

CHARIVARIA.

THE TIMES points out that a feature of the proposed levy on property in Germany will be an attempt to make all foreigners who are engaged in profitable occupations in that country take their full share in this work of German self-sacrifice. It is unlikely that an exception will be made even in favour of Englishmen. * *

The British steamer *Taion* reports, on her arrival at Hong Kong, that pirates who had booked as passengers have risen and murdered some of the other passengers, and succeeded in getting away with a considerable quantity of booty. To avoid a repetition of the incident it is proposed that in future all pirates before booking as passengers shall be required to wear jerseys with a skull and cross-bones plainly embroidered on the front. * *

Lord DENBIGH, Colonel of the H.A.C., has been drawing attention to our system of training the Territorial artillery. The men, it seems, are supplied with obsolete guns, and are allowed to practise only once in two years. The temptation to an enemy to come over and invade us in the year during which the H.A.C. has had no practice must be almost irresistible. * *

The second volume of *The Life of David Lloyd George* has appeared. To those on the look-out for a good investment—

Mr. ASQUITH, a parliamentary reporter informs us, has had his hair cut closely at the back and sides. We should have thought that if ever there was a time when it was essential that the PREMIER should keep his hair on it is the present. * *

There is, of course, no truth whatever in the absurd rumour that the reason why the PREMIER has altered his appearance is that he has been gambling and wished to baffle the police. * *

It is curious how often animal-lovers are indifferent to the suffering of their own species. It is reported that, in her present libel action, Miss LIND-AFHAGEBY, the anti-vivisectionist, proposes to address the judge and jury for a space of twenty-four hours.

The Suffragettes' policy of burning down houses is, we learn from headquarters, proving a most successful one, a number of well-insured builders having been recently converted to their views. * *

A correspondent who has been reading about the damage done to valuable pictures at Manchester by the Suffragettes respectfully draws the ladies' attention to the works of the Post-Impressionists at present on view in London.

still. They will, on payment of the usual fare, welcome not only dogs, but any of the milder animals, such as doves, ant-eaters, deer, sloths, elephants and silk-worms. * *

Torquay has decided to celebrate the centenary of WAGNER's birth by holding a WAGNER festival. This is a much better idea than giving a Rag-Time concert in honour of the occasion. * *

The Family Doctor publishes an article on the value of onions. Our contemporary, however, omits to mention one of their most useful qualities. The onion-eater never suffers from overcrowding. * *

We cannot agree with Mr. Watson's allegation that no one nowadays cares much for poetry. Why, only the other day, in one of the poorest districts, we came across the following notice on the window of a little third-rate crockery shop:—

"ALL KINDS OF POTERY SOLD HERE."

At Oaken, near Wolverhampton, some men who broke into the residence of a local ironmaster not only stripped the house of silver and plate, but also burst open the children's money-box and took the contents. It looks as if our burglars are losing all their pretty sentimentality.

"Miss Annie Kenny, the Suffragette leader, appeared at Bow-street Police-court this afternoon under a statue of Edward the Third. . . . The crowd was crowded with well-dressed Suffragettes."—*Evening News.*

We cannot help thinking that a statue of BOADICEA or JOAN OF ARC would have been more appropriate. It might have made the crowd even more crowded.

"Auri Sacra Fames."

"News has been received that Miss H. O. Pagan, a nurse at Modderfontein, is the winner of a competition set by the Rhodesian Eistoddfod for a South African National Anthem. The anthem runs:

Gold bless and keep our land!"

Daily Mail.

"Pagan" seems the right word.

"A detective and an alleged burglar had a fierce struggle in a beer-house with an off-licence at Sunderland early yesterday morning."—*Daily Mail.*
Savage things these off-licences.



Owner of Motor-boat (to friend). "GEE! THAT WAS A NABBY SQUEAK. I GUESS WE SCARED THOSE BEGGARS SOME."

As, however, the Futurist painter, GINO SEVERINI, declares himself a "Dynamist" it is possible that he and the Suffragettes have much in common. * *

The instalment system seems to be gaining in public favour. A mother at Barrow in Lancashire has given birth to a twin six weeks after the arrival of its young relative. * *

The Tramways Committee of the Middlesex County Council propose to allow dogs to be carried on their cars. The London County Council Tramways Committee, whose receipts have recently been dwindling, are, it is rumoured, contemplating going further

THOUGHTS ON SPRING TROUSERINGS.

["Did you ever see a man whose suit was made of precisely the same pattern cloth as your own? . . . I am still looking for the man who affects my identical taste in modern tweeds."—"The Office Window" of "The Daily Chronicle."]

WHEN critics in a captious key
Reiterate the old, old twaddle
That men in outward form agree
Like vegetables—pea and pea—
Made on the selfsame model,

I answer, "Tut!" and turn to muse
Upon the splendid thought how rich is
The wealth and varied range of views
Exposed by people when they choose
Some vernal scheme in breeches.

Whether a chaste or loud design,
Their choice is individualistic;
Within the tailor's awful shrine
Each separate soul adopts a line
Alloof and almost mystic.

But men are countless as the dew;
And since, in even Spring's profusion,
Patterns are relatively few,
A single type may serve for two
Without the least collusion.

Hence the engaging fancy cheers
My breast like wine amid carousers—
That somewhere in this Vale of Tears
There moves a man of middle years
Who shares my taste in trousers.

Him should I meet, and mark the same
Continuations on his leg, oh,
Oh! then I'd wrap me round his frame
With instant ardour and exclaim,
"My twin! my *alter ego*!"

But ah! my heart—I dare not think
How it would chirrup like a cello
If he, the sage of pen and ink,
Who paints "The Office Window" pink,
Should prove to be my fellow! O. S.

THE WAR.

THE girl who helped in the opposite flat was talking to the porter on the ground floor landing:—

"All I can say is, I wish this 'ere war was over and done for, but I suppose if it wasn't the war it'd be somethin' else. Father and Uncle Bill do get that 'ot with one another whenever they meets, I wonder they care to go on visitin', but father says 'e's got 'is family feelin's and Uncle Bill says 'e won't never give us up, 'im bein' mother's only brother and 'avin' a nice little bit o' property—'ouses, you know, and that kind o' thing. So there they go quarrellin' and 'avin' a serap, and next day or the day arter they're both as lovin' as a pair o' saints in a winder.

"Last time it was all about LLOYD GEORGE, and they finished up by father chuckin' a sossidge at Uncle Bill's face—ah, and not missin' him neither. 'E's a good un to aim is father, and when it 'it Uncle Bill it went squelch, and Uncle Bill got more supper than 'e bargin'd for. Well, they made up that little bit o' business through father writin' to Uncle Bill and sayin' 'e forgot at the moment 'e'd got a sossidge in 'is 'and, and 'e 'oped it would be took

in the sperit it was offered; and Uncle Bill answered on a lovely sheet o' paper with 'is monnygram in blue at the top, a W and a S all mixed up together like, to stand for William Sampson, and 'e said 'e wasn't one for bad blood between brothers-in-lor, but 'e was sorry about the waste of a good sossidge, and this oughter be a lesson to all of us not to let our angry passions git in the way of our friendships, and as to the apolligy 'e accepted it and would come round soon and smoke the pipe o' peace.

"Well, 'e come o' Sunday night just as mother and me was clearin' up supper, and father says, 'Bravo, Bill,' 'e says, 'you're a man o' your word,' and Uncle Bill says that nobody's ever found Bill Sampson backward in that way. 'I've come arter supper,' 'e says with a laugh, 'so's not to git mixed up with the eatables this time,' 'e says. 'It might be a pork-pie next, and that ain't so soft as a sossidge,' and then we all 'ad a good laugh—all except father, and 'e did 'is bist to jine in. Father's a very generous man, but 'e's proud, and I could see 'e didn't relish Uncle Bill illudin' to the little contrytemp—that's what Uncle Bill called it in 'is joky way. It's the same as what we call a rough and tumble.

"Father and Uncle Bill lit their pipes and then they got to work on their talkin'. They started about the war, and father 'e says, 'I don't 'old with this 'ere naval demingstration,' 'e says. 'I'm for the Montynegroes,' 'e says, 'and I don't see what call we've got to put no pressure on 'em. They're little uns,' 'e says, 'but they're plucky, and I can't abear to see them big bullies set about them. That ain't a proper use for our *Dreadnoughts*.'

"That's all very well,' says Uncle Bill; 'but you're forgittin' the balince o' power.'

"What's that?' says father.

"It's this,' says Uncle Bill. 'Supposin' you was to go and grab 'old of a pot o' money that don't belong to you—'

"'E'd never do that,' says mother. 'E ain't one o' that sort.'

"Ah, but I'm supposin',' says Uncle Bill. 'It's only 'ipothical,' 'e says, or some such word as that. 'I'm not really sayin' 'e'd go for to pinch what don't belong to 'im.'

"And you'd better not, Bill Sampson,' says father. 'But let's 'ear a bit more about this 'ere balince o' yourn.'

"Let's say as I pinched the money,' says Uncle Bill. 'Well, if we was both Great Powers and you come along, you'd 'ave the right to make me give you 'alf on it.'

"Is that the lor?' says father.

"That's the concert o' Europe,' says Uncle Bill.

"Then,' says father, 'I don't want no mcrs o' your concerts. I'll 'ave no second 'elphin' o' that dish. I'm a Montynegro, I am, and I don't care 'oo 'ears me say it.'

"But,' says Uncle Bill, 'the Austrians are mobilisin' their army.'

"Let 'em mobilise,' says father. 'They won't 'urt nobody but theirselves. They're all talk.'

