffs of Albion.

My pleasure in stirring things with a ladle nearly decided me to train as a Bean Boiler; but I fear the monotony. Nothing but an endless succession of beans, with never a carrot to make a splash of colour nor an onion to scent the steamy air. And, James, I have a friend who is known to all and sundry as "The Old Bean." Every bean I was called upon to boil would remind me of him, whom I would not boil for worlds.

Here is something extraordinarily attractive--Black Pudding Maker. You know black puddings. I am told that when you stew them (do not eat them cold, I implore you!) they give off ambrosial perfumes, and that after tasting one you would never again touch peche Melba. But as a Black Pudding Maker should I become nauseated?

Almost next door comes Blood Collector. Wait while I question the Mess Cook ... James, I cannot become a Black Pudding maker. The Mess Cook tells me that Blood Collector and Black Pudding Maker are probably allied trades. How dreadful!

How about Bobber? Does that mean that I should have to shear my wife's silken tresses? Cousin Phyllis has appeared with a tomboy's shock of hair, and she says it "has only been bobbed." By a "bobber"? I would like to wring his neck. But if Bobber has something to do with those jolly little things that dance about on cotton machines (aren't they called "bobbins"?) I will consider it.

I have not even finished the "B's." A glance ahead and other enchanting vistas are revealed. For instance, Desiccated Soup Maker, Filbert Grower and (simply) Retired.

This Schedule is splendid in its way, but why can't they be honest? They must know that lots of us in our great national army are in ordinary life just rogues and vagabonds. The Schedule ignores such

honest tradesmen. How is a respectable tramp to know when his group is called for demobilisation if he is not even given a group? What a nation of prigs and pretenders we are!

Yours ever, WILLIAM.

* * * * *

AUTRES TEMPS, AUTRES MOEURS.

My baker gives me chunks of bread—
He used to throw them at my head;
His manners, I rejoice to state,
Have very much improved of late.

My butcher was extremely gruff,
And sold me—oh, such horrid stuff;
But I observe, since Peace began,
Some traces of a better man.

I find my grocer hard to please
In little things like jam or cheese;
Now that the men are coming back
His scowl, I think, is not so black.

My coalman is a haughty prince
No tears could move or facts convince;
But tyrants topple everywhere
And he too wears a humbler air.

My milkman was a man of wrath
As he came down the garden path;
But, since the Hohenzollern fell,
I find him almost affable.

And what is this? My greengrocer
(A most determined character)
Approaches—'13 style—to say,
"What can I do for you to-day?"

* * * * *

"GERMAN CONSTITUTION.

Bill Disposing of Old Prussia."

Manchester Guardian.

Tit for tat; Prussia had already disposed of Old BILL.

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"Mr. Cecil Harmswirth has vacated his iffict in the 'gardtn suburb' at 0. Downing Strtet."--_Daily Mail_.

To the evident consternation of Carmelite Street.

* * * * *

"'I am an A.B.C. girl,' said a passenger to _The Daily Mirror_, 'and have been eleven hours on my feet. If a get a seat in the Dulwich omnibus, I shall have another hour's standing before I get to my house.'"--_Daily Mirror_.

It seems to be high time that the omnibus company adopted the railway

regulation, "Passengers are requested not to put their feet on the seats, etc."

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE NEW COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER.

PUCK, R.A.F. (_to SHAKSPEARE_). "YOUR IDEA OF A GIRDLE ROUND ABOUT THE EARTH IN FORTY MINUTES IS A BIT TALL, BUT YOU BET YOUR IMMORTALITY WE SHALL GET AS NEAR IT AS WE CAN."]

* * * * *

F. E.

A SIMPLE BIOGRAPHIC RECITATIVE BASED ON THE TONIC SOL-FA NOTE OF MI.

In ante-bellum days, ah me, when I a stuffman used to be, and proudly pouched a junior's fee, the _Law List_ styled me "Smith, F.E." Oh, how my place seemed small for me; not that I scomed the stuffman's fee, but stuffy courts did not agree with me. I dearly longed to be respiring often, fresh and free, the breath that was the life of me, so I became a live M.P. And, lest the spacious H. of C. should fail to hold sufficiently the lot of air respired by me, said I, "A soldier I will be—not one of Foot (that's Infantry), nor yet the reg'lar Cavalry, for barrack-life will not suit me, yet ride I must the high gee-gee;" so I decided straight to be an officer of Yeomanry. Drilling the troopers on the lea, the vent I craved for gave to me. Moreover, on my high gee-gee I learned what galloping could be.

Those back-bench days! Ah me, ah me, rude Members christened me "F.E." And even _Punch_, in kindly glee, once on a time, did picture me a prowling beast, beside the sea, all spotted o'er with signs, "F.E." That patronymic thus will be preserved for immortality. Newspapers, too, I chance to see sometimes apply that name to me.

Although I found smart repartee, shot forth from back seats, gave me glee, still I aspired to climb the tree, so with restrained temerity I donned a gown of silk, i.e. became a fully-fledged K.C. Then, after able A.J.B. was shunted by his great party and A.B.L. assumed the see, the latter's finger beckoned me to face direct the enemy. Anon the KING created me a member of his own P.C.

And then "the active life" for me, as Galloper to "Gen'ral" C., the loyal Ulsterman, to free from acts of Irish devilry. I thanked "whatever gods may be" for training with the Yeomanry!

Then came the war with Germany. Alas, again I sighed, "Ah me," and viewed the aspect gloomily, for I was then in apogee from all that mighty company that domineered the H. of C. A. ruled the roast, not A.J.B. But happy thought, that company of muddlers held one hope for me—my constant pal of Yeomanry, the smashing, dashing WINSTON C.; result—the Censorship for me. But not for long. The fresh and free and open air was calling me, so off I went across the sea to join the fighting soldiery. But soon there came a call for me, and back I came across the sea to be His Majesty's S.-G.

What next was I? Eureka! "_The_ Right Hon. _Sir_ F.E. SMITH, K.C."

Then came the storm. Sir EDWARD C. threw up his job and let in me, before I scarce could laugh, "He, he!" to be His Majesty's A.-G. That wasn't bad, I think, for me—a mild young man of forty-three!

Next came "the quiet life" for me. I held my tongue, but drew my fee and eke my A.-G. salary. Not e'en the great calamity that overtook

A.'s Ministry and raised the wizard, D.L.G., to offices of high degree disturbed my sweet serenity. Nor did I jibe when Sir R.B. FINLAY took on unblushingly the job that seemed cut out for me. Unwilling _he_ his weird to dree! _I_ whispered, "Mum's the word for me!"

Now, after waiting patiently, as fits a man of my degree, the Woolsack cries aloud for me, and soft and soothing it will be to my whole frame and dignity. And unto those who wish from me to know what will the ending be of my august biography, I answer in a minor key and classic language, "Wait and see!"

* * * * *

TRANSFORMATION.

My house, which I am trying to let, is a modest little affair in the country. It has a small meadow to the south and the road to the north. There are some evergreens about the lawn. The kitchen garden is large but most indifferently tended; indeed it is partly through dissatisfaction with a slovenly gardener that I decided to leave. The nearest town is a mile distant; the nearest station two miles and a half. We have no light laid on except in a large room in the garden, where acetylene gas has been installed.

I am telling you these facts as concisely as I told them to the agent. He took them down one by one and said, "Yes." Having no interest in anything but the truth, I was as plain with him as I could be.

"Yes," he said, "no gas anywhere but in garden-room."

"Yes, small paddock, about two acres, to the south."

"Yes, one mile from nearest town."

I was charmed with his easy receptivity and went away content.

A few days later I received the description of the house which the agent had prepared for his clients. Being still interested in nothing but the truth I was electrified.

"This very desirable residence," it began. No great harm in that.

"In heart of most beautiful county in England," it continued. Nothing very serious to quarrel with there; tastes must always differ; but it puts the place in a new light.

