

Punch, Or The London Charivari, Vol. 156, April 9, 1919

Various

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Title: Punch, Or The London Charivari, Vol. 156, April 9, 1919

Author: Various

Release Date: June 14, 2004 [EBook #12614]

Language: English

Character set encoding: ASCII

*** START OF THIS PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PUNCH, APRIL 9, 1919 ***

Produced by Malcolm Farmer, William Flis, and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team

PUNCH,

OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.

VOL. 156.

April 9, 1919.

CHARIVARIA.

A Brass-hat employed at the Air Ministry recently requested that his salary might be reduced on the ground that there was now very little work for him to do. As no other symptoms developed, the close observation kept upon him has now been relaxed.

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To what extent the habit of war economy is embedded in the minds of the British public was illustrated at Woodford Green on March 29th, when a lady entered the local Post Office and endeavoured to purchase some Daylight Saving Certificates.

The War Office Staff, it was stated in the House of Commons, has been reduced from 21,807 to 19,510 since the Armistice. It is only fair to point out that the vast bulk of them were not asked whether they wanted an Armistice.

The War Office talks of re-issuing to the Volunteers the rifles and equipment which were long ago called in. This threat is likely to discourage many of them from volunteering for the next Peace.

Experiments are being conducted with the view of discovering the best use to which obsolete army tanks can be put. Attached to a piece of cheese they are said to make excellent mouse-traps.

"The police," says The Irish Times, a propos of the escape of twenty Sinn Feiners from Mountjoy prison, "are pursuing active inquiries." This is much simpler than pursuing active Sinn Feiners.

"Ever since the snowdrop gave the first hint of Spring," burbles a contemporary, "we have watched the miracle of the young year unfolding." It certainly was a miracle in the weather we had last week.

The suggestion is being put forward in certain quarters that, in order to save time, the Commission to fix the responsibility for the Peace should begin to sit at once.

It is not known definitely how many ex-munition workers in this country are at present in Government unemployment.

In connection with the recent report that the Sittinghurst Vermin Club had killed 1,175 mice in one day, we are asked to say that the number should be 1,176. It appears that one mouse made its way in a state of collapse to the Club headquarters and gave itself up.

From the newspapers we gather that a sample of water analysed by the Essex County Analyst contained seven per cent. of milk.

A man charged with burglary in Hoxton Street was captured in a meat-storage ice-house. It is said that, remembering a well-known precedent, he tried to evade capture by making a noise like a frozen Canterbury lamb.

Sir SAMUEL SCOTT says that the odds are that a quack will kill you quicker than a qualified doctor. All the same we prefer the slow-and-sure method.

According to the Bishop of MANCHESTER there is a shortage of curates. A spinster writes to say that she is not surprised, considering how quickly they get snapped up.

With reference to the burglar who made off with the jewels of ex-Queen AMELIE, it is said that the fellow contemplates in future styling himself on his visiting-cards as "Housebreaker to the ex-Queen of Portugal."

A weekly paper states that if every soldier who served in France during the War would place all the letters he had received in a line they would reach a little more than once round the world. We hear, however, that, as the present addresses of several demobilised men are unknown, the feat will not be attempted.

"Between ten and fifteen thousand years ago," says Professor KEITH, "Scotland became fit for habitation." We ourselves should not have assigned so remote a date to the introduction of whisky into that country.

"There is no place like home," says a gossip-writer. This seems to indicate that spring cleaning has started at his residence.

"It isn't every year we celebrate peace," says a correspondent in a weekly paper. The usual custom, of course, is to celebrate peace about once every war.

"A Pretty Way to Pat Butter" is the heading of one of a contemporary's "Household Hints." They will never improve on the old-fashioned custom

of slapping it heartily on the bread.

"People will be able to have their strawberries and cream this summer," said an official of the Food Ministry the other day. Still, for association's sake it is thought that the conventional description, "Marrows and Milk," will be retained on the menus.

Professor LEONARD HILL says that people working in gas factories who have to breathe poison fumes suffer less from influenza than anyone else. It is thought that this opinion may give a serious set-back to the Garden City movement.

"Hens like artificial light," says Professor RICE, of Cornell University, "and if provided with it will lay through the winter." One enterprising gas company, we understand, is already advertising that no fowl-house can be regarded as adequately furnished without its egg-in-the-slot meter.

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[Illustration: THE FIRST PROHIBITION TIPSY-CAKE IN DEAD MAN'S GULCH, U.S.A.]

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"L5.--Church, nicely situated Gothic structure, sliding roofs. No ground-rent. Pulpit, Font, Lectern, Organ, Parson, Choir Boys, Bells; fully seated; electric light, bells, &c."--_Provincial Paper_.

It seems a nice cheap lot. The parson alone must be worth the money.

* * * * *

"THE TIMES" AS PEACEMAKER.

[On reading the heavy attack made by the "Political" Correspondent of _The Times_ in Paris on the Peace Conference leaders, "and in particular the British Prime Minister."]

How like the talk at Babel's Tower
This interchange of tedious chat!
War can be made in half-an-hour
And why should Peace take more than that?
All this procrastination, worst of crimes,
Annoys the Paris Politician of _The Times_.

Had _he_ been summoned to construct
New Heavens and a brand-new Earth,
To cope with Cosmos and conduct
The business of its second birth,
He would have finished months and months ago;
Why, the Creation only took a week or so!

He (while the Moving Spirit wired
Instructions from the South of France)
Would have dispatched, like one inspired,
A thousand details at a glance,
Built corridors for Poland while you wait,
And at a single sitting fixed the Bolshies' fate.

No _seance_ of the secret sort,
Had barred the Truth with bolts and keys;
The Press, encouraged to report.
Verbatim his soliloquies,
Would have exposed to all men near and wide,
(The Hun included) what was going on inside.

Is it too late to start again?
At this eleventh hour depose
A Council whose united brain
Apparently is comatose?
Replace the Big Four with a Monstrous One,
And hand the whole show over to _The Times_ to run?

O.S.

* * * * *

TO-DAY IN THE FOOD GARDEN.

PEAS.--Have you planted your early peas yet? If not you should do so at once. Select a piece of well-tilled ground running North and South. To find the North go out at twelve o'clock and stand facing the direction you think the sun would be in if it were visible. Turn smartly about bringing up the left foot on the word "Two." If you guessed right the first time you will now be facing North. Without taking your eye off it, drill your peas into the ground in columns of fours. Don't forget to soak them in prussic acid or any simple poison (this is done more easily before they are sown) to prevent them being eaten by mice. A less effective precaution is to sit up all night near the vegetable garden and miaow.

Here is a good recipe for cooking peas. Shell the peas. Take a piece of butter as big as a nut, two ducklings, six ounces sage and onions and three drops of mushroom catsup. Roast together briskly for twenty minutes. Boil the peas for fifteen minutes. Serve together.

ONIONS.--The big, gentle onions seen in the shops can only be brought to maturity on very warm sandy soil. Most of them come from Portugal. How the natives can bear to part with them is a mystery. The small high-powered onions, on the other hand, are easily cultivated. The best varieties are Eau de Jazz, Cook's Revenge, Sutton's Saucepan Corroder and Soho Violet. Sow in rows and beat the soil flat with the back of a spade. Your neighbour's spade is as good as any other for this purpose. Goats are said to be very fond of onion tops, but many people hesitate to keep both.

PARSNIPS.--To get big parsnips plant a single row twenty feet long. Thin out to ten feet apart. The crop you will get will last you until the following year. Placed in a quiet corner of the potting-shed and covered with sand it will last for several years. To get the best out

of parsnips stew them in a _bain-marie_ for eight hours. Remove the undissolved portion of the parsnips and set the liquid on the stone floor of the larder to cool. Prepare a nice thick stock, adding seasoning to taste. Cut up three carrots. Place the carrots in the saucepan in which the parsnips were cooked, being careful to wash it out first. Add the stock, bring to a boil and serve.

