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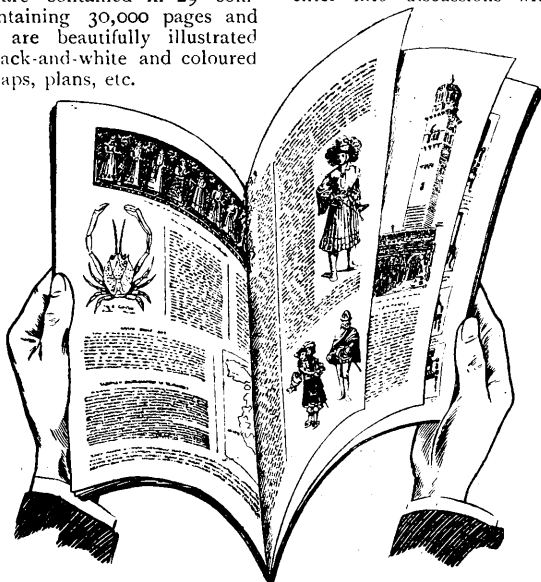
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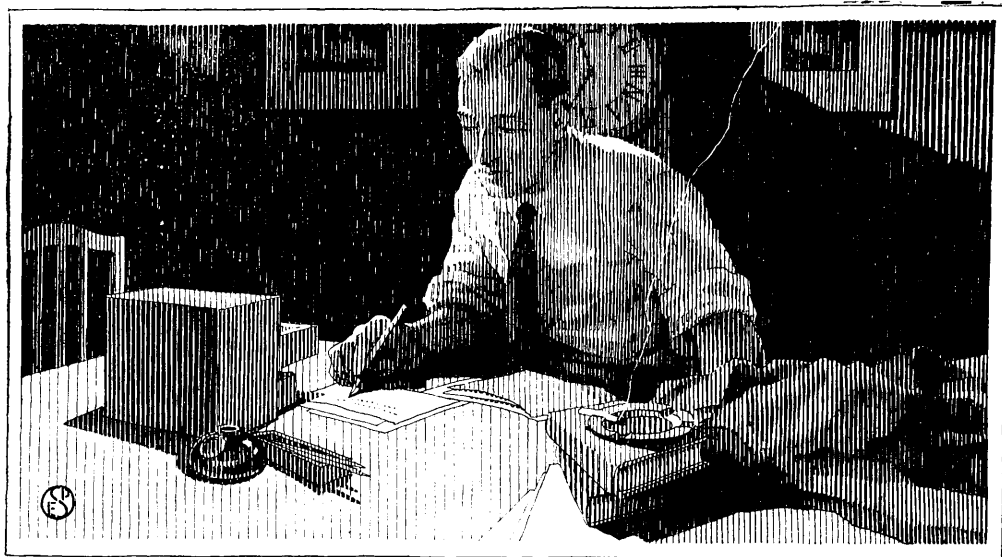
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(a) A Commissioned Officer in H.M. Army. I had no business experience; (b) Professional Public Accountant; (c) Estimate £400 p.a. increase.
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(a) Junior Clerk to Chartered Accountant; (b) Chartered Accountant; (c) 800% increase.
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The originals of these Questionnaires have been examined by David Paterson, Chartered Accountant, 135, Wellington Street, Glasgow, who certifies that they are genuine.

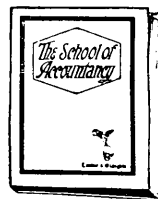
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Millgate Buildings, Long Millgate,

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62, Dale Street - LIVERPOOL
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Sir Ernest Shackleton wrote:

April 27th, 1921.
"Messrs. The Bavis Company,
Basingstoke."

Replying to your enquiry, I am pleased to state the Bavis Uppers and 'Dri-ped' Soles gave particular satisfaction. There was no complaint at any time. Should these findings, after such severe conditions, be of any service to you, you are quite at liberty to use them in any way you may desire.

E. H. SHACKLETON."



Our Quest ended last Friday

at 2.15 p.m.—when we all trooped into the boot-shop and Dad said, "We all want fitting up with 'Dri-ped' Soled Footwear." "Like Shackleton's," emphasized Billy.

Mother said we should have 'Dri-ped' because she had read about its double-wear, and counted the saving it would mean on the footwear bills.

When Dad read Sir Ernest Shackleton's letter in the 'Dri-ped' advertisement, the question was settled—there was no peace in the house until he promised we should all have 'Dri-ped' Soled Footwear.

We found our bootman stocked just the sizes we wanted with 'Dri-ped' Soles. He showed us the 'Dri-ped' purple diamond stamped every few inches on each sole, and said, "That's to show it's genuine 'Dri-ped' and guaranteed to wear twice as long."

So now mother says "Our quest for the best footwear is ended"—and we're all as proud as can be.

Your footwear dealer stocks 'Dri-ped' Soled Footwear in all styles and sizes for men, women and children. It is guaranteed double-wearing, guaranteed absolutely water-proof, the best and most economical footwear you can obtain.

NOTE.—Your repairer can re-sole the shoes you are now wearing with double-wear 'DRI-PED'—the super-leather for soles.

CAUTION:

All 'DRI-PED' Soled Footwear—as recommended by Sir Ernest Shackleton—bears the word 'DRI-PED' in the famous 'DRI-PED' purple diamond, stamped every few inches on each sole. Look for the diamonds when you buy—they are there for your protection.

Firmly refuse chrome (green) leather and other substitutes offered as "just as good." Genuine 'DRI-PED' is the world's best sole leather—guaranteed to give double wear.



DRI-PED

The Super-Leather for Soles

Guaranteed Double-wear **FOOTWEAR**

In case of difficulty write to DRI-PED, LTD., BOLTON, LANCS.

A different breakfast

STIR his breakfast appetite with a new delicacy to-morrow—try him with “Tyne Brand” Herrings! There’s something *very* inviting about these fine, plump fish—full of flavour, tender as chicken.

Only the very *best* fish are selected for “Tyne Brand,” cleaned and packed into spotless tins with a toothsome tomato sauce. Then the lids are sealed on and the “Tyne Brand” cooking process preserves all the concentrated goodness and flavour: makes even the bones soft—eatable—nutritious.

“Tyne Brand” Herrings are equally delicious, hot or cold. Try them to-morrow—you will have discovered a different breakfast!

IN OVAL TINS at GOOD GROCERS.

1-lb. net . . 1/3½ ½-lb. net . . 9d.
Standard size. Trial size.

IF your Grocer does not yet stock “Tyne Brand” send his name and address to TYNE BRAND PRODUCTS (Dept. 1.21), 329, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

Paste this in your Recipe Book.

ONCE you realise what a versatile food you have in “Tyne Brand” Herrings, you won’t stop at serving them straight-from-the-tin. You’ll start at that point.

For remember this: “Tyne Brand” Herrings lend themselves to numberless appetising combinations, all economical—and all easy to prepare.

Two such recipes are printed here. Others are in a little green booklet which will be given free to you whenever you buy “Tyne Brand.”

“Tyne Brand” Herrings a la Milanaise.

Ingredients.—1 lb. Tin “Tyne Brand” Herrings, ½ lb. macaroni or spaghetti, 2 ozs. butter or margarine, 2 ozs. grated or thinly sliced cheese.

Sufficient for 4 persons; cost 2/-.