"Surrounded by pleasure-grounds." Here I was pulled up very short. My little lawn with its evergreens, my desolate cabbage-stalks, my tiny paddock—these to be so dignified! And where do the agents get their phrases? Is there a Thesaurus of the trade, profession, calling, industry or mystery? "Garden" is a good enough word for any man who lives in his house and is satisfied, but a man who wants a house can be lured to look at it only if it has pleasure-grounds: is that the position? Does an agent in his own home refer to the garden in that way? If his wife is named Maud does he sing, "Come into the pleasure-grounds"?

"Surrounded," too. I was so careful to say that the paddock and so forth were on one side and the road on the other.

I read on: "Situated in the old-world village of Blank." And I had been scrupulous in stating that we were a mile distant—situated in point of fact in a real village of our own, with church, post-office, ancient landau and all the usual appurtenances. And "old world"! What is "old world"? There must be some deadly fascination in the epithet,

for no agent can refrain from using it; but what does it mean? Do American agents use it? It could have had no attraction for COLUMBUS. Such however is the failure of our modernity that it is supposed to be irresistible to-day. And "village!" The indignation of Blank on finding itself called an "old world village" will be something fierce.

None the less, although I was amused and a little irritated, I must confess to the dawnings of dubiety as to the perfect wisdom of leaving such a little paradise. If it had all this allurements was I being sensible to let others have it, and at a time when houses are so scarce and everything is so costly? Had I not perhaps been wrong in my estimate? Was not the sanguine agent the true judge?

I read on and realised that he was not. "One mile from Blank station." Such a statement is one not of critical appraisal but of fact or falsity. The accent in which he had said, "Yes, two and a-half miles from the station," was distinct in my ear.

I read further. "Lighted by gas;" and again I recalled that intelligent young fellow's bright "Yes, gas only in the garden-room."

What is one to do with these poets, these roseate optimists? And how delightful to be one of them and refuse to see any but desirable residences and gas where none is!

But it was the next trope that really shook me: "Well-stocked kitchen-garden." Here I ceased to be amused and became genuinely angry. The idea of calling that wilderness, that monument of neglect, "well-stocked." I was furious.

That was a week ago. Yesterday I paid a flying visit to the country to see how things were going and how many people had been to view the place; and my fury increased when, after again and for the fiftieth time pointing out to the gardener the lack of this and that vegetable, he was more than normally smiling and silent and dense and impenitent.

"You say here," he said at last, pulling the description of the house from his pocket and pointing to the words with a thumb as massive as it is dingy and as dingy as it is massive--"you say here 'well-stocked kitchen garden.'" _You!_

And now I understand better the phrases "agents for good" and "agents for evil."

* * * * *

[Illustration: PORTRAIT OF MR. ----, WHO HAD NO IDEA, WHEN HE FLED FROM LONDON TO ESCAPE AIR-RAIDS AND TOOK A THREE YEARS' LEASE NEAR MAIDENHEAD, THAT THE WAR WOULD BE OVER SO SOON.]

* * * * *

From an official circular:--

"If the man in question happens to be a seaman, he will be included on A.F.Z.8 in the figures appearing in the square of intersection between the horizontal column opposite Industrial Group 2 and the vertical column for Dispersal Area Ib."

Yet there are people who still complain of a want of simplicity in the demobilisation regulations.

* * * * *

STAGES.

1914.

Mr. Smith (of Smith, Smith and Smith, Solicitors) sat in his office awaiting his confidential clerk. There was a rattle as of castanets outside the door. It was produced by the teeth of the confidential clerk, Mr. Adolphus Brown.

Mr. Smith was a martinet ...

1915.

Second-Lieutenant A. Brown was drilling his platoon. There was a rattle as of castanets. It was produced by the teeth of the platoon.

Adolphus was a martinet ...

1916.

The raiding party hurled itself into the trench, headed by an officer of ferocious mien. There was a rattle as of castanets. It was produced by the teeth of the 180th Regiment of Landsturm, awaiting destruction.

Adolphus fell upon them ...

1917.

Captain A. Brown, M.C., on leave, sat by his fireside. There was a rattle as of castanets. It was produced by the teeth of Adolphus, Junior.

Daddy had changed ...

1918.

Major A. Brown, D.S.O., M.C. (on permanent Home Service) was awaiting the next case. There was a rattle as of castanets. It was produced by the teeth of No. 45012 Private Smith (of Smith, Smith and Smith, Solicitors), called up in his group and late for parade.

Adolphus was famous for severity ...

1919.

Mr. (late Major) Adolphus Brown stood outside the door of Mr. (late No. 45012) Smith (of Smith, Smith and Smith, Solicitors). There was a rattle as of castanets ...

On which side of the door?

Both.

* * * * *

"Mr. Ian Macpherson, the new Chief Secretary for Ireland, posed specially yesterday for the Sunday Pictorial. He has a difficult task to face."--Sunday Pictorial.

Let us hope they will keep the portrait from him as long a possible.

* * * * *

"Three new telephone lines have been laid between London and Paris, and it is now possible to pick up a telephone in

Downing Street and speak directly to Mr. Lloyd George at any time."--_Daily Chronicle_.

Immediately on the appearance of the above a long queue formed in Downing Street. Further telephones are to be installed to meet the rush. Some of the messages to the PREMIER, we understand, have been couched in very direct language.

* * * * *

A TRAGEDY OF OVER-EDUCATION.

It must not be thought that I underestimate the value of education as a general principle; indeed I earnestly beg of Mr. FISHER, should these lines chance to meet his eye, not to be in any way discouraged by them; but I have been driven to the conclusion that there is such a thing as over-education, and that it has dangers. When you have read this story I think you will agree with me. It is rather a sad story, but it is very short.

The population of my poultry-yard was composed of five hens and Umslumpogaas. The five hens were creatures of mediocrity, deserving no special mention—all very well for laying eggs and similar domestic duties, but from an intellectual point of view simply napoo, as the polyglot stylists have it. Far otherwise was it with Umslumpogaas. He was a pure bred, massive Black Orpington cockerel, a scion of the finest strain in the land. Indeed the dealer from whom I purchased him informed me that there was royal blood in his veins, and I have no reason to doubt it. One had only to watch him running in pursuit of a moth or other winged insect to be struck by the essentially aristocratic swing of his wattles and the symmetrical curves of his graceful lobes; and the proud pomposity of his tail feathers irresistibly called to mind the old nobility and the Court of LOUIS QUATORZE. Pimple, our tabby kitten, looked indescribably bourgeois beside him.

But it was not the external appearance of Umslumpogaas, regal though it was, that endeared him to me so much as his great intellectual potentialities. That bird had a mind, and I was determined to develop it to the uttermost. Under my assiduous tuition he progressed in a manner that can only be described as astonishing. He quickly learned to take a letter from the post-girl in his beak and deliver it without error to that member of the family to whom it was addressed. I was in the habit of reading to him extracts from the daily papers, and the interest he took in the course of the recent war and his intelligent appreciation of the finer points of Marshal FOCH'S strategy were most pleasing to observe. He would greet the news of our victorious on-sweep with exultant crows, while at the announcement of any temporary set-back he would mutter gloomily and go and scratch under the shrubbery. On Armistice day he quite let himself go, cackling and mafficking round the yard in a manner almost absurd. But who did not unbend a little on that historic day?

Perhaps his greatest achievement, however, was the mastering of a system of signals, a sort of simplified Morse code, which we established through the medium of an old motor-horn. One blast meant breakfast-time; two intimated that I was about to dig in the waste patch under the walnut trees and he was to assemble his wives for a diet of worms; three loud toots were the summons for the mid-day meal; four were the curfew call signifying that it was time for him to conduct his consorts to their coop for the night; and so on, with special arrangements in case of air-raids. Not once was Umslumpogaas at fault; no matter in what remote corner of the yard he and his hens might be, at the sound of the three blasts he would come hastening up with his hens for dinner. I was most gratified.

