

# Punch, or the London Charivari, Vol. 156, April 16, 1919

Various

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Title: Punch, or the London Charivari, Vol. 156, April 16, 1919

Author: Various

Release Date: March 27, 2004 [eBook #11732]

Language: English

Character set encoding: US-ASCII

\*\*\*START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI, VOL. 156, APRIL 16, 1919\*\*\*

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PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI

VOL. 156

APRIL 16, 1919

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## CHARIVARIA.

We understand that a proposal to send a relief party to America to rescue Scotsmen from the threatened Prohibition law is under consideration.

\*\*\*

It is rumoured that \_The Times\_ is about to announce that it does not hold itself responsible for editorial opinions expressed in its own columns.

\*\*\*

A correspondent, complaining of the tiny flats in London, states that he is a trombone-player, and every time he wants to get the lowest note he has to go out on to the landing.

\*\*\*

In Essex Street, Shoreditch--so Dr. ADDISON explained to the House of Commons--there are seven hundred and thirty-three people in twenty-nine houses. A correspondent writes that a single house in the neighbourhood of Big Ben contains seven hundred and seven persons, many of them incapable, and that nothing is being done about it.

\*\*\*

"The Original Dixie Land Jazz Band has arrived in London," says an evening paper. We are grateful for the warning.

\*\*\*

Over two hundred season-ticket-holders live within a mile radius at Southend. We suppose there must be some attraction at Southend to explain why so many season-ticket-holders live there.

\*\*\*

We are pleased to be able to throw some light on the mystery of the Russian who was not shot in Petrograd last week. It appears that he ducked his head.

\*\*\*

We await confirmation of the report that an American has offered to defray the cost of the War if the authorities will name it after him.

\*\*\*

The Surplus Government Property Disposal Board is making a special offer of eighteen-pounder guns to golf clubs. For a long shot out of a bad lie the superiority of the eighteen-pounder over the Sammie cleek is conceded by all the best golfers.

\*\*\*

Westgate-on-Sea has decided to abolish bathing-machines. In future visitors desiring to bathe will have to do it by hand.

\*\*\*

Mr. KELLAWAY informed the House of Commons the other day that the War Office has forty million yards of surplus aeroplane linen. It seems inevitable that some of it will have to be washed in public.

\*\*\*

A woman aged twenty-six, mother of five children, told the Old Street police magistrate that she could not read. How she managed to have five children without being able to read the Defence of the Realm Regulations is regarded by the authorities as a mystery.

\*\*\*

At the Royal Drawing Society's exhibition there is a picture painted by a child of two. Pictures by older artists, with all the appearances of having been painted by children of this unripe age, are, of course, no novelty.

\*\*\*

"Whitehall Wakes Up," says \_The Evening News\_. An indignant denial of this charge is hourly expected.

\*\*\*

A Northumberland man last week declined to draw his unemployment pay on the ground that he was not actually wanting it. His workmates put it down to the alleged fact that a careless nurse had let him fall out of the perambulator on to his head.

\*\*\*

"Unless Russian women join the Bolshevik movement," says Herr RADEK, "they will all be shot by order of Lenin." This confirms our worst fears that these Russian revolutionaries are becoming rather spiteful.

\*\*\*

A new fire-engine has been provided for Aberavon. As a result of this addition to their appliances the Aberavon Fire Brigade are now able to consider a few additional fires.

\*\*\*

A large rat with peculiar red markings on its back has recently been seen at Woodvale, Isle of Wight. In consequence much alarm is felt locally, as it is feared that this is an indication that the rodents on the isle have embraced Bolshevism.

\*\*\*

The correspondent who, as reported in these columns, noticed a pair of labourers building within a stone's-throw of Catford Bridge, now writes to say that a foundation stone has been laid.

\*\*\*

Philanthropists are warned against a beggar who is going about saying that, when wounded in France, he was so full of bullets that they took him back to the Base in an ammunition wagon instead of an ambulance.

\*\*\*

The reported decision of the Sinn Fein Executive, that policemen shall only be shot at on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, has definitely eased a situation which it was feared could only be coped with by arresting the instigators of such crimes.

\*\*\*

In a recent suit for alimony a wealthy New Yorker complained that his wife used a diamond-studded watch for a golf tee. If she had only wasted the money on a new ball he would never have complained.

\*\*\*

Experiments in rat-killing, says a news item, are being carried out at the Zoo. At the time of writing the reticulated python is said to be leading the whale-headed stork by a matter of three rats.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: \_Husband (just arrived home).\_ "WHAT ON EARTH HAVE YOU BEEN DOING WITH YOURSELF?"

\_Wife\_, "ONLY THE COAL-MAN'S BEEN AT LAST, AND I SIMPLY COULDN'T RESIST GIVING THE DEAR MAN A KISS!"]

\* \* \* \* \*

From the report of a breach of promise case:--

"The engagement came about through a chance meeting in Richmond Park in the summer of 117."--\_Daily Herald\_.

Despite the happy case of Jacob and Rachel, we never have approved of these long engagements.

\* \* \* \* \*

A PAYING GAME.

When Belgium lay beneath your heel  
To prove the law that Might is Right,  
And Innocence, without appeal,  
Must serve your scheme of \_Schrecklichkeit\_,  
"Justice," we said, "abides her day  
And she shall set her balance true;  
Methods like yours can never pay."  
"Can't they?" you cried; "they can--and do!"

And now full circle comes the wheel,  
And, prone across the knees of Fate,  
You are to hear, without appeal,  
The final terms that we dictate;  
And, when you whine (the German way)  
On presentation of the bill:  
"\_Ach, Himmel!\_" we can never pay,"  
"Can't you?" we'll cry; "you can--and will!"

O.S.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE BRIGHTER SIDE OF PEACE.

I'm not out of the Army yet, but lately I was home on leave. At a time like that you don't really care about being demobilised just yet. After all, to earn--or let us say to be paid--several pounds for a fortnight's luxurious idleness is a far, far better thing than to receive about the same number of shillings for a like period of unremitting toil. There you have an indication of the financial

prospects of my civvy career. None the less, to me in Blighty the future looked as rosy as a robin's breast, and life was immensely satisfactory. I deemed that I was capable of saying "Ha, ha" among the captains (though myself only boasting two pips). Then one day, in the lane that leads to the downs, I met Woggles.

I've known Woggles for years and years. Some time ago she became a V.A.D. and began to drive an ambulance about France; since when I had lost sight of her. I greeted her therefore with jubilation.

"Oh, Woggles," I cried, "this is a great occasion. How shall we celebrate it?"

"Well, if you like I'll go back again on to the top with you and show you the Weald. But I'd much rather you came home to tea. I could make some 'Dog's Delight'--s'posing you haven't outgrown such simple tastes."

"Oh, if you put it like that," I said cheerfully.

Well, it was a bitter sort of afternoon and growing late. The annoyance of Bogie (an enthusiastic puppy) at missing his walk might appropriately be solaced with portions of "Dog's Delight." It's a large home-made bun thing which used to delight me as well as Bogie's mother in days gone by.

"I ought to warn you," said Woggles as we walked across the fields, "that Mother and Dad are out to-day. I expect your dog'll have to take acting rank as chaperon."

"By the way," I said, "you don't know each other, do you?" I called Bogie, who was giving a vivid imitation of a cavalry screen protecting our advance, and made him sit up and pretend to be begging. "Now fix your eyes on the kind lady," I commanded. "Woggles--Bogie: Bogie--Woggles. Two very nice people." Bogie barked, put out his tongue and let the wind blow his left ear inside out. Woggles laughed in that excellent way she has.

At the Rectory she sang to me even better than she used to; the "Delight" was an achievement, Bogie being most agreeably surprised; there was a glow of firelight such as I love, and a vast comfortable chair. I felt lazy and very happy.

"This tea idea of yours was simply an inspiration. I don't know when I've been so pleased with myself and existence generally. At the moment my moral is as high as Mount Everest."

"Yes, I noticed something like that," Woggles agreed. "More tea? It's only about your fifth cup." Suddenly serious, she went on: "I wonder--is there much to be happy about just now? Dad thinks not; and so do I, rather. Do you want to talk about it, or would you rather find faces in the fire?"

"Please I want to talk about it."

"Carry on then. Fortify yourself with that last bit of 'Delight.'"

In spite of this reinforcement I found it wasn't so very easy to begin.

"Well," I said slowly, "I expect the foundation of my joie de vivre is a great relief that the War's over. Lots of troops celebrated that with song and dance and so forth on November 11th and subsequent nights; I'm spreading it over a much longer time. In a way it's like having a death sentence repealed, for millions of us. Not the heroic

spirit, is it?--but there you are."

"Of course everyone feels that," Woggles admitted. "Only now that it is all over, aren't we sort of looking round and counting the cost? Thinking that all this loss of life and suffering hasn't made the world so very much better? Look at Russia and our strikes. Doesn't Bolshevism worry you?" she asked.

