

# Punch, or the London Charivari, Vol. 156, Feb. 5, 1919

Various

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PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.

VOL. 156

FEBRUARY 5, 1919.

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CHARIVARIA.

The Germans refer to the Armistice negotiations as \_Waffenstillstandeverhandlungen\_. We hope it will be worse even than they think.

\*\*\*

There is no truth in the rumour that among the many new performances of \_Hamlet\_ which are promised there will be one in aid of the fund for brightening the lives of the clergy, with the Gloomy Dean as the Gloomy Dane.

\*\*\*

"We Americans do not consider ourselves the salt of the earth," says Senator HENRY. No, but their bacon certainly is.

\*\*\*

In view of the fact that there is a large quantity of marmalade in the country, it has been decided to release it. This is such a satisfactory solution of the problem that people are wondering whether the Food Ministry thought of that one themselves.

\*\*\*

Our heart goes out to the soldier who, when offered, on demobilisation, the option of fifty-two shillings and sixpence or a standard suit, replied that he would rather pay the fine.

\*\*\*

The only surprising thing about Mr. C.B. COCHRAN'S proposal for a Peace Fair in Hyde Park, to be arranged largely by himself, is that there is no mention of a Serpentine dance for DELYSIA.

\*\*\*

The Australian Government proposes to send returned Australian soldiers to prospect for minerals in the Northern Territories. Whether they will be interested in them after their experience in England in failing to locate quarts is another matter.

\*\*\*

Sir EDWARD ELGAR has dedicated his new orchestral work, "Polonia," to M. PADEREWSKI. The report that the distinguished pianist-politician is thinking of retorting with a fugue, "Stiltonia," is not confirmed.

\*\*\*

The Aircraft Salvage branch announces that not less than one thousand five hundred yards of the aeroplane linen which is being disposed of to the public will be sold to one purchaser. In the event of the purchaser deciding to use it as a pocket-handkerchief he can have it hemstitched for a trifling sum.

\*\*\*

Improvement is reported in the condition of the taxi-cab driver who had a seizure in Piccadilly Circus while attempting to say "Thank you" to a fare.

\*\*\*

We are pleased to be able to announce that the Kensington man who last week managed to board a tube train has consented to write a book about it.

\*\*\*

Writing to a contemporary a Leeds correspondent says that he does not think much of an inactive corporation. As a matter of fact, since the introduction of rationing we didn't think active ones were being worn.

\*\*\*

As a result of munition work, says a health journal, quite a number of men have given up smoking tobacco. We suppose the theory is that they have now taken to smoking threepenny cigars.

\*\*\*

Mrs. MAGGIE HATHWAY of Montana is to be congratulated upon running a six-hundred-acre farm without the help of men's labour. After all we men must admit that her sporting effort is a distinct score for the second oldest sex in the world.

\*\*\*

Anglesea Police Commission are offering one shilling and sixpence a dozen for rats' tails to residents of the county. Some difficulty is expected in distinguishing local from imported tails once they are separated from the rat.

\*\*\*

In connection with the offers for Drury Lane Theatre it appears that one of the would-be purchasers declares that he was more syndicate than sinning.

\*\*\*

In connection with the epidemic of burglaries in London, \_The Daily Express\_ has now published a leader note saying there have been too many of late. It is hoped that this will have the desired effect.

\*\*\*

We are glad to report that the gentleman who, at the BURNS festival, upon being asked if he would take a little haggis replied that he wouldn't mind trying a wing, managed to escape with his life.

\*\*\*

A West Hampstead architect has designed a cottage in which there will be no bricks in the walls, no timber in the roof, no slates or tiles and no register grates. Too late. Jerry-builders accomplished that trick years ago.

\*\*\*

While walking in Highams Park, Chingford, says a contemporary, a postman picked up a package containing one ounce of butter. To his eternal credit let it be said that he at once took it to the nearest police station.

\*\*\*

The best brains of the country are still exercised by the alleged need of brightening cricket. One of our own suggestions is that the bowler should be compelled to do three Jazz-steps and two Fox-trots before delivering the ball.

\*\*\*

A typist recently fell from a moving train on the Isle of Wight railway, but was able to get up and walk towards her destination. We hear she had a good deal to say to the guard when she overtook the train.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: DEPARTURE FROM DOWNING STREET 10 A.M.

ARRIVAL AT THE QUAI D'ORSAY 10.5 A.M.

THE NEW AERO-GUN SERVICE BETWEEN LONDON AND PARIS.

SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF HOW MR. LLOYD GEORGE CAN BE IN BOTH PLACES MORE OR LESS AT ONCE.]

\* \* \* \* \*

From a \_feuilleton\_ :--

"He had a cleft in his chain which Rosemarie thought most attractive."--\_Evening News\_.

There is no accounting for tastes. \_We\_ should have thought it suggested the Missing Link.

\* \* \* \* \*

EVICTED.

(\_A COMMON SCANDAL, INVITING THE ATTENTION OF THE GOVERNMENT.\_)

I was amazed the other day to hear that my landlord had called to see me. Hitherto our intercourse had been by letter and we had had heated differences on the subject of repairs. His standpoint seemed to be that landlords were responsible for repairs only to lightning conductors and weathercocks. My house possesses neither of these desirable adjuncts.

I moved an armchair so that no one sitting in it could fail to see the dampest wall and ordered him to be shown in.

He was a most benevolent-looking old gentleman, and I felt I had done him an injustice in regarding him as a property shark.

"Glad to see you," he said, shaking me warmly by the hand.

"Do sit down," I said. "That chair is the most comfortable. Don't be afraid. At that distance from the wall the damp won't affect you."

"So glad to see how comfortable you are here," said the benevolent one.

"If we could occasionally have a hot bath we should be more comfortable, but the kitchen range is impossible."

"What you need, my friend, is a house of your own so that you can adapt it to your own ideas. How would you like this house?"

My breath was taken away. Had the kindly one come to present me with a house? Was I to be the object of an amiable plutocrat's benevolence?

"I should like it very much," I said.

"You shall have it," he said, slapping me amiably on the knee.

I gasped for breath. In my time I had had boxes of cigars given me, but never houses.

"For fifteen hundred pounds, as you are the tenant," continued the benevolent one.

I gasped for breath again.

"But you bought it for five hundred and fifty pounds just before the War," I said when I had recovered.

"Ah, before the War," chuckled the philanthropist.

"I don't think I can afford fifteen hundred pounds."

The benevolent one looked disappointed in me. "Dear me," he said, "and I wanted so much to sell it to you. Well, I shall have to give you notice to quit in June. This house must be sold."

"But I can't get another house."

"You can have this house. But surely you have some friend who will advance you fifteen hundred pounds?"

"You don't know my friends. It would be very awkward to be turned into the street."

"You should have a house of your own and be independent. Every man should own his home. Now can't you think of some friend who could assist you?"

"Could you lend me fifteen hundred pounds for a rather speculative investment?" I inquired.

"Since my kindly consideration for a tenant is treated with mockery I give you written notice to leave. A 'For Sale' board will be placed in your garden. A clause in the lease authorises me to do that. I wish you good morning."

Well, I am to be evicted, and, as I'm not an Irishman, no one will care. I shall not lie in wait with a shot-gun for my landlord. But there is no clause in the lease forbidding me from putting up my sale announcement beside the landlord's. It will run:--

FOR SALE  
THIS UNDESIRABLE PROPERTY  
COST L550 IN 1913.  
Never been repaired since.  
Damp guaranteed to come through every wall.  
Mice can run under the doors but there is  
not sufficient space for cats to follow them.  
The Kitchen Range is unusable.  
All hope of baths abandon ye who enter here.  
One half of the windows won't  
open--the others won't shut.  
All chimneys smoke in all winds.  
A unique chance for the War-rich.

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE PUFF ERRATIC.

The New Statesman contains a letter from Mr. ARNOLD BENNETT, disclaiming all responsibility for the publisher's official description of his new novel printed on the "jacket" or paper cover thereof. It had not been submitted to him for approval and he knew nothing of it. Mr. BENNETT is, of course, entitled to his protest, but we greatly hope that publishers will not be induced thereby to abstain from supplying these interesting summaries. If only the method could be applied to standard works the results would be even more illuminating. As for example:

### "HAMLET."

This delicious comedy is the romance of the Prince of Denmark, which, unlike other romances, begins after his marriage: with Polonia, daughter of Horatio, who had been previously engaged to both Rosenstern and Guildencranz. Hamlet, by joining a troupe of strolling players, offends his uncle, the reigning sovereign, and is confined in a lunatic asylum.