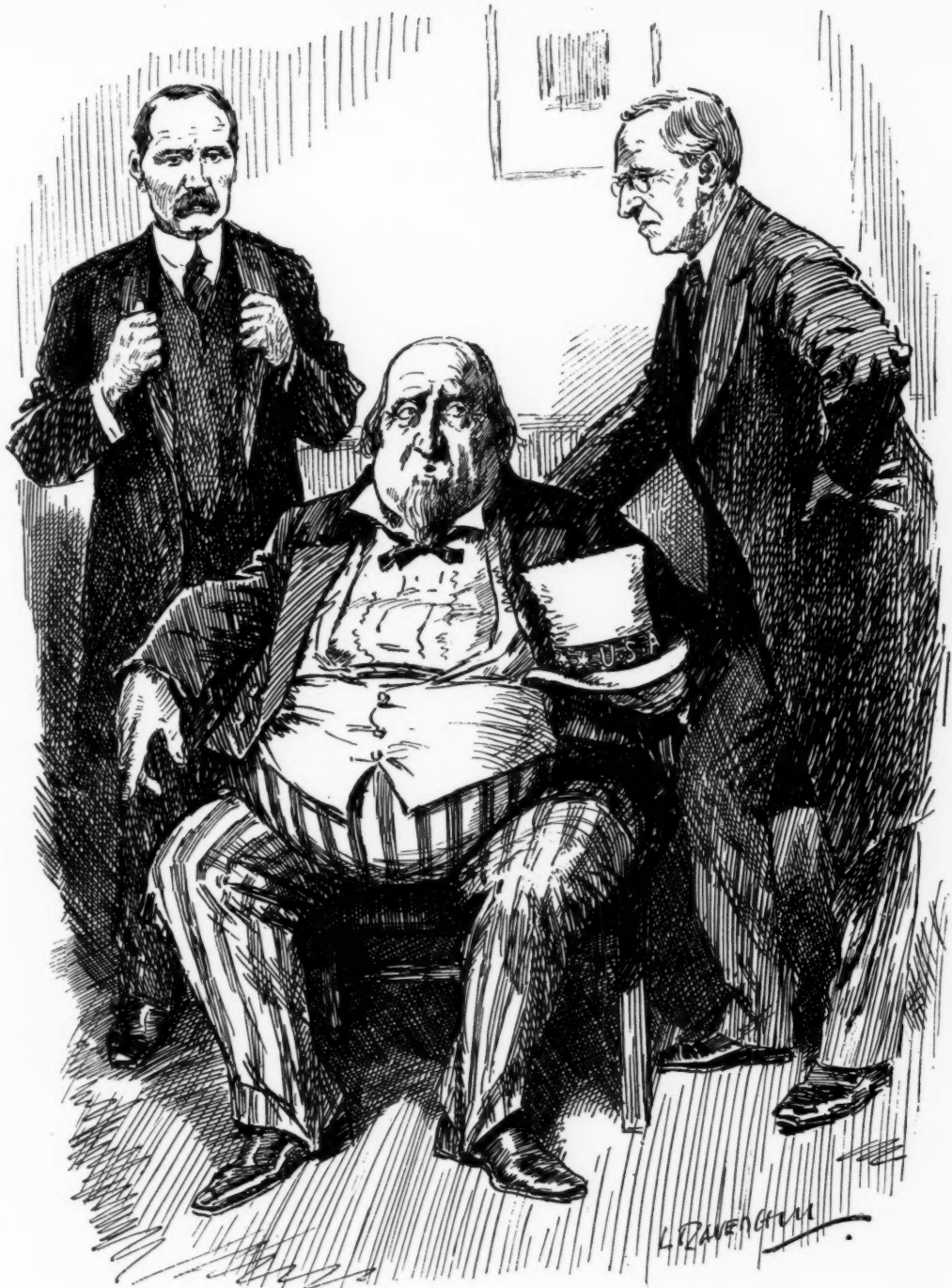
"They're not the only ones,' says Uncle Bill. 'There's others can do a bit o' talkin' too.'

"Meanin' yourself, I suppose,' says father.

"No,' says Uncle Bill, 'meanin' you.'

"Now, look 'ere, Bill Sampson,' says father, 'I've 'ad too much o' you and your balinces and your concerts o' Europe. You're enough to make a monkey cry with your bullyin' nonsense. If you can't argue no better than that, go and do it somewhere else.'

"Uncle Bill give 'im a look, and then 'e put on 'is 'at and went out o' the door; but 'e 'adn't bin gorn more'n 'alf a minute before 'e puts 'is 'ead in agin and shouts, 'Abar Montynegro!' I dunno what 'e meant. Father 'eaved a cushin at 'im, but Uncle was too quick. We ain't seen 'im since.'



PROFESSIONAL JEALOUSY.

PRESIDENT WOODROW WILSON. "HE'S SUFFERING FROM EXCESS OF TARIFF. I SHALL HAVE TO REDUCE HIM."

MR. BONAR LAW. "I WISH I HAD A PATIENT WITH HALF HIS COMPLAINT."

7



"WHAT A VERY NICE LITTLE BOY FREDDY IS—SO QUIET AND WELL-BEHAVED."

"WELL, I'M BLOWED! YOU MOTHERS ARE RUM! THAT'S WHAT FREDDIE'S MOTHER ALWAYS SAYS ABOUT ME!"

TO A BEAUTY PHOTOGRAPHER.

(By a celebrity in time of crisis.)

Lo, as a lover steals with faltering feet,
On Valentine his morning, to the doors
Of his coy mistress, so to this your seat,
Artist, I come, and with all force entreat,
"Take me, for I am yours."

Yet, ere you lead me to the torture chair,
Hear first my charge: 'Tis generally borne
That only Beauty gains your favouring care,
That you restrict your labours to the fair;
Others you treat with scorn.

Well, I lack loveliness (and so do you);
It is for that that I demand your skill.
Art should create; where Nature's charms are few,
It is for Art to show what She can do.
What—are you stubborn still?

Then further. In your ear let me confess
That I am famous; I have written books;
There is an editor who asks, no less,
To put me in our Illustrated Press,
That men may know my looks.

It is a crisis, gravely tho' I shrink
From the publicity that must be faced;
And really, if the people have to drink
My features in, it would be well, I think,
To give them something chaste.

Therefore I beg you, by your sacred Art,
To tone me up and do the thing in style;
There may be money in it quite apart
From the advertisement. Ha! ha! you start.
Heav'n bless you for that smile!

Come, then, to work, and, as the need is great,
So be your triumph. This shall be my pose;
Yours be the rest. 'Tis yours to palliate,
To make the rugged smooth, the crooked straight,
Especially my nose.

Now I am settled. Stately as a swan,
Thoughtful but not austere. Woa, Artist, woa!
I have a giggling humour coming on.
You looked so funny. It will pass anon.
Now. Are you ready? Go! DUM-DUM.

The Graceful Touch.

"Mr. Collins Bailey, of Portsmouth, delivered a short address on Home Rule, and the remainder of the evening was pleasantly spent."
Portsmouth Evening News.

We regret to state that the rumour that the Master of ELIBANK is about to follow the example of the MACLAINE of Lochbuie and go on the variety stage, with the idea of interpreting the emotions of his old colleagues in the Scots Cabinet, is officially denied.

ONCE UPON A TIME.

THE RESOLUTE SPIRIT.

ONCE upon a time there was in the Suffolk village of South Highbolt a Tudor grange. It was richly timbered, with vine leaves carved on its barge-boards, and it had a great hall with a roof-tree springing from a cross-beam of massive stoutness, and a very beautiful pilastered gallery, and altogether it was such a house as, although damp and insanitary, sends romantic travellers into ecstasies. But it had come upon evil days, and having been bought cheaply by a speculative London builder had been sold by him at an enormous profit to an American plutocrat, and—a minute plan of all having been prepared—was now being taken down with great care, every brick, stone and beam numbered, to be re-erected in the American millionaire's estate on the banks of the Hudson as a garden hostel for his guests and a perpetual reminder of a country older and more beautiful than his own.

Now it happened that, like most Tudor granges, this one was haunted. Ever since the year 1592, when a wealthy heir apparent, named Geoffrey, had been poisoned with a dish of toad-stools by his spendthrift younger brother, more than anxious to upset the exasperating financial provisions of primogeniture, and their sister Alice had unconsciously partaken of the same dish, Alice and Geoffrey, as well as could be managed in their disembodied state, had devoted themselves to the old home and the discomfort of its various successive inhabitants; and their dismay was intense on seeing its component parts gradually being packed into a series of trucks, to be drawn to some distant spot by a traction-engine. To demolition pure and simple they were accustomed. Many were the neighbouring mansions, most of them also haunted, which they had seen pulled down, and not a few rebuilt; but it was a new experience to observe a house bodily removed they knew not whither, nor could they discover. In vain were other ghosts consulted; none knew, not even the youngest. The point then was, what was to be done? for Geoffrey and Alice were divided in opinion as to their duty, Alice considering that her first allegiance was to the structure, and Geoffrey that his was to the site.

"It is our family home," said Alice;

"marry we must go with it, no matter where."

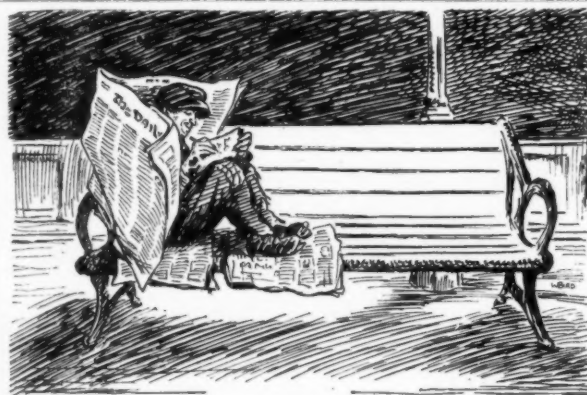
"Nay, sister," said Geoffrey, "that were foolish. We are Suffolk ghosts—more than Suffolk, South Highbolt ghosts—and here we ought to stay. Suppose it is going to London—how then? You are far too simple and countrified for the great city. The others will laugh at you."