"The fact is," I told her, "I believe I've evolved a philosophy of life which nothing of that kind can seriously disturb--or I hope not. It's very jolly to feel like that."

"It must be. May we have this philosophy, please? Perhaps you'll make a disciple."

"It's an awfully simple one really, only I think people lose sight of it so strangely. Just to realise the extraordinary pleasure everyday things can give you--if you'll only let them. You compree that?"

"It doesn't sound very convincing," Woggles objected. "Everyday things! As for instance?"

"Oh, what shall I say? One of those really fine mornings; huge white clouds in a deep blue sky; the feel of a good drive at golf; smoke from cottage chimneys at dusk; wondering what's round the next corner of an unknown road; bare branches at night with the stars tangled in them; the wind that blows across these downs of ours; the music of a sentence of STEVENSON'S; Bogie here and his funny little ways--Well, I needn't go on?"

"No, you needn't," said Woggles thoughtfully and looked at me rather hard for a space. "We're old friends, aren't we, and all that sort of thing?" she demanded.

"What a question! I hope we are. But why?"

"Well, I'm going to ask you something. But I may say I'm rather nervous. You'll promise not to set Bogie at me or strangle me with your Sam Browne?"

"I will."

"Well, then, have you been asking Betty Willoughby to marry you, and has she said 'Yes'?"

I was amazed. Was Woggles also among the soothsayers? Because a few evenings earlier, with the help of a splendid full moon and one or two extenuating circumstances--

"But this is black magic and wizardry," I said. "It's a dead secret. How on earth did you know?"

"Oh, I just guessed," said Woggles.

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE MATRIMONIAL MARKET.

"Young Girl Wanted, for Wife of Naval Officer."--\_Provincial Paper\_.

The Navy may be the Silent Service, but when it does speak it is very direct.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: THE EASTER OFFERING.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE (fresh from Paris). "I DON'T SAY IT'S A PERFECT EGG; BUT PARTS OF IT, AS THE SAYING IS, ARE EXCELLENT."]

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: Colonel (back with his battalion from front lines--to horsey and immaculate Railway Transport, Officer). "ENGINES A BIT FRISKY THIS MORNING?"]

\* \* \* \* \*

## PROPAGANDA IN THE BALKANS.

At the end of September last those whom we in Macedonia had come to regard as our deadly enemies became our would-be friends with a suddenness which was almost painful. Kultur is a leavening influence, and our spurious local Hun in Bulgaria is every bit as frightful in war and as oily in defeat as the genuine article on the Rhine.

To escape this unfamiliar and rather overpowering atmosphere of friendliness our section of the Salonica Force immediately made for the nearest available enemy and found ourselves at a lonely spot on the Turkish frontier. The name of the O.C. Local Bulgars began with Boris, and he was a \_Candidat Offizier\_ or Cadet, and acting Town Major. As an earnest of good-will, he showed us photos of his home, before and after the most recent \_pogrom\_, and of his grandfather, a bandit with a flourishing practice in the Philippopolis district, much respected locally.

We took up our dispositions, and shortly all officers were engaged sorting out the suspicious characters arrested by the sentries. It was in this way that I became acquainted with Serge Gotastitch the Serb.

When he was brought before me I sent for Aristides Papazaphiropoulos, our interpreter, and in the meantime delivered a short lecture to the Sergeant-Major, Quartermaster-Sergeant and Storeman on the inferiority of the Balkan peoples, with particular reference to the specimen before us, to whom, in view of the fact that he seemed a little below himself, I gave a tot of rum. He eyed it with suspicion.

"What's this?" he asked suddenly (in English). "Whisky?"

I informed him that it was rum.

"That's the goods," he said, and drank it. I then commenced interrogation.

"You are a Bulgar?" I asked.

"No," said Serge cheerlessly, "I am Serb."

"Serb! Then what are you doing here?"

"I hail from Prilep," he explained. "When Bulgar come Prilep, they say, 'You not Serb; you Bulgar.' So they bringit me here with others, and I workit on railroad. My family I not know where they are; no clothes getting, no money neither. English plenty money," he added, \_a propos\_ of nothing.

I ignored the hint.

"Then you are a prisoner of war?" I suggested.



"In old time," he continued, "Turks have Prilep. I go to America and work on railroad Chicago--three, four year. When I come back Turks take me for army. Not liking I desert to Serbish army. When war finish, Serbs have Prilep. I go home Serbish civil. Then this war start. Bulgar come to Prilep and say, 'You Bulgar, you come work for us.' You understahn me, boss?"

"I must look into this," I said to the Sergeant-Major. "Send for the interpreter and ask the Bulgar officer to step in. He's just going past."

Boris arrived with a salute and a charming smile and listened to my tale. Then he turned a cold eye on Serge and burst into a torrent of Bulgarian, under which Serge stood with lifting scalp.

"Sir," faltered Serge, when the cascade ceased, "I am liar. All I said to you is false. I am good Bulgar. I hate Serbs."

"Then you are not, in fact, a Serb?" I said.

"Nope," said Serge, nodding his head frantically (the Oriental method of negation).

"Do you want to go home?" I asked cunningly.

"Sure, boss," replied he. "Want to go Chicago."

Boris uttered one blasting guttural and Serge receded to the horizon with great rapidity. "You understand, \_mon ami\_," explained Boris; "he is really a Bulgar, but the villainous Serb propagandists have taught him the Serbian language and that he is Serb. It is his duty really to fight or work for Bulgaria, just as it was ours to liberate him and his other Bulgar brothers in Serbia from the yoke of the Serbs. It is understood, my friend?"

"Oh, absolutely," I replied.

He withdrew, exchanging a glance of hatred with Aristides Papazaphiropoulos, who approached saluting with Hellenic fervour.

"You wish me, Sare?" he asked.

"I did," I answered, and outlined to him what had passed. "Is it true that propaganda is, or are, used to that extent?"

"It is true," he answered sadly. "The Serb has much propagandism, the Bulgar also. But in this case both are liars, since the population of Prilep is rightfully Greek."

\* \* \* \* \*

Three days later Boris appeared before me with a sullen face.

"I wish to complain," he said. "You have with you a Greek, one Papazaphiropoulos. It is forbidden by the terms of the Armistice that Greeks should come into Bulgaria. Greeks or Serbs--it is expressly stated. I wish to complain."

"You are wrong," I replied. "He is no Greek. He is a Bulgar. But the cunning Greek propagandists have taught him the Greek language and that he is a Greek. It is really his duty to be the first to rush on to the soil of his beloved Bulgaria--"

"Ach!" said Boris, grinding his teeth; "you mock our patriotism. You

are an Englishman."

"I don't," I replied. "And I'm not. I'm French. We came over in 1066. You ask my aunt at Tunbridge Wells. But the villainous English propagandists taught me English, and the Scotch gave me a taste for whisky, and--"

But Boris had faded away.

\* \* \* \* \*

ALARMING: SPREAD OF CANNIBALISM.

"AUSTRALIANS IN FRANCE.

"THIRD OF GERMAN ARMY EATEN."  
\_Queensland Paper\_.

"THOROUGHLY Experienced Cook. Capable cooking large family."--\_Ceylon Paper\_.

"WANTED, Smart Young Man or Woman, for frying."--\_Provincial Paper\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: \_Born Grumbler\_. "FOR OVER FOUR YEARS I'VE BATTLED FURIOUSLY AGAINST A 'ARD AN' BITTER FOE. AN' 'ERE I AM CONSTRUCTIN' A WOODEN 'ORSE FOR THE CAPTIN'S SON."]

\* \* \* \* \*

TO A YOUNG SUB.

\_(By a late one.)\_

Sublime young Sir, so nuttily complacent,  
So airy-poised upon thy rubbered feet,  
The cynosure, no doubt, of all adjacent  
Regard along that hit of Regent Street,  
My thanks. In rather less than half a twinkling  
Thy lofty air and high Olympian gaze  
Have taught me that of which I had no inkling  
Throughout my swashing military days.

I too (\_et ego in Arcadia vixi\_)--  
I too have strolled like that in London town,  
Demanding homage from the very bricks I  
Pressed with my shoes of scintillating brown;  
But never till I tried the fair corrective  
Of seeing khaki from a civvy suit  
Could I envisage in its true perspective  
That common circumstance, a Second-Loot.

\* \* \* \* \*

NOT DEAD YET.

"The Hungarian Soviet Government has adopted a non-posthumous attitude."--\_Globe\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: \_Host (to visitor just arrived)\_. "GET YOUR OVERCOAT OFF QUICKLY, MAN; THEN HE'LL THINK YOU BELONG TO THE HOUSE!"]

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE PASSING OF GREEK.