Brilliant pictures of society in Copenhagen, Denmark Hill and Heligoland alternate with sparkling studies of the inner life of a touring company on the Continent.

"Can a woman love three men?" is the theme of this engrossing extravaganza.

### "IDYLLS OF THE KING."

In a series of exciting episodes, written in fluent heroic couplets, the author gives us a thrilling picture of the manners and customs of the Court of King Arthur, an early British sovereign, whose stately home was situated on the Cornish Riviera.

Owing to the compromising attentions which he pays to Elaine, the Lady of Shalott, the King alienates the affections of Queen Guinevere and is slain by one of his knights, Lancelot by name.

Winsome women, gallant paladins and mysterious magicians throng these fascinating pages, which incidentally throw much light on the theological problems discussed by the Knights of the Round Table, among whom Merlin, Vivien and Enid are especially prominent.

### "VANITY FAIR."

Major Dobbin, a beau sabreur of irresistible charm, is on the point of eloping with Amelia Osborne, the wife of a brother-officer, when the Battle of Waterloo breaks out and Dobbin is slain. Captain Osborne, in the mistaken impression that Amelia has shared her betrayer's fate, marries the beautiful Becky Sharp and is tried for bigamy, but is acquitted, as Becky Sharp is proved to have been already married to an Indian Nabob of the name of Crawley. On the death of Crawley, Becky marries the Marquis of Steyne, becomes deeply religious and dies in the odour of sanctity.

"Is marriage a failure?" is the problem of this kaleidoscopic drama, which is handled with all the author's well-known soulful verve.

\* \* \* \* \*

### "SMITH MINOR" AGAIN.

"\_Apelles fuit carus Alexandro propter comitate.\_"  
"Apples were dear in the days of Alexander on account  
of the Committee." (? Food Controller.)

\* \* \* \* \*

"A resolution was passed requesting the responsible local  
authority to provide thirty new houses in accordance  
with the Local Government Board's scheme. The houses  
required were--first, those which were unfit for human  
habitation."--\_Sussex Paper\_.

And, to judge by some of the fantastic designs for rural cottages  
published in the newspapers, those are what they will probably get.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: THE ORDER OF RELEASE.

PIVOTAL PIG (\_demobilised\_). "SO LONG, LEAGUE OF RATIONS, SEE YOU  
LATER."]

\* \* \* \* \*

THE REAL DALRYMPLE.

You would feel quite uncomfortable if you heard Dalrymple talk. He  
conveys the impression that everything is badly in the way and ought  
to be removed at once. That's his view. Dalrymple has no patience with  
the social system. This includes everything, from the washing bill to  
the House of Commons.

Dalrymple said the General Election made him impatient. By the way,  
Dalrymple is a fine upstanding personage, with just the coloured  
hair the lady novelists dote on, and eyes in harmony; but despite his  
handsome placid bearing Dalrymple is a fire-eater of the hungriest.

"What you want to do is to make a clean sweep of everything," he said.  
"Money is an anachronism, and in a perfectly ordered State would not  
be required."

Of course it is no more use arguing with Dalrymple than it would be  
to attempt a controversy on naval affairs with Lord Nelson on his  
pedestal.

And then there is this about Dalrymple--you remember what some Court  
poet said concerning Louis THE FOURTEENTH; it was to the effect that  
\_quand le Roi parle\_--well, apparently everything and everybody else  
had to put up the shutters. I forget exactly how the thing ran. It  
is just so with Dalrymple. He comes into my room in the City and  
warms himself, though no fire is needed to fan his enthusiasm for  
destruction. The Bolsheviks are peaceable Sunday folk compared with  
him. A Nihilist on a war footing would be considered Quaker-like in  
his symptoms.

Dalrymple is neck or nothing. He is a whole-hogger even to the most  
indigestible bit of crackling.

"What we want is a fresh start," he said. "Then you could begin anew  
and everybody would have a chance. Burn things, blow them up, leave  
nothing; then we should see something. Your whole scheme is faulty.  
Your Underground--" Dalrymple has an irritating habit of fathering  
things on me, which is unfair, for, as regards the Tubes, for  
instance, I am sorry to say I have not even a share, and often not  
as much as a strap.



"But the Underground is only a bit overcrowded," I ventured to say.  
"It can't help that, you know."

"It is all wrong," said Dalrymple. "The entire gadget is defective. Look at France, look at America, look at Germany and Russia and the Jugo-Slavs."

It was rather breathless work looking at all these nations and peoples, but I did my best. Dalrymple is particularly strong when it is a question of the Jugo-Slavs, and he always gave me the idea that he spent his Saturday afternoons enunciating chatty pleasantries in Trafalgar Square and on Tower Hill.

But—you might just see the finish—Dalrymple was not doing anything of the sort the afternoon that I was out house-hunting. Yes, it is true. You will scarcely credit the fact that I found any difficulty in tracking down an eligible villa, but that is the case.

The quest took me to a pleasant semi-rural neighbourhood where there was room for gardens with the borders edged with the nice soft yellow-tinted box, and rose walks, and dainty little arbours, and fandangled appurtenances which amateur gardeners love with perfect justification.

And there was Dalrymple. I won't deceive you. I recognised him on the other side of a low oak fence. He was wearing an old hat of the texture of the bit of headgear which the man who impersonates Napoleon at the music-hall doubles up and plays tricks with, only Dalrymple's hat had obviously been white and was now going green and other colours with wear and tear.

And wherever Dalrymple went a small cherub in a holland frock went too. The cherub would be about five. Dalrymple was fashioning a hen-coop out of two or three soap-boxes. Both he and the cherub ceased activities when I hailed and approached; and I stopped to dinner. Dalrymple told me he rather fancied he could wangle me a bungalow.

"I know the agent chap," he said, as we sampled a very pleasant glass of port. "Of course they want to keep it fairly dark or we should be swamped. I have taken a lot of trouble myself, you know, and am just starting gardening lectures at our club."

So he went on—the house, his new roses, the hens, the jam his wife made, the idea he had for a winter garden in the interests of his wife's mother, who could then take the air in her Bath-chair.

"But," I said, "you want to sweep everything away. You aim at sending villages like this to pot—your own word, you remember. And then there are the Jugo-Slavs—"

Dalrymple winked and handed me the cigars.

I fancy he is a fraud.

\* \* \* \* \*

"AEROPLANE FLIGHT TO INDIA.

"PREPARATIONS FOR DECEPTION IN DELHI."--\_Englishman\_  
(\_Calcutta\_).

But the aviators, in order that there might be no doubt about their \_bona fides\_, wisely landed at Karachi.

\* \* \* \* \*

MY SERGEANT-MAJOR-DOMO.

When WILSON has abolished War  
And grim Bellona claims no more  
The greatest of her sons,  
What job has Peace to offer thee  
That shall fulfil thy destiny,  
O Sergeant-Major Buns?

Shall thy great voice, at whose behests  
Trembled a hundred martial breasts,  
Be heard without a smile  
Urging astonished Cingalese  
To tap the tapering rubber trees  
Upon their distant isle?

Shall thy dread presence clothed in tweed  
Be seen, O Buns, without the meed  
Of some regretful sigh,  
Fresh from the triumphs of the trench  
Upon the Opposition Bench  
Begging the SPEAKER'S eye?

Nay, rather let thy mighty mind  
At length its true vocation find  
In the domestic sphere;  
The trivial round, the common task  
Shall furnish all thou needst to ask--  
There shalt thou earn thy beer.

Yes, thou shalt play a worthy role,  
Thou great unconquerable soul,  
Within my humble flat;  
For when thy voice shall thunder, "Where  
Is master's cream?" what maid shall dare  
Invoke the mystic cat?

And what or volatile Miss Grippe?  
The weekly notice on her lips  
Shall wither at thy look.  
And still one triumph waits for thee--  
And, oh! may I be there to see--  
When thou shalt face my cook!

\* \* \* \* \*

"DATE FIXED FOR HANGING RETAILERS."--\_Provincial Paper\_.

And some of them richly deserve it.

\* \* \* \* \*

"The League will reconsider traety obligations from time  
to time.

"The League will reconsider traeyt obligations from time  
to time."--\_Evening Paper\_.