A LADY-FRIEND sends me the following instructions for growing vegetable marrows: In the sunniest part of the garden--the middle of the tennis-court is as good as anywhere else--dig a trench ten feet deep and about six wide, taking care to keep the top soil separate from the subsoil. Into this trench tip about six hundredweight of a compost made up of equal parts of hyperphosphate of lime, ground bones, nitrate of soda and basic-slag. The basic-slag should be obtained direct from the iron-foundry. That kept by the chemist is not always fresh. Add one chive, one cardamon, two cloves, half a nutmeg and salt to taste. Replace the top-soil. Top-soil and sub-soil can easily be distinguished in the following way. If it is on your whiskers it is top-soil, if on your boots sub-soil. In the middle of the bed set a good strong marrow seedling, root downwards. As it grows remove all the marrows except the one you wish to develop. When it stands about two hands high, thread a piece of worsted through it, allowing the end of the worsted to hang in a pail of water. Some gardeners recommend whisky-and-water. If the marrow is intended for exhibition a half-inch pipe connected with the water main may be substituted for the worsted as soon as the marrow is about six feet long. Make a muslin bag out of a pair of drawing-room curtains and enclose the marrow in it. This will protect it from mosquitoes. As soon as the marrow ceases growing or if it becomes sluggish and exhibits loss of appetite it is ready for the table. Marrows grown in this way make delicious orange-marmalade.

HOW TO GET RID OF SLUGS.--Take a piece of hose-pipe about forty feet long. Lay one end anywhere and the other on the lawn. At the latter end place some cabbage leaves fried in bacon fat. The slugs will be attracted by the cabbage leaves and, having eaten their fill, will enter the hose-pipe to rest. Now hold the hose-pipe perpendicularly over a pail of water and pour into it a few drops of chloroform. This will cause the slugs to faint and relax their hold. They will then fall through the pipe into the water and be drowned. ALGOL.

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OUR HELPFUL PRESS.

"Summer time commences to-morrow morning at 2 o'clock, and it will be necessary for people to put their clocks by one hour before retiring to bed to-night. In Southport the Cambridge Hall clock, which governs the clocks for the municipal buildings, will be put one hour at midnight."--_Provincial Paper_.

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"The ---- Society has a large selection of literature tracing the origin and development of Bolshevism, and exposing its miseries and horrors, of which samples will be forwarded on application."--_Times_.

We are not applying; it is bad enough to read about them.

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From a General Routine Order:--

"_Shoeing_--G.R.O. No. ---- /d 23/10/18. With the exception of Pack and Draught Mules ..., all animals proceeding to join Units in the forward area must be shot all round without delay."

That should save the farriers a lot of trouble.

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[Illustration: THE ARMY OF UNOCCUPATION.

FIRST GENTLEMAN OF LEISURE. "I SEE THEY'RE GIVING US ANOTHER SIX MONTHS' UNEMPLOYMENT PAY. SEEMS ALL RIGHT."

SECOND GENTLEMAN OF LEISURE. "YES. BUT WHAT ABOUT THE INDIGNITY OF HAVING TO FETCH IT? WHY CAN'T THEY BRING IT TO US?"]

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[Illustration: _War Profiteer_. "AH, THAT'S BEAUTIFUL--GOT ME TO THE LIFE, THAT 'AS. WOTIMEANTERSAY IT _LOOKS_ LIKE MONEY, THAT DOES!"]

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ON THE RHINE.

III.

In spite of oft-repeated warnings--in spite of the fact that I personally explained to each sentry that all he had to remember was that there were only seven different kinds of military passes, each one of different colour and all with dates, stamps and signatures, and that there was no difficulty in recognising its validity if a pass had the right British official stamp and so long as the signature underneath was one of the twenty-four people authorised to sign (a list of which would be kept in every sentry-box and constantly revised), and if the number of the pass, the name of the person, his address, destination, habits, hobbies and past life tallied exactly with the information on his "personal Ausweis," which must be produced except in the case of a licence to proceed by bicycle, which differed, of course, in colour, shape, size and other small details (which would have to be learnt by heart) from the licence to carry foodstuffs--in spite, also, of the fact that all necessary details of the examination of passes were typewritten in not more than three pages of the clearest official language and were posted up in every sentry-box--even then that ass Nijinsky let the whole company down by passing a member of the Intelligence Police through the line on his giving his word of honour that it was all right.

The result was, of course, that I received official intimation that our line could apparently be broken at any time and that "steps must be taken," etc., etc. I took steps in the direction of Nijinsky.

Nijinsky is a Polish Jew (from Commercial Road, E.) and has long been the despair of his platoon sergeant. He is fat where there is no need to be fat, his clothes bulge where no clothes are expected to bulge, and he is the kind of man who loses a cap-badge once a week, preferably just before the C.O. comes round. There is only one saving grace about him. He can always be trusted to volunteer for a dull lecture or outing to which nobody else wants to go, but to which certain numbers have to be sent. His invariable reply to the question is, "Yiss, I'll ger-go, it's ser-something for ner-nothing."

I found him, as I expected, hanging round the cookhouse, and taxed him with his neglect of duty.

"He ter-told me I ought to use my dis-cretion, Sir," he piped in his high plaintive voice.

I told him severely that it was a trick, a very palpable trick, and that he must ever be on the alert for all such kinds of evasion. Finally, when I had informed him how badly he had let us all down, he waddled away contrite and tearful, and fully under the impression, I think, that I should probably lose my commission through his negligence.

I did not realise how deeply he had taken the matter to heart until I found him at his post apparently reading the Riot Act to a crowd of obsequious Huns, who were listening patiently to the written law as expounded in Yiddish--that being a language in which he succeeds in making himself partially understood. The incident passed, but I began to have fears that the reformed rake might prove a greater danger than ever.

The next day my worst fears were realised. In fact, during my temporary absence Nijinsky surpassed himself. At eleven o'clock the General, supported by his Staff, rolled up in his car and stopped at Nijinsky's post on his way into "neutral" country. The General, the G.S.O.1, the D.A.Q.M.G. and the A.D.C. got out, shining, gorgeous and beflowered with foreign decorations, to chat to the sentry (you've seen pictures of it; it's always being done), Nijinsky, who had already turned back two innocuous Gunner Colonels (armed with sporting guns) that morning, sauntered up, drunk with newly acquired confidence, his rifle slung on his right shoulder and his hat over one eye.

"All well here, sentry?" asked the General, towering over him in all his glory.

"Pup-pass, please," said Nijinsky, ever on the look-out for some cunning trick.

"Oh, that's all right; I'm General Blank."

The word "General" recalled Nijinsky to his senses. He unslung his rifle, brought it to the order, brought it to the slope and presented arms with great solemnity, and as only Nijinsky can.

"Oh--er--stand easy," said the General, when the meaning of these evolutions was made manifest to him. "Wonderful days for you fellows here--what? There have been times when the Rhine seemed a long way away, didn't it? And now here you are, a victorious army guarding that

very river! It's a wonderful time for you, and no doubt you appreciate it?"

"Ger-grub's short," said Nijinsky.

"Rations?" said the D.A.Q.M.G. "I've had no complaints."

"Yiss. No spuds--taters, I mean."

"We must see to that," said the General. "Well, we'll go on, I think;" and they got into the car.

"Pup-pass, please," said Nijinsky, spotting the trick at once.

"Oh, that's all right, my good fellow. Drive on."

"N-n-no," said Nijinsky sternly; "you ker-can't ger-go without a pup-pup-pass!"

"Come, come, don't be ridiculous. I'm your General; you know me perfectly well."

"Yiss."

"Then let me through, do you hear? And let me have no more of this infernal nonsense."

"It's ug-ug--"

"It's what?"

"Ug-against orders."

"_I_ know all about the orders, boy. I gave them myself."

"Yiss, and I'm ker-carrying them out, ain't I?" came with inexorable logic.

"Well, now I give you orders to let me through. Do you see?"

"Yiss; but if I do they'll have me up for disobeying the fer-first one. Pup-pass, please."

"Don't be ridiculous. We _must_ go through. Don't you realise we have our duty to perform?"

"Yiss, Sir, so have I."

"Pon my soul, this is too preposterous. My good boy, I'm very glad you know how to obey an order, but you must use your discretion sometimes."

At the word "discretion" Nijinsky started. Then he broke all records and winked--winked at a perfectly good General at eleven o'clock in the morning.

"Oh, no, you der-don't," he grinned; "I've been her-had before. The Captain says I'm ner-not to use my discretion; it only ger-gets me into a lot of terouble."