METHOD.—Thoroughly heat an unopened tin of “Tyne Brand” Herrings. Boil the macaroni in salt water, drain well and add butter, stirring gently over fire. Open the tin and separate the sauce from herrings, placing latter on hot dish. Keep sauce hot, add to macaroni and cheese at the last moment, and pour over the herrings. Rice may be used instead of macaroni. Serve hot.

“Tyne Brand” Herring Grenades.

Ingredients.—6-8 medium sized potatoes, 1 lb. tin of “Tyne Brand,” a little butter, salt, and pepper.

METHOD.—Bake the potatoes in their skins. When brown take them side up and cut off a piece to make them boat shape. Remove the inside, leaving enough to line the skins well. Open a tin of “Tyne Brand” Herrings and turn out the contents. Separate the sauce from the herrings, cutting the latter with a sharp knife into pieces which will easily go into the empty skins. Mix the rest of the potato pulp with butter, salt, and pepper, and place in skins. Bake the grenades so formed in a very hot oven for a few minutes, and serve hot.

Try “Tyne Brand” at O-U-R Risk.

Buy a Tin—take it home—open it—eat a fish! If you do not find “TYNE BRAND” really delicious, really tender, really appetising—BETTER in every way than any other Herrings in Tomato Sauce—return the Tin to your Grocer and he will refund your money in full.

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Herrings in Tomato Sauce

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Not connected
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In Tapestry to customers' selection. Patterns on application.

EASY PAYMENTS

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Settee and
Two Easy Chairs

£3 down and
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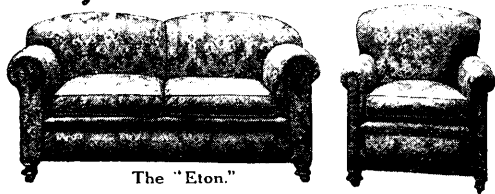
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THE "ETON" £42 : 10 : 0

Carriage paid to railway station
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If not approved of can be returned
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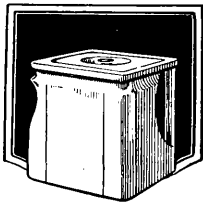
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Pounds will be saved in Furnishing by applying for our Complete Furnishing Guide.

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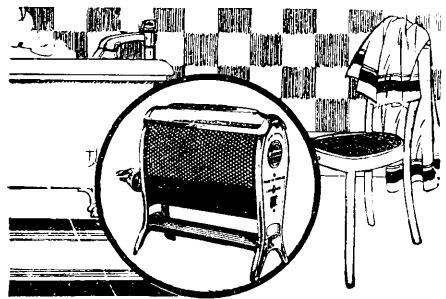
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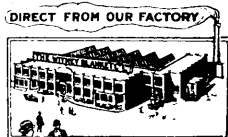
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THE World's Best and Warmest Blankets at Bargain Prices. Bargain hunters have here a great and wonderful chance to get their homes stocked with genuine Witney Blankets. Buy all you want, buy more than you want while the Sale Offer from the New Factory is prevailing. **Unprecedented Chance for Genuine Witney Blanket Bargains.** THE WITNEY BLANKET CO., Ltd., have now greater facilities for dealing with their world-wide "Direct from Witney" scheme of Selling Witney Blankets—the World's Best—on the System of "Seeing Before Buying," which has been so popular for many years.



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This is a splendid WINTER SALE OFFER. WITNEY has been FAMOUS for BLANKETS for CENTURIES, and for upwards of half a century THE WITNEY BLANKET CO., Ltd., have been sending their Blankets to all parts of the world on the system of "Perfect Satisfaction or Money Back in Full." Take advantage now of this splendid offer—viz., **Genuine Witney Blankets Direct from the Factory at Bargain Prices.**

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This is "Everybody's Best Way" to Buy Blankets.

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WITNEY BLANKETS ARE PROTECTED BY LAW. No Blankets made elsewhere can be called Witney Blankets. The Witney Blanket Co., Ltd., deal only direct with the public. Therefore your orders should be sent to The Witney Blanket Co., Ltd., direct, who have no agents. THE WITNEY BLANKET CO., Ltd., Witney, Oxfordshire, allow you to view, free of all cost, or obligation, samples (Dainty Miniature Blankets) of the actual articles.

Thousands of Bundles of Dainty Miniature Blanket Samples ready for Distribution.

Fill in the Coupon below. Direct from Witney will come a parcel of Dainty Miniature Blankets as samples of the actual articles, revealing to you in your own home the quality, variety, and value of the Witney goods.

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TO THE WITNEY BLANKET CO., Ltd.,

Manufacturers, WITNEY, Oxfordshire.

Please send me Post Free Miniature Blankets as patterns of Blankets direct from Factory (which I will return within FOUR DAYS).

NAME

ADDRESS

STRAND MAG., Feb.

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Saxone Shoes by POST



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Style 1134. In Box Calf
119 sizes & half sizes.

Here is an opportunity for those who have no Saxone store near to purchase this fine shoe. The Saxone service of perfect fit, reliability and comfort is brought to your home. Your order by post will receive the same attention as if you walked into a Saxone store.

ORDER NOW.

The shoe illustrated is a marvellous example of Saxone value. Made the handsewn way, with a welted sole, it is as pliable as it is strong. When ordering send outline of foot and size. Carriage paid anywhere British Isles.

Write for illustrated Folder.

SAXONE

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SAXONE SHOE CO. LTD. (DEPT. S2),

Kilmarnock, Scotland.

SHOULD ONE SPEAK TO STRANGERS?

CASES WHERE ADVICE MIGHT BE OF REAL USE.

How often one feels that one could really help complete strangers, if only convention had not made it an impertinence to address them.

I was travelling up in the tube the other morning. Opposite me sat a young woman, whose dark, long-lashed eyes and pale amber colouring suggested Spanish or South American descent. I watched her covertly, for she interested me.

The upper part of her face was entirely charming, but the lower was ruined by a heavy growth of dark hair at the corners of her mouth. Apart from this dreadful disfigurement her mouth was pretty, with red curved lips and white teeth. But this only accentuated the horror of the real "moustache" which spoilt her so entirely.

In half an hour I could have transformed that girl into the beauty Nature intended her to be. If only I could have told her to buy an ounce of powdered pheminol at the next chemist's shop she passed! The action of this drug when mixed with a small quantity of water and applied to superfluous hair is almost miraculous. In a few minutes the latter is bleached and loosened and comes away absolutely painlessly from the skin, which is left clear and smooth.

I watched the little Spanish girl regretfully as she got out at her station. Will her pretty face remain disfigured for life?

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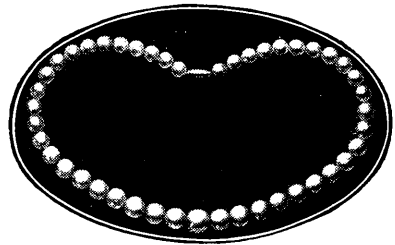
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Above necklet supplied in any other length at an additional cost of 1/4 per inch. Special solid Gold Safety Clasps 2/6 each.