A great thanksgiving meeting (postponed till "Summer-time" on account of the shortage of artificial heat) was held at the Albert Hall last Saturday to celebrate the dethronement of Greek at Oxford. Mr. H.G. WELLS presided, and there was a numerous attendance.

Mr. WELLS, while he struck and maintained a jubilant note throughout his eloquent speech, tempered enthusiasm with caution. The Grecians, he said, like the Greeks, were wily folk and capable of shamming dead while they were all the while scheming and plotting to restore their imperilled supremacy. Indeed he knew it as a fact that some of the most infatuated scholars actually voted against compulsion, simply to confuse the issue. Still, for the moment it was a great victory, a crushing blow to Oxford, the stronghold of mediaevalism, incompetence and Hanoverianism, and an immense relief to the sorely-tried physique of the nation. For he was able to assure them, speaking with the authority of one who had taken first-class honours in Zoology, that the study of Greek more than anything else predisposed people to influenza by promoting cachexia, often leading to arterio-sclerosis, combination of the tympanum, and even astigmatism of the pineal gland. (Sensation.)

Mr. PEMBERTON BILLING, M.P., speaking from the seat of an aeroplane, said that he had found the little Greek he remembered from his school-days not only no help but a positive hindrance to his advocacy of a strong Air policy. The efforts of the Greeks as pioneers of aviation were grossly exaggerated and, speaking as an expert, he denounced these literary fictions as so much hot air. There were at least forty-seven thousand reasons against Greek, but he would be content with two. It didn't pay, and it was much harder than Esperanto.

Mr. WILLIAM LE QUEUX in a most impressive speech said that he was no enemy of ancient learning. Egyptology was only a less favourite recreation with him than revolver practice. But Greek he could never abide, and he was confirmed in his instinct by the fact that at all the sixteen Courts where he had been received and decorated Classical Greek was practically unknown. It was the same in his travels in Morocco, Algeria, Kabylia, among the Touaregs, the Senussis and the pygmies of the Aruwhimi Hinterland. He never heard it even alluded to. Nor had he found it necessary for his investigations into the secret service of Foreign Powers, the writing of spy stories, the forecasting of the Great War or the composition of cinema plays. He had done his best to procure the prohibition of the study of Greek in the Republic of San Marino, and he was inclined to trace the present financial crisis in that State to his failure. (Cheers.)

Mr. BERNARD SHAW struck a somewhat jarring note by the cynical remark that it would be a very good thing for modern sensational authors if Greek literature were not only neglected but destroyed, as some of the Classical authors had been guilty of prospective plagiarism on a large scale. He knew this as a fact, as he had been recently reading LUCIAN in a crib and found him devilish amusing. (Uproar and cries of "Shame!")

A moving letter was read from Lord BEAVERBROOK, in which the great financier declared that, in arriving at the peerage at the age of thirty-seven, he had found his inability to read HOMER freely in the original no handicap or hindrance. He pointed out the interesting fact that Lord NORTHCLIFFE, who reached a similar elevation at the age of forty, had never composed any Greek iambics, though his literary style

was singularly polished.

It was felt that any further speeches after this momentous announcement would inevitably partake of the nature of an anti-climax.

The Chairman happily interpreted the feeling of the meeting by hurling a copy of \_Liddell and Scott\_ on the floor of the platform and dancing upon it, and the great assembly soon afterwards dispersed in a mood of solemn exultation to the strains of a Jazz band. As Mr. WELLS observed in a fine phrase, "We have to-day extinguished the lights in the Classical firmament."

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: \_Demobilised One (to massive lady about to make her exit),\_ "EXCUSE ME WOULD YOU MIND TREADING--ACCIDENTAL-LIKE--ON THAT MAN'S TOES? HE USED TO BE MY SERGEANT-MAJOR."]

\* \* \* \* \*

THE TENDER-HEARTED BAILIE.

"Accused broke down in the dock, and while weeping bitterly the Bailie fined both girls L1 or ten days."--\_Edinburgh Evening News\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Lord Burray of Elibank and the Hon. Gideon Murray, M.P., have recently had influenza and bronchitis."--\_Scotch Paper\_.

From internal evidence we gather that his lordship has not yet completely recovered.

\* \* \* \* \*

SO SOON FORGOT.

[A cinema has been showing a picture of M. PADEREWSKI, bearing the legend, "The new President of Poland: once a world-famed violinist."]

The President of POLAND  
Was born to place and power;  
Yet, ere he found his mission  
In filling this position,  
He was a great musician--  
Men say so to this hour.  
But, dash it! while the whole land  
Admits his old repute,  
It wonders, "Did this fellow,  
At whom Queen's Hall would bellow,  
Perform upon the 'cello,  
Or did he play the flute?"

The day AUGUSTUS JOHN is  
Created Duke of Wales,  
His countrymen will never  
Stop boasting of how clever  
He is at Art, whatever  
(Though Burlington still rails).  
But one small detail gone is  
From their forgetful nuts;  
Their recollection's shady--  
Did JOHN'S artistic heyday

Mean costumes for \_The Lady\_  
Or things for \_Comic Cuts?\_

When HALL CAINE rules a nation  
As Superman of Man,  
His subjects will assure us  
In daily dance and chorus:  
"Ere HALL presided o'er us,  
Men read him as they ran.  
For once his circulation  
Spread over Seven Seas."  
Yet memory by chance errs  
In these ecstatic dancers--  
Oh, did he edit \_Answers\_,  
Or write "Callisthenes"?

\* \* \* \* \*

#### OUR HELPFUL CONTEMPORARIES.

"But the most pressing of all the questions with which the Peace Congress has to deal is the settlement of terms of peace with Germany."--\_Nottingham Guardian\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### "LIFE'S LITTLE MARVELS.

"A family of eight was stated to be living on L3 a week in the Bow County Court, and counsel said it was a marvel how they did it."--\_Bradford Daily Argus\_.

It is supposed that they take it in turns to sleep on the Bench.

\* \* \* \* \*

"A Republic is derported to have been declared at Zagazig. In Cairo stdikes have added to the difficulties of the public, the latest being one by the cabddivers. Crowds attempted to storm the Government printing works, but were dispersed by the military."--\_Daily Paper\_.

Not, however, until they had worked some havoc among the type.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### THE MUD LARKS.

I was motoring homewards across the old line. A ghost-peopled dusk was crawling over the devastation and desolation that is Vimy, and in the distance the bare bones of St. Eloy loomed like a spectre skeleton against the frosty after-glow. We hummed past Thelus cross-roads, dipped downhill and, \_hey presto\_! all of a sudden I was in China. (No, not Neuville-St.-Vaast; China, China, place where they eat birds'-nests and puppy-dogs' tails.) There were coolies from some salvage company all over the place, perched on heaps of broken masonry, squatting along the ditch side, banked ten-deep in the road--tall villainous-looking devils, very intently watching something. I pulled up, partly to avoid killing them and partly to see what it was all about.

It was an open-air theatre. They had built it on the ruins of an \_estaminet\_, roofed it over with odds and ends of tin and tarpaulin, and the play was on. There was the orchestra against the back-cloth, rendering selections from popular Pekin revues on the drum, cymbal and

one-stringed fiddle. There were the actors apparelled in the gorgeous costumes of old Cathay strutting mechanically through their parts, the female impersonators squeaking in shrill falsetto and putting in a lot of subtle fan-work. And there was the ubiquitous property-man drifting in and out among the performers, setting his fantastic house in order. We were actually within a mile of the Vimy Ridge, but we might have been away on the sunny side of Suez, deep within the mysterious heart of Canton City.

"Good as a three-ring circus, ain't it?" said an English voice at my side; "most of their plays run on for nine months or so, but this particular show only lasts six weeks, the merest curtain-raiser."

I turned towards the speaker and looked full upon the beak nose, cleft cheek and bristling red moustache of an old friend. "Good Lord, The Beachcomber!" I breathed. He started, peered at me and growled, "Captain Dawnay-Devenish, if it's all the same to you, Mister blooming Lieutenant."

\* \* \* \* \*

In the year 1907 John Fanshawe Dawnay-Devenish arrived in a certain Far Eastern port, deck passenger aboard a Dutch tramp out of Batavia. The Volendam mate accompanied him to the gang-plank, shaking a size eleven fist: "Now yous, get, see?... an' iv yous gome bag...!" He ground his horse-teeth and made unpleasant noises in his throat.

"Shouldn't dream of risking it, old dear," replied John Fanshawe pleasantly, "not on your venerable coffee-grinder anyhow--not until she gets a navigator." He kissed his nicotined fingers to the exploding Hollander and strolled off down the wharf, whistling "\_Nun trink ich Schnapps\_."