The General got out of his car. So did the G.S.O.1. So did the D.A.Q.M.G. So did the A.D.C. But the spectacle was not so impressive as before. They advanced in artillery formation upon the enemy. It was enough. Perish the General Staff! They were mere phantoms of authority beside the vision of the company officer and the words, "Escort and accused--halt. Left--turn. Private Nijinsky, Sir." With his eyes bulging with excitement Nijinsky leapt back and assumed the attitude of warlike defiance known as "coming on guard."

The General hesitated. He did not know Nijinsky, you see; he had never seen him going sick before the battle, or heard him murmur "ser-something for ner-nothing," as he took his medicine.

"Look here, my man, you are exceeding your duty and the consequences will be very serious. I will not be stopped in this outrageous manner! There is a time to obey orders and there is a time to use our discretion_. Confound it, we must all of us use our discretion at times."

"Then," said Nijinsky, "wer-will you per-please use yours, for. I ker-can't let you through without a pup-pass."

The sun shone brightly on the car as it retired ignominiously, leaving Nijinsky hot, happy and victorious, presenting arms faithfully to the indignant Great Ones, and silence reigned on the battlefield.

He came and spluttered it all out to me afterwards, concluding with "I der-didn't let the ker-company down this time, Sir, der-did I?" and evidently expected a pat on the back for it.

Teams of infuriated artillery horses wouldn't drag from me whether he got it or not, but from that day to this he has never looked back. Indeed he has begun to take a pride in his personal appearance and general smartness. I met him yesterday wearing a smile like a slice of melon and with his boots, and buttons glistening in the sunshine.

"The General came through to-day, Sir," he said, beaming, "and he her-had a pup-pass all right;" and he strutted on, making strange noises in his throat, which I understand is the Yiddish for being pleased with yourself.

L.

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[Illustration: Alf. "AIN'T YOU GOIN' TO EAT ANYFINK, 'ERBERT?"]

'Erbert (four years in France). "WELL, MY OLD FAM AIN'T TURNED UP WITH MY BIT OF DAYJERNY."]

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[Illustration: Visitor to devastated area. "JOHN CHINAMAN LIKEE MUCHEE DLESSEE ALLEE SAMEE ENGLISH SOLDIER."]

Chinese Ganger. "WELL, SIR, I DON'T CONCERN MYSELF MUCH ABOUT UNIFORM. ACTUALLY I'M A JOURNALIST AND ONLY CAME OUT HERE FOR THE EXPERIENCE."]

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"General wanted; small family; cook wept; wages
L18-L20."--_Local Paper_.

We confess we should like to know the cause of cook's affliction. Was
it jealousy, or onions?

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TO CHLOE, CAUGHT SPRING-CLEANING.

Now wherefore should you be dismayed
And in confusion fall,
Because I spied on you arrayed
In cap and overall,
And saw you for a moment stand
Clenching a duster in your hand?

The morning ardour of your face
Was like a summer rose;
One sooty smudge but seemed to grace
The challenge of your nose;
The gaudy thing that hid your hair
Performed its office with an air.

There is a time for stately tire,
For frills and furbelows,
When dainty humours should inspire
Such vanities as those;
So for stern hours of high intent
Behoves a fit habiliment.

Did not those gallants win our pride
And heroes stand revealed,
Who flung their fineries aside
For fashions of the field?
I, who have known campaigning too,
Salute a kindred soul in you.

* * * * *

THE OVERLAND ROUTE.

"H.M.S. New Zealand, with Admiral Jellicoe on board,
arrived at Bombay on March 14, and left for Delhi on
the 15th."--_Scots Paper_.

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[Illustration: COMRADES OF THE WAR.

"STRAFE ME IF IT AIN'T ME OLD 'ORACE! W'Y, I AIN'T SEEN YER SINCE THAT
STUNT RAHND CAMBRAI!"]

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GETTING A JOB.

John looked very gloomy.

"_Pourquoi triste_, John?" said I, knowing the language.

"Well, it's like this," said John, "the time has come when you and I must look for a job."

"That's all right," said I cheerfully. "We'll go and see the Advisory Committee. They'll put us up to a job in civil life. They're sitting there bubbling over with advice. Employers in England are simply falling over one another to find positions for brave young officers who--"

"Yes, I don't think," remarked John very sceptically. "I went to see the Advisory Committee two days ago. Perhaps I was rather unfortunate in arriving at the same time as the English mail; anyhow I came away with the following information and convictions:--

(1) That the easiest job in civil life is to sit on an Advisory Committee.

(2) That one is always either too old or too young for the Civil Services.

(3) That I was a devil of a good fellow and I'd won the War (they patted me on the back and told me so).

(4) That I was to fill up my A.Z.15 and trust in my stars (not the things on my sleeve)."

"Well, what about it?" I continued.

"Personally," said John, "I think an advertisement in _The Daily Telegraph_ is the correct thing. How's this?--

"Anybody know of a decent war? Two young subs in France, Soldiers of Fortune (so-called), would like to get in touch with anyone thinking of starting a first-class war. Send full particulars and rough strength of enemy to "Warriors," c/o _The Daily Telegraph_."

Mine was much more modest:--

"An officer at present in France desires a good job in civil life. No experience, no education, no languages, no money, no prospects and no hope. What offers?"

"I don't think they'll bring much," said I. "You know, John, what we really want is leave."

So we applied for leave.

John asked permission to remove his person to the U.K. for urgent and private reasons. I stated that I had a position offered me, but an interview was necessary, and asked their indulgence for the purpose.

John's chit came back three days later. "Will this officer state his urgent and private reasons, please?"

"Ah!" said John, "enemy attitude hostile." Nevertheless he stated as required.

Three days later it came back again with the request that this officer further state his reasons, please.

"Enemy attitude distinctly hostile," said John, and committed himself further.

Nothing happened for a week and John's hopes ran high. "It must be through, old man," he declared, "or it would have been back before now."

But when at the end of the week it came back for further information his ardour cooled somewhat, and when, three days later, it turned up once more with a request for his urgent and private reasons, John in a fit of exasperation retorted that if the matter was kept much longer it wouldn't be urgent, and if they enquired much further it wouldn't be private. That finished him, and he got no leave.

My application was still on the tapis. Eventually it returned. "This officer can be granted leave only on condition that he promises to serve with the Rhine Army."

"Go on," said John; "promise."

So I promised.

Now, looking over the situation, we find that it amounts to this: John has no job and never will have till he can get leave to look for one. He can't get leave. That's John.

I have a job (I haven't really) if I can get leave to attend an interview. I've got leave, but only on the understanding that when I've got the job I refuse it because I've promised to serve on the Rhine. That's me.

We are now thinking out the next move.

* * * * *

THE MATERNAL INSTINCT.

Mr. Crabbe Hermitage to Mrs. Bonnamy.
March 30th.

MY DEAR MRS. BONNAMY,--I am glad to report that my journey was accomplished in safety and comparative comfort. Indeed my housekeeper was surprised that I showed so few traces of fatigue. This, I tell her, was due to the kind care and consideration experienced by me throughout my sojourn beneath your hospitable roof.

Please inform Miss Chance that the carriage _was_ a through one. This may relieve her of any possible anxiety as to her own journey with her mother. I much appreciated her consideration in seeing me into the train, and trust that the weather will prove favourable for their return to town.

Although the week I passed in your society will always be an agreeable

memory it carries with it the penalty of an increased sense of my solitary life, and I feel that your remarks were not without justice.

With kind regards,
Believe me, Yours sincerely,
THOS. CRABBE HERMITAGE.

Mr. Crabbe Hermitage to Mrs. Mayne Chance.
April 3rd.

MY DEAR MRS. MAYNE CHANCE,--Ever since my return from the visit which gave me so much happiness in your society and that of your dear daughter, I have wondered whether I dared address you upon a point which concerns me intimately. Have you reason to suppose that her affections are engaged in any quarter? Believe me that I seek this information from no idle curiosity, but solely that I may know whether there is any obstacle to my making a certain proposal. I naturally shrink from intruding myself between a mother and daughter whose companionship is so close and am well aware of the disparity in our ages, but if you could encourage me to proceed you would confer the greatest happiness upon a very lonely man.

Believe me, Yours very sincerely,
THOMAS CRABBE HERMITAGE.

Mrs. Mayne Chance to Mr. Crabbe Hermitage.
April 4th.

MY DEAR MR. CRABBE HERMITAGE,--Your letter has come as the greatest surprise. I suppose mothers cannot expect to keep for ever at their daughters' side, but the parting is robbed of its bitterness when _other_ considerations are involved.