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Clean as a
NEW-PIN
the modern
WASHWORD



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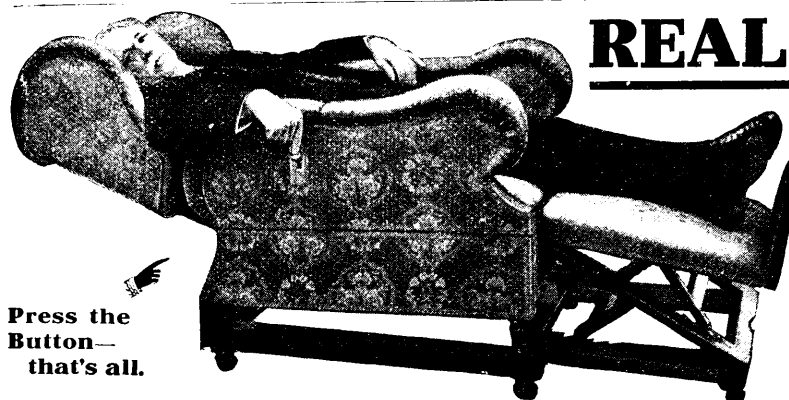
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THE BEST SOAP.

You cannot do better than use the

"NEW-PIN" TRIPLET



Manufactured by
THE BRITISH SOAP CO., LTD.,
WILMINGTON, HULL.
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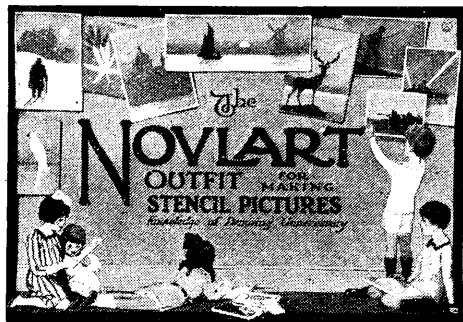
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REAL REST.

Simply press the button and the back declines or automatically rises to any position—release the button and the back is securely locked. The Leg Rest adjusts to various inclinations and can also be used as a footstool. When not in use it slides under the seat.

Catalogue 3 of Adjustable Chairs Post Free.

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POST **4/3** FREE

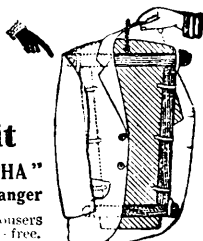
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RESULTS ARE CHARMING.

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It is made from sugar, and rich,
wholesome cream: so if you want a
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Coats,
21- to
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airy book for the
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HAVE you noticed that happy, healthy, rollicking youngsters generally have sound teeth?

Those sound teeth are usually the *cause* of the good health and high spirits. And sound teeth must be *clean* teeth!

How important, therefore, to teach children to *want* clean teeth!

Gibbs Ivory Castle Fairy Book has already set thousands of children on the high-way to health.

It has taught them to treasure their teeth as beautiful, precious structures, to be

defended against attacks of Giant Decay and his imps.

To let your children read the Ivory Castle Fairy Book is to make them *want* to clean their teeth. To let them use Gibbs Dentifrice is to ensure that the cleaning is done efficiently yet with absolute safety.

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7½d. and 1½/-

Both the Fairy Book and a sample of Gibbs Dentifrice will be sent you free. Just send 2d. stamp to cover postage. Fill up the coupon now!

D. & W. GIBBS, LTD. (DEPT. 105),
COLD CREAM SOAP WORKS,
LONDON, E.C.1.



—POST COUPON TO-DAY—

To Messrs. D. & W. Gibbs, Ltd. (Dept. 105),
Cold Cream Soap Works, London, E.C.1.

Please send me a copy of Gibbs Ivory Castle Fairy Book and sample of Gibbs Dentifrice. I enclose 2d. stamp for postage.

Name

Address

Seven Great Guarantees

are given with

THE "ACME" POLICY

of

THE STANDARD LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY

- (1) **GUARANTEED SURRENDER VALUES.**
- (2) **GUARANTEED LOAN VALUES.**
- (3) **GUARANTEED PAID-UP POLICY VALUES.**
- (4) **A GUARANTEED SURRENDER VALUE** at end of 20 years of at least all tabular premiums paid.
- (5) **A GUARANTEED BONUS** added at the end of 20 years of 50% of the Sum Assured.
- (6) **A GUARANTEED PAID-UP POLICY** at end of 20 years of £150 for each £100 Assured.
- (7) **GUARANTEED DISABILITY BENEFITS** in event of permanent total disablement, viz.:—
 - (a) Cessation of Premiums.
 - (b) One-tenth of Sum Assured paid each year for 10 years.
 - (c) Payment of Sum Assured in full at death.

All above Benefits are Guaranteed and Inserted in the Policy.

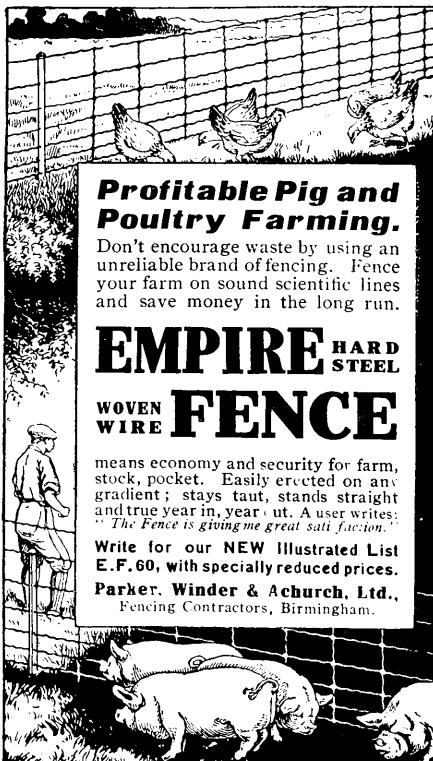
"THE HIGHEST DEVELOPMENT OF LIFE ASSURANCE."

WRITE FOR EXPLANATORY LEAFLET "H. 18" TO
THE STANDARD LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY
 (ESTABLISHED 18.5).

Head Office : 3, George Street, EDINBURGH.

LONDON : 110, Cannon Street, E.C.4 ; 15a, Pall Mall, S.W.1.

DUBLIN : 59, Dawson Street



Profitable Pig and Poultry Farming.

Don't encourage waste by using an unreliable brand of fencing. Fence your farm on sound scientific lines and save money in the long run.

EMPIRE HARD STEEL WOVEN WIRE FENCE

means economy and security for farm, stock, pocket. Easily erected on any gradient; stays taut, stands straight and true year in, year out. A user writes: "The Fence is giving me great satisfaction."

Write for our NEW Illustrated List E.F. 60, with specially reduced prices.

Parker, Winder & Achurch, Ltd.,
 Fencing Contractors, Birmingham.

Drawing is easy!

To the trained man or woman, Drawing is natural and easy. It expresses thought and idea more readily than writing. In fact, Drawing was the first form of writing—in the long ago.

The Press Art School teaches Drawing, successfully and conscientiously, through the Post. Evidence of its accomplishment can be found in my Prospectus, which reproduces work and testimonies from past and present Pupils. The illustration in this advertisement is a two-minute Caricature of one of my Collaborators. It was drawn by a former Pupil who is now a prospering "front-page" man working for the Weekly Topical Press.



My teaching is divided into two Courses:—The PREPARATORY COURSE for absolute Beginners and the ADVANCED COURSE for those who can draw, but who cannot sell. ("Punch," alone, has bought and published over 500 Drawings by my Pupils to date.)

ILLUST'D PROSPECTUS sent post free. It deals fully with both Courses and is a free Drawing Lesson in itself.