Arrived in the European quarter he smoothed what creases he could out of his sole suit of drills, whitened his soggy topee and frayed canvas shoes with a piece of chalk purloined from a billiard saloon, bluffed a drink out of an inebriated ship's engineer and snatched a free lunch on the strength of it. Thus fortified he visited the British Consul, and by means of somewhat soiled letters proved that he really was a Dawnay-Devenish of the Dorset Dawnay-Devenishes (who should be in no way confused with the Devenish-Dawnays of Chipping-Banbury or the Devenishe d'Awnay-Dawnays of Upper Tooting; the Dorset branch alone possessing the privilege, granted by letters patent of ETHELRED the Unready, of drinking the King's bathwater every Maunday Tuesday of Leap Year).

Awed by the name--was there not a Dawnay-Devenish occupying a plump armchair in the Colonial Office at the time?--the Consul parted with five hundred dollars (Mex.). Next time the yield was not so satisfactory, not by two hundred and fifty dollars. At the end of a month, the Consul having proved a broken reed only good for five-dollar touches at considerable intervals, it behoved our hero to seek some fresh source of income. He cast up-river in search of it and disappeared from civilised ken for seven merciful years.

In June, 1914, he beat back into port in a fancifully decorated junk, minus one ear and two fingers, but plus a cargo of jingling genuine money. He hired the bridal suite in the leading hotel, got hold of a fleet of motor cars and a host of boon companions, lived on a diet of champagne cocktails and splashed himself about with the carefree abandon of a dancing dervish.

By the middle of July he was "on the beach" again and once more began to haunt the Consular office babbling of his influential relations and his "temporary embarrassment."

When war broke out he had thrown up the sponge altogether and "gone yellow"; was living from hand to mouth among the Chinese. At the end of August a ship touched at that Far Eastern port, picking up volunteers for the Western Front. The port contributed a goodly number, but there remained one berth vacant. The long-suffering Consul had a stroke of inspiration. Here was a means of at once swelling the man-power of his country and ridding himself of a pestilent ne'er-do-well. His boys, searching far and wide, discovered John Fanshawe in the back premises of a Malay go-down, oblivious to all things, and bore him inanimate aboard ship.

In this manner did our hero answer The Call.

In due course he appeared in our reserve squadron and was detailed to my troop. It did not take me many days to realise that I was up against the most practised malingerer in the British (or any other) army. Did a fatigue prove too irksome; did the jumps in the riding-school loom too large; did the serjeant speak a harsh word unto him, "The Beachcomber" promptly went sick. Malaria was his long suit. By aid of black arts learned during those seven years sojourning with the heathen Chinese he could switch malaria (or a plausible imitation of it) on or off at will and fool the M.O.'s every time. I used to interview them about it, but got scant sympathy. The Healers' Union brooks no interference from outsiders.

"Look here, that brute's bluffing you," I would protest.

To which they would make reply, "Can you give us any scientific explanation of how a man can fake his pulse and increase his temperature to 102 deg. by taking thought? You can't? No, we didn't suppose you could. Good day."

One person, however, I did succeed in convincing, and that was the C.O., who knew his East. "Very good," said he. "If the skunk won't be trained he shall go untrained. He sails for France with the next draft."

Nevertheless our friend did not sail with the next draft. Ten minutes after being warned for it, the old complaint caught him again, and when the band played our lads out of barracks he was snugly tucked away in sick-bay with sweet girl V.A.D.'s coaxing him to nibble a little calves-foot jelly and keep his strength up. Nor did he figure among either of the two subsequent drafts; his malaria wouldn't hear of it.

I went back to the land of fireworks at the head of one of these drafts myself, freely admitting that John Fanshawe had the best of the joke. He waved me farewell out of the hospital window by way of emphasising this.

The Babe followed me out shortly after, bringing about fifty men with him. He strolled into Mess one evening and mentioned quite casually that The Beachcomber was in camp.

"How did you manage it?" we chorused in wonder.

"Heard the story of his leaving China and repeated the dose," the Babe replied. "Just before the draft was warned, my batman led him down to Mooney's shebeen and treated him to the run of his throat--at my expense. He came all the way as baggage."

Thus did John Fanshawe complete the second stage of his journey to the War. He did not remain with us long, however; a fortnight at the most.

We were doing some digging at the time, night-work, up forward, in clay so glutinous it would not leave the shovels and had mainly to be clawed out by hand--filthy, back-breaking, heart-rending labour. On calling the roll one dawn I found that The Beachcomber was missing.

"Anybody seen anything of him?" I asked.

"Yessir, I did," a man replied, and spat disgustedly.

"Well," I inquired, "was he hit or anything?"

The man grunted, "No, Sir; I don't think 'e was 'it; I think 'e was fed up. 'Call this war, do they?' says 'e to me. 'I call it blawsted WORK!' I told 'im to get on wiv it an' do 'is whack.

"'E chucks a couple of spoonfuls of muck and then sits down. 'I can feel me damned ol' malaria creepin' over me again, Jim,' says 'e. 'Noticed a Red Cross outfit in the valley; think I'll be totterin' along there,' says 'e. 'So long.' And that was the last the regiment saw of its Beachcomber."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Have it as you like, Captain Dawnay-Devenish," I said, "but before I go tell me, how did you wangle this job?"

"Any affair of yours?" he sneered.

"No," I admitted; "still I'm interested."

He laughed unpleasantly. "Yes, you would be. Always infernally keen on minding my business for me, weren't you? Well, if you must know, I was convalescing when these same Chows started a pogrom in the next camp. I stopped it, and the powers--who were scared stiff--tacked a stripe on me and told me to carry on."

"That accounts for the stripe," said I; "but what of the stars?"

"Oh, them! We were behind the line down south last year laying a toy railway when the Hun broke clean through in a fog. Remember? I pulled the Chinks together and we stopped 'em. That's all."

"Good Lord, that wasn't you, was it?" I cried. "Set about 'em with picks and shovels, shrieking Chinese war-cries and chopped 'em to bits. Oh, splendid! But how on earth did you rouse these tame coolies to it?"

The Beachcomber tugged his red moustache and laughed deprecatingly. "It wasn't very difficult really. You see, these birds of mine are only temporary coolies. In civilian life they're mostly river pirates, Tong-fighters and suchlike professional cut-throats. Killing comes natural to 'em. They only wanted somebody who could organize and lead 'em."

"And you could?"

The Beachcomber drew himself up proudly.

"I should hope so. Wasn't I their Pirate King for seven long years?"

PATLANDER.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: OUR COURTEOUS TELEPHONE SERVICE.



\_City Magnate\_. "YOU'VE CUT ME OFF! HELL!!"

\_Sweet Voice from the other end\_. "THAT WILL BE A TRUNK CALL."]

\* \* \* \* \*

#### SELF-DETERMINATION IN DEVON.

"At a public meeting at Barnstaple, the Vicar presiding, it was decided to form a local branch of the League of Nations."--\_Western Morning News\_.

Won't WILSON be bucked?

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: \_Little Girl (in foreground).\_ "MOTHER, I SUPPOSE THE BRIDEGROOM \_MUST\_ COME TO HIS WEDDING?"]

\* \* \* \* \*

#### THE LAST WATCH OF THE NIGHT.

The hand of dawn is on the door  
That seals the dolorous arch of night;  
Dim gardens and hushed groves once more  
Dream of the half-forgotten light;  
Yet all the ancient fires are cold  
On altars battered and forlorn,  
And men grope still for gauds of gold,  
Oblivious of the imminent morn.

When comes the dawn? Its unseen dew  
Distils on folded swath and mound,  
Where grass is deep or sods are new,  
And branches shake without a sound;  
Where, numberless and low and grey,  
The furrows lessen to the sky;  
There sleep the sons of England, they  
Who died that England should not die.

Better--ah, better for us all,  
For them who sleep and us who wake,  
That never bird at dawn should call  
Nor golden foam of morning break;  
That on one high cairn of the dead  
The ultimate light should be unsealed,  
Than that the world should live unled,  
Unchanged, unpurified, unhealed.

Life and all things that make it fair  
Men gave that better lives might be;  
They went exulting and aware  
Forth to the great discovery;  
But who will prize life over-much  
Or deem that death comes over-soon  
If hands of fools and barterers touch  
The architrave of Hope half-hewn!

Under a brave new baldachin,  
New robes drooped o'er their crimson feet,  
The old unaltered twain begin  
Their ride along the embannered street;  
With golden charms for men to kiss

A-swing from wrist and bridle-rein,  
The brethren Pride and Avarice,  
The monarchs of the world again.

If this thing be and no new world  
Rise from the old dead world beneath,  
Then morning's chaplet seven-pearled  
Is made the bauble-crest of death;  
All dreams belied, all vows made void,  
Pale Hope a wingless fugitive,  
And man a stumbling anthropoid--  
Can these things be if England live?