"Let them," said Alice, "I care not."
"Wait till you hear them," said Geoffrey, "all sensitive as you are! Anyway, here I mean to stay."

"But how foolish!" said Alice; "for surely, Geoffrey, you would not haunt nothing? What use could that be? How can you make nothing creak? or blow out candles when there are none? or moan along passages that do not exist? or wring your hands in

It therefore happened that when the time came for the road-train to leave, every vestige of the house being packed away, Alice took a tearful farewell of her brother and crept dismally into the last truck with a bibulous brakesman, and either such was her melancholy at leaving home or such the completeness of his potations that she caused him not a single tremor all the way to Harwich, where a vessel was waiting to convey the grange to America. It was when Alice realised this and took up her abode in the stuffy hold as near to the roof-tree as she could nestle that her courage first began to fail, for she was a bad sailor; but once again duty triumphed. . . .

It was on the first night on which the re-erected Tudor grange was opened as a hostel for the millionaire's guests that Alice was placed in the delectable position of realising that the consciousness of having been virtuous is not always the only reward of a virtuous deed; for she had hardly waved her arms more than thrice, or uttered more than three of those blood-curdling shrieks which dated from the moment when her suspicions that the fungus that she had just swallowed so greedily was not a mushroom but a toadstool assumed an air of fact, when Professor Uriah K. Bleeter, one of the most determined foes of the American Society of Psychical Research and all



Extract from a letter to an editor. "I THANK YOU FOR THE HOSPITALITY OF YOUR COLUMNS."

South Highbolt at casements that are elsewhere?"

"True," replied Geoffrey, "but I can carry on the mechanism of haunting just the same. I can gibber where the old home used to stand, as many another honest Suffolk ghost, ay, and Essex and Norfolk ghosts too, I wis, are doing at this moment. I belong to the village and shall stay here. I hate travel. No doubt to create anything like the sensation to which I have been accustomed will be difficult, but I can do my best. Even the poorest efforts, however, will be better than accompanying a traction-engine along a public road in broad day—verily a degrading occupation for the unladen spirit of a fair lady."

"Circumstances alter cases," Alice replied. "I conceive my duty to be to yonder wood and stone. Nothing shall shake me. Wherever they go, there go I also."

"And I too," said Geoffrey, "am adamant. South Highbolt is my home and never will I leave it."

its works, sprang through his bedroom window to the ground below, taking with him the sash and some dozens of diamond panes.

And now the Tudor grange, even emptier than it had been for so long in England (since America is a greater country), is once more for sale, preferably to a Suffolk landowner; and the millionaire who bought it lives entirely on his yacht.

From a police-court case headed "Furious Driving" in *The Cromer Post* :—

"Police-constable Woodcock said he saw defendant drive the horse over three-quarters of a mile of road in twenty minutes. When he stopped defendant the horse was trembling." A chill, no doubt.

"It is a fact not generally known that sailors who are off the southern coast of South America, and are in want of water, make for the mouth of the Amazon, where they can procure fresh water 200 miles from the coast."

Rexall News.

It seems a long way to go for a drink.



Host. "How do you like the course?"

Visitor. "Well, I don't wish to appear ungrateful, but I should like to lie down!"

ORIGINS.

THE Select Committee on Motor Traffic dangers, whatever the results of its investigations may be, has at least made a splendid start. It has already earned the gratitude of all antiquarians by the flood of valuable light which it has thrown on the vexed question of the origin of the Rule of the Road. One of the witnesses has pointed out that the rule came into being "about the time when men carried swords, so that they could seize their weapons with their free hand and turn round and defend themselves against attacks from behind."

We may now confidently look to the Select Committee, in the course of the sittings that are yet to come, to enlighten us upon the origin of other curious customs—equally closely connected with the dangers of motor traffic—which have grown up almost imperceptibly among us.

Does the custom, for instance, of walking on the outside of the pavement when in the company of a lady date—as we have always supposed—from about the time when ladies took an interest in shop windows?

Is it true—as we have good reason to believe—that the custom of shaking hands when acquaintances meet dates from about the time when men con-

sidered it prudent to keep the other fellow's right hand out of mischief until they saw how he was going to take it?

Are we right in supposing that the custom of knocking at a door before entering—obviously an old survival—dates back to about the time when most private residences were protected by a portcullis, on which you had to knock pretty hard if you wanted to make your way in?

These are moot points, some of them perhaps more moot than others; but there is no doubt at all in our mind that the custom of dressing for dinner dates back to about the time when the Court of CHARLES II. encouraged luxury, and no one dreamt of getting out of bed before that hour of the day; and it is interesting to note that the custom of using umbrellas dates back to about the time when they were first introduced.

We hope that if witnesses before the Select Committee have any more solutions to offer they will at least be free from ill-natured criticism. It has already been pointed out that the Rule of the Road on the Continent is the reverse of what it is in this country; but that circumstance is due, we understand, not so much to the fact that swords were never carried in France or Germany, as to the fact that all foreigners in the Middle Ages were notoriously left-handed.

FLIGHTS OF FANCY.

[“We shall all be flying soon.”—Miss Trehaucke Davies.]

ALTHOUGH my flying days are o'er,
And I, now verging on three-score,
Do not intend to quit the floor,

I greet with feelings of elation
The prospect that awaits the nation
Of universal aviation.

* * * * *

I'd simply love to see HALL CAINE
Careering in an aeroplane
Athwart the limitless inane;

Or watch Sir HERBERT BEERBOHM
TREE
Soar to the zenith like a bee,
With Mr. HANDEL BOOTH, M.P.;

Or mark, upon some night in June,
Great GARVIN, in a gas balloon,
Shoot madly upward to the moon;

Or gaze with rapture on LE QUEUX
As in his hydroplane he flew
To Vladivostok or Peru;

Or speed the parting of "TAX PAX"
As gallantly he winged his way
To Stellenbosch or Baffin's Bay.

* * * * *

Oh, won't it be a priceless boon—
Far finer than a rag-time tune—
To see these worthies flying soon!

WILLIAM'S SECRET.

[A study in the methods of Mr. WILLIAM LE QUEUX, whose new book, "Mysterics" (WARD, LOCK & Co.), leaves us cold.]

THE mystery of the astounding events which startled all Europe a few years ago has never been elucidated, therefore now for the first time I will relate the facts, which will astonish many.

It was a beautiful evening in September, and London was, as is usual at such times, empty. I had received my customary invitations from the Nobility to shoot over their preserves, but I had decided to remain in the Mecca of all Englishmen, London, in the hope that some astounding adventure might happen to me. Therefore it was that I was seated alone with my revolver in the smoking-room of the Devonshire Club on a beautiful evening in September.

Suddenly the door opened and my old friend Baron Banana came in. I had frequently dined with him on his yacht at Monte Carlo, therefore I knew him well.

"Good evening, Caro Barone," I said with a gay smile, for he and I had always been great companions and had sometimes lent each other money.

"My friend," he said, putting his hand on my shoulder and twirling his moustache despairingly, "I want you to do something for the Czar of Russia."

"At these words his face went the colour of ashes.

"What is it?" I asked hoarsely.

In an instant three low-looking determined men in dark tweed overcoats burst into the room, each with a loaded revolver covering us.

"The papers," muttered the first of them thickly, levelling his revolver unhesitatingly at Baron Banana's neck, "give me the papers!"

Without a word I handed him *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Westminster Gazette*, *The Morning Post* and *The Daily Chronicle*.

The ruffian, who had a big black beard and elastic-sided boots, blanched visibly, and turning again to my friend Baron Banana angrily pressed his revolver, which was loaded to the hilt, against the Baron's elbow.

"Give me the secret papers," he said in a hoarse whisper to my friend.

"They were stolen from me yesterday," said my friend Baron Banana, with whom I had often dined on his yacht at Monte Carlo.

The ruffian went as pale as ashes. Without a moment's hesitation he discharged his deadly weapon at the ceiling. Immediately I fainted.

* * * * *

When I recovered consciousness two

years later, I found myself to my amazement lying in a sumptuously-furnished cabin. Therefore I went on deck and found that I was on a magnificent steam-yacht off the coast of Algeria.

Suddenly the most beautiful girl I have ever seen appeared on deck and glided towards me. In less than a month we were the greatest friends.

"I adore you," I declared passionately one evening, taking out my revolver and raising her hand to my lips.

"Hush," she murmured in a hoarse whisper.

Two weeks passed, and I was standing on deck one morning when she came suddenly towards me, her beautiful face the colour of ashes.

"What is it?" I asked hoarsely.

She handed me a packet of papers.

"Take these," she said, "and give them to Popoff, the Chief of the Police in Warsaw," mentioning the name of the most dreaded detective in Russia, Paul Popoff. "It is a matter of life and death."

"Whose?" I asked anxiously.

"Yours," replied the beautiful girl, whose name I found out afterwards was Maritza.

Immediately I swooned.

* * * * *

I must have been unconscious for six months. When I came round I found myself to my astonishment in the deepest dungeon of the dreaded Schüsselburg, from which no prisoner ever returns alive. I made up my mind that my last moment had arrived, and drawing my revolver decided to sell my life dearly.

Suddenly the door of my cell was opened, and my old friend Baron Banana, with whom I used frequently to lunch on his yacht at Monte Carlo, was kicked in by one of the guards.

"How are you, my dear old chap?" I said, for his face was as pale as ashes.