And then the printer gave it up.

\* \* \* \* \*

"A Handley Page, with two Rolls-Royce engines, was the first and only machine to fly to India, and was the first and only machine to fly to India, and is the second to fly to India."--\_Daily Paper\_.

Not the third and only, as for the moment we were tempted to believe.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Young Educated Girl Pupil Wanted, help animals; live clergyman's family; pocket-money."--\_Newcastle Journal\_.

We are glad to hear of a really live clergyman. So many parsons nowadays are accused of being dead-alive.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: THE SPREAD OF EDUCATION.

\_Maid\_. "NO, MUM, I'M NOT GOING TO STAY IN THIS HOUSE TO BE INSULTED BY HAVING 'SLAVEY' WRITTEN ON THE MAT."]

\* \* \* \* \*

DAILY AND MAILY.

Mr. Daily burst into the room, slamming the door behind him, to find Mr. Maily seated before the fire.

"Maily, you're not getting things done," he shouted as he walked swiftly up and down the Turkey carpet.

"Only buttoning my spat, Daily," said Mr. Maily. Then he too, springing from his chair, walked rapidly to and fro. But whereas Mr. Daily chose the route between the window and the motto, "Do something else NOW!" Mr. Maily took the line between the fireplace and "Keep on keeping on!" for they seldom felt compelled to stick to one direction.

"Maily, I'm worried," exclaimed Mr. Daily in passing. "Things seem to be easing down. Even you are not so nimble as you were. This silence of the public troubles me--haven't been saying things about us for a long time."

"Some people even praise us," remarked Mr. Maily, disgust mingling with the perspiration on his face.

"We'll be damned if we put up with praise," Mr. Daily declared.

"We shall. We'd give praise if they'd damn us," said Mr. Maily.

"Never be funny, Maily, if you can help it," warned Mr. Daily. Then he remarked wistfully, "If they'd only burn us again!"

"Couldn't we go for the Archbishop of CANTERBURY?" asked Mr. Maily. "To be burnt during morning service in a cathedral--"

"No, these church-people couldn't be roused, Maily. Too much dillydally about them. They'd never fall to it."

Mr. Daily jabbed his thumb against a white bell-push, and a clerk appeared. "Got enough work to do?" asked Mr. Daily.

"And then some," said the clerk.

"Well, get on with it," shouted Mr. Daily impatiently, and pressed a

red bell-push.

"Plenty doing?" he asked the compositor who appeared.

"Twice that," said the compositor.

"Then go to it," barked Mr. Daily. Turning to behold Mr. Maily mopping his brow, he cried, "For heaven's sake don't let anybody see you standing still, Maily."

"I was only thinking," said Mr. Maily.

"Whatever for?" asked Mr. Daily.

"Do you suppose--"

"Suppose nothing. Know!"

"How would it be to--to denounce beer?" asked Mr. Maily.

"Gad, but you've still got pluck," said Mr. Daily with something like admiration. "They'd burn us right enough. But there is such a thing as too much pluck, Maily. Think again, if you must think."

"No," Mr. Daily went on, "I doubt if a satisfactory burning can be worked--it only comes by accident. Meanwhile, if the public won't talk about us, we must boom ourselves;" and he sprinted to a yellow bell-push to summon the editor.

"This peace business," said Mr. Daily to him--"\_Peace must be signed!\_ How's that for a new stunt? Cut out 'The Soldiers' Paper' and call ourselves 'The Paper that gets Peace.' Get the boys together, work out a scheme and come and show us in half-an-hour."

"But, Daily, is there any likelihood of peace not being signed?" asked Mr. Maily, when the editor had gone.

"For goodness' sake, Maily, pull yourself together. Don't you understand that one of the principles of our job is to back certs?" said Mr. Daily.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: \_Manager of Kinema Theatre\_ (\_referring to the two turbulent members of audience who have been ejected\_). "HOW DID THE QUARREL COMMENCE?"

\_Doorkeeper\_. "THEY WERE FIGHTING, SIR, ABOUT WHICH OF THEM THE GIRL IN THE PICTURE WAS WINKING AT."]

\* \* \* \* \*

LINES TO A LEGIONARY.

(\_ MEMBERS OF THE NEW CORPS OF DOMESTIC SERVANTS ARE CALLED LEGIONARIES\_.)

Sole hope of this my household, martial maid  
Whom ordered ranks and discipline austere  
Have shaped (I gather) for a braver trade,  
So that respect, not all unmixed with fear,  
Informs my breast as I await you here,  
Your title, with its stern Caesarian touch,  
Does, to be frank, alarm me very much.

Come not, I pray you, to my casual home  
(Where moulting cats usurp the best arm-chair)  
With the harsh practices of Ancient Rome,  
The brow severe, the you-be-careful air  
Which (on the film) all legionaries wear;  
My dream is just a regulated ease;  
Rules, if you like, but not too stringent, please.

Come not with rude awakenings, nor request  
That I at stated hours must rise and feed;  
I like my morning slumber much the best  
And hate a life by drastic laws decreed  
(I'm not a Persian born, nor yet a Mede);  
No, but with step demure and tactful come,  
And if soft music greet you, oh, be dumb!

In careless comfort let my days be spent!  
And, maiden, mutual happiness shall reign;  
The crash of crockery I'll not lament  
Nor (when I fain would sing) will I complain  
Though you should raise the far from dulcet strain;  
But with a sweet content I'll bless the day  
My legionary came, and came to stay.

\* \* \* \* \*

"LOST, large retriever dog, flat-coated; when pleased or expectant he grins, showing all his teeth; information leading to his recovery will be rewarded."--\_Glasgow Herald\_.

It is supposed that he has been studying the portraits of "Variety" ladies in the illustrated papers.

\* \* \* \* \*

"He must, said Mr. Thomas, urge men to recognise that, in the present state of the country, it was imperative that soppages should be avoided."--\_Liverpool Paper\_.

Excellent advice; but in the present state of the country, unless one wears waders, extremely difficult to follow.

\* \* \* \* \*

"WANTED.--A suitable match for a well-connected and refined Suri widower of 37; healthy and of good moral character; monthly income about 500 rupees. Possesses property. Late wife died last week."--\_Indian Paper\_.

It is a sign of the truly moral character to be definitely off with the old love before you are on with the new.

\* \* \* \* \*

"The five main points in the Prime Minister's programme are:  
(1) Punch the ex-Kaiser."--\_Sunday Times\_ (\_Johannesburg\_).

The other four don't matter, but we wish to take the earliest opportunity of denying this totally unfounded suggestion. Mr. Punch is not the ex-Kaiser, and never was.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: \_Late Superintendent of Munition Canteen\_ (\_in dairy where she has dealt for over three years\_). "AND YOU WON'T FORGET THE

CREAM AS USUAL."

Dairy Girl. "SORRY, MADAM. I REGRET YOU CANNOT HAVE ANY MORE CREAM, AS YOU HAVE CEASED TO BE OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE.]"

\* \* \* \* \*

A LITTLE FAVOUR.

Maisie was terribly upset when she lost her gold curb bangle (with padlock attached) between the hospital and the canteen. The first I knew of it was seeing a handbill offering two pounds' reward on our front gate, with the ink still damp, when I came home to lunch. There was a similar bill blowing down the road. My wife had some more under her arm and she pressed them on me. "Run round to the shops," she said; "get them put right in the middle of the windows where they'll catch everybody's eye."

The first shop I entered was a hosier's. Since drilling in the V.T.O. I have acquired rather a distinguished bearing. Shopkeepers invariably treat me with attention. The hosier hurried forward, obviously anticipating a princely order for tweeds at war prices. I hadn't the courage to buy nothing. I selected the nearest thing on the counter, a futurist necktie at two-and-six-three, and, as I was leaving the shop, turned back carelessly. "By the by, would you mind putting this bill in your window?" I said.

His lip curled. "This is a high-class business. We make it a rule--no bills," he said.

At the butcher's next door there were several customers. They all gave way to me. I made purchases worthy of my appearance and carriage, half an ox tail and some chitterlings. Then I proffered a handbill. The man in blue accepted it and, before I had opened my lips, returned it to me wrapped round the ox tail. I was too taken aback to explain. In fact, when he held out his hand, I mechanically gave him another bill for the chitterlings.