If you copy this former Pupil's Sketch, or send me an original Drawing (preferred), I will forward you a helpful Criticism, as well as the Prospectus post free. A p.c. alone will bring you the Prospectus. Write to me personally:—Percy V. Bradshaw, Principal.

PRESS ART SCHOOL,
 (Dept. S.M. 79),
 Tudor Hall, Forest Hill, S.E.23

MEN OF BIG BUSINESS.

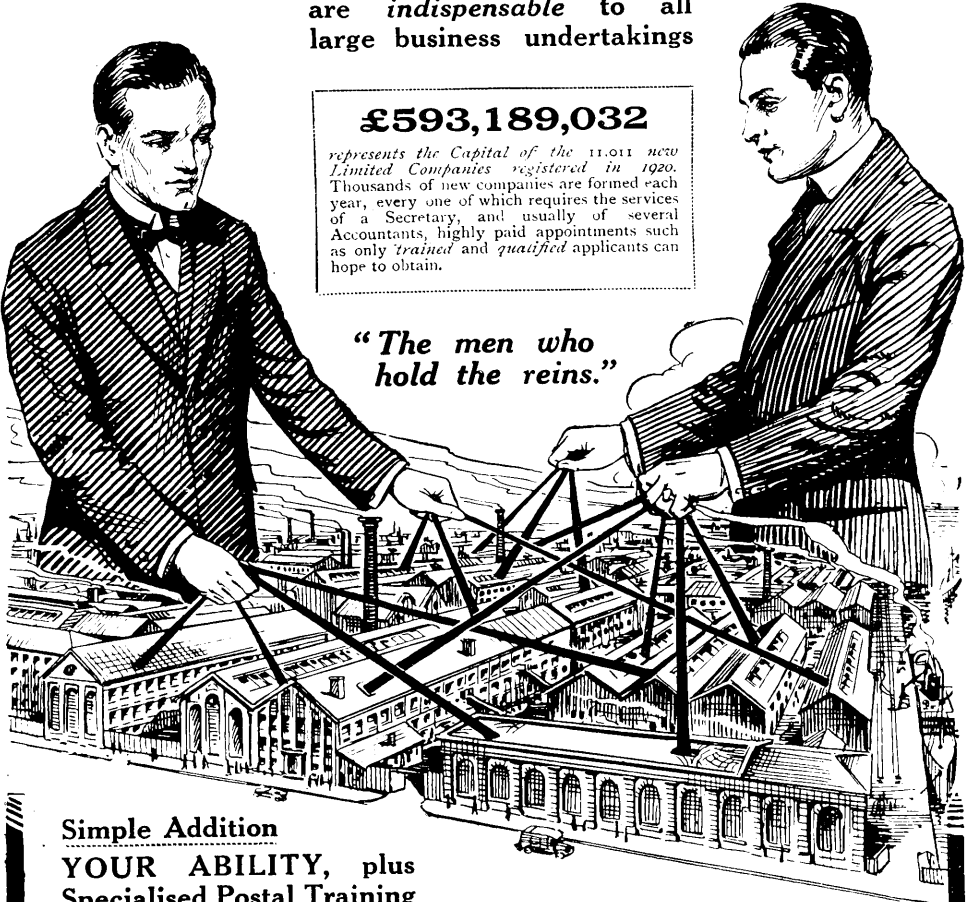
The Qualified Accountant
and Chartered Secretary

are *indispensable* to all
large business undertakings

£593,189,032

*represents the Capital of the 11,011 new
Limited Companies registered in 1920.
Thousands of new companies are formed each
year, every one of which requires the services
of a Secretary, and usually of several
Accountants, highly paid appointments such
as only trained and qualified applicants can
hope to obtain.*

*"The men who
hold the reins."*



Simple Addition

**YOUR ABILITY, plus
Specialised Postal Training
under the Metropolitan College**

= £1,000/£2,000-a-year capacity

In the pursuit of Success, plodding is no substitute for training. It is slow, but *not* sure.

The Metropolitan College offers you a choice of many Business courses of outstanding excellence and proven thoroughness, each of which leads Directly and Quickly to a definite goal, viz.—

**Qualification, in spare time, at home,
for a remunerative Accountancy, Secretarial or Commercial appointment.**

At recognised Professional examinations, the successes of the Metropolitan College Students

are phenomenal. To record them here is impossible, for several pages would be required, but they are stated frankly in the

**132-page "Students' Guide,"
a handsome volume, free for
the asking.**

Thousands of ex-students of the College are now holding highly paid positions of trust with important firms and companies whose names are household words. Emulate their successful example, and write to-day for the free Students' Guide to the Secretary.

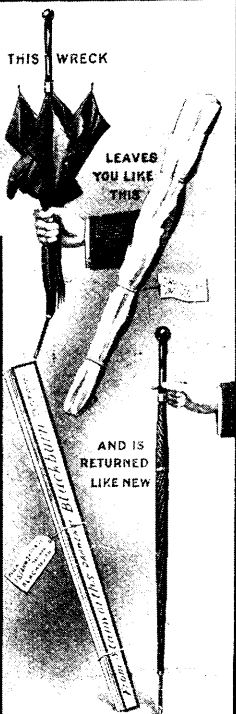
METROPOLITAN COLLEGE,
Dept. S., St. Albans.

STANWORTHS', "Defiance" RECP UMBRELLAS.

Just Wrap Your OLD UMBRELLA

in paper, tie to a board or stick, and post to us to-day with P.O. for 10/-. By next post it will come back "as good as new," re-covered with our "Defiance" Union and securely packed. Postage on Foreign Orders 1/- extra. A postcard will bring you our illustrated Catalogue of "Defiance" Umbrellas, and patterns for re-covering umbrellas from 5/- upwards.

J. STANWORTH & CO.,
Royal Umbrella Works,
BLACKBURN.



Regulation SAILOR SUITS *From Britain's Naval Port.*



MADE to measure in Real Navy Serge, as supplied to the Admiralty, or in White Drill, corresponding in every detail to the uniforms worn by H.M. Sailors. Self-Measurement Form and Illustrations on request.

We sell the Regulation Serge by the yard, and other qualities suitable for Ladies', Gent's, and Children's wear at prices from 2/6 to 25/- a yard, 30 ins. to 56 ins. wide. Tweeds, Cheviots, and Gabardines in all colours for Ladies' wear and Gent's suitings.

Write for Pattern Book 37, free.

Any length cut and sent Carriage Paid in U.K.

The Real Navy Serge Warehouse
J.D. MORANT LTD
PORTSMOUTH

OLD HATS MADE NEW

AND REMODELLED TO PRESENT FASHION
Save yourself from 10/- to 30/-



by sending your old **VELOUR, FELT** or **BEAVER** hat to the Renovating Expert—**A. WRIGHT** (Dept. 20), Albert Road, Luton. His clever band of workers will quickly transform your old hat—completely renovate, re-model, re-trim, and return it to you indistinguishable from a brand new expensive West End Creation. Send for Free Catalogue of 80 styles of latest shapes. From this list ladies can choose the design to which they wish their old hat remodelled and made fashionable. The cost is only 3/- to 4/6.

(If required, hats can be re-dyed to darker colours, preference should be given to Black, Navy, or Nigger, at an extra cost of 1/6 each.) Gent's hats also renovated—4/9 to 6/6 (except bowler or silk hats).

Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded.