"The papers?" he said in a hoarse whisper.

We drew out our revolvers, for we were resolved to sell our lives dearly, if the guards interrupted us at this moment.

"I am Paul Popoff," my friend Baron Banana went on, mentioning the name of the most dreaded detective in Russia.

Immediately I drew out the packet, which Maritza had given me, from the lining of my waistcoat.

Without a word the Baron opened the packet with the greatest eagerness. Suddenly he gave a cry. The packet contained, not the letters he had hoped for, but a deadly bomb!

Both our faces went the colour of ashes.

Then there was a loud explosion—and I knew no more.

* * * * *

When I recovered consciousness I found myself, to my intense surprise, in the Barnes mortuary. As may be supposed, I desired to remain in that place not an instant longer than was necessary, therefore I escaped by the window. Having a few shillings still left in my pocket, I took a taxi to Scotland Yard in order to clear up the mystery of my friend Baron Banana and the beautiful Maritza, whom I still loved with all the intensity of my soul.

At Scotland Yard I waited for three weeks, when suddenly the door opened and there entered a man whose presence there rendered me speechless.

It was Paul Popoff, the most dreaded detective in Russia.

He noted my amazement, and, laughing as he advanced towards me, exclaimed:

"Now that we meet here, allow me to introduce myself under my real name. I am the German Emperor."

At these words my face went the colour of ashes.

"Then who is Baron Banana?" I asked in a hoarse whisper.

In an instant he drew his revolver and handed me a packet of papers.

Immediately I swooned.

* * * * *

One word more. Not many weeks ago, while walking along the Strand, I noticed a short bearded man coming out of a Cinema Palace. At the same moment our eyes met. Instantly his face went the colour of ashes and he jumped into a taxi.

It was the Czar of Russia!

A. A. M.

From a picture-framer's circular:—

"GENUINE OIL PAINTINGS.

I have in my employ some of the best and cleverest artists and can guarantee you first-class work at the following reasonable prices, including Landscapes, Waterfalls, Mountain Scenery, Fruit and Flowers, etc. 10 x 8 1/- each, 12 x 10 1/9 each, 18 x 10 2/6 each."

We have laid out 3/6 on a "Bunch of Grapes rising over Ben Nevis" (10 x 8) and a "Cauliflower coming down at Lodore" (18 x 10).

"Some heat seems to have been engendered through the action taken by the Somerset Archaeological Society respecting the installation of an improved heating apparatus."

Estates Gazette.

Evidently the apparatus is a success.

"Young Man (reliable) Wanted, who can kill and make himself useful; live out."—*Advt. in "The Devon and Exeter Gazette."*

We certainly recommend this last arrangement in case the police should call.



Priest. "NOW, PAT, YE'RE VERY BEHINDHAND WITH YOUR GARDEN. THERE'S NOTHING SHOWING."

Pat. "SHURE, FATHER, THE SLUGS AND SUCH BASTES WERE SO THROUBLESOME LAST YEAR THAT I THOUGHT I'D PUT THE SPOITE ON THIM AND NOT GROW ANNYTHING AT ALL, AT ALL."

SOMEWHERE NEAR BLENHEIM.

(A typical Oxfordshire scene at the present moment, with sincere apologies to ROBERT SOUTHEY and all pedantic students of rural dialects.)

It was an April evening;
Old William, fairly ripe,
Was walking homewards from the pub
Puffing a dark clay pipe:
He took to help him o'er the green
His little grandchild Emmeline.

She saw her brother, Henry John,
Wave something in his hand,
A leaflet issued by *The Mail*
He could not understand;
He looked for someone to expound
The words so large and smooth and round.

The old man took it from the boy,
He leaned against a stile,
He scratched a ruminative head
And smiled a maudlin smile;
"That is a tract," said he, "that be,
About the vamous policy."

I seed one at the "Spotted Pig;"
John Brown he read un out;
They're going to plough the big Park up,
And that's what it's about;

There's several thousand words," said he,

"Explaining that there policy."

"But tell us what it's all about,"
Was Henry John's remark,
And little Emmeline said, "Lor!
Why should they plough the Park?
And is it true, or just a tale
Invented, granfer, by *The Mail*?"

"It was the GREAT DUKE," William said,

"Who laid the FIRST LORD flat;
But what they fought each other for
I bain't so sure of that;
But everybody knows," said he,
"It wor a vamous policy."

"The GREAT DUKE lives by Woodstock town,

The FIRST LORD rules the sea,
The DUKE's a great Conservative,
His cousin—what are he?
There's some as says—but there, my head
Ain't what it was," the old man said.

"Howmbesover, in *The Mail*,
The GREAT DUKE took and wrote
As summat's wrong with English land;
This here's un's antidote.

'I'll plough the Park,' says he, 'for wheat.'

'You will?' says WINSTON. 'Well, I'm beat.'

"But what," said Henry John, "do things
Like rural problems mean?"
"And does the GREAT DUKE love *The Mail*?"

Quoth little Emmeline.
"Ah! that I cannot tell," said he,
"But 'twor a vamous policy."

EVOE.

The Age of Luxury.

"Bedroom (small) and Sitting Room Required by young gentlemen; bathroom and accommodation for small dog."

Newcastle Evening Chronicle.

The small dog seems to be the more particular of the two.

From *The Weekly Times*' report of Mr. FORBES ROBERTSON'S speech at the O.P. Club banquet:—

"He added that his farewell to London did not include Miss Gertrude Elliott." Mr. *Punch* is not at all surprised, and wishes them many more happy years together.



"WHIT KIND O' DANCE IS THIS TURKEY TROT, WULLIE?"

"WEEEL, IT'S LIKE THIS, NOO. YE TAK' YER PAINTNER, YE PUSH HER FORRIT, YE PULL HER BACK, AN' YE TIRRL HER ROUN' WHILES."

FASHION NOTES.

[According to the Press, Landscape Frocks "painted to resemble well-known masterpieces" are to be the newest fashionable sensation.]

DEAREST MILLY,—You will of course expect me to tell you all about the latest modes. Well, to begin with, Goose and Edwin are showing some really charming Turners for evening wear. This firm's "Fighting Téméraire," in old gold net over blue chiffon with a dash of rose, would look exceedingly well on anyone who was not afraid of a little colour. There are also some quite too delicious Whistlers (including an "Old Battersea Bridge" that would be the very thing for half-mourning), the soft shades of which make them especially suitable to very young blondes.

I was immensely taken, too, with a

wonderful Napier Hemy, in dark navy merino, the skirt made billowy, with a bodice of tulle clouds, which has been ordered for a smart yachtswoman. More fragile is a "June in the Austrian Tyrol" afternoon confection, of green and blue velvet, with which is to be worn a Hobbema "Avenue" hat of brown straw, trimmed with absolutely straight uprising plumes, like the trees in the famous original.

I hear that Messrs. Égalité, of Regent Street, are making a feature of a special line in ready-made Leaders; the coat and skirt of the popular russet and green being finished off with a dainty toque in various sunset shades, the whole giving the effect of masses of foliage caught by the last rays of evening.

A propos of this firm, I should tell you that Mrs. Blank Dash, the wife of

the well-known artist, created quite a sensation in Bond Street last week by appearing in the smartest of tailor-made costumes of hand-painted canvas. Everyone was admiring the delightful *je-ne-sais-quoi* blend of colouring; but only now am I able to publish the fact that this was really due to the material employed being the Academy rejecteds of the lady's husband. Messrs. Égalité were of course responsible for this triumph; and I am told further that, in order to keep abreast of the latest movement in fashion, they have opened a branch establishment in the King's Road, where customers desirous of obtaining the real Chelsea *cachet* can have their own materials made up within a stone's-throw of the studios supplying them.

Next week I must write to you about the new designs in oil-painted coats for wet weather.

Yours,

LOUISE.

I'D HAVE A DAIRY.

I'd have a dairy—
Stool, churn and dish,
An if a fairy
Gave me a wish;
Fragrant and airy,
Long, clean and cool,
I'd have a dairy—
Dish, churn and stool!

Three maids are plenty—
May, Moll and Meg;
If I paid twenty
I'd have to beg;
Thrifty and tenty,
Up with the day,
Three maids are plenty—
Meg, Moll and May!

Cows of my raising,
White, red and roan,
I'd have a-grazing
In fields of my own;
Milkers amazing,
Morning and night,
Cows of my raising,
Roan, red and white!

I'd give the fairy
Cream, curd and whey,
Best of my dairy
Fresh every day;
These shouldn't vary
'Neath my door beam;
I'd give the fairy—
Whey, curd and cream!

Vie de Bohême.