I questioned the dear child this morning and she confessed, as indeed I suspected, that she is not indifferent to the attentions of the son of a neighbour of ours. But anyhow there need be no obstacle in that quarter. She is far too sensible and unselfish, as only I know. Surely there is not such a disparity of age as you seem to think! But perhaps I have said too much.

Most sincerely yours,
MELISSA MAYNE CHANCE.

Mr. Crabbe Hermitage to Miss Chance.
April 5th.

MY DEAR MISS CHANCE,--I wrote to your dear mother two days ago to endeavour to ascertain whether you would view favourably the proposal which I wished to make. Her reply was, on the whole, encouraging, but it is far from being my wish that in seeking my own happiness you should sacrifice your own. More I will not permit myself to add until you have reassured my mind.

Believe me, Your sincere Friend,
THOS. CRABBE HERMITAGE.

From Miss Chance to Mr. Crabbe Hermitage.
April 6th.

DEAR MR. CRABBE HERMITAGE,--Yes, mother told me all about it, and I think it is perfectly lovely. Of course I would never stand in the way of your happiness and you need not consider me at all. She is so happy about it, and of course I am too.

Yours very sincerely, EDITH CHANCE.

From Mr. Crabbe Hermitage to Mrs. Mayne Chance
April 7th.

MY DEAR MRS. MAYNE CHANCE,--I have received a letter from dearest Edith which removes the only obstacle to the realization of the wish of my heart. Rest assured that my every endeavour shall be to prove worthy of this great happiness. If quite convenient I hope to call on the 9th instant to offer myself in person.

Believe me, Your sincere Friend,
THOS. CRABBE HERMITAGE.

From Mrs.-Mayne Chance to Mr. Crabbe Hermitage
April 8th.

MY DEAR THOMAS,--For I must call you this without waiting till to-morrow! I knew the dear child would share our happiness. How could you ever doubt it? Only this morning she said there was no one in the world she would like better for a father than you. But I mustn't begin by making you vain! Oh dear! I wish to-day was to-morrow.

Your MELISSA.

* * * * *

THE LAST-STRAW.

I don't agree with grouching, and I trust I shall escape any
Desire to pick a quarrel with an egg at fivepence ha'penny;
I'm quite prepared to recognise that no persuasive charm'll aid
In getting from a grocer either cheese or jam or marmalade;
I brave the brackish bacon and refrain from ever uttering
Complaints about the margarine that on my bread I'm buttering;
I'm not unduly bored with CHARLIE CHAPLIN on the cinema
And view serenely miners agitating for their minima;
I sit with resignation in a study stark and shivery,
Desiderating coal with little hope of its delivery;
I realise that getting into tram or tube's improbable
And pardon profiteers for robbing ev'ryone that's robable;
I don't mind cleaning doorsteps in the view of all ignoble eyes
(Now Mary, my domestic, has decided to demobilise);
Though life is like a poker that you've handled at the vivid end
And all my wretched companies have ceased to pay a dividend--
All these and other worries, though they're very near the limit, I
Maintain that I can face with philosophic equanimity;
But, when I by my family and fond and fussy friends am asked
To trot about in public with my features influenza-masked,
My sense of humour wrings from me (or possibly a lack of it)
The protest of the camel at the straw that breaks the back of it.

* * * * *

RECONSTRUCTION IN LONDON.

Extract from a recent novel:--

"She sat at her desk and, without any palpable hesitation, wrote to Stanley asking him to meet her within an hour by the bridge over the Serpentine in St. James's Park."

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE MAKING OF HISTORY.

1915. THE PURCHASE OF THE SOUVENIR.

1920. "THAT'S A SOUVENIR OF MY JOB AT HAVRE--

1925. --OF MY SERVICE IN FRANCE--

1930. --OF MY ACTIVE SERVICE--

1935. --OF MY FIGHTING DAYS

1940. GOT THAT IN THE BIG PUSH

1945. --FIERCE FIGHTING IT WAS--

1950. --DESPERATE FIGHTING.

1955. --HACKED MY WAY THROUGH--

1960. --RIGHT UP TO THEIR GENERAL--

1965. --CUT HIS HEAD OFF--

1970. --_THAT_ WAS ON IT!"]

* * * * *

[Illustration: _Infatuated Little Boy_. "I WISH YOU CAME TO OUR CHURCH. WHY DON'T YOU?"

Little Girl. "MOTHER SAYS IT'S TOO HIGH."

J.L.B. "IS THAT ALL? WELL, I'LL SPEAK TO DADDY, AND I'M SURE HE'LL FIX THAT UP ALL RIGHT."]

* * * * *

A GENTLE HINT.

The Corps Commander paced thoughtfully down the street of a half-ruined village in France and his thoughts were pleasant; for he alone amongst all other Corps Commanders was the owner of a cow. There was no other cow in the whole army nearer than G.H.Q., and he pictured the envy of brother Generals when he invited them to come in and have a glass of milk.

The Assistant Provost-Marshal stood at his office window and gazed out upon his garden. His thoughts were also pleasant, for the garden

belonged to him by right of billet law, and in the garden grew strawberries rich and ripe.

The A.P.M. pictured the envy of brother A.P.M.'s when he should ask them to a strawberry feast.

The Corps Commander's thoughtful wanderings took him by chance through the A.P.M.'s garden, and as he walked he stooped now and again and picked some of the sacred fruit.

The A.P.M. swelled with impotent anger, for the Corps Commander was known to be "hot stuff," and nobody had told him "not to do it" for a very long time.

That night the A.P.M. sought the company of his friend the R.E. officer and told his troubles.

The R.E. officer had been a journalist before the War and had learnt to say and write rude things without offence. He was also the owner of wood and paint and brushes.

The next morning a large notice-board reared its head above the scarlet fruit of the strawberry bed:--

ANYONE FOUND PICKING THESE STRAWBERRIES
WILL HAVE HIS COW SHOT.

* * * * *

"Express Train to the Orient.

The itinerary will include London, Paris, Vallorbe, Lausanne, the Simpleton, Milan, Trieste and beyond. The first train is fixed to leave Paris on April 15."--_Provincial Paper_.

"All Fools' Day" would have been more appropriate for the "Simpleton" route.

* * * * *

The following advertisement appeared in a French provincial paper:--

"TAKE KERE!

Ask always the interchanging thooth made by this inventors in this mastery. The interchanging tooth is able for any people and it is very good and not dear.

The imperfections of the mouth, resulting of a bad dentition, are stricken away by the application of the interchanging Thooth. That toolh it is not expensive and you can changed in five minutes if it broked.

Gives you all guarontees of perfect natural immitation.
ENGLISH SPOKEN."

But, as you may have remarked, not invariably written.

* * * * *

[Illustration: CRAMPING HIS STYLE.

BRITISH LION: "I'M GETTING A BIT TIRED OF THIS LADY. AFTER ALL, I _AM_ A LION, AND NOT AN ASS."]

* * * * *

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

Monday, March 31st.--Colonel WILLIAM THORNE has the credit of eliciting from the Government the most hopeful statement about Peace which has yet been made. To the hon. and gallant Member's suggestion that May 1st should be declared a general holiday, if Peace was signed before that date, Mr. BONAR LAW replied that it would be considered.

It is fortunate that the PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE possesses a most imperturbable character. He is daily bombarded with the most diverse questions regarding the effects of the Government's fiscal policy. The paper manufacturers are being ruined because paper is being allowed in; export traders are suffering because glass bottles are kept out; the textile trades cannot compete with their foreign rivals because of the high price of olive-oil. But for all inquirers Mr. BRIDGEMAN has a soft answer, delivered in level tones, discouraging further catechism.

A delightful inconsistency is one of Lord HENRY CAVENDISH-BENTINCK'S many claims upon the affection of the House. Not long ago he wrote a book in praise of Toryism as a democratic creed; so it was perfectly natural that when Mr. CECIL HARMSWORTH (a Coalition Liberal) had explained that law and order must be restored before an inquiry could usefully be held into the causes of the Egyptian riots Lord HENRY should burst out with, "When will my hon. friend begin to apply Liberal principles?"