A. WRIGHT (Dept. 20), Albert Road, LUTON

LAKKERIT

**KEEPS YOUR BRASS AND COPPER
BRIGHT WITHOUT POLISHING.**

Do a final rub-up to-day! Clean all your Brass and Copper-ware, and then apply a coating of "LAKKERIT." This will save you hours of labour because "LAKKERIT" keeps the metal bright and shining for many months without further polishing.

Send for trial set 2/9 post free. Money refunded if not satisfied

BELFRAGE & BENTLEY
(Dept. S), 100, Cowcaddens Street, GLASGOW

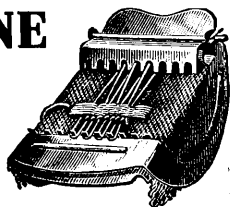


**PRICE
2/9**

THE "STAR" DARNING MACHINE

**LIKE A SMALL LOOM—MENDS ANYTHING
FROM UNDERWEAR TO LACE CURTAINS.**

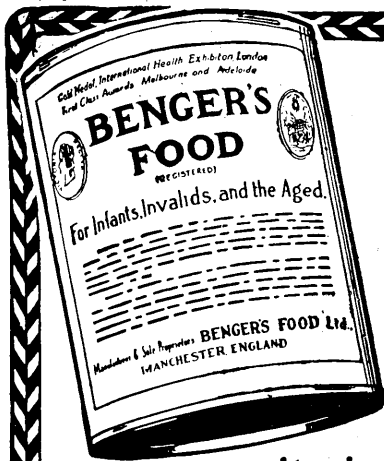
With this wonderful hand darning machine you can do the work of an hour in a few minutes. Perfectly even darn is smoothly woven right into fabric, leaving no lumps. **The Greatest Boon to the busy housewife ever invented.** Speedily puts fresh heel or toe in stockings and neatly repairs table-linen, curtains, fine silk goods, etc., etc. The "Star" Darning Machine is complete in itself, and is **NOT** a sewing-machine attachment. It is so very simple to work that by its aid even a child can darn quicker, neater and better than an expert by hand alone.



MAKES DARNING A PLEASANT RECREATION,

saving endless time, eye-strain and labour. Will last a lifetime, being strong, and well made of high-grade metal throughout. Supplied in neat box with easy illustrated directions. Usual price 3/6. **Reduced to 2/9** (postage 3d. extra). Send now 3/- P.O. to

E. J. R. Co. (Dept. 18), 682, Holloway Rd., London, N.19



Benger's Food does three things for the dyspeptic—

*it gives complete nourishment ;
it allays the craving of the stomach ;
it helps to win back the natural digestion.*

Benger's Food is so highly nutritious that athletes use it in training, so delicious that invalids and aged persons enjoy it, year in and year out.

An explanation of DYSPEPTIC conditions.

Mental or physical overstrain—overwork or worry—sedentary work, or shortage of exercise—over-indulgence—unsuitable, or unsuitably balanced food—sudden weather changes—chill—are among the causes that bring about dyspepsia, *i.e.*, disturbed digestion. Persons suffering from it are in the state that the digestive functions are not properly or adequately doing their work, notwithstanding that the bodily system may be urgently requiring sustenance. Food not properly digested undergoes fermentative changes, resulting in flatulence and pain, and a disturbed state of health ensues.

The immediate requirement is to supply nourishment that the system can take in with little digestive effort. Benger's Food is expressly devised to meet such conditions to nourish and sustain in weakness and illness, and to overcome the evils of malnutrition which arise from digestive complications or weakness, whether temporary or long-standing.

BENGER'S Food

is sold in tins by Chemists, etc. ————— everywhere.

Prices—Size No. 0—1/4; Size No. 1—2/3; Size No. 2—4/-; Size No. 3—8/6

The Booklet of Benger's Food contains dainty recipes which give relief from the sameness of milk and similar diet. These are so light as to give nourishment with digestive rest. Post free on request from

BENGER'S FOOD, LTD., ——— Otter Works, ——— **MANCHESTER.**
NEW YORK (U.S.A.): 90, Beekman St. SYDNEY (N.S.W.): 117, Pitt St. Depots throughout CANADA.

42/- "Mattamac" (Reg'd.) Feather weight Stormproof.

A "Mattamac" is identical in appearance with the usual five-guinea Weatherproof. In utility, also, it equals its much more costly competitor. It wears as long, weighs one-third, and is absolutely Waterproof. Though light and compact-folding, it is Wind and Chill proof as well as Wet proof, and can be used additionally as a light Overcoat for Driving, Motoring, Watching the Football Match, etc.

WEIGHT
19 ozs.
FOLDS INTO
THIS SIZE.

Fits the jacket pocket or Attaché Case.
(Reg'd. Trade Mark.)



42/-

For Man, Woman, and Child. Also made for Equestrian, Military, and Sporting Wear.

"Mattamac" Fabric is exceedingly compact. The Coat worn by the 6-ft. man beneath, when folded, just made this handful.

This is an actual photograph of his hand and the "Mattamac" he wears, folded to fit snugly into his jacket pocket.

3 OZS. HEAVIER THAN AN UMBRELLA. You can carry a "Mattamac" as easily as a newspaper. Yet it gives complete weather protection—at less than half the cost and one-third the weight of ordinary Weathercoats.

Sporting (19 oz.) Model.

42/-

19 OUNCES WEIGHT 42/-
Belted Models (21½ oz.), 47/6

Colours:—
Fawn, Olive,
Tan, Green,
Black, and Blue
Shades.



Infantry (19 oz.) Model.

42/-

Cavalry wide-skirted (22 oz.) Model.
Fawn and Khaki only.

59/6

With Belt.
65/-



47/6

Illustrations are direct drawings from photos of stock "Mattamac" Stormproofs costing 42/-, Belted Models, 47/6. Made in 6 shades, 11 Models, and 40 sizes.

MADE FOR EVERY OUTDOOR PURPOSE. Town and Country Models, in Fawn, Olive, Grey, Tan, Black, and Blue Shades, 42/-; Belted Models for Ladies, Civilian, and Military, 47/6; wide-skirted Equestrian Models from 59/6; and Children's Models for all ages at size prices. Made entirely from the genuine, hard-wearing, all-weather-proof "Mattamac" (Reg'd.) Fabric, with wind-cuffs, perpendicular pockets, lined shoulders, Raglan sleeves, roomy under arms, and the famous cut of Conduit Street.

"MATTAMAC" ART BOOKLET POST FREE. Illustrating Adult and Children's Models. A p.c. brings Booklet and 6 colour Patterns of "Mattamac" Fabric, or you can safely send your order now, without awaiting it.

SENT OUT ON SEVEN DAYS' FREE APPROVAL. You buy without risk. Send chest measurement over waistcoat (Ladies measure over Blouse), height, and remittance, stating colour, and your "Mattamac" will be sent post free in Great Britain (extra abroad). If you are not fully satisfied, you can return it within 7 days of receipt, and get your money back in full. Write for booklet "26 T" and colour patterns of "Mattamac" Fabric, Ordering Forms, etc., to the Sole Makers of "Mattamac" Stormproofs; or inspect Models at our London Showrooms:—



THE "MATTAMAC" TRADE MARKS are registered throughout the world. (COPYRIGHT RESERVED.)

45, KINGSTON HOUSE,
CONDUIT STREET,
LONDON, W.1.

The Best Cloths That Britain Produces are



Tailored To-Measure in "Lion" Suits - By - Post.