If England live, the anarch tide  
Shall lose itself among her waves,  
And the grey earth be glorified  
By the young blossom on her graves;  
And by her grace no power shall part;  
Fulfilment from the dreams that were,  
If still the music of her heart  
Be theirs who lived and died for her.

D.M.S.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: THE DOVE AT SEA.

BIRD OF PEACE. "EXCUSE ME, BUT IS THIS THE ARK?"

MAN OF WAR. "DUNNO NOTHIN' ABOUT NO ARK; BUT WE'RE FOR ARK-ANGEL, IF THAT'S ANY USE TO YOU."]

\* \* \* \* \*

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

[Illustration: \_Sultan Addison (his mind on the house famine). \_ "TELL ME THE STORY OF THE PALACE BUILT IN A SINGLE NIGHT."]

\_Monday, April 7th\_--The FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS is determined that there shall be no slack time in the furniture-removing industry. To that end he is arranging that the business-premises in Kingsway now being vacated by the Government shall be filled by the Commission Internationale de Ravitaillement, that the Commission's old premises shall then be occupied by the Air Ministry, and that the Hotel Cecil shall then be restored to its original owners--unless, of course, it should be wanted by the Department lately housed in Kingsway. "Musical chairs," muttered Colonel WEDGWOOD.

That was not the hon. and gallant Member's only contribution to the gaiety of the proceedings. He essayed to move the adjournment in order to discuss the situation of our troops in Russia, but was reminded that there was already a motion on the Order Paper dealing with that subject and standing in his own name. An attempt to perform the difficult manoeuvre of getting out of his own light was frustrated by the SPEAKER, who, to the argument that the motion on the Paper dealt with a wider subject, replied "\_Majus in se minus continet\_." Overwhelmed by this display of erudition, the victim murmured "\_Der Tag!\_" and collapsed.

In moving the Second Reading of the Housing Bill Dr. ADDISON thought it necessary to disclaim any intention of posing as "an Oriental potentate," modestly adding, "I do not look the part." He has, however, one characteristic of the Eastern ruler, namely, a delight in

long stories. It took him two hours to tell the House in melancholy monotone all about the defects of our present system and his proposals for removing them. Unfortunately he has not the Oriental gift of transforming slums into palaces in a single night, but hopes to produce a similar effect by treating the local authorities with a judicious mixture of subsidies and ginger.

Tuesday, April 8th.--Congratulations to Lord ASKWITH on taking his seat in the House of Lords and condolences (in advance) to those foreign journals which will inevitably announce that the ex-PRIME MINISTER has overcome his objections to taking a peerage.

Lord BUCKMASTER'S futile attempt to resist the passage of the Military Service Bill was chiefly remarkable for his epigrammatic description of the present SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR--"a man of great capacity, a man of most restless and versatile energy and unconquerable will, and of the most vivid and most illimitable and elusive vision of any politician of recent time." Several public schoolmasters, I understand, have already noted its possibilities as a suitable extract for translation into Tacitean Latin.

Lord CURZON hastened to assure Lord BUCKMASTER that, though deprived of his co-operation, the present Cabinet thought itself equal to coping with Mr. CHURCHILL. As for the Bill, there were still storm-clouds over Europe that might break at any moment; and every threatened nationality was uttering the same cry, "Send us British troops." Although we could not respond to all these appeals, we must have the power to give aid when the circumstances required it.

Some of our warriors are already experiencing the horrors of peace. Mr. CHURCHILL has promised searching inquiry into the case of the officer who sent a hundred-word telegram--at Government expense--about a dog; and Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, on his attention being called to the forty-three motorcars still in use by the War Office, gave an answer which implied an impending slump in joy-rides.

Sir MARTIN CONWAY'S anxiety that an "archaeologically-qualified official" should be entrusted with the duty of protecting the ancient monuments of Mesopotamia was relieved by Mr. FISHER. Such an official had already been sent out--not from the War Office, where all the "archaeologically qualified" are presumably too busy--but from the British Museum. Part of his work had been kindly done for him by the German scientists, who had collected ninety cases of specimens, now in our hands. The removal of bricks or other antiquities had long been forbidden--rather a blow to Dr. ADDISON, who in the present shortage of building material is very envious of the new Bavarian Government with a bricklayer at its head.

Wednesday, April 9th.--In the Commons Dr. MACNAMARA announced that the Admiralty did not propose to perpetuate the title "Grand Fleet" for the principal squadron of His Majesty's Navy. The Grand Fleet is now a part of the history that it did so much to make.

On the Third Reading of the Ministry of Health Bill Mr. J.H. THOMAS made a rather ungracious allusion to the Local Government Board. De moribundis nil nisi bonum should have been his motto, especially as the old Department has done splendid work (and never better than in recent times under Sir HORACE MONRO) for the health and comfort of His Majesty's lieges.

If words were as effective as bullets the Bolshevik Government in Russia would have but a brief existence. The rumour that LENIN had made overtures to the Allies moved Mr. CLEM EDWARDS to a display of virtuous vituperation that Mr. BOTTOMLEY found difficult to equal, though he did his best. Even Colonel WEDGWOOD, though he evidently

thinks we ought to make peace with LENIN, indignantly repudiated the suggestion that he himself is a Bolshevik. Towards the close of the evening the HOME SECRETARY declared that no proposals from LENIN had reached our delegates in Paris--a statement which, if made a few hours earlier, would have rendered the debate superfluous. In his opinion the proposals, whatever they may be, had been "made in Germany" and should be excluded as goods of enemy origin. His statement that he was deporting Bolsheviks every day was satisfactory so far as it went, but left the House wondering how they had been permitted to get here.

\_Thursday, April 10th\_.--The House does not feel quite the same without its BONAR, who has once more flown off to Paris. Question after Question was "postponed" for his return. We were informed, however, that the delay in releasing Charles the First from internment was due to the necessity of repairing sundry damages to his fabric, due, I understand, not to Zeppelins or Gothas, but to the corroding tooth of Time.

Several Questions regarding an explosive magazine at Dinas Mawddwy have lately been addressed to the Ministry of Munitions. Hitherto they have received rather cryptic replies, no one in the Department apparently being prepared to pronounce the name. But this afternoon Mr. HOPE, after a few preliminary sentences to get his voice into condition, boldly blurted out, "Dinnus Mouthwy," and received the tribute which the House always pays to true courage.

[Illustration: MODIFIED MOTOR FACILITIES.

STAFF-OFFICERS PASSING THROUGH WHITEHALL ON THEIR WAY TO LUNCHEON.]

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, hitherto a dual personality, is now three single gentlemen rolled into one. Mr. GEORGE LAMBERT has accepted the leadership of a new Liberal Party, and with Colonel GODFREY COLLINS and Mr. ALBION RICHARDSON as his attendant Whips, duly took his seat upon the Front Bench. Someone challenged the intrusion of non-Privy Councillors into that sacred precinct. But the SPEAKER dismissed the objection with the remark, "There is more room upon that bench than on any other, you know." It is expected that, in contradistinction to the "Wee Frees," the new Party will be known as the "Auld Lights."

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"It is impossible to plough on account of the large number of unexploded shells and bombs buried in the soil. These are now being employed by the Engineers."--\_Evening Paper\_.

We trust they will manage to avoid the traditional fate of the engineer.

\* \* \* \* \*

UNEMPLOYMENT NOTES.

Government unemployed at present engaged in drawing their weekly donation are requested to call at the Labour Exchange every day at 10 A.M. Morning dress.

It is not permissible for applicants to send their wives, valets or chauffeurs to represent them.

Smoking is not prohibited, but applicants are requested not to offer tobacco, cigarettes or cigars to the officials.

Arrangements are to be made to provide entertainment by means of

concert parties and motor-trips; also newspapers and periodicals, in which, to avoid annoyance, the "Situations Vacant" column has been blacked out.

It is desirable that applicants should not wear fur coats. The present fashion does not go beyond a grey tweed lounge suit, with white spats and velours hat.

A limited number of openings are offered to any who care to act as batmen to unemployed munition-workers.

A doctor is in future to be kept at every Labour Exchange to render first-aid to those who should be offered a situation.

Applicants are requested not to tease the officials.

\* \* \* \* \*

JARGON.

From a speech at a Medical conference:--

"He was ashamed of the term 'shell-shock.' It was a bad word, and should be wiped out of the vocabulary of every scientific man. It was really molecular abnormality of the nervous system, characterised by abnormal reactions to ordinary stimuli."--\_Daily Paper\_.

We must try to remember this.

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A MODEST ESTIMATE.

From a publisher's advertisement:--

"Baroness Orczy has laid the world under a fresh debt of gratitude. 7/- net."--"\_Times" Literary Supplement\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"The question one could naturally put is, 'Has the millennium arrived, when the lion and the lamb shall lay together?'"--\_Monthly Paper\_.

Let's hope, at all events, that the produce won't be a cockatrice's egg.