Mr. BOTTOMLEY is the latest convert to "P.R.," as the result of a mock-election in which he came out top of the poll, with the PRIME MINISTER second, Mr. HOGGE third, and Messrs. BALFOUR and ASQUITH among the "also ran;" but Mr. BONAR LAW, who can be very dense when he likes, did not see in that an argument for the general adoption of the system.

The "Wee Frees" made a last and unavailing attempt to defeat the new Military Service Bill. Mr. GEORGE THORNE, Major HAYWARD and others made great play with the PRIME MINISTER'S "No Conscription" pledge, and Mr. NEWBOULD in a maiden speech declared that what West Leyton had said yesterday England would say to-morrow. But it was noticeable that not one of the opponents of the Bill was unwilling to give the Government the powers they required if they were really necessary.

Mr. CHURCHILL revealed himself in a new _role_ as a financier, and proved to his own satisfaction that the Army Estimates of L506,500,000 would, if properly manipulated, work out at little more than a fourth of that amount. Between now and the Budget Mr. CHAMBERLAIN might do worse than get his versatile colleague to explain away the National Debt.

[Illustration: THE PROMISE OF MAY.

Peace. "IF YOU'RE WAKING, CALL ME EARLY, CALL ME EARLY, BONAR DEAR, FOR I'M TO BE QUEEN OF THE MAY, BONAR; I'M TO BE QUEEN OF THE MAY."]

Tuesday, April 1st.--Twenty years ago there used to be a not infrequent headline in _The Times_, "The Duke of Devonshire on Technical Education," which always struck on my frivolous spirit with a touch of infinite prose. It is the same nowadays, I regret to say, with a Lords' debate on the national resources. The Upper House is filled with eminent financiers--men who think in millions and who under our glorious Constitution may not propose an expenditure of sixpence without the consent of Tom, Dick and Harry in the Commons--and they all talk the most excellent good sense. But whether such unimpeachable truisms as that "this huge Debt is going to be a terrible handicap to this country" (Lord LANSDOWNE), or that "what applies to private credit and private economy may be in the main taken to apply to public economy and also to public credit" (Lord CREWE), are going to have much effect upon the demands of the Labour Party, to whom they were directly addressed, I am rather inclined to doubt.

It is refreshing to note, however, that the Commons had a brief spasm of economy. Under the financial resolution of the Ways and Communications Bill the new Minister would have had almost unlimited powers of initiating great enterprises without the consent of Parliament. Mr. R.J. MCNEILL alluded (without acknowledgment to Mr. Punch) to the hero _Eric_; or, Little by Little_, and urged that not even "a Napoleon of administration" ought to be trusted with a blank cheque. He rather spoilt a good case by referring to the new Minister's financial relations with his late employers, the North-Eastern Railway; but his argument was so far successful that Mr. BONAR LAW undertook first that a Treasury watchdog should be permanently installed in the new Ministry, with instructions to bark whenever he saw any sign of extravagance; and, secondly, that the Minister should not have power to initiate any enterprise involving large expenditure--he suggested a million as a moderate limit--without the direct sanction of Parliament.

After this achievement Members felt that a rest was necessary. So the Housing Bill was postponed, and after two or three Scottish Bills had received a second reading the House counted itself out, and Members went to their dinners feeling as comfortably virtuous as the Boy Scout who has done his good deed for the day.

Wednesday, April 2nd.--The unemployment donation was the theme of innumerable inquiries. The MINISTER OF LABOUR was forced to admit that Parliament had at present furnished him with no direct authority to spend a million or so a week on this form of out-door relief, but hoped that it would be kind enough to do so when the Appropriation Bill came along. A statement that in Ireland men were coming for their donation in motorcars aroused the sympathy of Mr. JACK JONES, who said that surely they were entitled to an occasional ride, but did not go so far as to suggest that the Government should organise a service of cars to be at their disposal.

A suggestion to incorporate in the Army Annual Bill one of Dora's most stringent regulations for the prevention of criticism upon military matters aroused much indignation. Mr. BEN TILLET observed that, if it were retained, Lord NORTHCLIFFE, Mr. BOTTOMLEY and even Sir HENRY DALZIEL might soon be conducting their various journals from a prison-cell. This possibility may have mitigated but it did not wholly

remove the objections to the clause, which Mr. CHURCHILL ultimately withdrew.

A debate on the popular theme, "Make Germany Pay!" was initiated by Col. CLAUDE LOWTHER, who not long ago produced a specific scheme for extracting twenty-five thousand millions from the enemy--a scheme which by its unconventional handling of the rules of arithmetic excited the amazed admiration of professional financiers. Possibly Mr. BONAR LAW, as ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, was jealous because he had not thought of it first. At any rate he subjected the plan to so much caustic criticism that Col. LOWTHER, having appealed in vain for the protection of his namesake in the Chair, walked out of the House.

[Illustration: _Treasury Bulldog (to Minister of Transportation)_.
"ERIC--NAUGHTY!"]

Thursday, April 3rd.--Some of NAPOLEON'S many complaints of his treatment at St. Helena concerned the cost and quality of his food. The exile of Amerongen need have no fears on that score should the Allies decide to remove him to Longwood, for the present Governor has been so successful in keeping down the price of foodstuffs that the merchants of the island have petitioned for his recall.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER has so far relaxed his _non-possumus_ attitude on the joint income-tax question as to consent to receive a deputation of Members interested, and even to allow them to be accompanied by a small number of ladies. Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, by the way, has exchanged his hereditary monocle for a pair of ordinary spectacles, which may account for his taking a less one-sided view of this question.

Mr. T.P. O'CONNOR now enjoys the distinction of being the "Father" of the House of Commons, having sat there uninterruptedly since the General Election of 1880. Perhaps his new dignity sits rather heavily on his youthful spirit, for his speech on the Irish Estimates was painfully lugubrious. He took some comfort from a statement in _The Times_ that "We are all Home Rulers now," but as a veteran journalist he is probably aware that what _The Times_ says to-day it will not necessarily say to-morrow.

"Leave politics alone and give us decent houses for our people and better education for our children" was Sir EDWARD CARSON'S prescription for invalid Erin; and Mr. IAN MACPHERSON, making his first speech as Chief Secretary, indicated that he meant to apply it. But the patient is suffering from so many disorders at present that she must have a tonic--with iron in it--before her Constitution can be regarded as completely restored.

* * * * *

P.B.

Oft when the world was bent
Solely on killing
Heard we in Parliament
PEMBERTON billing.

Now the Dove hovers near,
Now the League's brewing,

May we not hope to hear
PEMBERTON cooing?

* * * * *

MACEDONIA.

The Allies having won the War, and myself having been released from the hands of the Hun, I spent a happy repatriation leave, and began to think about soldiering again. My orders were to rejoin my reserve unit in the North of England.

Before the time came, however, a friend of mine, an educational staff officer in Ireland, wrote to me and suggested that I should go over and give him the assistance of my superior intelligence. I replied that I would be delighted. He then wrote:--

"My dear K----,--I am so pleased that you are willing to come over to Macedonia and help us. You had better ask War Office for a week's extension of leave, by which time my application for you will probably have filtered through. That will save you the trouble of rejoining your reserve unit."

I thought this an excellent plan and went to the War Office to see about it.

After the customary wait I was granted a few moments of a Staff Officer's precious time.

"What do you want?" said the Staff Officer. He seemed used to meeting people who wanted things, and familiarity had evidently bred contempt.

I humbly explained.

"Have you got a written authority to support your application?" he asked.

I produced my friend's letter, which was endorsed with the stamp of his Command Headquarters.

The Staff Officer, standing (not out of politeness, I am sure), read the letter. Then he looked up, suspicion in his eye and in the cock of his head.

"I don't understand this," he said. "You told me you wanted to go to Ireland. This letter distinctly refers to your going to Macedonia."

"Macedonia!" I echoed (I had forgotten my friend's Biblical way of expressing himself).

"Yes, Macedonia," snapped the Staff Officer. "Balkans, isn't it? Something to do with Salonika?"

"Macedonia!" I repeated, still mystified.

"Yes, yes--Macedonia," he snapped, obviously suspecting me of trying to obtain a week's leave on false pretences. "Here it is, in black and white, 'so pleased that you are willing to come over to Macedonia and help us.' I don't understand this at all."

He handed me the letter. Then I realised what was amiss. My friend had not reckoned with the War Office. They call a spade a spade in Whitehall (unless they refer to it as "shovels, one.")