At the next shop, a fancy draper's, I acted with cunning. In the centre of the window, on a raised background of silver paper, was displayed a wreath of orange-blossom veiled with tulle. I bought it. The young ladies were hysterical. "May I ask permission to put this little handbill in its place?" I said. They appealed to the shopwalker. "In the absence of the head of the firm I cannot see my way to accede to your request," he said. "At present he is on the Rhine. On his demobilisation I will place the matter before him if you will leave the bill in my hands." I left it.

I skipped a gramophone emporium and a baby-linen shop and entered a fishmonger's. Here I adopted tactics of absolute candour. "Look here," I said, "I haven't come to buy anything. I don't want any fish, flesh or red-herring, but I should be no end grateful if you would stick this bill up for me somewhere."

"Certainly, Sir, as many as you like," said the proprietor heartily.

Gleefully I gave him two. One he stuck on a hook on top of a couple of ducks, and it flopped over face downwards on their breasts. The other he laid in the middle of the marble counter, and the next moment his assistant came along and slapped an outsize halibut on it.

I went into a jeweller's next and purchased a gold curb bangle (with padlock attached).

"You clever old thing," said Maisie; "you'd never tell one from the

other, would you? Mine's a tiny bit heavier, don't you think? I've just found it in the soap-dish. I'll change this for a filigree pendant. All my life I've longed for a filigree pendant"

\* \* \* \* \*

"For 85 tons of blackberries, gathered last autumn, Northamptonshire elementary school children were paid L2,380, 3d. a lb."--\_Daily Paper\_.

The young profiteers!

\* \* \* \* \*

"Splendid imitation almond paste for cakes can be made as follows: Take four ounces of breadcrumbs, one small teaspoonful of almond essence, four ounces of soft white sugar, and one well-eaten egg to bind the mixture."--\_Answers\_.

The difficulty is to get the egg.

\* \* \* \* \*

\_APRES LA GUERRE\_.

"\_On ne sait jamais le dessous des cartes\_" as the perplexing dialect of the aborigines of this country would put it. William and I, when we used to discuss after-the-war prospects o' nights in the old days, were more or less resigned to a buckshee year or two of filling shell-holes up and pulling barbed wire down. Instead of which we all go about the country taking in each others' education. No one, we gather, will be allowed to go home until he has taken his B.A. with honours. And after that--But it would be better to begin at the beginning.

It began within ten days of the signing of the armistice, assuming the shape of an official inquiry from Division, a five-barred document wherein somebody with a talent for confusing himself (and a great contempt for the Paper Controller) managed to ask every officer the same question in five different ways. They cancelled each other out after a little examination and left behind merely a desire to discover whether or not each officer had a job waiting for him on his return to civil life. William and I took the thing at a gallop, stuck down a succinct "Yes. Yes, No, No. Yes," subscribed our signatures and returned the documents--or so William proposed to do--"for your information and necessary inaction."

"They're getting deuced heavy about these jobs, aren't they?" observed William a day or two later. "The Old Man wants to see us all at orderly-room for a private interview--he's got to make a return showing whether his officers have got jobs waiting for them, if not, why not, and please indent at once to make good any deficiencies. Hullo, what's this?"

It happened to be William's mail for the day--one large official-looking envelope. It turned out to be a document from his old unit (he had entered the Army from an O.T.C.), headed, "Resettlement and Employment of ex-Officers: Preliminary Enquiry." It was a formidable catechism, ranging from inquiries as to whether William had a job ready for him to a request for a signed statement from his C.O. certifying that he was a sober, diligent and obliging lad and had generally given every satisfaction in his present situation. In case he hadn't a job or wanted another one there were convenient spaces in which to confess the whole of his past--whether he had a liking for

animals or the Colonies, mechanical aptitude (if any), down to full list of birth-marks and next-of-kin. William thrust the thing hastily into the stove. But I observed that there was a cloud over him for the rest of the day.

However, we both of us satisfied the examiner at the orderly-room, though the renewed evidence of a determined conspiracy to find work for him left William a trifle more thoughtful than his wont. Shades of the prison-house began to close about our growing joy, "These 'ere jobs," remarked William, "are going to take a bit of dodging, dearie. Looks to me as though you might cop out for anything from a tram-driver to Lord Chief. Wish people wouldn't be so infernally obliging. And, anyway, what is this--an Army or a Labour Exchange?"

As the days wore on the strain became more and more intense. William's old school had contrived an association which begged to be allowed to do anything in the world for him except leave him for a single day in idleness. And what time the Army was not making inquiries about his own civil intentions and abilities it was insisting on his extracting the same information from the platoons. William grew haggard and morose. He began looking under his bed every night for prospective employers and took to sleeping with a loaded Webley under his pillow for fear of being kidnapped by a registry office. He slept in uneasy snatches, and when he did doze off was tormented by hideous nightmares.

In one of them he dreamt he was on leave and walking through the City. At every doorway he had to run the gauntlet of lithe and implacable managing directors, all ready to pounce on him, drag him within and chain him permanently to a stool--with the complete approval of the Army Council. In another he was appearing before a tribunal of employers as a conscientious objector to all forms of work.

The last straw was when the Brigadier caused it to be made known that if any officer was particularly unsettled about his future he might be granted a personal interview and it would be seen what could be done for him. William sat down with the air of one who has established a thumping bridgehead over his Rubicon and wrote to the Brigadier direct and as follows:--

"SIR,--I have the honour to hope that this finds you a good deal better than it leaves me at present. In case you should be in any uncertainty over your prospects on return to half-pay, I shall be happy to grant you a personal interview at my billet (Sheet 45; G 22a 3.7.) and see whether anything can be arranged to suit you. I may add that I have a number of excellent appointments on my books, from knife-boy to traveller to a firm of mineral water manufacturers. For my own part my immediate future is firmly settled, thank you. For at least three months after my discharge from the Army I have no intention of taking up any form of work.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"YOUR OTHERWISE OBEDIENT SERVANT, ETC."

\* \* \* \* \*

The court-martial was held last Thursday and sentence will be promulgated any day now. Medical evidence certified William as sane enough to understand the nature of his offence, but as the War is over it is unlikely that he will be shot at dawn. William himself is confident that he will be cashiered, a sentence which carries with it automatic and permanent exclusion from all appointments under the Crown. "That makes a tidy gap in the wire," says William hopefully. "They won't even be able to make a postman of me. With a bit of luck



I'll dodge the unofficial jobs—I get that holiday after all, old bean."

\* \* \* \* \*

"HUNTING. THE DANGER OF KICKING HORSES."--\_Times\_.

Generally the shoe is on the other foot.

\* \* \* \* \*

"The Falkirk iron fitters, by an overwhelming majority, have opposed the forty-hour week and have agreed to a forty-four hour week."--\_Provincial Paper\_.

Bravo, Falkirk!

\* \* \* \* \*

"The announcement of the augmentation of the British beet in the Mediterranean appeared exclusively in the 'Sunday Express.'"--\_Daily Express\_.

It doesn't seem anything to boast about.

\* \* \* \* \*

"WANTED.--On a farm, two capable European young or middle-aged girls."--\_South African Paper\_.

There are lots of girls answering this description, but the difficulty is that most of them are too shy to admit it.

\* \* \* \* \*

"M. Clemenceau ... speaks English with rare perfection, having spent years in the United States."--\_Daily Paper\_.

"M. Clemenceau, speaking in excellent English, said 'Yes.'"--\_Sunday Paper\_.

What he really said, of course, was "Yep."

\* \* \* \* \*

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

"What \_are\_ you, Sir?" the Counsel roared.  
The timid witness said, "My Lord,  
A Season-ticket holder I  
Where London's southern suburbs lie."  
"Tut, tut," his Lordship made demur,  
"He meant what is your business, Sir."  
The witness sighed and shook his head,  
"I get no time for that," he said.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: SERVICE EVOLUTION. BUD. BLOSSOM. FRUIT.]

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: \_Guest\_ (\_who has cut the cloth\_). "BILLIARDS REQUIRE CONSTANT PRACTICE."]

\* \* \* \* \*

ANOTHER CRISIS.

(\_BY A FUTILITY RABBIT KEEPER\_)

There is a rabbit in the pansy bed,  
There is a burrow underneath the wall,  
There is a rabbit everywhere you tread,  
To-day I heard a rabbit in the hall,  
The same that sits at evening in my shoes  
And sings his usefulness, or simply chews;  
There is no corner sacred to the Muse--  
And how shall man demobilise them all?