There are no better cloths than those Groves & Lindley put in their £7 10s. Lounge Suits. Only the finest Huddersfield Worsted and Scotch Tweeds are used by them, and each suit is individually cut and tailored. The large number of suits made and huge cloth orders placed direct with manufacturers enable Groves & Lindley to cut out middlemen's profits and reduce the cost to you—the wearer. Why pay more than their

HIGHEST PRICE
for a tailor-made Lounge Suit of the finest quality cloths produced in England and Scotland? They also offer excellent pure wool qualities at considerably under this price.

Write for 100 Cloth Patterns, Post Free. Specially selected for Home or Overseas men, with Fashion Guide and full particulars of simple self-measure system. Satisfaction or Cash Refund Fully Guaranteed.

Suit Lengths supplied of any Groves & Lindley's super-cloths. Write for Free Cloth Patterns now.

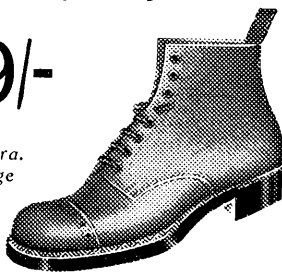
GROVES & LINDLEY, Merchant Tailors,
114, "The Lion," Huddersfield, England.

OFFICERS' MARCHING - BOOTS -

This is an unrivalled offer, for these Boots were sold for 50/- pair during the War.

19/-

Postage 1/- extra.
Foreign Postage 2/6 extra.



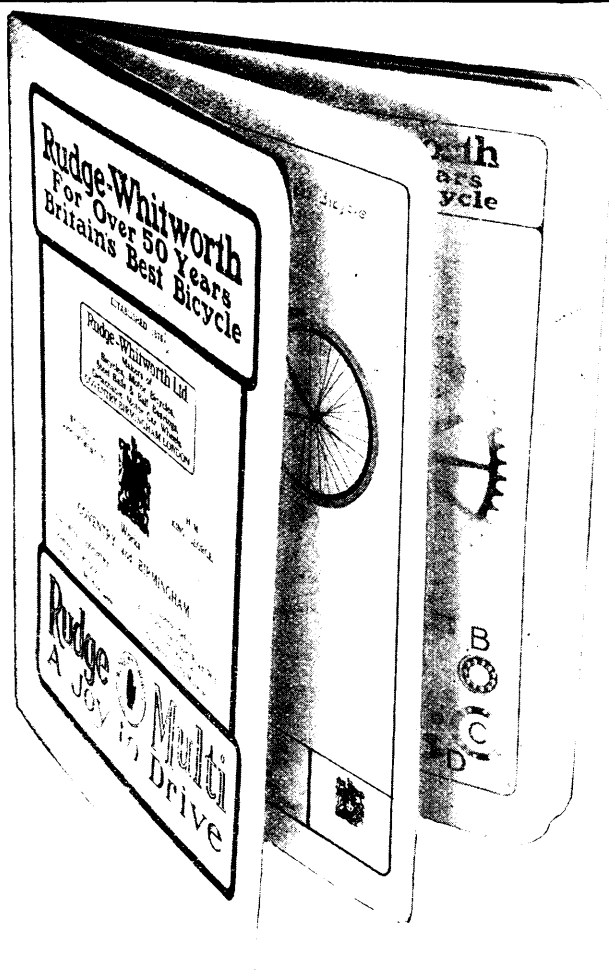
In Black or Tan, with double soles. They are guaranteed all leather and waterproof, and as a sound wearing medium-weight boot you cannot get a better at double the price.

Sizes 6 to 11 19/- pair.
Size 12 - - - 1/- extra.
Postage 1/- extra.

Send today, and if you are not perfectly satisfied we will refund your money immediately.

Also write for profusely Illustrated Catalogue No. S.1. It gives our complete range of Ladies', Men's, and Children's Boots.

John Needham
ALL LEATHER WORKS.
98, Sparkenboe St., LEICESTER



Illustrated Art Catalogue of 1922

Rudge - Whitworth Aero - Special
Ladies', Gent.'s, and Sporting Bicycles

Rudge Multi
and Chain Driven Motor Bicycles

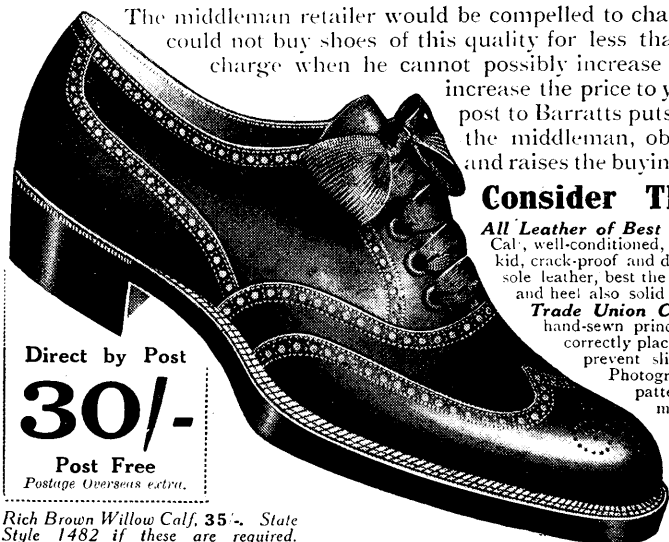
FREE.

Call at **The Bicycle Shop**, 230, Tottenham Court Road, W.1,
see our new Models, and obtain a Catalogue, which is also
sent post free for asking from Dept. 201, Coventry.

Rudge-Whitworth Ltd.
Makers of
Bicycles, Motor Bicycles,
Steel Balls & Ball Bearings,
Detachable Motor Car Wheels,
COVENTRY, BIRMINGHAM, LONDON

Buy These Fine Brogue Shoes by Post

Direct from Barratts Northampton Factory for 30/-



Direct by Post

30/-

Post Free

Postage Overseas extra.

Rich Brown Willow Calf, 35/-, State Style 1482 if these are required.

How to Order. *Home*: Simply mention Style 1682, enclose cheque or money order for 30/- (size 12 1/- extra), and post to *Overseas*: With Cash on Delivery orders, send 10/- deposit only. Barratts. Pay when shoes arrive. Where C.O.D. is not in operation, enclose full amount and postage. Weight (packed) 4 lbs.

W. BARRATT & CO., LTD., 20, "Footshape," Northampton, England

Write for Barratts 115-page Illustrated Catalogue for 1922 (postage 3d.).

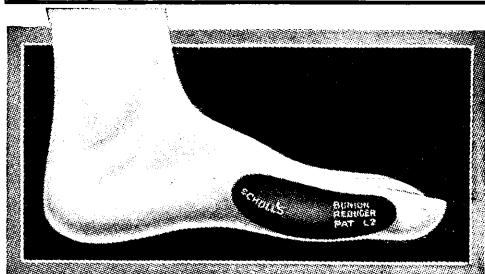
The middleman retailer would be compelled to charge you at least 10/- more, for he could not buy shoes of this quality for less than 30/- Why pay him this extra charge when he cannot possibly increase the value of the shoes, and must increase the price to you—the wearer? Your order by post to Barratts puts you on equal factory terms with the middleman, obtains for you a **guaranteed** shoe, and raises the buying power of your cash by one-third.