And then came the disaster. I was sawing wood one morning in the saddle house, and Umslumpogaas and his wives were sitting round about the door, dusting themselves. All was peaceful. Suddenly down the lane which passes the gate of my yard appeared a large grey-bodied car. Some school-children being in the road the driver emitted three loud warning hoots of his horn. In an instant Umslumpogaas was on his feet and, his wives at his heels, making a bee line for the gate. By the time he reached it the car had passed and was turning the corner that leads to the village, when the driver again sounded his horn thrice. With an imperious call to his wives to follow, Umslumpogaas set off at full speed in pursuit, and before I had fully grasped the situation my entire poultry-yard had vanished from sight in the wake of that confounded motor-car. And it is the unfortunate truth that neither Umslumpogaas nor a single member of his harem has been seen or heard of since. It is as bad as the affair of the Pied Piper of Hamelin.

I said at the beginning that this was rather a sad little story. Taking into consideration the present price of new-laid eggs it amounts more or less to a tragedy, and I put it down to nothing but the baleful effects of over-education.

* * * * *

[Illustration: "GET ON WITH YOUR SUPPER, ROBERT. IT'S ONLY THE MISSUS, AND SHE DAREN'T SAY ANYTHING FOR FEAR I SHOULD DEMOBILISE."]

* * * * *

GARDENING NOTES.

Meconopsis cambrica (Welsh Poppy). Owing to the wide popularity of the energetic daughter of the PRIME MINISTER we understand that the authorities at Kew have decided to re-name this plant Meganopsis.

Digitalis.--The spelling of the homely name of this well-known plant is to be altered in the Kew List to Foch's-glove; the suggestion of an interned German botanist that Mailed Fist would be more suitable not having met with the approval of the Council of the Royal Horticultural Society.

* * * * *

"SPAIN'S REPUBLICAN PARLIAMENT.

Lisbon, Wednesday.--It would seem that the Cabinet just formed by Senhor Tamagnini Barbosa will have in the next Parliament a moderate Republican majority."--Liverpool Daily Post.

No other journal seems to have noticed the re-annexation of Portugal by Spain.

* * * * *

"The task of fitting the square men created by the war into square holes is certainly going to be one of tremendous magnitude."--Lancashire Daily Post.

From some of the new Government appointments we gather that the PRIME MINISTER gave up the task in despair.

* * * * *

"Wanted to purchase elephants, sound and without vice, and to sell a variety of pigeons at reasonable prices."--Pioneer

(Allahabad). _

But we doubt if the advertiser will be able to get all the elephants, however free from vice, into the old pigeon-house.

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[Illustration: BRIGHTER CRICKET.]

* * * * *

THE FINANCIER.

He had sat at the same table in the same restaurant for years--more years than he cared to count. He was not as young as he used to be.

Always when he could he sat on the comfortable sofa-like seat on the wall side of the table. When that was fully occupied he sat on the other side on an ordinary upright chair, in which he could not lounge at ease.

He sat there now discontentedly, keeping a watchful eye for vacancies in the opposite party.

Half-way through his meal a vacancy occurred. He pushed his plate across the table and went round, sinking with a sigh into the cushioned seat.

The departing customer had left the usual gratuity under the saucer of his coffee-cup. In a minute or two the waitress would collect the cup and saucer and the coins.

But the waitress was busy. The room was full and there was the usual deficient service.

He finished eating, lighted a cigarette and called for a cup of coffee. It was then, I think, the thought came to him.

The other man's cup, saucer and money were still there.

His hand fluttered uncertainly over the cloth among the crockery. There seemed to be nobody looking. His fingers slid under the other man's saucer and in a moment the money was under his own.

He rose, took his hat and bill and went.

We left soon after.

"How mean!" said my wife. "Did you see? He made the other man's tip do. Even a woman wouldn't have done that."

It seemed severe, I thought, but that is what she said.

* * * * *

"The rats were chased out of camp and their skins tanned and made into dainty purses and handbags."--_Manchester Guardian_.

The rats having in their hurry left their skins behind them.

* * * * *

"The front door of the Lord Mayor's coachman opens on to a long, narrow staircase."--_Weekly Dispatch_.

Very interesting, no doubt; but the general public would have preferred to learn something about his bow-window.

* * * * *

IN WINTER.

Boreas blows on his high wood whistle,
Over the coppice and down the lane
Where the goldfinch chirps from the haulm of the thistle
And mangolds gleam in the farmer's wain.
Last year's dead and the new year sleeping
Under its mantle of leaves and snow;
Earth holds beauty fast in her keeping
But Life invincible stirs below.

Runs the sap in each root and rhizome,
Primrose yellow and snowdrop cold,
Windyflowers when the chiffchaff flies home,
Lenten lilies with crowns of gold.
Soon the woods will be blithe with bracken,
April whisper of lambs at play;
Spring will triumph--and our old black hen
(Thank the Lord!) will begin to lay.

ALGOL.

* * * * *

A "DRY" STATE.

"On the declaration of the armistice with Bulgaria this Balkan-Jug stopped running."--_Observer._

* * * * *

THE NEW NAVY.

["The New Navy of small craft, created by the special needs of the War ... has every reason to be proud of its share in bringing the War to a victorious conclusion. The good wishes of the Board of Admiralty and the Royal Navy will follow the armed yachts, trawlers, drifters and motor-boats after they have hauled down the colours they flew as His Majesty's Auxiliary Patrol Vessels."

Admiralty Message to the Auxiliary Patrol Service]

The Old Navy wakened and got under way
And hurried to Scapa in battle array,
While the drifters and trawlers looked on from afar
At the cruisers and battleships off to the War;
Having sped their departure with ev'ry good wish,
The drifters and trawlers returned to their fish.

Do you know the sensation, so hard to explain,
Of living a former existence again,
With never a clue to the why or the when?
Well, the drifters and trawlers were feeling it then,
And the sea chuckled deep as it washed to and fro
On the hulls of the battleships up in the Flow.

The Old Navy waited, the Old Navy swore,
While battleships costing two millions and more
Reviewed the position from starboard to port:
"It's small craft again, but we're terribly short;

Let us pray for the Empire whose sun never sets;"
Then the fishing fleet pensively hauled in its nets.

And rolling with laughter, at varying speeds
The New Navy sped to the Old Navy's needs;
Unblushingly paintless, by units or lots,
Came drifters and trawlers and whalers and yachts;
And, heedless of Discipline Acts, I've been told,
The New Navy cheerfully winked at the Old.

Without any pride but the pride of its race,
The New Navy took its historical place
In warfare on quite unconventional lines
As hunting sea vermin or sweeping for mines,
Till the sea would agree when a battleship swore
That surely they'd helped an Old Navy before.

Through Summer and Autumn, through Winter and Spring
The Old Navy patiently guarded the ring.
The while the Auxiliaries out on the blue
Were making the most of the flag that they flew,
And a cruiser would call to her sister, astern,
"Precocious as ever, they've nothing to learn!"

The Old Navy stretched as they got under way
To take the Surrender that fell on a Day,
And the drifters and trawlers looked on from afar
At the cruisers and battleships winning the War,
And, cheering the conquest with ev'ry good wish,
Prepared to go back to their nets and their fish.

But scarce had the fishing fleet time to turn round
When there fell on their ears a remarkable sound,
And some who were present have given their word
That the roll of DRAKE'S drum through the squadrons was heard;
Resulted a sequel as strange as it's true,
The Old Navy solemnly winked at the New.

The moral is simple but worthy of note
Whenever the spirit of DRAKE is afloat,
There's only one Navy when foes come to grips,
And nobody knows it so well as the ships,
And so when the small craft are blessed by the Board,
Demurely they murmur: "_New_ Navy? Oh, Lord!"

* * * * *

OUR BEAUTY COLUMN.

(_LATEST STYLE._)

We four are _such_ friends, Estelle, Rosalie, Beryl and I. If we weren't could we sit round and say the things to each other that we do? I ask you.

It's quite a small flat we have, just the one room, but it's _so_ convenient. There's a chemist's next door, so it's no walk to get _everything_ we require.

We were sitting round our cosy fireplace, wishing it were summer or that we had some coal, when one of those thoughts that make me so loved occurred to me.

"Estelle darling," I asked, though I knew, because the box was on the mantelpiece; "how _do_ you get that lovely flush? Your nose is such a

delicious tint; it reminds me of a tomato."