\* \* \* \* \*

"This is the anniversary of the death of Robert Southey in 1843. Perhaps his most celebrated poem is the delightful 'Ode to a Skylark,' the beginning of which 'Hail to thee, blithe spirit,' is known to every school child."--\_New York Evening Journal\_.

It seems that Truth still stands in need of propaganda in America.

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[Illustration: \_Amateur Photographer (on a conducted tour in France).\_"CHARMING SPOT; BUT RATHER DISAPPOINTING. I \_QUITE\_ HOPED IT WOULD HAVE BEEN ALL SMASHED UP."]

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## FINANCIAL INTELLIGENCE.

The decision of \_The Westminster Gazette\_ to return to its old figure of a penny must not be taken as a sign that prices generally are coming down. On the contrary there is every indication that they are rising and will still rise, as the following symptomatic scraps of news, gathered from all parts of the country, go to prove:--

The First Commissioner of Oaths states that "twopenny damns" will, until further notice, be eight-pence each.

\* \* \* \* \*

A schoolmaster in Birmingham who propounded the old question about a herring and a half costing three half-pence has been put under restraint as a dangerous lunatic.

\* \* \* \* \*

If the information that reaches us from a little bird is correct, a boycott of sparrows is in progress, owing to their inveterate habit of saying, "Cheep! Cheep!"

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. HEINEMANN announces that, as a concession to modern susceptibilities, he has decided to alter the title of Mr. HERGESHEIMER'S successful novel, \_The Three Black Pennys\_ to \_The Three Black Half-crowns.\_

\* \* \* \* \*

All guinea-pigs and guinea-fowls will from the present date onwards be two guineas.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the best profiteering circles cigars are now lighted with spills made of one-pound, notes, instead of, as during the war, ten-shilling ones.

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A well-known orchestral leader states that there is a serious movement afoot to popularise "The Dear Home Land" as an encore for the National Anthem.

\* \* \* \* \*

The legal profession has long been concerned by the fact that lawyers' fees remain so fixed in a world given over to flux. It has now been decided that, although the fees shall remain the same, less value shall be given. For six-and-eightpence a solicitor will in future give only half his attention, by listening with only one ear.

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## COMMERCIAL CANDOUR.

"EGGS FOR SALE.

"Why go out of ---- to be swindled? Come to the ---- Poultry Farm."

\* \* \* \* \*

"IN MY GARDEN.

"April 4.--Now is a suitable time to saw sweet peas."--\_Daily Mirror.\_

When the stalks are very strong we always use an axe.

\* \* \* \* \*

L'ALLEGRO.

Haste thee, Peace, and bring with thee  
Food and old festivity,  
Bread and sugar white as snow,  
The bacon that we used to know,  
Apples cheap, and eggs and meat,  
Dainty cakes with icing sweet,  
And in thy right hand lead with thee  
The mountain nymph (not much U.P.).  
Come, and sip it as you go,  
And let my not-too-gouty toe  
Join the dance with them and thee  
In sweet unrationed revelry;  
While the grocer, free of care,  
Bustles blithe and debonair,  
And the milkman lilts his lay,  
And the butcher beams all day,  
And every warrior tells his tale  
Over the spicy nut-brown ale.  
Peace, if thou canst really bring  
These delights, \_do\_ haste, old thing.

\* \* \* \* \*

"WINTER SPORTS IN FRANCE.--Sledges were constructed out of empty ration-boxes, whilst the old flappers used for dispersing poison-gas from dug-outs did duty as snow-shoes."--\_Daily Paper\_.

The young flappers were no doubt better engaged.

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PINK GEORGETTE.

Joyce, at breakfast that morning, had announced firmly that if I really loved her I would take the pattern up to town with me and "see what I could do." What she failed to realise was that, if I ventured alone into the midst of so intimately feminine a world as Bibby and Renns' for the purpose of matching stuff called Pink Georgette, I should become practically incapable of doing anything at all.

The only redeeming feature about the whole nerve-racking business was that he found me as soon as he did.

"Good afternoon, Sir," he said in a most ingratiating voice. "What can we have the pleasure of showing you, Sir?"

He was tall and handsome, with a perfectly waxed moustache and a faultless frock-coat. He bowed before me with a sort of solicitous curve to his broad shoulders, and the way he massaged one hand with the other had a highly soothing effect.

"Pink georgette, Sir? Certainly, Sir." To my inexpressible relief he seemed to consider it the most likely request in the world.

A moment before I had been drifting hopelessly, in a state of most acute self-consciousness. But with him to guide me I set off quite boldly.

At what proved to be exactly the right spot he paused.

"Miss Robinson," he called; "pink georgette."

With a polite introductory wave of the hand he motioned me towards the lady. He hovered about, near by, whilst I opened the bit of tissue-paper containing the pattern and murmured my needs to Miss Robinson. His very presence gave me confidence.

When it was all over he came up and led me away. As we emerged into the stronger light near the door I peered at him closely. Then I touched him on the arm and beckoned him behind a couple of Paris models.

I took hold of his hand and wrung it fervently.

"Sergeant Steel," I said, "you always did have the knack of being in exactly the right spot at the right moment. I haven't set eyes on you since that very hot day in '16, when you brought up the remnants of 14 platoon and pulled me out of that tight corner at Guillemont. That was a valuable bit of work, Sergeant, but nothing to this--simply nothing!"

The solicitous curve had straightened out from his broad shoulders. His hands had ceased their soothing massage. His heels were together, his arms glued to his sides, his eyes glaring at a fixed point directly over the top of my head.

"Thought it was you, Sir, as soon as I saw you. But of course I wasn't going to say anything till you did." It was not the ingratiating voice now, but that rasping half-whisper he always used for nocturnal conferences in the front line. "Never heard anything of you, Sir, since you went down with a Blighty after Guillemont. Beg your pardon, Sir, but you looked a bit windy as you came in just now, so I thought I'd keep in support.... Yes, Sir, got my ticket last month--only been back on my old job a fortnight."

I tapped the parcel that Miss Robinson's own fair hands had made up for me.

"This a good issue, Sergeant?" I said. "Sound and reliable and all that?"

"Couldn't be better, Sir. I had my eye on her. We only drew it ourselves lately. That's the stuff to give 'em. You can safely carry on with that, Sir ... a perfect match ... exquisite blending of colour ... those art shades are to be very fashionable this season, I assure you, Sir."

Imperceptibly his hands had resumed their massage, the solicitous curve had returned to his broad shoulders, his voice was ingratiating again.

"We have a large range of all the daintiest materials. I believe our charmeuse, ninons and crepe-de-Chines to be unrivalled in town, Sir. A little damp under foot to-day, Sir, but warmer, I think--distinctly warmer. Yes, Sir. Thank you, Sir, Good day, Sir."

And Sergeant Steel (D.C.M. and four chevrons) bowed me into the street.



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[Illustration: "I DON'T THINK I CARE ABOUT THAT ONE. IT MAKES ME LOOK LIKE ONE OF THESE 'ERE SPANISH DANCERS."]

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#### LITERARY GOSSIP.

MR. WELLS has a new volume of collected Prefaces coming out this week, with an Introduction and an Epilogue by Sir HARRY JOHNSTON. It will be remembered that in \_Joan and Peter\_, a comparatively early work of Mr. WELLS--it was published, if our memory serves us, before the Armistice--handsome acknowledgment was made of Sir HARRY JOHNSTON'S administrative ability and high aims; and it is pleasant to know that in the long interval that has elapsed nothing has occurred to modify their mutual admiration.

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The firm of Black and Green will shortly publish Lord DYSART'S monumental monograph on \_China Tea: the Universal Antidote.\_ Lord DYSART establishes the remarkable fact that the word "dyspepsia" was practically unknown until the introduction of Indian and Ceylon tea. Mr. WELLS, who contributes an illuminating Preface, points out that the troubles of Russia are entirely due to the cutting off of the supplies of caravan tea from China (the leading Bolsheviks prefer vodka to tea in any form) and the consequent recourse to inferior synthetic substitutes. The rival merits of cream, milk and lemon are carefully discussed both from the gustatory and hygienic standpoint, Mr. WELLS pronouncing in favour of lemon, in which idiosyncrasy he resembles Mr. CONRAD and Mr. GALSWORTHY. The volume is richly illustrated with pictures of rare tea-pots, tea-caddies and samovars, and contains a set of humorous verses dedicated to the author by Mr. T. LEIF JONES.

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The Right Hon. REGINALD MCKENNA'S new book, \_The Proud Podsnaps\_, will be his first novel, and we hear it is to be humorous. His distinguished relative, Mr. STEPHEN MCKENNA, Mr. WELLS and Mr. HERBERT JENKINS have all written encouraging Prefaces to it; and Master ANTHONY ASQUITH has added two essays on commercial aviation and a couple of brilliant caricatures of Mr. LLOYD GEORGE and Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL.