Consider These Super Qualities

All Leather of Best Quality. Uppers: Finest tested Black Box Cal., well-conditioned, cut from best portions of selected skins, soft as kid, crack-proof and damp-proof. Soles: Solid English oak-tanned sole leather, best the world produces. Insoles and stiffeners in toe and heel also solid leather. Shoes are leather lined. **Expert Trade Union Craftsmanship.** Soles stitched to welts on hand-sewn principle, ensuring flexible tread. Blocked toe, correctly placed heel, and perfectly moulded heel-back to prevent slipping. **High-grade Design and Finish.** Photograph from actual shoe shows smart brogue pattern, neat punched ornament, and gentlemanly appearance. This shoe is a great favourite with golfers everywhere, and will give thoroughly satisfactory service for smart walking wear. **Style 1682.**

32 Fittings, 8 sizes (5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12), and four widths (narrow, medium, wide, extra wide). Give usual size or "Footshape," obtained by outlining stockinged foot with pencil. Foot should rest with normal pressure on the paper.

If not approved, return unsoiled. Money refunded without hesitation.



Foot Troubles Vanish.

Dr. Scholl's Bunion Reducer is made of soft surgical rubber, and instantly relieves the inflamed area from pressure, prevents shoe bulging, and gradually reduces the enlargement. Men's and Women's Sizes, rights and lefts. Price 2/6 each.

Dr. Scholl's

Foot Comfort Appliances

Comprise 38 different types for giving instant relief and permanent correction to all foot ailments. Made on strictly anatomical lines from only selected materials. "Scholl" Appliances are universally supported by the medical profession. They can be adjusted to your individual requirements. Your safeguard against substitution is the name "Scholl" on every Appliance and Speciality.

Dr. Scholl's Foot Book free on request.

THE SCHOLL MFG. CO., LTD.,
2, Giltspur Street, London, E.C.1.

Watch your Feet

The "Grey Hair" Problem

Solved by
a New
Discovery

"Nuctone" is an entirely new discovery, which gradually restores the colour to the Hair, without Dyeing, however grey or faded the Hair may be.

Colour
Restored
Gradually,
Permanently,
Safely

There is no sudden change from greyness to the natural colour of the Hair, as with Dyeing. The colour comes gradually, but permanently and safely.



Guaranteed not to contain Sulphur, Lead, or any other injurious ingredients. Everyone who has tried "Nuctone" is delighted with the results. If your Hair is going grey, or even if it is grey altogether, send for a bottle of "Nuctone" to day: 6/6 post free. "Nuctone" for Dark Hair. "Nuctone" for Fair Hair.

Jas. Stewart,
Hair Specialist,
225, Regent St.,
LONDON, W.1.

Riley's "Home" Billiards

—a never-ending source of enjoyment for the long dark nights.

THERE'S a desire lurking in the heart of every member of your home circle—especially the boys—to play billiards, and why shouldn't it be gratified at home?

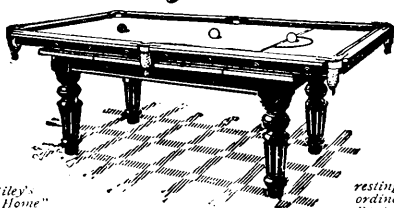
A "Riley" Billiard Table in your home will provide thorough enjoyment throughout the long winter nights. An irresistible fascination, a wide field for the training of hand and eye, and a never-ending feeling that there is "more to be learned," makes billiards the most interesting and enduring of all indoor games.

15/-

DOWN

Send 15/- P.O. to us this evening, and within a few days the £12 10s. size Riley "Home" Billiard Table will be despatched. The balance you pay in 17 monthly instalments of 15/-. There are sizes to fit on any ordinary Dining-Table.

Seven Days' Free Trial



Riley's
"Home"
Billiard Table

resting on
ordinary
Dining Table.

RILEY'S "HOME" BILLIARD TABLES

Solid mahogany or oak, French-polished, best slate bed, low frost-proof cushions, and all accessories included.

Size	4 ft. 4 in. x 2 ft. 4 in.	£8 0s.	or in	9/6
	5 ft. 4 in. x 2 ft. 10 in.	£10 0s.	18	11/9
	6 ft. 4 in. x 3 ft. 4 in.	£12 10s.	monthly	15/-
	7 ft. 4 in. x 3 ft. 10 in.	£17 0s.	payments	20/6
	8 ft. 4 in. x 4 ft. 4 in.	£23 0s.	of	27/6

RILEY'S "COMBINE" BILLIARD-AND-DINING TABLES. A handsome dining-table and a perfect Billiard Table; patent raising and lowering action; complete with highly polished top; all accessories included.

Size	5 ft. 4 in. x 2 ft. 10 in.	£27 10s.
	6 ft. 4 in. x 3 ft. 4 in.	£32 10s.
	7 ft. 4 in. x 3 ft. 10 in.	£39 0s.
	8 ft. 4 in. x 4 ft. 4 in.	£49 0s.
	9 ft. 4 in. x 4 ft. 10 in.	£59 0s.

Or in 13 or 20 monthly instalments.

Every table sent ready for play, carriage paid to any address within one mile of any railway station in United Kingdom.

FREE Send to-day for Catalogue of either "Home" Billiard Tables or "Combine" Billiard-and-Dining Tables.

Riley's are makers of the well-known "Riley" Full-Size Tables. All repairs carried out, and accessories of every description supplied. Write for particulars.

E. J. RILEY, Limited,
Crane Works, ACCRINGTON.

London Showrooms: 147 Aldersgate Street, E.C.1



GET IT FROM THE FACTORY FREE

A postcard to H. SAMUEL'S Huge Factory brings you by return a wonderful money-saving

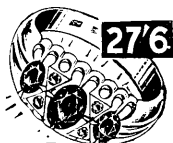
FREE BOOK OF 3,000 BARGAINS

—splendid Watches and beautiful Jewellery at Factory Prices! Write now! See the lists of

FREE PRIZES

for all buyers.

WRITE NOW!



27/6



70/-



95/-

OVER 500 DIAMOND AND GEM RINGS.
Set with selected stones from 15/-



67/6

SOLID GOLD BRACELET WATCH. High-grade jewelled movement, 10 years' warranty. Perfect timekeeper.

Extra heavy case.

67/6

A FULL MONTH'S TRIAL ALLOWED



25/-



22/6

HANDSOME POCKET WATCH

Fully jewelled lever movement, compensation balance Nickel Silver case

22/6

GOLD NECKLET AND PENDANT, new design, set 2 Pearls and Aquamarine.

OVERSEAS ORDERS receive the prompt attention of a special manager. Catalogue mailed free.

SEND YOUR POSTCARD NOW!

H. SAMUEL

31, MARKET ST., MANCHESTER

Over 85 Branches, including:

WOOLWICH: 40 and 42, Powis Street.
CROYDON: 16, North End.
NEWCASTLE: 3, Grainger Street, W.
PORTSMOUTH: 41, Commercial Road.
GLASGOW: 134-136, Argyle Street.