"I owe my colour to my fur coat," replied Estelle frankly; "you've no idea how warm it keeps me. I think a natural glow is so much more becoming than an artificial one."

"By the way, Madge," put in Rosalie (I'm Madge), "as you've started the game may I ask you a question? How do you get such a lovely shine on _your_ nose?"

"Chamois leather," I replied sweetly. (You see we're such friends we love telling each other our boudoir secrets.)

"I wish I knew how you keep those cunning little curls, Estelle," sighed Beryl longingly. "_My_ hair is so horribly straight."

"It's quite easy," explained Estelle; "you can do it with any ordinary flat-iron, though of course an electric-iron is the best. If you heat the iron over the gas or fire (if any) it gets sooty, and if you've golden hair, as I have this year--well. Only," she went on warningly, "always see that you lay your curl flat on the table before you iron it."

"I wish I could get my hands as white as yours, Beryl," I said.

"You can't expect to, darling; working at Whitehall as you do your fingers are bound to get stained with nicotine. Warm water and soap is all _I_ use. First I immerse my hands in tepid water, then I rub the soap (you can get it at any chemist's or oil-shop) into the pores--you'd be surprised how it lathers if you do it the right way--and then I rinse the soap off again. I learnt that trick from watching our washer-woman--she had such lovely hands."

"Why do you never use powder now, Estelle?" asked Rosalie. "Before the War one could never come near you without leaving footprints."

"My reasons were partly patriotic, conserving the food supply, you know, and partly owing to the mulatto-like tint the war-flour gave me. One doesn't want to go about looking half-baked, does one?"

"No," we murmured, making a pretty concerted number of it.

"But wrinkles, darling Estelle," I pleaded--"do tell us what you do for your wrinkles."

"Wrinkles," murmured Estelle, with a pretty puckering of her brow--"I haven't any left; I've given them all to you."

[EDITORIAL NOTE.--This series will not be continued in our next issue.]

* * * * *

"MUSICAL.

1916 car, nearly new, two-seater body, hood, screen, complete, L13."--_Provincial Paper_.

At that price it probably would be "musical."

* * * * *

"The latest telegrams from Berlin state that the Spartacus (Extremist) leaders are in extremis."--_Sunday Paper_.

But, confound it, that's their element.

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[Illustration: _Sergeant_. "ONLY ONE BUTTON DECENTLY CLEAN. AND I SUPPOSE YOU MANAGED TO GET THAT ONE BRIGHT BY RUBBIN' OF IT AGAINST THE CANTEEN COUNTER."]

* * * * *

A MILITARY EDUCATIONAL PROBLEM.

Dear Mr. Punch,--I write to ask your advice. As you know, the Army Council in its wisdom decreed that the Army, before being demobilised, must be educated. I have been chosen as one of the Educators.

My efforts to lead the Army into the paths of light and learning were crowned with success until in an evil moment I undertook to teach Private Goodbody. This genial ornament of our regimental sanitary squad is especially anxious to plumb the mysteries of arithmetic. When he had, as I thought, finally mastered the principle that if you borrow one from the shillings' column you must pay it back in the pounds' column, I set him the following sum:--

"Supposing you owed the butcher sixteen shillings and three pence halfpenny and took a pound note to pay him with, how much change ought he to give you?"

Private Goodbody scratched his head for several minutes and at last decided that he did not know.

"But come, Goodbody," I urged, "surely it's quite easy." And I repeated the question.

"I don't know, Sir; I don't never have no truck with butchers," he declared emphatically. "I leaves that 'ere to the missus."

"Ah!" I said, "and how does _she_ get the money to pay him?"

"_I_ gives it 'er," said Goodbody.

"What does she do with the change?" I asked next.

"Gives it back to me, I reck'n," he answered.

"Well," I continued, "if you don't know how much change there ought to be when you give her a pound and she spends sixteen shillings and three pence halfpenny, how do you know she gives you back the right amount?"

Private Goodbody eyed me with something suspiciously like contempt.

"If my missus started playin' any o' them monkey tricks on me, givin' the wrong change an' sich, I'd put it acrost 'er," he said.

And there the matter rests for the present. I feel that I should not lead Private Goodbody any further into the intricacies of his subject until he has solved my problem. This he resolutely professes himself unable to do, and begs to be allowed to leave it and plunge into the giddy vortex of the multiplication table.

Yours faithfully, MENTOR.

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"A cable message of 100 words from London to Johannesburg to-day,
at 2s. 6d. a word, costs L1 10s."--_Evening Paper_.

We suppose the Post Office makes a reduction for taking a quantity.

* * * * *

THE WIND.

The day I saw the Wind I stood
All by myself inside our wood,
Where Nurse had told me I must wait
While she went back through the white gate
To fetch her work ... I don't know why,
But suddenly I felt quite shy
With all the trees when Nurse was gone,
For quietness came on and on
And covered me right round as though
I was just nobody, you know,
And not a little girl at all...
But _then_--quite sudden--HER torn shawl
Came through the trees; I saw it gleam,
And SHE was near. Just like a dream
She looked at me. Her lovely hair
Was waving, waving everywhere,
And from her shawl--all tattered--
There blew the sweetest scents to me.
I didn't ask her who she was;
I didn't _need_ to ask, because
I _knew!_ ... That's all ... She didn't wait;
She _went_--when Nurse called through the gate.

* * * * *

"HOT WATER BATTLES--Best quality rubber, from 4/3 each." --_Parish
Magazine_.

A new kind of tank warfare, we suppose.

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[Illustration: OUR DANCING MEN.

"WHO'S THE SLIGHTLY ANCIENT DAME THAT THAT KID BINKS HAS BEEN DANCING
WITH ALL THE EVENING?"

"I DUNNO. YOUNG BINKS DOESN'T EITHER. BUT HE SAYS SHE'S THE ONLY WOMAN
IN THE ROOM WITH A GLIMMERING OF HOW TO 'JAZZ.'".]

* * * * *

THOUGHTS IN COMMITTEE.

The War decays; the Offices disperse,
And after many a bloomer flies the don;
All kinds of Bodies perish with a curse,
And only my Committee lingers on,
Still rambles gaily in the same old rings,
Still sighs, "At any rate, we are at one";
Yet even here, so catching, are these things,
Something, I think, is going to be done.

For me, I would not anything were done,
But would for ever sit on this soft seat
Each sweet recurrent Saturday, and run

An idle pencil o'er the foolscap sheet,
The free unrationed blotting-pad, and scrawl
Delightful effigies of those who speak,
But not myself say anything at all,
Only be mute and beautiful and meek ...

Are there not Ministers and ex-M.P.'s,
A Knight, a Baronet, a Brigadier?
Is it not wonderful to be with these,
To watch, and after in the wifely ear
Whisper, "This morning I exchanged some words
With old Sir Somebody, who thought of Tanks;
I saw the Chairman of the Board of Birds;
I said, 'How are you?' and he answered, 'Thanks'?"

So let us sit for ever--and expand;
Let us be paid, not properly, but well.
Let more men come, all opulent and bland,
So that we qualify for some hotel,
So that, as all the Constitution grows
From little seeds long buried in the past,
We too may be a part of it! Who knows?
We may become a Ministry at last.

And if indeed our end must be more tame,
Let large well-mounted photographs be made
Of this high gathering, and let each name
Beneath each face be generously displayed,
That I may say, when penury has crept
Too near for decency, to some old snob,
"_That_" was the kind of company I kept
When England needed me"--and get a job.

A.P.H.

* * * * *

"Good Servants of all kings required at once.--Apply Mrs. ----'s
Registry."--_Provincial Paper_.

There should be a good supply, as several monarchs have lately given
up housekeeping.

* * * * *

"REQUIRED, ROMPOTER, to float L50,000 company for manufacturing
bricks for reconstruction. Curiosity mongers please
refrain."--_Daily Paper_.

But for the warning we should have been sorely tempted to inquire what
a "Rompoter" may be.

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[Illustration: "DORA" DISCOMFITED.