From a recent statement by a juvenile scholar:—

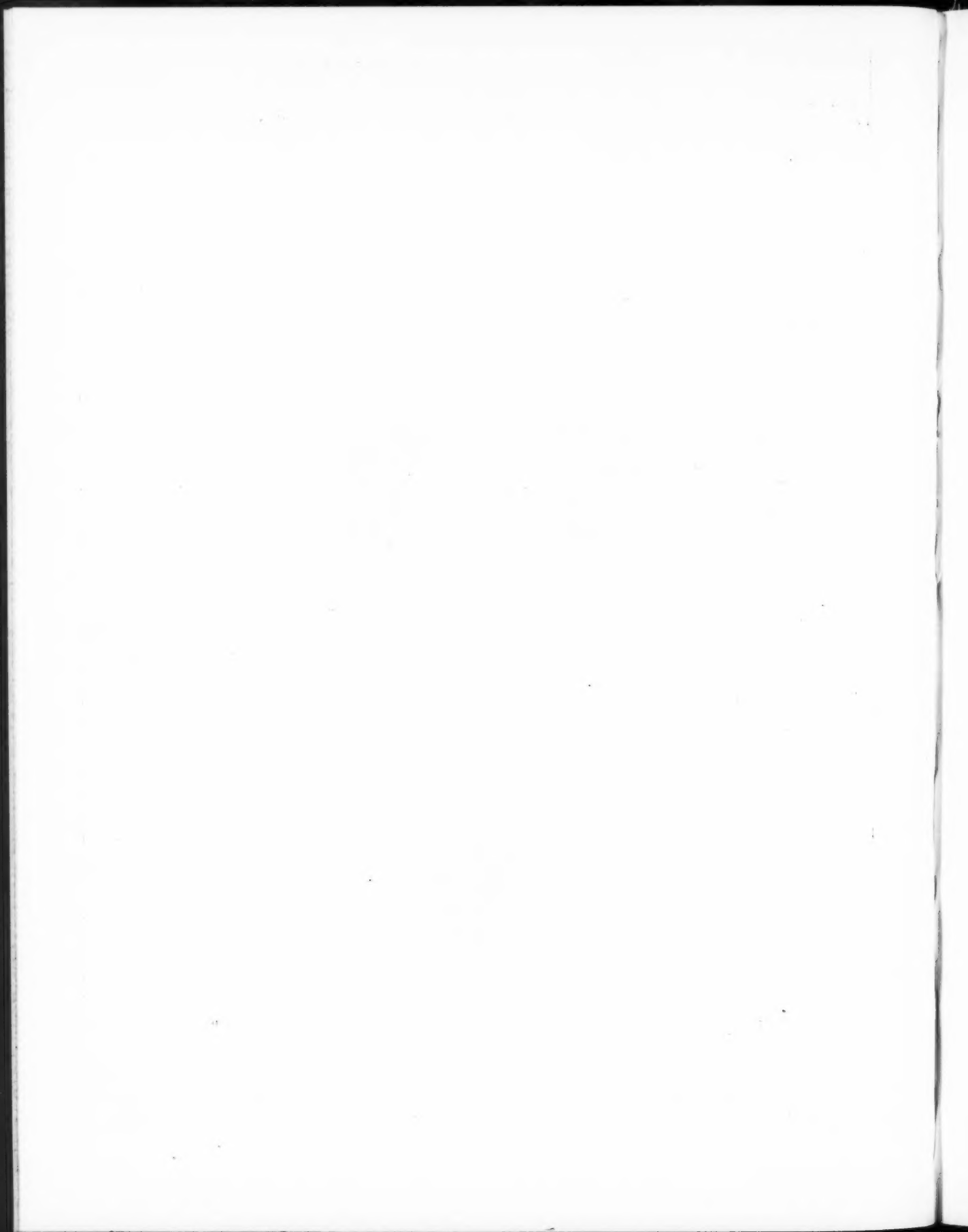
"The old blind King of Bohemia was slain at the battle of Crecy, and Edward, Prince of Wales, adopted his crest and motto, 'Hitchy Koo.'"



THE POINT OF IT.

MR. ASQUITH. "OF COURSE I'M DOING THIS FOR THE HONOUR OF MY COUNTRY; BUT IF I SHOULD CHANCE TO IMPALE A TOBY OR TWO—WELL, I SHALL NOT WASTE TIME IN VAIN REGRETS."

[Javelin practice for the next Olympian Games has already begun in the Park.]



ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

(EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.)

House of Commons, Monday, April 7.

—For some months a war-cloud has lain ominously low over the East of Europe. From its component parts, rare in complexity, full charged with electricity, there would follow on explosion a conflict by the side of which the wars of the past century would seem to be but skirmishes. Avoidance of this appalling calamity is, according to admission frankly made in the Chancelleries of Europe, largely due to the sagacity and confidence - inspiring character of the British Foreign Minister. Without putting himself forward with intent to assume a position of prominence Sir EDWARD GREY's right to presidency, alike at gatherings of the Ambassadors and at conferences of representatives of the Allies, has been instinctively recognised and generously acknowledged.

Rising to-day in crowded House, hushed to state of anxious expectancy, he made characteristically frank statement disclosing current situation. At a moment when, Turkey beaten to her knees, peace seemed assured upon terms fairly distributing the spoil among the victors, Montenegro asked for more and defied the Powers whose carefully worked-out scheme of settlement reserved Scutari for an autonomous Albania. This attitude was significantly answered by a naval demonstration, in which two British ships took part, our Admiral finding himself in command of the International Fleet cruising off the coast of Montenegro.

The agreement between the Powers respecting the frontier of Albania was, Sir EDWARD GREY said, reached after long and laborious diplomatic effort. "Arrival at such agreement was essential to the peace of Europe, and in my opinion it was accomplished only just in time to preserve that peace between the Great Powers."

It might be supposed that this statement, solemnly made by a man who never indulges in gasconade, would have given pause to the little clique below Gangway on Ministerial side who rather fancy themselves as authorities on foreign affairs, whether affecting China or Timbuctoo. On the contrary, MASON of Coventry, BECK of Saffron Walden, MACPHERSON of Ross and

Cromarty, and DON'T KEIR HARDIE of Merthyr Tydvil (and the Universe) rose up in succession expressing dislike and distrust. All very well for the FOREIGN SECRETARY and the Conference of Ambassadors in London to flatter themselves that, having spent their days and nights in earnest endeavour

their counsel, MASON proposed to move adjournment. "In view of the enormous and very delicate interests involved" PREMIER gravely deprecated discussion at present moment. In accordance with high traditions that exclude critical questions of foreign policy from Party polemics, LEADER OF OPPOSITION, amid cheers from his own side, heartily agreed. Demand for leave to move adjournment nevertheless pressed. Challenged to show how far it was supported sixteen Members stood up. As forty is the minimum number necessary for such enterprise as Member for Coventry was bent upon, application refused.

Business done. — Attempt of tail of Ministerialists to wag the dog in connection with crisis in Eastern Europe baffled.

By majority of 141 CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER carried Resolution legalising usage and custom followed by every Government during last sixty years with respect to collection of taxes pending passage of a Budget.

Tuesday. — Useful object-lesson presented in connection with Bill abolishing privilege of Plural Voting. A measure of first-class importance, it might, had it been introduced in ordinary old-fashioned way, have occupied whole sitting.

Minister in charge would have been expected to make prolonged speech. There would have been equally lengthy discourse from Front Opposition Bench. Members above and below Gangway on both sides would have chipped in, and so the night would have worn away to reach the same inevitable conclusion.

Under 'Ten Minutes' Rule it was all over, including division, well within the half-hour. Ten Minutes' Rule so called because Standing Order in question says nothing about ten or other precise number of minutes. It simply directs that when a motion to bring in a Bill be made "the Speaker if he thinks fit may permit a brief explanatory statement from the Member who moves and a Member who opposes the motion." House has agreed that ten minutes is fairly sufficient time for such explanation. Hence the nomenclature of the Rule and the establishment of general belief that a limit of ten minutes is definitively ordered.

This afternoon JACK PEASE (whose case is to some extent analogous to the 'Ten Minutes' Rule, since he is commonly called "Jack" because he was



Sir EDWARD GREY (to Radical critics). "I said, 'Land me your ears.' I said nothing about your mouths."

to settle this intricate matter on a basis of equity all round, they knew something about their business. The four eminent jurists and statesmen knew better.

With intent to let Europe profit by



THE PLURAL VOTER IS CALLED ON TO SURRENDER.

christened JOSEPH ALBERT, with his eye on the clock, compressed admirably lucid statement within space of ten minutes. F. E. SMITH, overstepping the limit by a hundred seconds or so, was pulled up by murmurs from punctilious gentry below Gangway opposite.

For practical purposes Ten Minutes' Rule might with exceedingly few exceptions be applied to introduction of all Bills. Extended debate on First Reading stage is worse than wasted time. It is frequently misleading, since Members are discussing proposals they have not yet had advantage of considering after studying in print their precise terms. Second Reading stage presents full opportunity for such debate.

When it comes we shall probably hear something about F. E. SMITH's objection to the Bill that "it loads the dice against the Opposition as a party." As SARK points out, if the imagery be accepted it follows that through all these years during which the principle of Plural Voting has been operative the dice have been loaded against Liberal candidates at elections.

Business done.—Bill for Abolition of Plural Voting read a first time by 303 against 177. Ministerial majority running up to 126.

Friday.—Questions addressed to Ministers, more especially those put by Irish Members, occasionally throw vivid flash of light upon social life in remote country districts. In form of series of questions addressed to POSTMASTER-GENERAL, SHEEHAN told stirring story of exploits of auxiliary postman JAMES M'SWEENEY, of Carriginimma, County Cork. It reads like a chapter from LOVER's *Handy Andy*. According to SHEEHAN, in addition to commonplace duties pertaining to post office, Mr. M'SWEENEY takes active part in public life of Carriginimma. He is the local parish secretary of a secret sectarian and political order known as the Board of Erin, A.O.H.

Whether these letters are initials familiar to the initiated or merely an explanation was not disclosed.

Meetings of this secret society have, it is asserted, been held in the local post office, whose affairs are administered by Miss M'SWEENEY. Having a day off (it was Sunday, March 23) this terrible though auxiliary postman "organised a political invasion from Maeroom and Ballyvourney upon the Carriginimma Catholic Church." Worse still, he is, it appears, "frequently

guilty of neglect of duty in the delivery of letters by attending funerals of the members of his order during official hours," a practice which certainly must involve a measure of inconvenience in business circles.