"Oh," said I, "I see. Yes, Macedonia. Slight misunderstanding. It's written from Ireland all right. There's the Irish Command stamp on it. 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.' Biblical phrase. St. PAUL, you know. Just a figure of speech. My friend meant it metaphorically."

"The devil he did," barked the Staff man. "Then why the blazes didn't he say so?"

Of course, why didn't he say so? Very stupid of him. One can't be too literal in dealing with the War Office, that notorious fount of clear and orderly diction.

My plan nearly went West, and I was nearly sent East. It was only the Headquarters' stamp that turned the scale in my favour.

It was lucky for my friend that I ultimately got leave to help him in his educational duties. Cleanly he is himself sadly lacking in the very rudiments of official culture.

* * * * *

[Illustration: _Magistrate_. "BUT WHAT WERE YOU DOING TO ALLOW A MAN OF THE PRISONER'S PHYSIQUE TO GIVE YOU A BLACK EYE?"

Constable. "ON THE MORNING OF TOOSDAY, THE FIRST OF APRIL, YOUR WORSHIP, I WAS ON DOOTY OUTSIDE THE 'DOOK OF WELLINGTON' PUBLIC-'OUSE, WHEN, AT THE INSTIGATION OF THE PRISONER, MY ATTENTION WAS DRAWN TO SOMETHIN' THAT WASN'T THERE. 'E THEN 'IT ME."]

* * * * *

THE LETTERS THAT COUNT.

["Meanwhile one sighs for the letters which do not exist."--C.K.S., in "_The Sphere_."]

I never have felt any hunger,
Apart from my shortage of gold,
For the spoils of the autograph-monger,
The screeds of the sages of old;
By envy unvexed and unsmitten
I study the connoisseur's list,
But I sigh for the letters unwritten,
Or those that no longer exist.

The notes, for example, that Hector
Despatched to his Andromache,
When, tied to a troublesome sector,
He couldn't get home to his tea;
Or the messages CAESAR kept sending
To pacify QUEEN CLEOPAT,
When, simply from fear of offending
The mob, he avoided her flat.

But even more impetus giving,
More apt to inspire and refresh,
Are the letters addressed to the living
By writers no more in the flesh--
The epistles to WILCOX from SHELLEY,
From LANDOR to Mrs. JOHN LANE,
From SWIFT to Miss MARIE CORELLI,
From POPE to Sir THOMAS HALL CAINE;

The instructions to NORTHCLIFFE from BONEY,
The comments of SHAKSPEARE on SHAW,
COLUMBUS'S hints to MARCONI,
TOM HUGHES'S to young ALEC WAUGH,
Or a letter to cheer her supporter
In CHARLOTTE'S own delicate fist,
Enclosing her photo to SHORTER--
A letter which does not exist.

For relics of _this_ sort I hanker,
For these, when they're offered for sale,
I will beg overdrafts from my banker
And bid on a liberal scale;
For the arts of the DOYLES and the LODGES
Are bound to contribute new grist
To SOTHEBY'S mills and to HODGE'S
In the letters which do not exist.

* * * * *

AN AID TO GENUFLEXION.

"The Rev. ----, minister of ---- U.F. Church, was yesterday
presented with pulpit robes, hassock, hood and cap by his
congregation."--_Scotch Paper_.

* * * * *

"Schools of cokery are being 'snowed' under with
applications,"--_Evening Paper_.

We ourselves call almost every day to ask for more cokery.

* * * * *

[Illustration: _Employer_ (_who has given his foreman a ticket for
Pianoforte Recital_). "AND HOW DID YOU ENJOY THE MUSIC LAST NIGHT?"

Foreman. "I WAS A BIT DISAPPOINTED, SIR. 'E WASN'T 'ARF AS GOOD AS
MY YOUNG FLORRIE. WHY, 'E PLAYED THERE FOR CLOSE ON TWO HOURS, AND
NEVER ONCE CROSSED 'IS 'ANDS."]

* * * * *

"BOTCHES."

AN APPEAL FOR GOD-PARENTS.

For many years the village of Chailey, in Sussex--famous
topographically for possessing that conical tree which is said

to mark the centre of the county, and for a landmark windmill of dazzling whiteness--has been famous sociologically for its Heritage Craft Schools of crippled boys and girls. Among the ameliorative institutions of this country none has a finer record than these schools, where ever since 1897 the work of converting helplessness into helpfulness has been going bravely on. Entering as complete dependents, the inmates leave fully equipped to earn their living unassisted, the boys chiefly as carpenters, and the girls as needlewomen. In some cases the cures effected have been remarkable. In the late War seven-and-twenty Guild boys fought in the ranks, four of whom were killed and are now proudly commemorated on the wall of the School church.

This contribution of fighting men, together with a certain activity in munition-making, is not, however, Chailey's only share in the War, for the Government are using its experience for the education of cripples of a larger growth. The boys have, in short, surrendered their comfortable old quarters--now transferred to a War Hospital, named, after the Heritage's chief patron, the Princess Louise Special Military Surgical Hospital--to companies of maimed soldiers, who are sent to Chailey to learn how much of usefulness and fun can still remain when limbs are missing; and, by a charming inspiration, their teachers in this great lesson are the boys themselves. It is no doubt encouraging for a soldier who has lost both arms to be told by a kindly and enthusiastic visitor at his bedside that all will be well, and he will be able to manage without them; but a certain measure of scepticism and despair may remain to darken his waking hours. But when a little fellow in precisely the same plight shows him how the disabilities have been conquered, his zest in life begins to return. Seeing is believing, and believing means new endeavour. The result is that the crippled soldiers at Chailey, taught by the crippled boys, have been transformed into happy and active men, and not a few of them have discovered themselves to possess faculties of which they had no notion. There is even an armless billiard-player among them; and I could not wish him a happier setting for the exercise of his skill. For here is one of the finest Y.M.C.A. recreation halls in the country, with a view of the South Downs that probably no other can boast. Whether or not the method of learning from a young cripple the art of being an old one is novel, I cannot say, but it has been proved to be eminently successful; and one of its attractions is the pride taken not only in their mature pupils by the immature masters but in the boys by the men.

Meanwhile, what became of the boys whose nest was thus invaded? (The Girls' School and Babies' Montessori School is half-a-mile away.) They immediately showed what they are made of by themselves erecting on the ground beside the windmill a series of Kitchener huts. There they sleep and eat, coming hobbling down to headquarters for carpentering and to perform their strange new duties as guides, philosophers and friends.

Another development in the Chailey scheme of altruism that arose from the War was, as readers of Punch will no doubt remember, the sudden establishment of the St. Nicholas Home for child victims of the air-raids. So sudden was it that within seven days of the inception of the idea a house had been found and furnished, a staff engaged and a number of the beds were occupied. Here, throughout the last years of the War, terrified children were soothed back to serenity and a sense of security in the sky above.

And now for "Botches." It had long been one of the many aspirations of the founder of the Heritage Schools, and the founder also of the Guild of Brave Poor Things and the Guild of Play--Mrs. C.W. KIMMINS--who in her quiet practical way is probably as good a friend as London ever had--it had long been one of her dreams that the word "cripple" should be enlarged from its narrower meaning to include the crippled mind no less than the crippled limbs. In her work in Southwark, where the Guild of the Brave Poor Things began, she has seen too many children stunted and enfeebled by lack of pure food and fresh air, who would under better conditions grow naturally into health and strength and even power: "little mothers" taxed beyond their capacity by thoughtless parents, and all the other types of "cripple" which the mean streets of a great city can only too easily produce. If a house at Chailey or near by could be found or built where this wasted material might be nourished into happy efficiency, how splendid! Such was the desire of the founder, and it is now within sight of fruition; for, through the generosity of a friend of the Heritage, the house has been acquired and is ready for occupation.

Strange are the vicissitudes of fortune; stranger the links in the chain of life. CLAUDE and ALICE ASKEW, who wrote popular serial novels in the daily papers, lived in a rambling old home at Wivelsfield Green, in Sussex, known as "Botches." This they enlarged and modernised; they developed the gardens and filled the grass with bulbs. Then came the War. Mr. and Mrs. ASKEW threw themselves into foreign work, and on one of their voyages were drowned through an enemy torpedo, and "Botches" became tenantless. It is "Botches" which has now been given to the Heritage for the reception of Southwark children.