"DORA." "WHAT, NO CENSORSHIP?" [_Swoons._]

{The Foreign Office has announced that Press Correspondents' messages
about the Peace Congress will not be censored.}}

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[Illustration: _Jock_. "BON JOUR, M'SIEUR. NOUS AVONS REVENUS DE
PERMISSION ET NOUS SOMMES BLINQUANT MISERABLE. SI VOUS FEREZ MON

AMI DE SOURIRE, JE DONNERAI VOUS DIX FRANCS."]

* * * * *

THE WAR DOGS' PARTY.

I am a plain dog that barks his mind and believes in calling a bone a bone, not one of your sentimental sort that allows the tail--that uncontrollable seat of the emotions--to govern the head. I voted Coalition, of course. As a veteran--three chevrons and the Croix de Guerre--I could hardly refuse to support the man who above all others helped us war dogs to beat the Bosch. But to say that I am satisfied with the way things are going on--that's a mouse of a very different colour, as the phrase goes. A terrier person who claims to own the PRIME MINISTER and has been very busy demanding what he calls our invaluable suffrages buttonholed me the other day outside the tripe shop and commenced to tell me all the wonderful things that we dogs would get if we only elected a strong Coalition Government--better biscuits, larger kennels, equal rabbits for all and I don't know what else. But when I asked him plainly, "Are you in favour of keeping out the dachshunds?" the fellow hedged and said the question was not so important as some people seemed to think, and that financial interests had to be considered.

And that's how the War Dogs' Party came to be formed, for when they heard how the land lay some of the influential dogs in our neighbourhood called a meeting in Jorrocks' Mews and elected me chairman. We decided that membership should not be confined to dogs who had actually seen service at the Front, but that any dog who had faced the trials of the War in the spirit of true patriotism should be eligible. A slight difficulty was encountered in the case of the Irish terrier who owns the butcher's shop and notoriously has never been on bone rations, some of the young hotheads claiming that he was not eligible. But Snap is a very popular dog, and when he is not brooding over his national grievances is a merry fellow and always ready to share a bone with a pal. So I ruled that on account of the historic wrongs of Ireland we would overlook Snap's defiance of the Public Bones Order and allow him to be one of us.

One of the first things you learn in the trenches is the use of tact in coping with delicate situations. Well, we drew up a very strong platform and were on the point of carrying it unanimously when our secretary, a clever fellow but temperamental, like all poodles, spotted the big yellow cat from No. 14 slinking down the street on some poisonous errand or other, and the meeting adjourned in what I can only describe as a disorderly manner. Of course we are treating the Declaration of Peace Aims, as we called it, as carried, though the secretary insists on adding a fifteenth point, which he says is of vital importance, relating to the Declawing of Yellow Cats.

The first plank in our platform is BRITAIN FOR BRITISH DOGS, which sounds very well, don't you think? Sassafra, the Aberdeen terrier from No. 3, a solid fellow but unimaginative, wanted it to be ONCE A U-DOG ALWAYS A U-DOG, but I ruled that that couldn't be right because once there had been a U-dog next door to us, but now there wasn't. Of course they all wanted to hear about it, but we war dogs are supposed to be as modest as we are brave, so I simply said that he was spurlos versenkt. But it isn't only German dogs we draw the line at. Take the Pekinese. I've always said if we didn't combat the Yellow Peril we'd regret it, and now the pests are everywhere. My master's woman has one which she calls Pitti Sing. Did you ever hear of such a name for a dog? But then it isn't a dog in the real sense of the word. Only last Friday the little beast flew at me--all over an absurd chicken bone which was really meant for me but had been put on to its plate by mistake--and deliberately filled my mouth full of nasty fluffy fur.

Of course the woman had to come in at that moment and, instead of chastising the little monster, she grabbed it up and hugged it, saying, "Diddums nasty great dog bite um poor ickle Pitti Singums?" and a lot more silly rot equally at variance with the facts. I wagged my tail at her to show it wasn't my fault, but she just wouldn't see reason and told master that I must have a good whipping. Of course master and I both know that one isn't whipped for a little thing like that, so we retired into the study, and while master pretended to whip me I pretended to howl. I was just beginning to howl in a very lifelike way when the woman rushed in and called master a cruel brute, and said she didn't mean him to hurt me really.

Women are funny creatures and I'm glad I don't own one. Snap, the butcher's dog, even went so far as to suggest that we should adopt anti-feminism as a plank in our platform, but the Irish Wolfhound who comes from Cavendish Square said that his mistress was driving an ambulance in France and that, in her absence, anyone who had anything to say against women would have to see him first. Of course it's very difficult to argue with that kind of dog, and, though Snap seemed inclined to press the point, I ruled the proposal out of order. The value of resource is one of the things you learn in the Army.

I think Snap was rather relieved really, because after the meeting he asked me to go and help him dig up a nearly new mutton bone that he had buried under a laurel bush in the Square.

Well, to return to our platform, what we say about these foreign dogs is "Keep them all out." Of course there are some Allied dogs, like Poodles and Plumpuddings and Boston terriers, that have earned the right to be considered one of ourselves, but when it comes to having Mexican Hairless and Schipperkes and heaven knows what else coming into the country and taking the biscuits out of our mouths--well, we say it isn't good enough. Not that we're insular, mind you, but to hear some of these mangy foreigners talking about the Brotherhood of Dogs! But I must tell you how Bolshevism raised its ugly head in our midst. It was while we were discussing the second plank in our platform, which is "DOGS, NOT DOORMATS."

But there, Master is calling me to take him for a walk, so it must wait till next week. ALGOL.

(_To be continued._)

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[Illustration: _Official (to applicant for post as policewoman)_ "AND WHAT WOULD YOU DO IN THE EVENT OF A STREET ACCIDENT?"

Applicant. "OH, I SHOULD--ER--CALL A POLICEMAN."]

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"German civil officials in Nancy must salute American officers. Failure to obey the order means arrest."--_Globe_.

We hear that the same regulation applies to all German civil officials in Lyons, Toulouse and Bordeaux.

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NEW BOOKS

FROM MESSRS. TRUEMAN AND WASHINGTON'S LIST.

THE ZOOMERS.

BY GLADYS WANK.

PRICE 6/113/4.

A new writer who by virtue of her godlike genius takes her seat with HOMER, DANTE, SHAKSPEAKE and MARIE CORELLI, and a novel such as the world has not known since _The Miseries of Mephistopheles_ startled the comatose mid-Victorians from their slumbers--both stand revealed in these soul-shaking pages. To say that this is the novel of the year is to malign its greatness It is the novel of the century, of all centuries, of all time.

FIRST REVIEW BEFORE PUBLICATION.

"It is not saying too much, when I solemnly assert that I really believe that Miss Wank's first book is the best she has ever written."--" _A MAN OF KENT_," in _The Scottish Treacy_.

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SIMIAN SONGS.

BY ISABEL MUNKITTRICK.

PRICE 11/31/2.

These remarkable lyrics are translations into vernacular verse of the prose versions of specimens of the literature of the great apes of Africa, collected by Professor GARNER. It is not too much to say that those touching _cris de coeur_ redolent of the jungle, the lagoon and the hinterland, will appeal with irresistible force to all lovers of sincere and passionate emotion. The Chimpanzee's "swing song" on page 42 is a marvel of oscillating melody.

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THE MILLENNIUM VIA ARMAGEDDON.

BY REV. ANGUS WOTTLEY, D.D.

WITH A FOREWORD BY PRINCIPAL CAWKER.

PRICE 9/41/4.

This is a work of over 120,000 words of extraordinary beauty and distinction. It has gone into 150 editions in Patagonia, where the editions are very large, and ought to be in great demand in this country. Tiberius Mull, writing in the Literary Supplement of _The Scottish Oil World_, uses these remarkable words: "I do honestly believe that Dr. Angus Wottley's book is the most weighty volume he has ever given to the world."

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POLLY ANDREA'S SACRIFICE.

BY SALINA LAKE.

PRICE 8/31/2.