The INFANT SAMUEL, not easily taken aback, shielded himself from attack by reading official vindication of JAMES M'SWEENEY's general character. Irish Members not to be put off by this. WILLIAM O'BRIEN, with his instinctive dislike of secret societies (such as the Land League, for example), thundered demand for auxiliary postman's head on a charger delivered by earliest post. INFANT SAMUEL meekly promised he would see what could be done, and storm abated.

Business done.—Colonel SANDYS' National Service (Territorial Forces) Bill talked out.



WM. O'BRIEN ASKS FOR BLOOD.

THE DIAGNOSIS.

[A weekly paper alleges that the boots one wears react on one's mood, producing frivolity, sombreness, and so on.]

Ah me! I did feel queer that day.
Betwixt the blithesome and the tragic
I alternated in a way
Suggestive of some evil magic.
A tear stood in my bright blue eye,
And e'en as down my cheek it trickled
My reckless laughter rent the sky
As though my ribs were roughly tickled.

Long time I pondered o'er the thing,
For, truth to tell, it made me qualmy.
Could it, I wondered, be the Spring?
Was I in love or going balmy?
In vain I sought the trouble's seat
In heart and head, until, despairing,
I cast one look towards my feet—
The shoes were odd that I was wearing.

"OUTSIDE THE ARK. Just Out."
Adapted in "Times Literary Supplement."
Hard luck—a very near thing.

THE MOTOR-BUS HANDICAP.

It was a Saturday afternoon and Bill and I were in sore need of amusement. Hyde Park oratory we had found overrated. Our respective clubs had seemed to consist of nothing but silent bald heads. So at Hyde Park Corner we parted, and I, in accordance with our pre-arranged scheme, stepped on to a bus going along Piccadilly to Liverpool Street. It was not long before I made the acquaintance of the conductor, at that time a man of honest appearance and no doubt unblemished character.

"Conductor," I said, "I have a friend and his name is Bill."

The conductor, though by now he may be silent and reserved, as is the way with those who have regrettable pasts, was at the moment inclined to all the outspoken candour of sweet innocence. He told me that he had many friends and that most of them would answer to the name of Bill.

"But this Bill," said I, "is relevant." (The man's jovial expression sobered down a little. I think he misunderstood me to mean that Bill was a parson.) "He is at this moment being carried as fast as bus can carry him up Park Lane. Arrived at the Marble Arch, he will travel *via* Oxford Street to Liverpool Street. Arrived there, he will return with all speed, but *via* Piccadilly, to Hyde Park Corner. I, on the other hand, am scheduled to return to that im-

portant spot *via* Oxford Street and Park Lane. In other words, it is a circular route and we are travelling it in opposite directions. For private reasons, including a liquidated sum of money, it is urgent that I should be back at Hyde Park Corner first."

Leaning over the side, he shouted a few cryptic words to the man at the wheel. Clearly these two had the racing instinct and a pride in their bus. *Nec*, as my old friend VIRGIL used to say, *mora*.

* * * * *
The Strand is slow-going on a Saturday afternoon, but I had every hope that we should make up time through the deserted City. Never did I loathe two people so much and on so short an acquaintance as I did the two British matrons who stood in the middle of Fleet Street and barred our progress with waving umbrellas. It was possible but, we decided, imprudent to pass through them, so we delayed our rush and they delayed it more. When, after an age, we had got them



Dear Old Gentleman (to Jones, who is removing his rejected works from the Royal Academy). "CAN YOU TELL ME WHO HAS PAINTED THE PICTURE THIS YEAR?"

on board, they sat just in front of me, less by design than by reason of the suddenness of our start, and their subsequent conversation, which I could not help hearing, made me sweat with dismay. It disclosed an awful state of affairs. So I hastened down-stairs to interview the conductor before he should interview them.

"My friend," I whispered to him, "this bus is going to Piccadilly."

He demurred.

"Yes," said I, "it is—eventually. They will ask you upstairs, 'Is this bus going to Piccadilly?' You will preserve an impassive face and say, 'Yes.' True, it is not going by the most direct route; but there are two routes from Fleet Street to Piccadilly, and one of them is *via* Ludgate Hill, St. Paul's, the Mansion House, Liverpool Street, the Mansion House, St. Paul's, Ludgate Hill and Fleet Street again. What are time and direct routes and money to British matrons? Can we, having wasted many moments getting them on, be expected to waste more getting them off; ay, and, for all we know, getting them on to another bus?"

I took my seat inside while the conductor went up-stairs and told his lie.

* * * * *

I was back at the starting and winning post, Hyde Park Corner, just in time to see Bill emerge from a taxi-cab.

"I attribute my downfall," said he, on being confronted, "to two old women."

I asked for particulars. Their descriptions seemed familiar.

"When I got on to my return bus at Liverpool Street," he continued, "and saw the old things sitting on top, I should have known that they put no value on their own time and would not hesitate to waste mine. But it was such a nice-looking bus and the genial conductor wore such an unscrupulous look."

I asked for further particulars, and this time the descriptions left no room for doubt.

"At Piccadilly, after two previous attempts, in which they changed their minds when they had stopped the bus, they got off."

"As they of all people were entitled to do," I murmured.

"But not where everybody else gets off. No, they must have a stop to themselves. Worse, they must keep us all waiting while they had a long, long chat with the conductor."

"Perhaps," I suggested, "they had cause to remonstrate with him?"

"Not they. For when, being able to tolerate the delay no longer, I left the bus, they were thanking him in the most emphatic and profuse terms for their pleasant ride. Indeed," he added, as he handed over the amount of our bet, "the last I saw of them they were tipping the fellow."

I pocketed the wager. "In my opinion," said I, "it has been from first to last a most disreputable affair, from which no one, save the ladies, emerges without shame."

Bill's only regret, on being enlightened, was the thought that, if he had not been detected over the taxi-cab scandal, he would probably have confessed voluntarily.

"The annual match between the Oxford and Cambridge teams last week at Hoylake resulted in a tee."—*Dublin Evening News*.

It generally ends on a green.

NEIGHBOURS.

It is not, generally speaking, amusing—even for a musical critic—to be in bed for a week in a Swiss hotel in winter. Yet I was well entertained by my friendly intercourse with Mr. Arthur W. Brooks, next door. His portmanteau was sent to my room by mistake on the evening of my arrival. That is how I discovered his name, but I never wittingly beheld his features. Still our rooms were only separated by a locked door, and I came to know a good deal about Arthur W. Brooks.

His principal characteristics appear to be a catholic taste in music and an inveterate habit of whistling while he is dressing for dinner. That is how we got on terms almost of intimacy with one another. It was on the Tuesday evening that I first became aware of a beautiful rendering of CHOPIN'S "Funeral March" creeping solemnly through the key-hole. This was followed, after a suitable interval, by a brief and brilliant selection from *Carmen*. I felt that applause in any form would be out of place, and yet I wished to show my appreciation in the most delicate manner possible. I am no mean whistler myself. I have even, in my day, whistled to my own accompaniment at a Band of Hope concert. So I replied tentatively, unobtrusively, with the opening bars of the "Freischütz Overture." I had not advanced very far when the gong sounded and he went down. I thought he might have waited. On the Wednesday I began to keep a record in the form of a diary, which follows:—

Wednesday night.—Brooks came up early, having, perhaps, got wet through tobogganing. We plunged at once into BEETHOVEN'S Symphonies. He gave a really fine synopsis of the principal themes of the "Eroica." I replied with the slow movement of the Fourth. I thought I should have him there, as it is not so generally known, but to my extreme pleasure he went on to the Scherzo with the utmost promptitude. We then took the "C Minor," dividing the movements between us, Brooks being a little shaky on the last. The gong found us on the point of attacking the "Pastoral."

Thursday night.—More BEETHOVEN. Brooks is quite sound on BEETHOVEN, though I did not at all care for his reading of the slow movement of the Seventh Symphony. It was abominably dragged. I must try to put him right about that.

Friday evening.—I have been wondering all day as to what is his attitude on STRAUSS, and as soon as he appeared

I opened upon him with a selection from the duet from "Elektra." (Pretty difficult, of course, but I had been practising.) I do not think he recognised it at first. The silence seemed a little strained. But as I worked up to my climax he began very suddenly to knock things about all over the room. There was such a row of rattling crockery and the violent splashing of water that at last I found it impossible to proceed. An awkward pause followed, when he had managed to silence me. I thought I would try him once more. But before the end of the second bar I heard the door bang and steps in the passage. I hope I have not offended him. I must keep off STRAUSS.

Saturday.—Brooks was quite himself again to-day. He actually opened in the morning, as he was dressing, with a most spirited rendering of one of SCHUMANN'S "Novellettes." Afterwards we dipped into TSCHAIKOWSKI, BERLIOZ and MACDOWELL. In the evening we had a delightful session devoted exclusively to motives from "Parsifal" and the "Ring." I perceive he is a Bayreuther.

Sunday.—A very awkward thing has happened, resulting almost in a breach between us. I find to my horror that Brooks is an admirer of MENDELSSOHN. It has been a great shock to me. He began without any warning on the first movement of the "Italian Symphony." I nearly leapt out of bed. I coughed, I rocked to and fro, at last I hammered on the door. But the persecution went on. In every moment of silence he began again. He tried the "Songs Without Words," and I had to smash the wash-basin before breakfast brought me relief. The trouble about Brooks is that he can't take a hint.

Monday.—Brooks is evidently ashamed of himself. He has returned to BEETHOVEN, as being quite uncontroversial ground, and we had a long wrangle over that slow movement. I fear I failed to convince him. He always listened patiently when I gave him the proper tempo, but as soon as I stopped to take breath he replied by repeating the passage at his own pace. I cannot but regret that we should have parted thus at variance.