Far back, when England was devoid of food,  
Men bade me breed the coney and I bought  
Timber and wire-entanglements and hewed  
Fair roomy palaces of pine-wood wrought,  
Wherein our first-bought sedulously gnawed  
And every night escaped and ran abroad;  
Yet she was lovely and we named her Maud,  
And if she ate the primulas, 'twas nought.

The months rolled onward and she multiplied,  
And all her progeny resembled her;  
They ate the daffodils; they seldom died;  
And no one thought of them as provender,  
The children fed them weekly for a treat,  
And my wife said, "The \_little\_ things--how sweet!  
If you imagine I can ever eat  
A rabbit called Persephone, you err."

Yet famine might have hardened that proud breast,  
Only that victory removed the threat;  
And now, if e'er I venture to suggest  
That it is time that some of them were ate,  
That Maud is pivotal and costing pounds,  
And how the garden is a mass of mounds,  
She answers me, on military grounds,  
"Peace is not come. We cannot eat them yet."

So I shall steal to yon allotment space  
With a large bag of rabbits, and unseen  
Demobilise them, and in that fair place  
They all shall browse on cauliflower and bean;  
There Smith will come on Saturday, and think  
That it is shell-shock or disease or drink;  
But Maud shall dwell for ever there and sink  
A world of burrows in Labumum Green. A.P.H.

\* \* \* \* \*

SECRETS OF THE PEACE CONFERENCE.

"The proceedings yesterday afternoon began punctually at three o'clock. Lord Robert Cecil sat with the British delegates. M. Leon Bourgeois sat among the French delegates."--\_Manchester Guardian\_.

And not, as might have been thought, \_vice versa\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

"A thoroughly capable and energetic man wanted, who will look

after a family concern: Must understand management of 25 acre farm with 10 cows, about four acres may have to be broken up. Must be an experienced brewer, capable of mashing 10 times a week, and taking entire charge of brewing operations with assistance of unskilled labour. Must be conversant with licensing laws and requirements, also present restrictions as applying to brewing; thoroughly understand and superintend wines and spirits department, direct repairs, capable buyer, general manager, organiser and foreman. Must be thorough accountant, capable of directing office and branch work, conversant with income-tax and excess profits duty practice. Able to drive, or willing to learn a 4-ton Commer lorry, must be motor-cyclist to visit branches, and manage public-houses. Absolutely essential to understand and drive oil engines.--Further particulars apply ---- and Sons."--\_Daily Paper\_.

What we chiefly miss is any information as to how the man is to fill up his spare time.

\* \* \* \* \*

"ITALIAN SPELLING.

"There are to be streets in Athens named after President Wilson and after Mr. Lloyd George. In the 'Patris,' an Athens paper, we read that 'Wilson' is spelt 'Ouilson,' whilst 'George' is 'Tzortz,' 'Bonar Law' is 'Mponar Lo.'"--\_Birmingham Mail\_.

We bow to our contemporary's erudition, but we confess it all looks Greek to us.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: THE PROGRESSIVE WEIGHT-LIFTER.]

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: \_Betty\_. "MUMMY, DOES GOD SEND US OUR FOOD?"

\_Mother\_. "YES, DEAR; OF COURSE HE DOES."

\_Betty\_. "BUT WHAT A PRICE!"]

\* \* \* \* \*

ALL THE TALENTS.

Now that hostilities are at an end it is thought by many intelligent young subalterns that a little variety might well be introduced into Army routine.

For instance, at a General's Inspection why should not Officers' duties be allotted after this fashion?--

The Commanding Officer will bind up the Second-in-Command with a length of red tape, showing that no escape is possible from this form of entanglement.

The Adjutant will give an exhibition of paper manipulation, using various Army Forms for this purpose.

The Assistant-Adjutant will demonstrate how a morning's work may be made of the changing of a pen-nib, while still creating an impression of devoted industry.

The Messing Officer will fry a fillet of sole by means of haybox cookery, and during the process will publicly skin a ration rabbit in such a way that not the slightest depreciation is caused in the value of 21/2d. attached to a rabbit-skin.

The Officer i/e Demobilisation will demobilise you while you wait (provided you can wait long enough).

The Quartermaster will make a model of Hampton Court Maze, illustrative of the intricacies of his department, taking care that his model appropriately differs from the original in having no means of exit.

The Medical Officer will demonstrate how the huge national accumulation of No. 9 pills may be adapted to civilian purposes by using the pill \_(a)\_ as a fertiliser for the Officers' tennis lawn, and \_(b)\_ as a destroyer of the superfluous grass bordering thereon.

Company Commanders will collaborate in a display of standing on their own feet without the assistance of their respective Company Sergeant-Majors. (N.B.--Absolute silence is requested during this very delicate performance.)

The Junior Subaltern will give an exhibition of stunt saluting.

\* \* \* \* \*

TO MY DRESS SUIT.

Old friend, well met! I've longed for this reunion;  
You've been the lodestar of this storm-tossed ship  
In those long hours which poets call Communion  
With one's own Soul, and common folk the Pip.

The foe might rage, the Brigadier might bluster.  
Was I down-hearted? No! My spirit soared  
And dreamt of you and me with blended lustre  
Gracing some well-spread and convivial board.

And what if now you fit askew where erstwhile  
Fair lines bewrayed a figure not too svelte?  
What if your shoulder-seams are like to burst, while  
A sad hiatus shows beneath the belt?

As April fills the buds to shapely beauty,  
As cooks fill Robert with plum-cake and tea,  
So, it may be, a diet rich and fruity  
May fill the gap that sunders you from me.

And if it fail, as I'm a, living sinner  
I'll save you from the gaze of scornful eyes.  
They say that Bolsheviks don't dress for dinner;  
I'll off to Petrograd and Bolshevize.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: \_The Mayor\_. "THE CONTENTS OF THE PURSE WILL IN TIME INEVITABLY DISAPPEAR; BUT (\_laying his hand on the clock\_) HERE IS SOMETHING WHICH WILL NEVER GO."]

\* \* \* \* \*

A PLEA FOR PROPORTION.

[Its contemporaries having told us all about Mr. Lloyd George's hat and how President Wilson ate a banana, \_The Daily Express\_ recently went one better with the headline, "Mr. Balfour joins a Tennis Club," as the subheading of its "Peace Conference Notes."]

Has it always been this way, I wonder,  
Did editors always display  
The same disposition to blunder  
O'er the weight of the news of the day?  
When simpler was war and director,  
Was Athens accustomed to see  
In the sheets of its \_Argus\_ how Hector  
Had bloaters for tea?

If so--or indeed if it's not so--  
One cannot but gently deplore  
That the custom of chronicling rot so  
Has not been expunged by the War.  
When the world with its horrors still stunned is  
And waits for vast hopes to come true,  
What boots it if delegates' undies  
Are scarlet or blue?

All facts of those delegates' labours  
I'm ready to read with a zest,  
And they must, like myself and my neighbours,  
I know, have their moments of rest;  
I do not begrudge them their pleasures,  
But frankly I don't care a rap  
If the sport that engages their leisure's  
"Up, Jenkins" or "Snap."

Since the founts of its wisdom present us  
Each morning with gems of this kind,  
Such matters must strike as momentous  
The news-editorial mind;  
'Tis time this delusion was done with,  
High time that some voice made it clear  
We don't want those fountains to run with  
Such very small beer.

\* \* \* \* \*

"A married man, aged 34 years, collided with the mail train when riding a motorcycle into Hawera on Friday. His right arm, collarbone, and blue hospital uniforms on Thursday morning."--\_New Zealand Herald\_.

We rather like this telescopic style of reporting. It leaves something to the reader's imagination.

\* \* \* \* \*

"To Parents and Pawnbrokers.--Anyone assisting to remove the Charity Boots, marked B., from the Children's Feet, which are the property of Mr. J. B---- and his Supporters, WILL BE PROSECUTED."--\_Irish Paper\_.

A distressful country, indeed, where the children do not own their own feet.

\* \* \* \* \*

WINCHESTER'S OPPORTUNITY.