This is the first attempt to present the limitations of the modern monogamous system in its true polyphonic perspective, several huge editions having been exhausted before publication. Professor

McTalisler writes in the Theological Supplement of John Bull: "For a person in a state of partial exhaustion I can imagine no more efficacious stimulant than is to be found in those beautiful pages. Not being acquainted with any of the earlier works of the author, I can honestly declare that in my opinion it is the best thing that I have read from her pen, and, further, that it has made a deeper impression upon me than any other work which I have not read but which deals with the same subject."

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[Illustration: DOPE.

Jack. "'ERE'S AN ARTICLE 'ERE ON THE 'FASCINATION OF OPIUM SMOKIN'.' FASCINATION, I DON'T FINK! THE ONLY TIME I SMOKED IT WAS IN CHINA, AN' FOR THREE DAYS I 'AD AH 'EAD ON ME LIKE A SMOKE BARRAGE."]

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PEACE AND PROMOTION.

Lucasta, prideful times they were
When first it came to pass
That on each shoulder I might bear
A little star of brass.
And when by reason of my zeal
I was awarded twain,
'Twas not mere vanity to feel
Almost as proud again.
My warrior soul was filled with song
In triumph's clearest key,
When, feeling thrice as broad and strong,
My shoulders shone with three.
Yet these I'll gladly from their place
Remove, and in their stead
Support one star of gentler grace--
Lucasta's golden head.

* * * * *

"GENTLEMAN required, knowledge of short-hand essential although not absolutely necessary."--Local Paper.

A very nice distinction.

* * * * *

"In my opinion the Asiatic cholera, 1850-1851, took more lives and caused more anxiety than the flu. In Spanish Town, with a population of 5,000, 7,800 died."--Daily Gleaner (Kingston, Jamaica).

We agree that the 'flu mortality can hardly have been greater than this.

* * * * *

"Flageolets soaked or parboiled previously and placed in alternate layers in a fireproof dish with sliced tomato or potato sprinkled with onion also make a valuable dish." --Evening Paper.

We have fortunately not yet been reduced to eating our wood-wind instruments; but we think we should need a double-bass to wash them down.

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[Illustration: _Impressed Rustic Sightseer_. "AY, AMOS, IT MUST TAKE YEARS OF OILING AN' COMBING TO TRAIN HAIR LIKE THAT."]

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THE MUD LARKS.

I met a man in the Club at Lille the other day who told me that he knew all about women. He had studied the subject, he said, and could read 'em like an open book. He admitted that it took a bit of doing, but that once you had the secret they would trot up and eat out of your hand.

Having thus spoken he swallowed three whiskies in rapid succession and rushed away to jump a lorry-ride to Germany, and I have not seen him since, much to my regret, for I need his advice, I do.

* * * * *

We splashed into the hamlet of Sailly-le-Petit at about eight o'clock of a pouring dark night, to find the inhabitants abed and all doors closed upon us.

However, by dint of entreaties whispered through key-holes and persuasions cooed under window-shutters, I charmed most of them open again and got my troop under cover, with the exception of one section. Its Corporal, his cape spouting like a miniature watershed, swam up. "There's a likely-lookin' farm over yonder, Sir," said he, "but the old gal won't let us in. She's chattin' considerable." I found a group of numb men and shivering horses standing knee-deep in a midden, the men exchanging repartee with a furious female voice that shrilled at them from a dark window. "Is that the officer?" the voice demanded. I admitted as much. "Then remove your band of brigands. Go home to England, where you belong, and leave respectable people in peace. The War is finished."

I replied with some fervour (my boots were full of water and my cap dribbling pints of iced-water down the back of my neck) that I was not playing the wandering Jew round one-horse Picard villages in late December for the amusement I got out of it and that I could be relied on to return to England at the earliest opportunity, but for the present moment would she let us in out of the downpour, please? The voice soared to a scream. No, she would not, not she. If we chose to come soldiering we must take the consequences, she had no sympathy for us. She called several leading saints to witness that her barn was full to bursting anyhow and there was no room. That was that. She slammed the window-shutter and retired, presumably to bed. The Corporal, who had been scouting round about, returned to report room for all hands in the barn, which was quite empty. Without further ado I pushed all hands into the barn and left them for the night.

Next morning, while walking in the village street, I beheld a remarkable trio approaching. It consisted of a venerable cleric--his skirts held high enough out of the mud to reveal the fact that he favoured flannel underclothing and British army socks--and a massive rustic dressed principally in hair, straw-ends and corduroys. The third member was a thick short bulldog of a woman, who, from the masterly way in which she kept corduroys from slipping into the village smithy and saved the cleric from drifting to a sailor's grave in the duck-pond, seemed to be the controlling spirit of the party. By a deft movement to a flank she thwarted her reluctant companions in an attempt to escape up a by-way, and with a nudge here and a tug there brought them to a standstill in front of me and opened

the introductions.

"M. le Cure," indicating the cleric, who dropped his skirts and raised his beaver.

"M. le Maire," indicating corduroys, who clutched a handful of straw out of his beard and groaned loudly.

"_Moi, je suis Madame, Veuve Palliard-Dubose_" indicating herself.

I bowed, quailing inwardly, for I recognized the voice. She gave corduroys a jab in the short ribs with her elbow. "_Eh bien_, now speak."

Corduroys rolled his eyes like a driven bullock, sneezed a shower of straw and groaned again.

"_Imbecile!_" spat Madame disgustedly and prodded the Cure. But the Cure was engaged in religious exercises, beads flying through his fingers, lips moving, eyes tight closed. Madame shrugged her shoulders eloquently as if to say, "Men--what worms! I ask you," and turned on me herself. She led off by making some unflattering guesses as to my past career, commented forcibly on my present mode of life, ventured a few cheerful prophecies as to my hereafter and polished off a brisk ten minutes heart-to-heart talk by snapping her fingers under my nose and threatening me with the guillotine if I did not instantly remove my man-eating horses from her barn.

"Observe," she concluded triumphantly, "I have the Church and State on my side."

"Have you?" I queried. "Have you? Look again."

She turned to the right for the Mayor, but a strong trail of straw running up the by-way told that that massive but inarticulate dignitary had slunk home to his threshing. She turned to the left for the Cure, but the whisk of a skirt and a flannel shank disappearing into the church-porch showed that the discreet clerk had side-stepped for sanctuary. I thought it kinder to leave Madame the widow Palliard-Dubose to herself at this juncture, but something told me I had not heard the last of her. Nor had I. A week later an imposing document was forwarded from the orderly-room for my "information and necessary action, please." It emanated from the French Military Mission and claimed from me the modest sum of two thousand three hundred and fourteen francs on behalf of one Madame Veuve Palliard-Dubose, of the village of Sailly-le-Petit, Pas de Calais, the claimant alleging that my troopers had stolen unthreshed wheat to that value wherewith to feed their horses. A prompt settlement would oblige.

I fled panic-stricken down to stables and wagged the document in the faces of the thieves. They were virtuously indignant; hadn't pinched no wheat-straw at all--not in Sailly-le-Petit. Might have been a bit absent-minded-like at Auchy-en-Artois, and again at Pressy-aux-Bois mistakes may have been made, but here never--no, Sir, s'welp-them-Gawd. I wrote to the French Mission denying the impeachment. They replied with a fresh shower of claims. I answered with a storm of denials. The sky snowed correspondence. Just when the French were putting it all over me and my orderly-room was hinting that I had best pay up and save the Entente Cordiale, the French ran out of paper and sent one of their missionaries in a car to settle the matter verbally. I gave him a good lunch, an excellent cigar and spread all the facts of the case before him as one human to another. He spent an hour nosing about the village, and the result of his investigations was that Madame Veuve Palliard-Dubose, so far from

having her wheat stolen, had had no wheat to steal, and furthermore never in the course of her agricultural activities had she harvested crops to the value of Francs 2314. Virtue triumphant. Evil vanquished. Madame the widow Palliard-Dubose retired grimly into her cabin, slamming the door on the world.

Yesterday was New Year's Day. Imagine my surprise when, on visiting the horses at mid-day, Madame Veuve Palliard-Dubose leaned over the half-door of her dwelling and waved her hand to me. "_Ah, ha, Monsieur le Lieutenant_", she crowed, "many felicitations on this most auspicious day! _Bon jour, belle annee_!"