Tuesday.—I suppose he went with the early train before I was up. Anyhow, after having been out of my room in the afternoon I began this evening quite hopefully with a BRAHMS Sonata. I waited long for a reply, and then suddenly there fell upon my outraged ears a raucous strain which I believe to be a popular song of the day, entitled, "We All Go the Same Way Home." I cannot stay on with Brooks's successor. I wonder if the doctor would let me travel to-morrow?

Should these words ever meet the eye of Brooks, I should like him to know that I am quite prepared to waive our differences on STRAUSS and MENDELSSOHN, but he is wrong about the slow movement of the Seventh. He ought to admit that.

THE HOLE STORY.

"SYLVIA," I called, "do you know the story of the two holes in the ground?" Of course, it is a very old story, but Sylvia is a new audience.

"No. Do tell me, please."

"Well, well."

Sylvia climbed up on my knee and settled down comfortably. "Now you can tell it me," she said.

"But I've told it. It's, Well, well. Two holes in the ground."

"Yes?"

"You know what a well is, Sylvia? It's a hole."

"I had a weeny wony hole in my sock yesterday."

"Yes, but this is a hole in the ground, just about big enough to put a pail in. And there's water at the bottom, and when you put the pail down it comes up full of water. You know. Like Jack and Jill. That's a well."

"Yes. And you're going to tell me a story about it?"

"It's about two holes in the ground, and the story is, Well, well. You see, a well is a hole in the ground, and Well, well is two holes in the ground. It's a sort of joke."

"Yes," said Sylvia.

"Now you tell it to me."

"Tell you a story?"

"Yes, tell me a story about two holes in the ground."

"I don't think I know one."

And there I had to leave it.

A day or two later I heard her talking to her brother.

"Do you know the story about the two holes in the ground?"

"No."

"Well, well, well."

"Mr. Hake is the second Brighton resident to attain the age of one hundred and two within a few years."—*Morning Post*.

While heartily congratulating Mr. HAKE we opine that he must have taken longer than that about it.

Our Spring Complexions.

A contemporary on a recent Suffragette outbreak:—

"When arrested Brady was violet."

From a City menu:—

"Boiled Ostendo Rabbi, Pickled Pork—1s. 0d." So they meet at last.



Hunt Servant (new to the country). "EVER SEEN 'OSSSES IN THERE BEFORE?"
 Hunt Servant. "'OW DID THEY GET OUT?"

Native. "THAT I 'AVE, PLENT OF 'UN."
 Native. "THEY BE MAINLY THURE YET."

MUSICAL NOTES.

THE interest excited by the appearance of the "Red Caruso" at the Alhambra has naturally stimulated the competitive instinct, and it is pleasant to think that lovers of *coloratura* will be gratified during the coming season by a number of interesting *débuts*. In fact, as Sir HENRY WOOD wittily remarked the other day, the new fashion threatens to put an entirely different complexion on the musical situation.

The proprietors of the Bolosseum have been so fortunate as to engage the famous Albanian singer, Ilka Sandansky, who is perhaps best known under the engaging sobriquet of the "Pink Patti," Mlle. Sandansky being an Albino as well as an Albanian, and, what is more, the only Albino who is also famous as a singer. Her peculiar physique confers peculiar advantages on her, as she recently admitted in an interview with a representative of *Le Ménestrel*. "No one knows my age, and no one ever will. I looked exactly

as old as I am now when I was sixteen, and I shall look no older if I live to be ninety." Mlle. Sandansky's voice is a rich soprano of a peculiarly glutinous timbre, recalling the delicious Carlsbad plums of thirty years ago; and she is equally good in the rôles of *Rosina* and *Juliet*. The great ambition of her life is to play *Briinnhilde* at Bayreuth, but unfortunately Madame WAGNER has a strong prejudice against Albinos.

Miss Topsy Umslopogaas, the renowned Nubian contralto, is known throughout Central Africa as the "Black Butt," although in stature she falls short by several inches of the famous English singer. Her voice is a sumptuous and sonorous organ of encyclopædic volume and velvety quality, and her recitals at Addis-Abeba were always attended by the Emperor MENELIK until his health failed. The announcement that she has been engaged to appear at Covent Garden in the part of *Amneris* arouses the most lively anticipations, and Sir H. RIDER HAGGARD has taken a box for her *début*.

Miss Umslopogaas, we may add, has a charming literary gift and has written a delightful autobiographical poem which begins:—

"They call me the Black Butt,
 I play on the sackbut,
 The cymbals, the harp and the drum."

During his recent tour in New Guinea Mr. Bamberger captured several pygmies and brought one back with him to London. The diminutive savage has developed an extraordinary talent for the piano and will shortly make his appearance at the Æolian Hall under the *nom de guerre* of the "Pocket Paderewski." The P. P. is of a beautiful bronze tint with a magnificent head of hair. We understand that M. SCRIBINE, the redoubtable Russian composer, has written a wonderful fantasia for the new performer, which he has entitled "Fantasia Fuzziwuzzia, or *Le dernier Scri*." Additional interest is lent to the event by the fact that Sir Pompey Boldero, Mr. Bamberger's father-in-law, has kindly consented to turn over the pages for his son-in-law's gifted pupil.

PONSONBY.

OTHER people walk out of the palatial tube exit at Holland Park with an easy carriage and a fear-nobody air. But with me it is different. I glance furtively to left and right, pull my hat down over my eyes, and slink hurriedly into the street like a man who is wanted by Scotland Yard. This is not because I have committed any crime, but because two or three hundred yards away from the station lives Ponsonby. I hate, I fear Ponsonby.

When I went to dine with him a few weeks ago, I had not seen him since we were at school together; but even in those days the madness was growing up within him, so that I anticipated the worst. I remembered that he used to collect photographs of engines. I did not suspect, however, how far things had gone with him subsequently.

He came out into the hall to meet me, and almost before I could take off my overcoat, "Hullo!" he said, "how did you get here?"

It was necessary to be calm.

"Ponsonby," I replied, "we were boys together. Is it not wonderful to reflect that even now, as we speak, the map of Europe, which in childhood's days we used to trace illegally by holding it up to the same window-pane, is undergoing alteration. Servia, I remember well, a delicate mauve. And Bulgaria, Bulgaria——"

"Did you come by Tube?" said Ponsonby, interrupting me rather rudely.

"My wife," I said loftily, "happened to be using the aeroplane this evening. She is attending a Women's Suffrage meeting."

"The Tube!" shrieked Ponsonby madly, "the Tube! Just fancy, he came by Tube! Come and look here."

He pulled me roughly into his study, and, oblivious of the fact that the soup was already growing tepid on the dining-room table, hunted out a Bradshaw, an A. B. C., and a chart of the Underground Railways of London. It looked like a vertical section of the human body. In a heated oration lasting some twenty minutes, he proved to me conclusively that the cheapest and quickest way to get to his house from Hampstead Heath (that is the mountain fastness where I reside) was to take the North London Railway to a little village in the provinces called Willesden Junction, and change there for Uxbridge Road.

I said "Yes," meekly, and we had a pleasant little dinner together, during which the conversation turned, so far as I remember, on a recent alteration in the time-table of the South-Eastern

and Chatham Line between Gravesend and Victoria. After dinner we discussed the improved Saturday service to Ponder's End, and in a rather lyrical flight Ponsonby sketched the possibility at no very distant date of the construction of a new bay at Waterloo. (If it ever happens, Ponsonby will be the first, I feel sure, who ever bursts into that silent bay.)

When I got up at last to go, "Wait a minute," he said, "I'm coming with you; I've got a letter to post."

"Can't I do it for you?" I said hopefully. But Ponsonby was obdurate. He took me firmly by the shoulder and marched me, shrinking and reluctant, to Uxbridge Road Station. I went in. I walked to the booking-office. I felt like a French aristocrat in the time of the Terror. The little hutch was my guillotine. Then a light dawned.

"Can you change half-a-sovereign?" I said to the clerk, and looked round swiftly over my shoulder. Ponsonby was gone.

I gathered up my silver, turned up the collar of my overcoat, and made a bold, successful sprint for Holland Park.

The fact is, I like the Tube. It is warm, for one thing, and there are little notices and arrows stuck up everywhere, so that a cow could hardly go wrong. I like the lift. I like the comfortable feeling of my warm familiar strap. I like the smell. I like the motion. I like looking at the people's spats. But now, whenever I go to Holland Park (and unfortunately, as it happens, I have to go there pretty often), I feel like a suspected criminal. I have a dreadful feeling that Ponsonby may be lurking somewhere near, spying upon me. Uxbridge Road hangs round my neck like an albatross.

And yet, after all, why shouldn't I use the Tube if I want to? England is a free country. And it is not as if Ponsonby had shares in the North London Railway. No. It is just Bradshaw mania. And of all forms of lunacy Bradshaw mania is the worst. For one thing, there is no telling when it may become dangerous. I rather suspect Ponsonby of having a ticket-punch concealed about his person, and it is principally to warn the public that I have written this truthful narrative. If any reader of it should chance to fall into conversation with a stranger, a dark sinister man with a wild gleam in his eye, who suggests that the proper way to get from Putney to the Bank is to get on to the Lancashire and Yorkshire *via* Sheffield, and change at Blisworth Junction for Hartlepool and the Severn Tunnel, let him have a care. For that will be Ponsonby.

THE SENIOR MISTRESS OF BLYTH.

[*"BLYTH SECONDARY SCHOOL.*—The Governors of the above School invite applications for the post of Senior Mistress. Candidates must be Graduates in Honours of a British University and must be well qualified in Mathematics, Latin and English. Ability to teach Art will be a recommendation."
Advt. in "The Spectator."]

It is told of the painter DA VINCI,
Being once unemployed for a span,
At the menace of poverty's pinch he
Sought work at the Court of Milan.
Having shown himself willing and able
To perform on the curious lyre,
He presented the Duke with a table
Of the talents he proffered for hire.