For the peopling and maintenance of the Home a novel and very pretty device has been invented. Everyone has heard of the _marraines_ of France during the War--those ladies who made themselves responsible each for the comfort of a _poilu_, sending him gifts of food and cigarettes, writing him letters and so forth. It is the _marraine_--or godmother--system which is being adopted and adapted for "Botches." The house can accommodate fifty children, and as many godmothers or godfathers are needed, each of whom will be responsible for one child for a year, at a minimum cost of fifty pounds. The Duchess of MARLBOROUGH, who has just been elected a Southwark County Councillor, was the first to accept this honourable privilege, and other ladies and gentlemen have already joined her; but there are still many vacancies. Mr. Punch, who has very great pleasure in giving publicity to Mrs. KIMMINS'S most admirable scheme, would be proud indeed if the other godparents were found among his readers. All communications on the subject should be addressed to the Hon. Treasurer, Miss A.C. RENNIE, the Heritage Craft Schools, Chailey, Sussex.

"Botches," it should be added, is not to be the Home's final name. The final name--something descriptive of the work before it and its ideal of restoration--has yet to be found. Perhaps some of Mr. Punch's readers have suggestions.

* * * * *

[Illustration: _Lady of the billet_ (_to officer returned from Rugger match on Flanders ground_). "LA, LA! VOUS ETES TOMBE, M'SIEUR?"]

* * * * *

"NAVAL SQUADRON IN ROME.

ROME, Sunday.

The special Brazilian naval squadron, comprising the cruiser Bahia and four destroyers, under the command of Admiral Defrontin, arrived to-day."--_Evening Paper_.

Like the British Army, it looks as if the Brazilian Navy can "go anywhere."

* * * * *

A WASTED TALENT.

Fresh knowledge of a varied kind
While in the army I acquired,
Some useful, which I didn't mind,
And much that made me tired;
But one result was undesigned;
It cost me neither toil nor care:
Swiftly and surely, with the ease
Of drinking beer or shelling peas,
War taught me how to swear.

Widely my power was recognised;
The hardest soldier shook like froth,
And even mules were paralysed
To hear me voice my wrath;
Unhappy he and ill-advised
Who dared withstand when I reviled;
Have I not seen a whole platoon
Wilt and grow pale and almost swoon
When I was really wild?

But now those happy days are past;
A mild civilian once again,
I dare not even whisper "----!"
If something gives me pain;
Barred are those curses, surging fast,
That swift and stinging repartee;
Instead of words that peal and crash
I breathe a soft innocuous "Dash!"
Or murmur, "Dearie me!"

Yet sometimes still, when on the rack
And past all due forbearance tried,
The ancient fierce desire comes back,
I seem to boil inside;
And then I take a hefty sack,
I place my head within, and thus
Loose off, in some secluded niche,
A deep, whole-hearted, grateful, rich,
Sustained, delirious cuss.

* * * * *

THE SLUMP IN MONARCHY.

From a publisher's advertisement:--

THE PRICE OF A THRONE

1/6 NETT

* * * * *

"The scratching of the hydroplane Sutnrise for the Atlantic Flight Stakes must tempt her captain to change his name from Sunstedt to Sunsttd."--_Provincial Paper_.

We fear the printer did not appreciate the sub-editor's humour.

* * * * *

"Until they get a barber the Islington Board of Guardians are employing a gardener to do hair-cutting and shaving work in his spare time at a remuneration of 1s. 3d. per hour."--_Daily Express_.

But we understand that he is expected to provide his own scythe.

* * * * *

THE OLD SHIPS.

They called 'em from the breakers' yards, the shores of Dead Men's Bay,
From coaling wharves the wide world round, red-rusty where they lay,
And chipped and caulked and scoured and tarred and sent 'em on their way.

It didn't matter what they were nor what they once had been,
They cleared the decks of harbour-junk and scraped the stringers clean
And turned 'em out to try their luck with the mine and submarine ...

With a scatter o' pitch and a plate or two,
And she's fit for the risks o' war---
Fit for to carry a freight or two,
The same as she used before;
To carry a cargo here and there,
And what she carries she don't much care,
Boxes or barrels or baulks or bales,
Coal or cotton or nuts or nails,
Pork or pepper or Spanish beans,
Mules or millet or sewing-machines,
Or a trifle o' lumber from Hastings Mill ...
She's carried 'em all and she'll carry 'em still,
The same as she's done before.

And some were waiting for a freight, and some were laid away,
And some were liners that had broke all records in their day,
And some were common eight-knot tramps that couldn't make it pay.

And some were has-been sailing cracks of famous old renown,
Had logged their eighteen easy when they ran their easting down
With cargo, mails and passengers bound South from London Town ...

With a handful or two o' ratline stuff,
And she's fit for to sail once more;
She's rigged and she's ready and right enough,
The same as she was before;
The same old ship on the same old road
She's always used and she's always knowed,
For there isn't a blooming wind can blow
In all the latitudes, high or low,
Nor there isn't a kind of sea that rolls,
From both the Tropics to both the Poles,
But she's knowed 'em all since she sailed sou' Spain,
She's weathered the lot, and she'll do it again,
The same as she's done before.

And sail or steam or coasting craft, the big ships with the small,
The barges which were steamers once, the hulks that once were tall,
They wanted tonnage cruel bad, and so they fetched 'em all.

And some went out as fighting-craft and shipped a fighting crew,
But most they tramped the same old road they always used to do,
With a crowd of merchant-sailormen, as might be me or you ...

With a lick o' paint and a bucket o' tar,
And she's fit for the seas once more,
To carry the Duster near and far,
The same as she used before;
The same old Rag on the same old round,
Bar Light vessel and Puget Sound,
Brass and Bonny and Grand Bassam,
Both the Rios and Rotterdam--
Dutch and Dagoes, niggers and Chinks,
Palms and fire-flies, spices and stinks--
Portland (Oregon), Portland (Maine),
She's been there once and she'll go there again,
The same as she's been before.

* * * * *

Their bones are strewed to every tide from Torres Strait to Tyne--
God's truth, they've paid their blooming dues to the tin-fish and
the mine,
By storm or calm, by night or day, from Longships light to Line.

With a bomb or a mine or a bursting shell,
And she'll follow the seas no more,
She's fetched and carried and served you well,
The same as she's done before--
They've fetched and carried and gone their way,
As good ships should and as brave men may ...
And we'll build 'em still, and we'll breed 'em again,
The same good ships and the same good men,
The same--the same--the same as we've done before!

C.F.S.

* * * * *

A FIRST-CLASS MISDEMEANANT.

Cozens has a conscience--a conformist conscience--and is a first-class season-ticket holder.

The other morning we were travelling up to town together as usual. He was evidently bursting with the anticipatory pride of telling me something very much to his credit. Presently, at a gap in my reading, he said:--

"I left my season at home this morning, so I bought a return."

"What on earth for?" I expostulated. "You've already paid the company once by taking out a season; why pay twice? And anyhow it's only the Government."

"It's the first duty of a citizen to obey the laws of his country," he proclaimed sententially.

"Oh, all right; but you'll never get your money back--not from the Government. Besides, you could easily have got through without a ticket."

"How?"

"By taking out your note-case at the barrier and showing the girl the back of a Bradbury. Dazzled by the display of so much wealth, she'd pass you without a murmur."

"A miserable subterfuge," Cozens protested.

"Or you and I might walk up to the barrier deep in conversation. I should then get in front, and the examiner would pull me up for my ticket. I should fumble before producing my season. Meantime you would have passed beyond recall."

"I simply couldn't do it."

"Or why not pay at the barrier, if you must pay?"

"Yes, and lose the return ticket rate. How should I get down to-night?"

"That's easy. Buy a platform ticket. The man at the gate at home will pass you; he knows you."

"All underhand work," said Cozens. "It's much more dignified to buy a ticket."

Just then a travelling inspector entered our carriage.

"Tickets, gentlemen, please!"

And Cozens, looking supremely undignified, produced a third-class return, and tried to explain.

* * * * *

[Illustration: Little Girl (reading poster). "OH, MUMMY, ISN'T THAT VULGAR? OUGHTN'T THEY TO PUT 'PERSPIRED LABOUR'?"]

* * * * *

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(_BY MR. PUNCH'S STAFF OF LEARNED CLERKS_.)