I was so staggered I treated her to my _perfecto superfino_, my very best salute (usually reserved for Generals and Field Cashiers). "The same to you, Madame, and many of 'em. _Vive la France!_"

Madame bowed and smiled with all her features. "_Vive l'Angleterre_!" What a lot of weather we were having, weren't we? and what a glorious victory it had been, hadn't it?--mainly due to the dear soldiers, she felt sure. She hoped I found myself enjoying robust health.

I replied that I was in the pink myself and trusted she was the same.

Never pinker in her life, she said; everything was perfectly lovely. She beckoned me nearer. She had a small favour to ask. At this season of peace and goodwill would the so amiable Lieutenant deign to enter her modest abode and take a little glass of _vin blanc_ with her?

The "amiable Lieutenant" would be enchanted.

She swung the door open and bowed me in. The glasses were already filled and waiting on the table--a big one for me, a little one for her.

We clicked rims and lifted our elbows to the glorious victory, to the weather (which was rotten) and our mutual pinkness.

"_A votre sante, mon Lieutenant_!" crooned Madame the widow Palliard-Dubose.

"_A votre, Madame_," replied her Lieutenant, quaffing the whole issue in one motion. Paraffin, ladies and gentlemen, pure undiluted paraffin--paugh! wow! ouch!

* * * * *

If the fellow I met in the Lille Club who reads women's souls and gets 'em to feed out of his hand should also happen to read this, will he please write and tell me what my next move is? PATLANDER.

* * * * *

[Illustration: "IT'S PERFECTLY SIMPLE, UNCLE--TWO SLOW, THREE QUICK, THREE SIDE CHASSEES, WOBBLE WOBBLE, LAME DUCK, LAME DUCK, DIP, GRASSHOPPER, TWO SLOW, SWIVEL, SCISSORS, JAZZ-ROLL, KICK, TURN, TWO CHASSEES, BACK, TWINKLE, AND ON AGAIN."]

* * * * *

"TOO LATE FOR CLASSIFICATION.

12 March and April pullets laying rabbits."--_Advt. in Local Paper_.

Personally we should place these admirable birds in a class by

themselves.

* * * * *

"HUNT FOR CIGARETTES.

STATE CONTROL ENDS, BUT SUPPLY STILL SCARCE."--_Daily Chronicle_.

Is this the fag-end of State control, or the State control of fag-ends?

* * * * *

"Girl, about 18, for grocery; permanency; experience not necessary; must love locally."--_Daily Paper_.

But we doubt if this attempt to constrain the tender passion within geographical limits will prove a "permanency."

* * * * *

There was a young man from Dundee
Who didn't succeed with the Sea;
So they gave him command
Of the Air and the Land
Just to make it quite fair for all three.

* * * * *

THE END OF THE VOLUNTEERS.

And now the fell decree by post went out
That all the world might understand and know
How that our Volunteers henceforth must live
A quite unkhaki'd and civilian life,
Stripped of their rifles, bared of bayonets too.
Ah, many a time had we passed by to drill
And scorned the loafer who hung round to see,
The while, with accurate swift-moving feet
And hands that flashed in unison, we heard
The Sergeant-Major's voice in anger raised
Because we did not mark it as he wished;
Or uttering words of praise for them that knew
To act when rear rank got itself in front.
And ah, we knew to mount a gallant guard,
To fix our sentries, and to prime them well
With varied information that might serve
To help them in their duties and to make
Them glib and eloquent when called upon
In all the changes of this martial life.
And we could march in line and march in fours,
And bear ourselves ferociously and well
When the inspecting officer appeared.
And, one great day--it was our apogee--
When volunteers for France were called upon,
A forest of accepting hands went up;
But nothing further ever came of it.
At any rate it showed a right good will
And stamped our Volunteers as gallant stuff
To serve their country should the need arise.
And now their rifles have been ta'en away,
Their side-arms are removed, and they themselves
Are mocked in obloquy and sunk in scorn.

* * * * *

THE LINGUIST.

Nancy is eleven and thinks I know everything. I never could resist or contradict her.

"Now tell me about animals in Africa," she said. "Tell me lots."

This was better than usual, for I possess a heavily-mortgaged and drought-stricken farm in some obscure corner of that continent and have spent much time disputing with beasts who refused to acknowledge my proprietary claims.

So I told Nancy tales of lions that roared till the stars tumbled out of the sky with fright, and, when she crept very close to me, of the blue monkeys with funny old faces who swung through the trees and across the river-bed to steal my growing corn. I told her of the old ones who led them in the advance and followed in the retreat, chattering orders, and of the little babies who clung to their mothers. I told her that monkeys elected not to talk lest they should be made to work, but that there were a few men living who understood their broken speech and could hold communion with them.

She led me on with little starts and questions and--well, I may all unwillingly have misled her as to my general intelligence.

"We'll go to the Zoo to-morrow," Nancy commanded, "and you can talk to the monkeys and find out what they think. Let's."

* * * * *

Nancy shook her curls and turned her back on the patient-looking bear.

"He's stupid," she said. "Why can't you find the monkeys? You know you promised."

I suggested luncheon, but was overruled, and, on turning a corner, read my fate in large letters on the opposite building.

"Come on," said Nancy, taking me by the hand.

Her first selection was very old and melancholy. He accepted a piece of locust-bean with leisurely condescension and watched us with quiet interest as he chewed. He rather frightened me; the wisdom of all the ages was behind his wrinkled eyes.

"When you were in your prison did the Germans feed you through the bars?" Nancy asked with great clearness.

Several people in the vicinity became aware of our existence and, feeling the limelight upon me, I again mentioned the lateness of the hour.

"Talk to him," she said. "Ask him what it's like in there."

I treated the blinking monkey to a collection of clicks and chuckles which would have startled even a professor of the Bantu languages. He finished his bean and emitted a low bird-like call.

"What's that?" asked Nancy.

"You see," I said, "he's brown and comes from a different part of the country. It's like Englishmen and Frenchmen. Now, if he was blue--"

"Ask that keeper," said Nancy.

"He's very busy," I whispered. "We oughtn't to interrupt him."

Nancy at once ran over to the man.

"Have you got any blue ones?" she asked. "'Cos _he_ can talk to them. We'd like to see one."

The man looked at me without interest. I was an amateur and a rival; but Nancy's smile can work wonders.

"Yes, Missy," he said, "a beauty round here."

We reached the cage all too soon.

"Now talk," Nancy ordered.

Again I went through my ridiculous performance. The monkey looked at the keeper.

The hand which lay in mine told me that Nancy's confidence was waning. I knew then how much I valued it.

"Not very well, is he?" I asked of the keeper. "A little out of sorts--this weather, you know."

My reputation was in his hands, but I dared make no sign. Nancy's eyes were on my face.

The man looked at me and then at the eager little face below him. "Heavy cold, Sir," he said stolidly. "Always makes 'em a bit hard o' hearing. Poor old Topsy! Want to be left alone, do you?"

"What a pity," said Nancy. "Mother _will_ be sorry to hear that the only one you could speak to was so ill and deaf."

"What were you giving him?" she asked as we walked away.

"Only a little New Year present for his children," I said.

"How do you know he's got any children?" Nancy demanded. "He didn't say so, did he?"

"No, but I'm quite certain he has," I answered.

* * * * *

Letter received by an officer in Egypt:--

"Sir I have the honour and the opportunity to write you a letter and I am coming to ask you and to pray you perhaps perchance it is possible to find for me employment for translator. I am very sorry and much vexed and grieved and bothered and harassed consequently accordingly consequently I made you acknowledge my petition request and to bid you peradventure well you occupied me for 6 months with a contract. I beg you very much to answer respond reply if that letter I suppose deem conceive cogitate mediate when you will receive my letter you will respond me at once immediately from your cervical and faithful."

It is inferred that the would-be "translator" kept a dictionary at his elbow and took no chances.

* * * * *

[Illustration: _Visitor_. "YOU FOUGHT WITH THE GALLANT 51ST DIVISION, DID YOU NOT?"