"I can raze you a fortress," it ran on,
"Quell castles, drain ditches and moats,
Make shapely and competent cannon,
Build aqueducts, bridges and boats;
In peace I can mould for your courts a
Few models in marble or clay
And paint the illustrious SFRONZA
With anyone living to-day."

LEONARDO is dead, they asseverate,
He has left no successor behind,
For the days of the specialist never rate
At its value the versatile mind.

Is Lord BROUGHAM, then, our latest
example?

No, Time, the old churl with his
scythe,
Shall spare us a notable sample
In the Senior Mistress of Blyth.

She shall guide Standard Three through
Progressions,
Study Statics and Surds with the
Fourth,

She shall dwell on DE QUINCY'S *Confessions*,

DONNE, CAEDMON, and CHRISTOPHER
NORTH;

And no class-room shall boast of a
quicker row

When her classical pupils rehearse
Their prose, which is modelled on
CICERO,

And their more than HORATIAN verse.

She shall lead them to love CIMABUE,
To distinguish with scholarship ripe
"Twixt the texture of CLAUSEN and
CLOUET

And the values of COLLIER and CUYP.

Nay, all Blyth shall reflect her ability
As its brushes acquire by her aid
South Kensington's pretty facility

Or the terrible strength of the Slade.

Yes, her duties are diverse, and this 'll

Suggest to each candidate why
They should read LEONARDO'S epistle

Before they sit down to apply;

For his style is itself a credential,

Though truly he has not a tithe
Of the qualifications essential

To the Senior Mistress of Blyth.



THE DEMAND FOR BRITISH WAITERS.

THE RECENT RESTAURANT STRIKES MAY BE THE MEANS OF INDUCING SEVERAL MID-VICTORIAN WAITERS TO EMERGE FROM THEIR RETIREMENT.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

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

MR. EDWIN PUGH'S *Punch and Judy* (CHAPMAN AND HALL) is capital fun, and I have enjoyed reading it very much. But I did not think I was going to. At first, plunged into that grim and moving episode of *Punch's* attempted murder of the *Coss* baby for its own good, I could only believe that I had got (if you will forgive me) into the wrong PUGH. But it was all right really. After that untoward beginning the author's buoyant optimism asserted itself triumphantly, and the characters were the same brave and humorous Londoners whom the author has so long taught us to expect from him. Even the unwanted baby died naturally, and enabled its father to get drunk on the insurance money. He, I may say, is one of the characters that do not appear, but are only spoken of. Those whom you meet personally are, with very few exceptions, sufficiently amiable. *Punch* himself, the Soho gutter-snipe, with his pale face and the big nose that earned him his name, is jolly enough to be worthy of it. His match-making, on the simple Shakspearean formula of false-report, is pure joy. All the action of the tale takes place in Soho; and those who know Mr. PUGH's art will not need to be told how well he has caught the lively spirit of the place, the clatter and scent of the little restaurants, the interminable traffic of the narrow streets, the polyglot babel of the inhabitants. If I have a word of complaint, it is that the story produces, perhaps unavoidably, an effect of episodes rather than a concerted whole; episodes humorous or tragic, the anarchists, the

affair of the pistol and the Prime Minister, and others—all excellently well told, but a trifle detached. For this reason, the species of general rally, in which all the characters come on in the last chapter, and say their little tags preparatory to living happily ever after, struck me as artificial. But who cares? The interest and jollity of the book are what matter, and they are genuine enough.

The Determined Twins (HUTCHINSON) are simply Mr. JEPSON doing on paper what he would love to do, but daren't, in his own person on the heights of Notting Hill. *Lady Noggs* in her day pulled chairs from beneath elderly gentlemen, made apple-pies in the beds of unsuitable suitors, led trembling Prime Ministers into the nastiest of quagmires; so now do *Violet* and *Hyacinth Dangerfield*. "I've called myself *Lady Noggs* long enough," says Mr. JEPSON; "I am now in that capacity upon the boards of a London theatre; watch me therefore as the *Determined Twins*." Watching him, then, I am bound to confess that his antics have not quite the freshness of humour that once was theirs. My sympathy is, in spite of myself, on the side of *Captain Baster* whose brushes were in his bed and whose body was in the mud. Had *Lady Noggs* invented the *Cat's Home* and trailed a piece of cloth with valerian upon it all about the country roads, then I am sure that it would have amused me; but now I cannot resist the feeling that the *Dangerfields* have been forestalled, or perhaps, more accurately, that I have seen Mr. JEPSON laughing at his *Cat's Home* already somewhere else. Then the incident of the German princess and her rescue by the twins needs a

delicacy of touch that is exactly Mr. KENNETH GRAHAME'S but is not at all Mr. JEPSON'S. Whilst Mr. JEPSON is amused by the snoring of stout ladies and the apoplexies of stout gentlemen the pathos of the little princess slips timidly away. In short, although I must confess that *The Determined Twins* have, on occasion, made me laugh, they have not made me laugh very often—and on their next appearance I do not think that I shall laugh at all.

The author of *The Surgeon's Log*, writing of what he knows in *The Night-Nurse* (CHAPMAN AND HALL) of the routine, the excursions and alarms, the heroisms and the littlenesses of hospital service, has made an exceptionally interesting story. It is true that he provides no sufficient reason for the estrangement of *Dermot Fitzgerald*, senior house surgeon, and *Nora Townsend*, nurse; but in this fashion of artificially corrugating the courses of true love our author is following quite a number of more experienced craftsmen. One has, I suppose, to accept this kind of thing under protest as a part of the game; but nothing could well be better than the way he manages to convey the hospital atmosphere, the splendid efficiency and precision of the work, the queer undercurrents of impulse and emotion controlled by quasi-monastic discipline, or sometimes not controlled, with results that make the warp and woof of his narrative. The hero's hospital is in Dublin City, and he also takes a spell of fever duty in a tiny country town. The author, whom one assumes to be an Irishman, has well observed and cleverly presented the charm and gaiety, the generosity and jolly casualness of his countrymen. It is the work of a man who can see the depths and significance of the simple life around him and can write a love story with imagination and without too cloying a sentimentality.

The house of METHUEN would seem to be establishing a corner in Irish fiction. The latest example is *Unconventional Molly*, by JOSEPH ADAMS, which the publishers are good enough to tell me on the wrapper is a romance "where love and jealousy, tragedy and comedy are brought into play." This is such a friendly lead that I am deeply sorry to be unable to follow it; but the fact remains that I myself found the story part of the book more than a little dull. The young hero, who rents a West of Ireland shoot, captivates the peasants, falls in love with the daughter of a neighbouring squire, and finally reveals himself as the missing heir to the local landowner, is never more than a lay figure in the foreground of Mr. JOSEPH ADAMS' sketches of Irish scenery. Let it be said at once, however, that these are excellent. And there are some *genre* studies of peasant life, fairs and evictions, legends and merry-makings, that could hardly be bettered. It is only where the author seems to have considered himself under the irksome necessity of producing romance that his spirit failed him; and here it

must be confessed that his hand is heavy indeed. "The distinguished surgeon left for the Irish metropolis" is his too typical phrase for sending a specialist to Dublin. You will have difficulty in believing that this and similar pedantries are by the writer of the wholly delightful chapter in which the customers of *Mary Hannagher* meet in her little shop for the settlement of a betrothal.

I am a stern, rough, rugged man, and I can bear most of the minor ills of life without wincing; but there is one thing that cuts me to the quick, and that is a split infinitive. Miss UNA SILBERRAD, on the other hand, appears to love these mangled horrors. *Keren of Lowbole* (CONSTABLE), her latest book, is congested with the severed bodies of what might have been lively young infinitives full of health and vigour. *Sir James Belton*, for instance, puts his pleasure first "and all else so far after as to seldom have strength left to attend to it," while *Betsy Shipp* actually "wiped her eyes to so soon lose the second daughter." Yet none of these militant outrages



STUDIES IN CRIMINOLOGY.

AN ATTEMPT ON THE CROWN JEWELS—DRAWING OFF THE GUARD.

on the plate-glass windows of English grammar could spoil *Keren of Lowbole* for me. It is a leisurely book, which depends for its interest less on its story than on its atmosphere and its subsidiary characters. Indeed, I would far rather attempt a *précis* of a musical comedy than try to set down in a few words the actual plot of *Keren's* adventures. She wanders through the pages, an attractive young person with uncanny eyes and a curious intimacy with the wild things of the forest, sometimes accompanied by a gentleman tramp named *Zachary*, and sometimes by *Tobiah*, a Dissenter. Somewhere towards the end you will find the Last Will which restored *Zachary* to the fortune of which his wicked step-mother had deprived him; and all through the book you will chuckle, as I did, over the excellent humour of *Tobiah*. Add to these things that sympathetic knowledge of human nature which marks all Miss SILBERRAD'S work, and you have an extremely readable historical novel.

Divers Colours (CHAPMAN AND HALL)—a collection of short stories and poems by MAUD G. MEUGENS—is based on the idea that life is a colour-scheme blended of many tones, but that each separate incident and abstraction has a colour of its own. Thus, according to Miss MEUGENS, grey stands for tears and renunciation, rose colour for happiness, yellow for fame, crimson for hate, and green for repose and healing. Personally, I think much nonsense is talked by people who say, for instance, that Wednesday is brown and the number eight pink, and so on. But, except that I had not previously thought of dead white as properly suggestive of cruelty, I find that my ideas of the meanings of colours agree very closely with those of Miss MEUGENS. And I like her stories. For all of them, especially those labelled white, yellow, and rose, are imagined with charm and told with much delicacy and literary feeling.