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Mr. HAROLD BEGBIE'S \_Life of the Kaiser\_ is already far advanced, but he has laid it on one side in order to collaborate with Sir ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE in the authoritative biography of Sir OLIVER LODGE. It is understood that of the chapters dealing with the physiognomy and phrenological aspect of the subject Mr. HAROLD BEGBIE will be exclusively responsible for those on the frontal regions of Sir OLIVER'S cranium, while Sir ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE will devote himself to the occipital Hinterland. In this way it is hoped that the whole area, which is enormous, will be adequately covered. The book will be published by Messrs. Odder and Odder at 10s. 6d.; but a limited number of copies, with special tambourine and planchette attachments, will be available at L2 2s.

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To the list of biographies of the PRIME MINISTER already published or

in contemplation there remains to be added one by an author who veils his identity under the pseudonym of "Mount Carmel." It will bear the title, \_Lloyd George--\_Saint or Dragon\_? and will be prefaced by an introduction by Mr. Stickham Weed, in which that eminent publicist discusses the antagonism of the Celtic temperament to Jugo-Slav ideals. The book will be published at Fontainebleau.

\* \* \* \* \*

The new Cardiff firm of Jenkins and Jones announce a novel from the pen of Mr. Caradoc Blodwen, who had to fly from his native village last year owing to the realistic picture he gave of local life in \_The Home of the Squinting Widows\_. It is to be called \_Taffy was a Thief\_ ; and those who have had the privilege of seeing early copies of the book, which Mr. Blodwen wrote during his seclusion amongst the Hairy Ainus, describe it as lurid in the extreme.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. Cuthbert Skrimshanks's new novel is being looked forward to expectantly by those who admire the vital and distinguished artistry of his work. The author, it will be remembered, was employed in a firm of ginger-beer bottlers before he took to literature, and Mr. WELLS, who contributes a Preface, dwells happily on the stimulating and phosphorescent quality which his literary work owes to his employment, and contrasts it favourably with the flatness of Eton "Pop."

\* \* \* \* \*

Yet another Shakspearean volume, which promises to be of engrossing interest, has been written by Lord BLEDISLOE. It is to be called \_Bacon and Hamlet\_, and Sir THOMAS LIPTON has contributed an Introduction, in which the organisation of the food supply in the Elizabethan age is exhaustively described. This exhaustive work, which is dedicated to General STORRS, the Governor of Jerusalem, will be published by Messrs. FORTNUM and MASON.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: \_Nurse (reproachfully).\_ "WHO DIDN'T FOLD UP HIS TROUSERS WHEN HE WENT TO BED?"

\_Tony\_. "I KNOW. ADAM. I CAN ALWAYS GUESS THESE SUNDAY RIDDLES."]

\* \* \* \* \*

"C'EST LA GUERRE."

A brace of chemists' labels:--

This preparation is issued in amber glass pots, as a War Emergency Measure, when white glass is not available owing to shortage."

"War Bottle. Amber glass is not obtainable just now, so we have to use white glass. May we ask you to grant us your kind indulgence under the circumstances?"

\* \* \* \* \*

"A bullet fired at a pig from a humane killer, struck the wall of a Merthyr Tydvil slaughterhouse, ricocheted and wounded a butcher's manager."--\_Daily Paper\_.

The victim regards the name of the instrument as most inept.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Lord Salvesen, the presiding judge, arrived in Aberdeen on Monday night, and gave a winner in the Palace Hotel."--\_Sunday Paper\_.

We hope to meet him in London before the Derby.

\* \* \* \* \*

POLLY.

\_(With acknowledgments to Mr. KIPLING.)\_

I went into a private 'ouse to get a place as cook;  
The lady ups an' greets me with a most angelic look:  
"I've just been makin' tea," she sez, "I 'opes as you will try  
These little scones wot I 'ave baked;" and to myself sez I:  
    "It was Polly this, an' Polly that, an' 'Polly, scrub the  
        floor,'  
But it's 'If you please, Miss Perkins,' since we won the  
        bloomin' War;  
We won the bloomin' War, my girls, we won the bloomin' War,  
It's 'If you please, Miss Perkins,' since we won the  
        bloomin' War."

The lady she was out to please; we talked about the weather,  
An' when the tea was done we smoked a cigarette together,  
An' then we talked o' jazzin' an' the BILLIE CARLETON case,  
An' so we come in course o' time to talkin' o' the place.

"You won't mind cookin' lunch?" sez she. Sez I, "Without a doubt,  
On Toosdays an' on Fridays, which they ain't my 'alf-days out;  
An' dinner, too, I'll manage"--'ere the lady give a grin--  
"On Mondays an' on Thursdays, which they 'll be my evenings in."

"An' wot about the breakfast?" "Don't you worry, mum," sez I,  
"I'm willin' to oblige you every single blessed dye,  
Bar Sundays, when my young man comes; 'e's such a bloomin' toff,  
'E takes me up the river, so I takes the 'ole day off."

"That's excellent," the lady sez, "I'll easy do the rest,  
So if you come, Miss Perkins, you will be our honoured guest,  
For Mr. Vere de Vere an' I do all we can an' more  
To please the splendid women wot 'ave bin an' won the War."

Well, seein' as the lady seemed to 'ave the proper view,  
I took the situation an' I 'opes as it will do.  
Of course there may be drawbacks, but you can't get \_all\_ you wish,  
For aprons ain't quite overalls an' cookin' ain't munish.  
    It was Polly this, an' Polly that, an' "Ugh! the mutton's red;"  
    But it's "\_Won't\_ you come, Miss Perkins?" now we're paid to  
        stay in bed;  
An' it's Polly this, an' Polly that, an' anythink you please;  
An' Polly ain't a bloomin' fool--you bet that Polly sees!

\* \* \* \* \*

"LES BEAUX ESPRITS SE RENCONTRENT."

"Persons expressing unpopular views (by which I mean views opposed to such patriots as Horatio Bottomley, Colonel Lowther, and our own hon. and gallant member of Parliament, et hog genus omne)."--\_Letter in "The Daily News\_"

"There have been more pig posts than there have been big men able

to fill them.--Mr. Bonar Law."--\_Bristol Times and Mirror\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

From an article on the Zeebrugge exploit:--

"An on-shore wind was needed to carry the fog-screen in advance of the blockships. Absence of fog was essential. A fog would be beneficial. These desiderata postulated a concurrence of favourable conditions, and on April 23 they were not all present."--\_Cologne Post\_.

We gather that the Censor, shortly to be demobilised at home, still maintains his watch on the Rhine.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### CRITICISM IN EXCELSIS.

There was a good deal of excitement in the Elysian Fields when the news went round that the Committee had exercised their power of electing a certain distinguished Shade to full membership of the Asphodel Club without a ballot. The general opinion seemed to be that the Committee had acted wisely, and that the election was in every way justified. A few members, however, expressed disapproval, not so much on account of any demerits of his own as of the effect that his election might produce on the sensitive minds of some who were already members.

"This Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON," said one who had been busy in canvassing opinions, "is fully qualified for membership, but I fear he may have a deleterious effect on JOHN MILTON and THOMAS GRAY. Did he not roughly criticise them in his \_Lives of the Poets\_, and do you think that MILTON is one who will sit down tamely under the affront? MILTON has been for years and is still one of our most distinguished members. Indeed, he has almost the standing amongst us of a highly-respected Bishop. He uses the Club a great deal, and I fear his comfort will be much reduced by the admission of one who regards his poetry with a hostile eye."

"In what way," said another, "has the denouncer of SALMASIUS become entitled to complain of rough attacks? Nor has his character been assailed. In that he remains episcopal. Only in his poetry is he made to suffer."

"But he is made to suffer pretty heavily," said a third. "Hear what JOHNSON said with regard to our friend's \_Lycidas\_:--

"One of the poems on which much praise has been bestowed is \_Lycidas\_; of which the diction is harsh, the rhymes uncertain and the numbers unpleasing. What beauty there is we must therefore seek in the sentiments and images. It is not to be considered as the effusion of real passion; for passion runs not after remote allusions and obscure opinions. Passion plucks no berries from the myrtle and ivy, nor calls upon Arethuse and Mincius, nor tells of rough \_satyrs\_ and \_fauns\_ with cloven heel\_. Where there is leisure for fiction there is little grief.

"In this poem there is no nature for there is no truth; there is no art for there is nothing new. Its form is that of a pastoral: easy, vulgar and therefore disgusting."

"Do you call that criticism?"

"Ah, but listen," said another and much agitated Shade, "to what he

says of our respected THOMAS GRAY. The Committee must have forgotten how it goes:--

"These odes are marked by glittering accumulation of ungraceful ornaments; they strike rather than please; the images are magnified by affectation, the language is laboured into harshness. The mind of the writer seems to work with unnatural violence. \_Double, double, toil and trouble\_. He has a kind of strutting dignity and is tall by walking on tiptoe."