Scot. "AY--D'YE MIND MY FACE?"

Visitor. "OH--NOT AT ALL."]

* * * * *

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(_BY MR. PUNCH'S STAFF OF LEARNED CLERKS._)

I wonder if I am alone in a feeling of impatience and bewilderment over what I may call half-fairy stories. Magic I understand and love; but this now diluted form of it leaves me cold. Take for example the book that has occasioned this complaint, _The Curious Friends_ (ALLEN AND UNWIN), an unconventional and perhaps just a little silly tale about a secret association of children and grownups, pledged to mutual help and a variety of altruistic aims--a scheme, with all its faults, at least human and understandable. But Miss C.J. DELAGREVE has chosen to complicate it by (apparently) a dash of the supernatural, in the person of a character called _Saint Ken_, about whom we are told that he lived in a tunnel on the Underground and employed himself in helping distressed passengers. Well, what I in my brutal way want to know is whether this is a joke, or what. Because if I have to credit it, over goes the rest of the plot into frank make-believe. And fantasy of this kind consorts but ill with a scheme that embraces such realities as heart-failure and typhus. Not in any case that Miss DELAGREVE'S plot could be called exactly convincing. "Preposterous" would be the apter word for this society of the Blue-Bean Wearers, in which vague elderly persons wandered about with sadly self-conscious children and talked like the dialogue in clever books. This at least was the impression conveyed to me. I may add that I was continually aware of a certainty that Miss DELAGREVE will do very much better when she selects a simpler and less affected subject.

* * * * *

In _Douglas Jerrold_ (HODDER AND STOUGHTON) Mr. WALTER JERROLD has executed a pious task. He has written the life of his grandfather, and has done it with great enthusiasm. The work is in two volumes, one thick and the other thin, and sometimes I cannot help feeling that one volume, the thin one, would have been enough. DOUGLAS JERROLD'S reputation depends upon his work in _Punch_ and his writing of plays, of which nearly seventy stand to his credit. To _Punch_ he contributed from the second number and soon became a power by means of "Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures," "The Story of a Feather" and countless other articles which suited the taste of the public of that day. Of his work for _Punch_ there is only the barest mention in this book, for that story has already been told at some length by the same author. In the present book Mr. WALTER JERROLD devotes a large amount of space to a review of DOUGLAS JERROLD'S theatrical pieces. Where now is a five-act comedy, entitled _Bubbles of the Day_, which at the time of its production was described as "one of the wittiest and best constructed comedies in the English language"? I am afraid that this comedy, and even _Black-eyed Susan_, JERROLD'S greatest triumph, have passed away into the limbo of forgotten plays and can never return to us. Another drama had in it as one of the characters "a certain cowardly English traveller named Luckless Tramp," a name, I should have thought, quite sufficient in itself to swamp every possible chance of success; yet our forefathers seem to have had no difficulty in accommodating themselves to it.

* * * * *

In an author's note to Moon of Israel (MURRAY) Sir H. RIDER HAGGARD tells us that his book "suggests that the real Pharaoh of the Exodus was not Menepthah or Merenptah, son of Rameses the Great, but the mysterious usurper, Amenmeses ..." I am not a student of Egyptology, and in this little matter of AMENMESES am perfectly content to trust myself to Sir RIDER, and, provided that he tells a good tale, to follow him wherever he chooses to lead the way. And this story, put into the mouth of Ana, the scribe, is packed with mystery and magic and miracles and murder. For fear, however, that this may sound a little too exhausting for your taste, let me add that the main theme is the love of the Crown Prince of Egypt for the Israelite, Lady Merapi, Moon of Israel. Sir RIDER'S hand has lost none of its cunning, and, though his dialogue occasionally provokes a smile when one feels that seriousness is demanded, he is here as successful as ever in creating or, at any rate, in reproducing atmosphere. I hope, when you read this tale of the Pharaohs, that you will not find that your memory of the Book of Exodus is as faded as I found mine to be.

* * * * *

Mr. CHRISTOPHER CULLEY, whom you may remember for a bustling, rather cinematic story called Naomi of the Mountains, has now followed this with another, considerably better. Lily of the Alley (CASSELL) is, in spite of a title of which I cannot too strongly disapprove, as successful a piece of work of its own kind as anyone need wish for, showing the author to have made a notable advance in his art. Again the setting is Wild West, on the Mexican border, the theme of the tale being the outrages inflicted upon American citizens by VILLA, and what seemed then the bewildering delay of Washington over the vindication of the flag. The "Alley" of its unfortunate name is the slum in Kansas City where Dave, stranded on his way westward, met the girl to whom the laws of fiction were inevitably to join him. I fancy that one of Mr. CULLEY'S difficulties may have lain in the fact that, when the tale, following Dave, had finally shaken itself from the dust of cities, the need for feminine society was conspicuously less urgent. Even after a rescued and refreshed Lily is brought up-country, she is kept, so to speak, as long as possible at the base, and only arrives on the actual scene of Dave's activities in time to be hustled hurriedly out of the way of the final (and wonderfully thrilling) chapters. The explanation is, I think, that the cowboy, whom he knows so well, is for Mr. CULLEY hero and heroine too. Dave, round whom the story revolves, is a pleasant study of a type of American youth which we are coming gratefully to estimate at its true worth; but in the development of the theme Dave soon becomes almost insignificant beside the greater figure of the cowboy, Monte Latarette. For him alone I should regard the book as one not to be missed by anyone who values a handling of character at once delicate and masterful.

* * * * *

Keeling Letters and Recollections (ALLEN AND UNWIN) is a book that will perhaps rouse varied emotions in those who read it. Regret there will be for so much youth and intellectual vigour sacrificed; admiration for courage and for a patriotism that circumstances made by no means the simple matter of conviction that it has been for most; and vehement opposition to many of the views (on the War especially) held by the subject of the memoir. By sympathy and environment KEELING was, to begin with, a wholehearted admirer of Germany. Strangely, in one of his social views, he carried this admiration even to the extent of advocating a Teutonic control that should include Holland. To such a mind the outbreak of war with Germany may well have seemed the last horror. But he admitted no choice. Within a few days he was a private soldier; he was killed, as sergeant-major, while bombing a trench on

August 18, 1916. The spirit in which he entered the War is shown in an extract from a letter: "What we have got to do in the interest of Europe is to fight Germany without passion, with respect." How grimly those last two words sound now! Through everything KEELING held with a generous obstinacy to his original prejudices. Germany remained most tragically his second fatherland. Somewhere he writes, "I expect I shall be a stronger Pacifist after the war than any of the people who are Pacifists now. But I don't feel one will have earned the right to be one *unless one has gone in with the rest*." The italics are mine. Before a vindication so unanswerable criticism has no further word to say.

* * * * *

Extract from collected works, of Viscount HALDANE OF CLOAN, O.M., K.T., Op. 3001, Minister of Reconstruction. Report of the Machinery of Government Committee (Cd. 9230), par. 12:--

"We have come to the conclusion, after surveying what came before us, that in the sphere of civil government the duty of investigation and thought, as preliminary to action, might with great advantage be more definitely recognised."

"That's the stuff to give 'em."

* * * * *

"Every boy in the street knows that all component factors in Jugo-Slav countries have proclaimed the union of Jugo-Slavia under the sceptre of the Karagorgjevic dynasty, and that the jurisdiction of the new Jugo-Slav Government extends over Belgrade and Nish, as well as over Zagreb, Sarajevo, Spljet, or Ljubljana."--_Letter to "Manchester Guardian."_

Then why all this talk about the necessity of higher education!

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Cophetua's Queen* (on her first visit to a new royal residence)._"OH, COPH! AIN'T IT A DINK!"

King Cophetua. "My DEAR CHILD, BEFORE REMARKING THAT IT IS ALL YOURS AND NOT GOOD ENOUGH, I WOULD LIKE TO POINT OUT THAT YOUR LANGUAGE, THOUGH EXCUSABLE, IS NOT QUITE IN KEEPING WITH YOUR ELEVATED POSITION."]

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