MR. COMPTON MACKENZIE gives us in Sylvia and Michael (SECKER) a continuation--I hesitate to say a conclusion--of the adventures of that amazing heroine, Sylvia Scarlett, which, being not a sequel but a second volume, needs some familiarity with the first for its full enjoyment. Not that anyone even meeting Sylvia for the first time in mid-course could fail to be intrigued by the astounding things that are continually happening to her. The variety and piquancy of these events and the general brilliance of Mr. MACKENZIE'S colouring must keep the reader alert, curious, scandalized (perhaps), but always expectant. His scheme starts with an invigorating plunge (as one might say, off the deep end) into the cabaret society of Petrograd in 1914, where Sylvia and the more than queer company at the pension of Mere Gontran are surprised by the outbreak of war. Incidentally, Mere Gontran herself, with her cats, whose tails wave in the gloom "like seaweed," and her tawdry spiritualism--"key-hole peeping at infinity" the heroine (or the author) rather happily calls it--is one of the least forgettable figures in the galaxy. I have no space to indicate what turns of this glittering kaleidoscope eventually bring Sylvia and Michael together during the Serbian retreat, though there are scenes upon which I should like to dwell, notably that of the death of Guy Hazlewood, an incident whose admirable restraint shows Mr. MACKENZIE at his best. One question I have to ask, and that is how has Sylvia learnt to imitate so bewilderingly the mannerisms of Michael? Her soliloquies especially might have come straight from the first volume of Sinister Street, so much more do they suggest the cloistered adolescence of Carlington Road than a development from her own feverish youth. While I cannot pretend that she has for me the compelling vitality of Jenny Pearl, her adventures certainly make (for those who are not too nice about the morals or the conversation of their company) an exhilarating, even intoxicating entertainment, the end of which is, I am glad to think, still remote.

* * * * *

The publishers, in their preface to Mr. HUGH SPENDER'S new novel, The Seekers (COLLINS), led me to believe that it was written with the object of denouncing the dangers and the frauds of spiritualism. This, however, is by no means the case. To be sure the first few chapters do contain an account of a seance, which serves not so much to lay bare the mysteries of spiritualism as to bring together a few of the characters in the novel. From that point onward there is nothing more about spooks, save for an occasional reference. It is when the dramatis personae have been well collected in and about a Yorkshire vicarage that things really get a move on and begin to hum. No reader is entitled to complain of a lack of excitement; the mortality, indeed, is almost Shakspearean. Rudge, a medium, who must not be confused with our old friend, Mr. Sludge, perishes in a snowstorm. John Havering batters in the head of Hubert Kenyon, and later on commits suicide, while Beaufort, a Labour leader, is wrongfully charged with the murder of Hubert and barely escapes with his life. Everything however ends comparatively well, owing to a strong female interest. Mr. SPENDER is usually a careful workman, but sometimes his

sentences get the better of him. Here is one such: "She wondered if Peter, who must have seen Mary as he came into the vicarage disappear into the study, had gone in, hoping to find her there as he left the house." It is not often however that Mr. SPENDER leaves his clauses to fight it out together like that.

* * * * *

In The Golden Rope (LANE) Mr. J.W. BRODIE-INNES has tried to combine a tale of mystery and murder with the love-story of a man of fifty; and, on the whole, it is a fairly successful effort. Alan Maclean, the middle-aged one, who tells the tale, was a celebrated artist, and, when he made his way to Devon to paint Pontylanyon Castle, he little expected to find himself involved in a maze of intrigue and adventure. The castle, however, was owned by a lady of great but unfortunate possessions. In the first place she had a dual personality (and, believe me, it is the very deuce to have a dual personality); and, secondly, she possessed a crowd of relatives (Austrian) who wanted her estate and were ready to remove mountains and men to get it. I know nothing of Mr. Maclean's pictures except that I am assured by the author that they were exquisitely beautiful, but I do know that Mr. INNES'S own canvas suffers from overcrowding, and, although I admire the deft way in which he handles his embarrassment of figures, his task would have been less complicated and my enjoyment more complete if he had managed to do with fewer. Otherwise I can recommend The Golden Hope both for its exciting episodes, lavish of thrills, and for the warning it gives to men of fifty to stick to their pigments, or whatever their stock-in-trade may be.

* * * * *

The Cinderella Man (HODDER AND STOUGHTON), "a romance of youth," by HELEN and EDWARD CARPENTER, is more suited to the ingenuous than the sophisticated reader. Its hero is a poet, Tony Quintard, very poor and deathly proud. The scene is set in New York and largely in Tony's attic verse-laboratory, which Marjorie, the rugged millionaire's daughter, visits by way of the leads in a perfectly proper if unconventional mood. The idiom occasionally soars into realms even higher. Thus when Tony's father dies he is "summoned, by the Great Usher of Eternity." When the gentle Marjorie, reading out one of Tony's efforts--

"Love whose feet are shod with light
Lost this ribbon in her flight;
Rosette of the twilight sky,
Waft to me Love's lullaby!"

(the note of exclamation is Tony's), says, "Anyone who can write songs like that ought to write an opera," you realise that her heart is sounder than her pretty head. Anyway Tony, who needed no encouragement, wrote his opera and landed a ten-thousand dollar prize for same, together with the daughter of the millionaire, who began to see, no doubt, that there might be something in poetry after all.

* * * * *

Indian Studies (HUTCHINSON) one may call a work partly descriptive and historical, partly also polemic. Its author, General Sir O'MOORE CARAGH, V.C. (and so many other letters of honour that there is hardly

room for them on the title page), writes with the powerful authority of forty years' Indian service, five of them as Commander-in-Chief. His book is, in compressed form, a survey of the Indian Empire that deserves the epithet "exhaustive"; history, races, religious castes and forms of local government are all intimately surveyed; the chapters on the India Office and (especially) the army in India will command wide attention both among experts and the general public. Naturally the word "experts" brings me to the controversial side of the subject, the much discussed Montagu-Chelmsford Report, concerning which the late C.-in-C. holds views that might fairly be described as pronounced. Where authorities differ the honest reviewer can but record impartially. Really we have here the old antagonism between the upholder of one school of Imperial thought, fortified by many years' experience of its successful application, and the theories of a newer and more experimental age. Without attempting a judgment on its conclusions, I can safely agree with the publishers that this is a book that "will be read with special interest in military, diplomatic and Government circles"; also--my own postscript--more vociferously debated in certain club smoking-rooms than almost any volume of recent years.

* * * * *

A "Literary Note" thoughtfully inserted in the fly-leaves of _The Elstones_ (HUTCHINSON) informs me that it will "make a strong appeal to all those who have experienced the suffering caused by religious conflict." It is not entirely because it has been my lot to escape the ordeal in question that Miss ISABEL C. CLARKE'S latest book failed to make the promised appeal. She takes two hundred and odd pages of peculiarly eye-racking type to convert the _Elstone_ family to Catholicism without indicating in any way how or why her solemn puppets are inspired to change their beliefs. Now and again a completely nebulous cleric happens along to perform the necessary function of receiving a moribund neophyte into the Church; otherwise the conversion appears to take place as it were by spontaneous combustion and not as the result of any visible proselytising agency. However the _Elstones_ bear no resemblance to real human beings--you can hardly expect it of people called _Ierne_ and _Magali_ and _Ivo_ and _Elvidia_ and names like that--so perhaps it doesn't matter how they came to see the great light. The important thing obviously from the authoress's point of view is to get them into the fold; and good Catholics who look at the end rather than the means may enjoy _The Elstones_. As a novel it will try them hard.

* * * * *

[Illustration: _Manager of Gasworks_ (_to aeronaut who has just had his balloon inflated_). "EXCUSE ME, SIR, BUT I WOULD LIKE YOU TO UNDERSTAND CLEARLY THAT OUR TERMS FOR GAS ARE STRICTLY CASH."]

* * * * *

HOW THE SECRETS OF ROYAL HOUSEHOLDS LEAK OUT.

"SO HOMELY AND NICE."

WHAT THE PRINCE SAID WHEN TOLD THERE WERE NO BATHROOMS."--_Daily Mirror_.

* * * * *

"It is a trifle, perhaps, that the author misspells the name of Varden in 'Barnaby Rudge,' and the name of Bucket in 'Bleak House.' Spelling is not of much consequence."--Mr. Arthur Machen in "_The Evening News_."

So we observe.

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