War legislation has pressed hard on many callings, and on none more than that of the architect. But the embargo has been lifted; the ancient art is coming to its own again, and it is of happy omen that the new President of the Royal Academy has been chosen from the architects. In this context we welcome the stimulating article in a recent issue of *The Times*—a proposal of the Winchester War Memorial. "Are we never," asks the writer, "to take risks in our architecture?" and his answer, briefly summed up, is "Perish the thought. *De l'audace, encore de l'audace, toujours de l'audace.*" It is, of course, a pity that the Winchester War Memorial scheme has not met with the unanimous approval of Wykehamists. Possibly they have reason, for while adding a new cloister, a new gateway and a new hall to the existing school buildings, it involves the pulling down of the Quingentenary Memorial Building, erected some twenty years ago, and of some old houses in Kingsgate Street. Some consider such a drastic destruction to be unfortunate, but, says *The Times*, it is "necessary if any scheme worthy of the occasion is to be carried out." Moreover it is proposed to re-erect the Quingentenary Memorial on a new site, "where it will certainly look as well as ever."

The greatest event in our history, as the writer finely observes, cannot be worthily commemorated by any timid compromise. Winchester has set a splendid example, but it is perhaps too much to expect that it will be followed by London, owing to the inevitable clash of conflicting interests in our unwieldy metropolis. The erection of a new Pantheon on the site of St. Paul's and the removal of WREN'S massive but *demode* structure to Hampstead Heath, where it would certainly look as well as ever, is, we fear, however much *The Times* may desire it, beyond the range of practical politics. But example is infectious, and if only the Winchester authorities would expand their scheme and carry it out with Dantonesque audacity to its full logical conclusion, other towns and cities might ultimately fall into line.

Winchester Cathedral, as we need hardly remind our readers, has only been rescued from subsidence and collapse at an immense cost by a lavish use of the resources of modern engineering. The building itself is not without merits, but its site is inconspicuous and the swampy nature of the soil is a constant menace to its durability. The scheme which we venture with all humility to suggest is that it should be removed and re-erected, in the same spirit though in the architectural language of our own day, on the summit of St. Catherine's Hill, where it would look better than ever, and be connected by a scenic neo-Gothic railway with Meads. This would not only add to the amenities of the landscape, but enable the present cathedral site to be utilized for a purpose more in consonance with the needs of the age. We do not presume to dictate, but may point out that if the deanery and the canons' houses were pulled down and re-erected on the golf-links, where they would look better than ever, space would be available for a majestic aerodrome, or, better still, an experimental water-stadium for submarines, in memory of KING ALFRED, the founder of our Fleet.

Into the question of details, design and cost it is not for us to enter. We confine ourselves to appealing with all the force at our command to Winchester, fortunate, as *The Times* reminds us, in the choice of an architect of genius and ingenuity, to persevere, to rise to the occasion, to cast compromise to the winds and above all to remember that the greatest compliment which can be paid to the architects of the past is to remove their buildings to sites where they look better than ever and do not suffer from the immediate neighbourhood of the masterpieces of their successors. Architecture has been defined as "frozen music." But on great occasions such as this it needs to be taken out of its cold-storage and judiciously thawed.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: THE SOFT ANSWER.

\_Navy\_ (\_to person who has accidentally bumped him\_). "GO TO BLANKETY--BLANK--BLANK--BLAZES."

\_Person\_. "GENTLE STRANGER, YOUR LIGHTEST WISH, EXPRESSED IN SUCH COURTEOUS LANGUAGE, IS TO ME A COMMAND."

(\_Ambulance call\_.)

\* \* \* \* \*

"Lost, sulky inflate."--\_Glasgow Citizen\_.

\* \* \* \* \*

CIVIL EDUCATION FOR SOLDIERS.

When the armistice was signed and the close season for Germans set in, it occurred to the authorities that it would be a waste of labour to continue to train some few million good men for a shooting season that might never re-open, and the weekly programme became rather a sketchy affair till some brain more brilliant than the rest conceived the idea of giving a good sound education in the arts of peace to this promising and waiting multitude. The idea was joyfully accepted, and gradually filtered through its authorised channels, suffering some office change or other at each stage till it finally reached one of our ancient seats of learning. It arrived rather like the peremptory order of a newly-gazetted and bewildered subaltern, who, having got his platoon hopelessly tied up, falls back on the time-honoured and usually infallible "Carry on, Sergeant."

There were some six-hundred white-hatted cadets stationed at this spot, all thirsting (presumably) for information on gas, and Mills bombs, and studs on the cocking-piece, and forming fours, and vertical intervals and District Courts-martial; and when the order came to "carry on" with education it caused something like a panic. A council of war nearly caused Head-quarters to cancel a battalion parade, but they pulled themselves together and held the drill, and the appointed Jack as "Battalion Education Officer," and empowered him to draft a scheme of work.

When produced it consisted of fourteen paragraphs, each of which finished up with the sentence, "This is obviously a problem for the Company Commander." Jack had nothing to learn as to the duties of a battalion specialist and realised that his responsibility lay simply in providing Company Commanders, and then finding problems for them to solve. As the Company Commanders were already in being his work was simplified.

However, the Company Commanders, being men of merit, cheerfully accepted the situation and approached their victims. "We are going to teach you," they said. "What would you like to be taught?"

"Well," said the victims, "what have you got?"

"Oh, anything you like," said the Company Commanders. "Just you choose your subject and we'll do the rest."

Now that was very generous, but rather rash. For the victims took them at their word, and so by the time the perspiring Platoon Commanders had produced their returns (in triplicate) it was found that there

were forty-three subjects to be provided for, including seven languages, six branches of science, four kinds of engineering, six commercial subjects and various sundries, such as metaphysics, wool-classing and coker-nut planting.

The way the Company Commanders dealt with this problem was quite simple and ingenious. They sent for all junior officers and asked what they were prepared to teach. The result seemed really rather good. Tom said he would take French, having spent three months in Northern France before they sent him to Salonika. Dick's father has an allotment and Dick himself occasionally hunts, so he chose Agriculture, Oswald chose Mathematics, on the strength of having been a Quartermaster-Sergeant in the Public Schools Brigade in September, 1914. Wilfred once went to a gas course for ten days, so of course his subject was Science. Arthur really does know something about Architecture and can also enlarge a map quite nicely, so he put down Drawing. John chose Theology. He said he once read the lessons in church; really he thought he was safe to draw a blank.

Once more the Company Commanders were equal to the emergency. They looked at it in this way. French is a foreign language; Spanish is also a foreign language. Tom offers to teach a foreign language; therefore Tom shall teach Spanish. Corn-growing in Western Canada, sheep-raising in Australia and coker-nut planting are all obviously agriculture. Dick says he can teach Agriculture; so he shall. The science of manures caused some discussion as to whether it should be agriculture or science, but it was finally settled in favour of science, which also included physics, electricity and crystallography. John got four theological students, but, when he investigated, he found that one was a Jew and one a Presbyterian minister, while the other two, like himself, thought that no one else would have thought of it. And these touch only the fringe of the subject.

The indent sent in for materials was a rather formidable one, but the article most in demand was a sheep, which was wanted at the same time by Dick for his Agriculture and Arthur for his Drawing, and also by Mac, who is O.C. the Butchery class. Mac wrote a polite little note saying he must have at least one a week, and he'd like "a pig to be going on with, if you please," promising to hand, the latter over complete and in good order, when he'd done with it, to Jones for his bacon-curing class, "upon receipt of signature for same."

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: Politically inclined Nurse (exhibiting new daughter to M.P.). "LET US 'OPE, SIR, THAT SHE MAY LIVE TO BE CALLED THE MOTHER OF THE 'OUSE OF COMMONS."]

\* \* \* \* \*

COMMERCIAL CANDOUR.

"120 Pairs Unbleached Calico Sheets, 2 x 23/4 yards. Sale price, 12/11 per pair; present value, 1/- per pair."--Yorkshire Paper.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Including new enlistments there are about 1,000 men concentrated in and around Berlin."--Manchester Guardian.

Let FOCH be warned.

\* \* \* \* \*



"BAD BOYS AND THE BIRCH.

"We are glad to observe that the Recorder has decided to adopt stern measures with juvenile offenders who are brought before him in future."--\_Irish Times\_.

"Stern measures" is good.

\* \* \* \* \*

"NON-STOP WAIST DRIVES, Every Wednesday Evening at 8.30. L10 Top, and Six other Special Prizes."--\_Local Paper\_.

Believed to be under the patronage of the FOOD-CONTROLLER.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE FOOD PROBLEM IN PARIS.

The cost of living in the vicinity of the Peace Conference has been enormously exaggerated. Likewise the difficulty of reorganizing Europe on a truly ethnic basis. By combining the two questions I have found them immensely simplified, and I have been in Paris only three days.