The agitated Shade was about to proceed further with his protest when a sound of cheering stopped him. And lo and behold! an approving throng was circling round the new member, and in the thick of it were JOHN MILTON and THOMAS GRAY.

\* \* \* \* \*

"FOR THIS RELIEF," ETC.

From a Girl Guides' report:--

"The thanks of the Association are due to the following ladies who have resigned...."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Sir George Newman and Mr. Philip Snowden have resigned their membership of the Central Control Board" (Liquor Traffic).

"Caruso has sung at 550 performances."--\_Evening Paper\_.

All the same, there seems to have been a lack of harmony.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: \_Lady (who has called on two successive Wednesdays, the fourth and fifth of the month, and has been told each time that Lady Smith-Robinson is not at home). \_"BUT I THOUGHT HER LADYSHIP WAS AT HOME ON ALTERNATE WEDNESDAYS?"

\_Parlourmaid (with dignity). \_"NO, MADAM. HER LADYSHIP IS AT HOME ON THE FIRST AND THIRD WEDNESDAYS IN THE MONTH; BUT WHEN THERE IS A FIFTH WEDNESDAY THAT IS TO \_OUR\_ ADVANTAGE."]

\* \* \* \* \*

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

\_My War Experiences in Two Continents\_ (MURRAY) is made up of the diary and letters of Miss MACNAUGHTAN, written during her search for work that might help in the great Task. The book, it is sad to say, must serve as her memorial to those many whom she has amused by her bright and wholesome stories. Worn out by labours and quests beyond her strength she fell sick at Teheran in 1916 and returned to England to die. In 1914 she had done fine service with her soup-kitchen in Flanders, where her energy and almost too tender sympathy had full scope and the reward of good work accomplished. She seemed also to be happy in her lecture tour on her return to England, trying to arouse the sluggish-minded to a sense of the gravity of the business. But in her Russian and Persian adventure it is clear that she was deeply disappointed at feeling herself unwanted and useless in a region of waste and muddle. It is probable that for all her courage and unselfish devotion she was too sensitive to the suffering she

encountered ever to attain the routine indifference which makes work among such horrors possible. Her deep religious convictions aggravated rather than eased that suffering. She was honestly old-fashioned and never took quite kindly to the khaki-breeched free-spoken young women of the subsidiary war services, had a hatred of muddle and was a little severe on men, though acknowledging that "young men are the kindest members of the human race." True this, I should say, who am no longer young. "The war is fine, \_fine\_, FINE, though I don't get near the fineness except in the pages of \_Punch\_." Charming of her to say that.

\* \* \* \* \*

The heroine of \_Miss Fingal\_ (BLACKWOOD) is called by her publishers "a woman whose distinguishing trait is femininity," to which they add, with obvious truth, "a refreshing creation in these days." Really, in this one phrase Messrs. BLACKWOOD have covered the ground so comprehensively that I have little more to do than subscribe my signature. To fill in details, Mrs. W.K. CLIFFORD'S latest is a quietly sympathetic tale about a lonely gentlewoman (this you can take either as one or two words) rescued from a life of penury by the will of a rich uncle, transferred from her tiny flat in Battersea to Bedford Square and a country cottage, expanding in prosperity, and generally proving the old adage that where there's a will there's a way, indeed several ways, of spending the result agreeably. As I have said, it is all the gentlest little comedy of happiness, not specially exciting perhaps. I find it characteristic of Mrs. CLIFFORD'S method that the only at all violent incident, a railway smash, happens discreetly out of sight, and does no more than provide its victim with an enjoyable convalescence, and the attentive reader with the suggestion of a psychological problem that is both unnecessary and unconvincing. The best of the tale is its picture of \_Miss Fingal\_ herself, rescued from premature decay and gradually recovering her youth under the stimulus of new interests and opportunities. Whether the now rather too familiar \_Kaiser-ex-machina\_ solution was needed in order to rid the stage of a superfluous character is open to question; but at all events it leaves \_Miss Fingal\_ happy in companionship and assured of the success that waits upon a satisfactory finish.

\* \* \* \* \*

"How can I"--I seem to hear the author of \_Elizabeth and Her German Garden\_ communing with herself--"how can I write a story, with all my necessary Teutonic ingredients in it, which shall be popular even during the War?" And then I seem to see the satisfaction with which she hit upon the solution of inventing pretty twin girls of seventeen, an age which permits remarks with a sting in them to be uttered apparently in innocence and yet is marriageable or, at any rate, engageable; making them orphans; giving them a German father and an English mother, and very mixed sympathies, in which England predominates; and sending them to America to pass its novelty under their candid European eyes. Much of the satisfaction which her scheme must have given to the authoress of \_Christopher and Columbus\_ (MACMILLAN) is shared by its readers, although the feeling that it has been made to order to fit a difficult market is never absent. For much of the dialogue, and often when most amusing, does not ring true, and we are occasionally asked to believe that the twins could be far slower in the uptake than at other, and less inconvenient, times they show themselves to be. But the book is another sufficing proof that the male sex has no monopoly of humour.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. CHRISTOPHER CULLEY, in his rather superfluous and petulant preface to \_Billy McCoy\_ (CASSELL), observes that such reviewers as "may find

time to skip through its pages" will probably call it a Romance. Well, skipping or not, here is one reviewer who will not disappoint him. A story of a hero who adventures into sinister places, disregards repeated warnings to "go back ere it is too late" (or the American for that entrancing formula), meets there a Distressed Damsel and kisses her as introduction, and finally, after an infinity of perils, is left with the D.D. as his B.B., or blushing bride--this I state emphatically to be not only Romance, but a most excellent brand of that article. What however Mr. CULLEY seems most to fear is that we shall think that \_McCoy\_ himself and the whole setting (New Mexican scenes) are all make-believe. He need have had no such alarm in my case. I have, I remember, already commented on the admirable reality of his cowboys, as exemplified in the hero of a previous story. \_Billy\_, if just a little less convincing, is in many ways a worthy companion. But Mr. CULLEY'S heroines always strike me as inferior to his men. They have the air of hanging about in corners of the tale, and generally of being rather a nuisance than a delight to their creator. But the heroine of \_Billy McCoy\_ makes hardly a pretence of being other than a lay figure; without her it would be just as entertaining and exciting, if perhaps less completely furnished for Romance.

\* \* \* \*

While reading \_"Q" Boat Adventures\_ (JENKINS) I kept on telling myself that it ought to be read in small doses if the greatest enjoyment was to be got from it; but all the same I could not let it out of my hands. "The 'Q' boat," says Lieutenant-Commander AUTEN, V.C., "was a 'stunt' possible only to a nation of sailors. Officers might be found for 'Q' boats in any country with a seaboard; but men--no;" and I imagine that few Englishmen will be found to deny this statement. Elizabethan days for all their spaciousness contained nothing more incredibly brave than the exploits of these decoy boats, exploits which could only be carried out if absolutely every man taking part in them played his role to perfection. And it cannot be too widely noted that after the Huns had become suspicious the "Q" boat had to invite a torpedo as a preliminary to real business. Officers and men alike deserve all the gratitude their nation can give them, not only for their courage in action, but also for their patience when spending dreary months without getting to grips with the enemy. Few things are more demoralizing than to wait to be attacked and to find no one kind enough to accommodate you; but even during all these long periods of inaction the discipline and keenness of the "Q" boat crews never relaxed. Lieut.-Commander AUTEN has done a great service in telling us of these astounding achievements and of the infinite difficulties in the way of their successful accomplishment. We may be a nation of short memories, but it is impossible to believe that our "Q" boats will ever be forgotten.

\* \* \* \*

Anything more Pettridgian than \_The Bustling Hours\_ (METHUEN) cannot be conceived and cannot certainly be written. That means that Mr. PETT RIDGE'S latest book will be heartily welcomed and thoroughly enjoyed by the large circle of his readers. Mr. PETT RIDGE is as good as a tonic in these depressing days, and without any effort he keeps at a high level of sane cheerfulness. His heroine is a certain \_Dorothy Gainsford\_, who has the gift of turning up at exactly the right moment and of getting exactly the right thing done, or more often of doing it herself. She really is a marvel and the last word in efficiency. There is only one thing at which I hint a doubt or hesitate dislike. She takes a banjo with her to a picnic on the Upper Thames.

\* \* \* \*

[Illustration: \_Professor (who has inadvertently pulled the shower-bath handle). \_ "TYPICAL APRIL WEATHER!"]

\* \* \* \* \*

There was a young man who said, "How,  
With the minimum sweat of my brow,  
Can I find jobs to do  
For a maximum screw?"  
So they said to him, "Why not try Slough?"

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