My meaning will be clearly illustrated by the record of a single day's experience--with the representative of the Dodopeloponnesians for \_dejeuner\_ and the delegate of the Pan-Deuteronomaniads for dinner.

I made the acquaintance of the first in the lift. On the way down it came out that I was \_journaliste\_ assisting at the Conference of the Peace, whereupon the other introduced himself as secretary of the Dodopeloponnesian delegation and eager for the pleasure of entertaining me at \_dejeuner\_.

Nothing international arose in connection with the \_hors d'oeuvres\_. It was between the soup and the fish that my host inquired whether I had yet found time to look into the just claim of the Dodopeloponnesian people to the neighbouring island of Funicula.

"You mean," I said, "on the ground that the island of Funicula was brought under the Dodopeloponnesian sceptre on September 11th, 1405, by Blagoslav the Splay-fingered, from whom it was wrested on February 3rd, 1406, by the Seljuks?"

"Precisely," he said. "But also because the people of Funicula are originally of Dodopeloponnesian stock."

"Yet they speak the language of Pan-Deuteronomania," I said.

"A debased dialect," he said, "foisted upon them by a remission of ten per cent. in taxes for every hundred words of the lingo learned by heart, with double votes for irregular verbs."

The \_entree\_, something with eggs and jelly, was excellent.

"Far be it from me to deny," I said, "the fact that Funicula is by right a part of the inheritance of the Octo-syllabarians"--and I bowed gracefully to my host, who raised his glass in return--"and I agree in advance with every argument you put forward in favour of a restored Sesquicentennial commonwealth by bringing together the scattered members of the Duodecimal race from all over the world. In fact," I added as the waiter poured out the champagne, "it seems to me that in addition to the Island of Funicula there properly belongs, in the realm of your Greater Anti-Vivisectoria, the adjacent promontory, geyser and natural bridge of Pneumobronchia, from which the last

Seljuk ruler, Didyffius the Forty-fifth, leaped in front of a machete wielded by his eldest son, who therefore became Didymus the Forty-sixth."

He was delighted to find so much sympathy and understanding in an alien journalist from far across the seas. His bill, so far as a hurried and discreet glance could reveal, was 89 francs 50 centimes, not including the \_taxe\_.

On the other hand, the \_sous-secretaire\_ of the Pan-Deuteronomaniad delegation, who took me out to dinner that same night, paid 127 francs (including theatre tickets) before he proved to my satisfaction that the basic civilization of Funicula Island is after all Pan-whatever-you-call-it.

At any rate my point is made. My expenditure on food these three days in Paris has been negligible, and there is rumour that the Supra-Zambesian delegation is thinking of opening a hotel with running water, h. and c., in every room.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: \_Gunner\_. "DO YOU PLAY THE PIANO?"

\_Jack\_. "NO, SIR."

\_Gunner\_. "NOR THE 'CELLO?"

\_Jack\_. "NO, SIR."

\_Gunner\_. "WELL, THE NEXT TIME YOU HEAR RUMOURS OF A BARBER JUST FOLLOW THE MATTER UP.]"

\* \* \* \* \*

\_DULCE DOMUM\_.

The air is full of rain and sleet,  
A dingy fog obscures the street;  
I watch the pane and wonder will  
The sun be shining on Boar's Hill,  
Rekindling on his western course  
The dying splendour of the gorse  
And kissing hands in joyous mood  
To primroses in Bagley Wood.  
I wish that when old Phoebus drops  
Behind yon hedgehog-haunted copse  
And high and bright the Northern Crown  
Is standing over White Horse Down  
I could be sitting by the fire  
In that my Land of Heart's Desire--  
A fire of fir-cones and a log  
And at my feet a fubsy dog  
In Robinwood! In Robinwood!  
I think the angels, if they could,  
Would trade their harps for railway tickets  
Or hang their crowns upon the thickets  
And walk the highways of the world  
Through eyes of gold and dawns empearled,  
Could they be sure the road led on  
Twixt Oxford spires and Abingdon  
To where above twin valleys stands  
Boar's Hill, the best of promised lands;  
That at the journey's end there stood  
A heaven on earth like Robinwood.

Heigho! The sleet still whips the pane  
And I must turn to work again  
Where the brown stout of Erin hums  
Through Dublin's aromatic slums  
And Sinn Fein youths with shifty faces  
Hold "Parliaments" in public places  
And, heaping curse on mountainous curse  
In unintelligible Erse,  
Harass with threats of war and arson  
Base Briton and still baser CARSON.  
But some day when the powers that be  
Demobilise the likes of me  
(Some seven years hence, as I infer,  
My actual exit will occur)  
Swift o'er the Irish Sea I'll fly,  
Yea, though each wave be mountains high,  
Nor pause till I descend to grab  
Oxford's surviving taxicab.  
Then "Home!" (Ah, HOME! my heart be still!)  
I'll say, and, when we reach Boar's Hill,  
I'll fill my lungs with heaven's own air  
And pay the cabman twice his fare,  
Then, looking far and looking nigh,  
Bare-headed and with hand on high,  
"Hear ye," I'll cry, "the vow I make,  
Familiar sprites of byre and brake,  
\_J'y suis, j'y reste\_. Let Bolshevicks  
Sweep from the Volga to the Styx;  
Let internecine carnage vex  
The gathering hosts of Poles and Czechs,  
And Jugo-Slavs and Tyrolese  
Impair the swart Italian's ease--  
Me for Boar's Hill! These war-worn ears  
Are deaf to cries for volunteers;  
No Samuel Browne or British warm  
Shall drape this svelte Apolline form  
Till over Cumnor's outraged top  
The actual shells begin to drop;  
Till below Youlberry's stately pines  
Echo the whiskered Bolshy's lines  
And General TROTSKY'S baggage blocks  
The snug bar-parlour of 'The Fox.'"

ALGOL.

\* \* \* \* \*

ROMANCE WHILE YOU WAIT.

My friend and I occupied facing seats in a railway-carriage on a tedious journey. Having nothing to read and not much to say, I gazed through the windows at the sodden English winter landscape, while my friend's eyes were fixed on the opposite wall of the compartment, above my head.

"What a country!" I exclaimed at last. "Good heavens, what a country, to spend one's life in!"

"Yes," he said, withdrawing his eyes from the space above my head.  
"And why do we stay in it when there are such glorious paradises to go to? Hawaii now. If you really want divine laziness--sun and warmth and the absence of all fretful ambition--you should go to the South Seas. You can't get it anywhere else. I remember when I was in Hawaii--"

"Hawaii!" I interrupted. "You never told me you had been to Hawaii."

"I don't tell everything," he replied. "But the happiest hours of my existence were spent in a little village two or three miles from Honolulu, on the coast, where we used to go now and then for a day's fun. It was called--let me get it right--it was called Tormo Tonitui--and there were pleasure-gardens there and the most fascinating girls." His eyes took on a far-away wistfulness.

"Yes, yes?" I said.

"Fascinating brown girls," he said, "who played that banjo-mandolin thing they all play, and sang mournful luxurious songs, and danced under the lanterns at night. And the bathing! There's no bathing here at all. There you can stay in the sea air day if you like. It's like bathing in champagne. Sun and surf and sands--there's nothing like it." He sighed rapturously.

"Well, I can't help saying again," I interrupted, "that it's a most extraordinary thing that, after knowing you all these years, you have never told me a word about Honolulu or the South Seas or this wonderful pleasure-garden place called--what was the name of it?"

He hesitated for a moment. "Morto Notitui," he then replied.

"I don't think that's how you had it before," I said; "surely it was Tormo Tonitui?"

"Perhaps it was," he said. "I forget. Those Hawaiian names are very much alike and all rather confusing. But you really ought to go out there. Why don't you cut everything for a year and get some sunshine into your system? You're fossilising here. We all are. Let's be gamblers and chance it."

"I wish I could," I said. "Tell me some more about your life there."

"It was wonderful," he went on--wonderful. I'm not surprised that STEVENSON found it a paradise."

"By the way," I asked, "did you hear anything of STEVENSON?"

"Oh, yes, lots. I met several men who had known him--Tusitala he was called there, you know--and several natives. There was one extraordinary old fellow who had helped him make the road up the mountain. He and I had some great evenings together, yarning and drinking copra."

"Did he tell you anything particularly personal about STEVENSON?" I asked.

"Nothing that I remember," he said; "but he was a fine old fellow and as thirsty as they make 'em."

"What is copra like?" I asked.

"Great," he said. "Like--what shall I say?--well, like Audit ale and Veuve Clicquot mixed. But it got to your head. You had to be careful. I remember one night after a day's bathing at--at Tormo Titonui--"

"Where was that?" I asked.

"Oh, that little village I was telling you about," he said. "I remember one night--"

"Look here," I said, "you began by calling it Tormo Tonitui, then you

called it *Morto Notitui* and now it's *Tromo Titonui*. I'm going to say again, quite seriously, that I don't believe you ever were in Hawaii at all."

"Of course I wasn't," he replied. "But what is one to do in a railway carriage, with nothing to read, and a drenched world and those two words staring one in the face?" and he pointed to a placard above my head advertising a firm which provided the best and cheapest Motor Tuition.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### DEMOBILISED.

Daddy's got his civvies on:  
In his room upstairs  
You should have heard him stamping round,  
Throwing down the chairs;  
When I went to peep at him  
Daddy banged his door....  
Well, I think I'll hide from Daddy  
Till the next Great War!

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: *Exhausted Shopman*. "WELL, SIR, YOU'VE HAD ON EVERY HAT IN THE PLACE. I'M SURE I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SUGGEST."

*Fastidious Warrior* (*hopelessly*). "NO, I SEE NOTHING FOR IT BUT TO REMAIN IN THE ARMY."]

\* \* \* \* \*

#### OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(*BY MR. PUNCH'S STAFF OF LEARNED CLERKS.*)

MR. ARNOLD BENNETT'S new novel, *The Roll Call* (HUTCHINSON), is a continuation of the *Clayhanger* series to the extent that its hero, *George Cannon*, is the stepson of *Edwin*, who himself makes a perfunctory appearance at the close of the tale. The scene is, however, now London, where we watch *George* winning fame and fortune, quite in the masterful *Five-Towns* manner, as an architect. The change is, I think, beneficial. That quality of unshakable astonishment, native to Mr. BENNETT's folk, accords better with the complexities of the wonderful city than to places where it had at times only indifferent matter upon which to work. But it is noticeable that Mr. BENNETT can communicate this surprise not only to his characters but to his readers. There is an enthusiasm, real or apparent, in his art which, like the beam celestial, "evermore makes all things new," so that when he tells us, as here, that there are studios in Chelsea or that the lamps in the Queen's Hall have red shades, these facts acquire the thrill of sudden and almost startling discovery. I suppose this to be one reason for the pleasure that I always have in his books; another is certainly the intense, even passionate sympathy that he lavishes upon the central character. In the present example the affairs of *George Cannon* are shown developing largely under the stimulus of four women, of whom the least seen is certainly the most interesting, while *Lois*, the masterful young female whom *George* marries, promises as a personality more than she fulfils. We conduct *George's* fortunes as far as the crisis produced in them by the War, and leave him contemplating a changed life as a subaltern in the R.F.A. It is therefore permissible to hope that in a year or two we may expect the story of his reconstruction. I shall read it with delight.

\* \* \* \* \*

Iron Times with the Guards (MURRAY), by an O.E., is emphatically one of the books which one won't turn out from one's war-book shelf. It fills in blanks which appear in more ambitious and more orderly narratives. This particular old Etonian, entering the new Army by way of the Territorials in the first days of the War, was transferred, in the March of 1915, to the Coldstreams and was in the fighting line in April of the same year. A way they had in the Army of those great days. Details of the routine of training, reported barrack-square jests and dug-out conversations, vignettes of trench and field, disquisitions on many strictly relevant and less relevant topics, reflections of that fine pride in the regiment which marks the best of soldiers, an occasional more ambitious survey of a battle or a campaign—all this from a ready but not pretentious pen, guided by a sound intelligence and some power of observation, makes an admirable commentary. Our author's narrative carries us to those days of the great hopes of the Spring of 1917, hopes so tragically deferred. Perhaps the best thing in an interesting sheaf is the description of the attack of the Guards Division—as it had become—on the Transloy-Lesboeuifs-Ginchy road, with its glory and its carnage.

\* \* \* \* \*

It is to be feared that Battle Days (BLACKWOOD), a new work by Mr. ARTHUR FETTERLESS, author of Gog, will lose a good many readers as the result of the armistice. There are battle stories and battle books that are not stories that will live far into the piping times of peace because they are human documents or have the stamp of genius. These attractions are not present in Battle Days, which in truth is rather a prosy affair, though ambitious withal. It is not fiction in the ordinary sense. Mr. FETTERLESS essays to conduct the reader through every phase of a big "Push." Pushes were complicated affairs, and the author does not spare us many of the complications. And unless the reader happens to be an ardent militarist he is apt to push off into slumberland. Cadets should be made to read this book as a matter of instruction; for, though it lacks the subtle humour that endeared Duffer's Drift to us, it provides a striking analysis of modern trench warfare.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Curtain of Steel (HODDER AND STOUGHTON) is the fourth book which the author of In the Northern Mists has given us during the War, and in essentials it is the most valuable of the quartette. For here we have real history, served, it is true, with some trimmings, but none the less a true record of the doings of our Grand Fleet since the day when the "curtain" was lowered. "Nothing," our author says, "nauseates a naval man so much as the attempt to represent him as a hero or to theatricalise him and his profession." It behoves me then to choose my words with the utmost circumspection, and I beg him to forgive my audacity when I say that, if I were Book-Controller, a copy of The Curtain of Steel would be in (and out of) the library of every school in the Empire. I find courage to make this statement because I see that he does not deny that a part of our "disease of ignorance" concerning the Senior Service is due to the modesty of Naval men. If he will please go on correcting that ignorance, and in the same inspiring style, I wish an even greater access of power to his elbow.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I am allowed the reputation of a tolerable guide in writing and style, and I can certainly help you to produce clear English." These words, written in 1881, are to be found in a letter of GEORGE MEREDITH

to his eldest son. They show how wildly mistaken even the best of us may be with regard to our own qualities and gifts; for if there is one thing that MEREDITH could not produce, that thing is clear English. Mr. S.M. ELLIS agrees with me in this particular point, and has written \_George Meredith: His Life and Friends in Relation to his Work\_ (GRANT RICHARDS) to prove that this is so. The book is a curious compound. At one moment Mr. ELLIS sets out in detail the Meredithian genealogy, and shows that MEREDITH was the son and grandson of tailors and did not relish the relationship; at another moment he describes MEREDITH'S delightful and exuberantly youthful characteristics as a friend; and again he shows how badly MEREDITH behaved in regard to his first wife (though she was much more in fault), and also in regard to his first son, Arthur. Still the book is extremely interesting and, though it does not profess to deal in elaborate criticism, it contains some very shrewd comments on MEREDITH'S work and the reasons that made his novels so many sealed books to the British public. Here and there Mr. ELLIS allows himself almost to write a passage or two in the style of the master. This is one of them: "As he [Maurice Fitzgerald] was the gourmet instrument that brought Mrs. Ockenden's art to perfect expression, he appropriately attained immortalisation jointly with her at the hands of the friend who had shared with him the joys of that good woman's superlative cookery in Seaford days."

\* \* \* \* \*

[Illustration: THE PAY-TABLE. (THE END OF A PERFECT WAR.) "JOHN SMITH, A.B., THREE POUNDS TEN--IN DEBT."]

\* \* \* \* \*

"Wanted, half-governess for boy aged nine, girl aged six; wages L30 per year."--\_Morning Post\_.

A half-governess is, we suppose, the feminine equivalent of two quartermasters.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Lady Nurse, nursery college trained, wanted, under 34; very experienced babies."--\_Provincial Paper\_.

Perhaps they will know too much for her.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Will gentleman, navy mackintosh, who spoke to lady, blue hat, vicinity Park Station, Tuesday, 6 o'clock, speak again same time?"--\_Liverpool Echo\_.

The gentleman will doubtless beg a ride on Mr. H.G. WELLS'S "Time Machine" in order to get back in time for the appointment.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Sir WILLIAM BEVERIDGE. K.O.B., has been appointed Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Food.]

To skimp its daily bread for beer  
Was not this nation's mood;  
But now with lightened hearts we hear  
That BEVERIDGE turns to Food.

156, FEB. 5, 1919\*\*\*

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