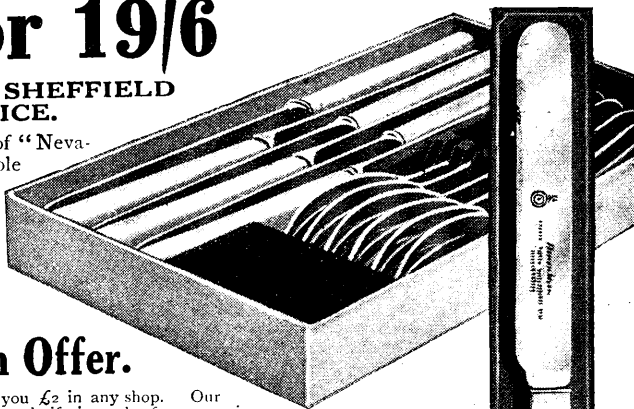
Full List in the Big Free Book

H. SAMUEL, LTD.

Get this Box of Stainless Cutlery for 19/6

**BUY IT DIRECT FROM SHEFFIELD
AT MAKERS' PRICE.**

Give your friends or give yourself a box of "Nevastain" Knives. Learn the unspeakable relief of abolishing rubbing, scouring, and polishing. Have cutlery as nice as any of your friends. Use stainless steel at every meal, and your table will look as handsome as any you have seen. Our price is manufacturers' price—direct from Sheffield to you, at factory cost.



Extraordinary Bargain Offer.

The box of cutlery pictured above would cost you £2 in any shop. Our price is 19/6 only. Postage 1/- extra. Every knife is made from genuine Firth's Stainless Steel—the wonderful metal which nothing in existence can tarnish or stain. Stainless is not a coating—it goes right through, and a damp cloth removes every trace of use and leaves the brilliant surface like new. The square white handles retain their colour with ordinary care, and the forks are made from extra weight B.T.R. Nickel Silver. "Nevastain" knives sharpen easily when necessary. No matter who you are or where you are, you cannot afford to pass this half-price offer. Get it NOW—secure Sheffield's Brightest Bargain—give yourself a £2 gift for 19/6—put a pound in your pocket and cut out rubbing and cleaning for ever.

Another Half-price Bargain.

If you want knives only we will send half-a-dozen from the case above (dessert size) for 15/-. Table size, 18/6. Postage 6d.

ART CATALOGUE FREE.

Our Art Catalogue of beautiful Cutlery is free for postage (2d.). Get your copy to-day—NOW.

NOW WRITE on these satisfaction or money-back terms: Put £1 Treasury Note and six penny stamps in an envelope. Add your name and address, register your letter, and post. Your cutlery comes by return in a useful box. If you are not thoroughly delighted, send it back and we refund your money in full. Make P.O.'s and cheques payable to British Table Requisites, Ltd. Prices: Dessert size, 19/6; Table size, 24/-. Postage 1/- extra.

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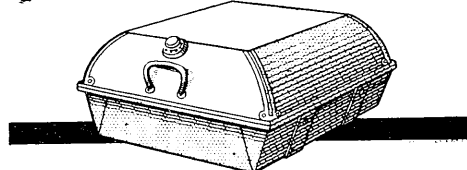


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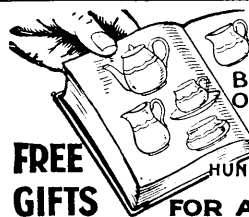
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get rid of your burden as thou-
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Digestive trouble may manifest itself in many ways and may be termed indigestion, dyspepsia, gastritis and many other things, but it always starts in the stomach, and is due to excess and harmful acid. That's the key to the whole situation, for if you can get rid of this dangerous acid you can get rid of the whole disorder!

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The benefits derived from the taking of Bisurated Magnesia are noticeable from the outset; not only in the absence of pain, but in the quicker step, the brighter eye and the more cheery glow in the cheeks. There's health for dyspeptics in every bottle of Bisurated Magnesia; it is the stomach-sufferer's sure aid and stand-by.

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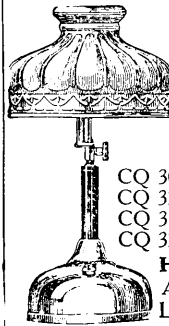
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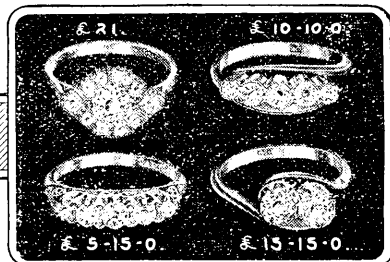
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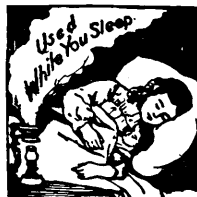
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You should make this test. It is free and delightful. To millions it has brought a new era in teeth cleaning.

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It is film-coats that discolour, not the teeth. Film is the basis of tartar. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth and the acid may cause decay.

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Dental science has now found two effective film com-

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Chocolate Flavour
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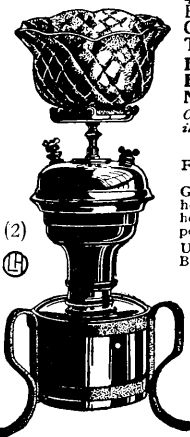
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Other fittings extra: fitted complete, as illustrated.



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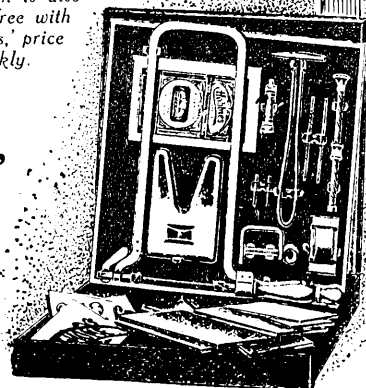
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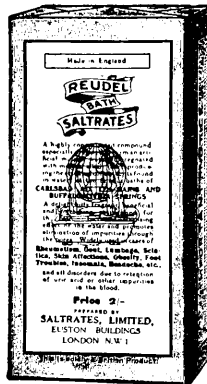
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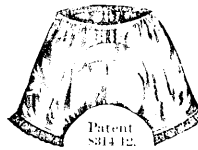
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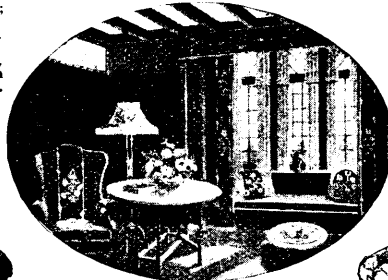
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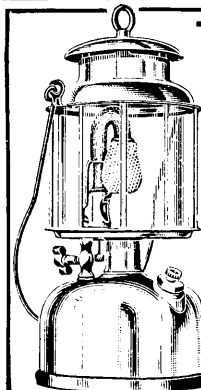
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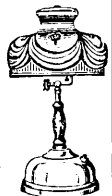
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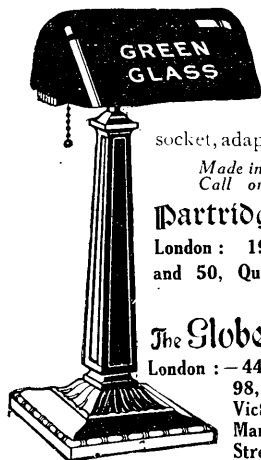
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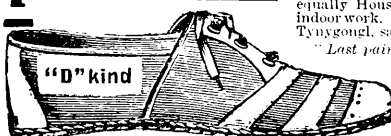
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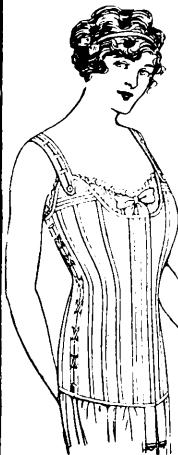
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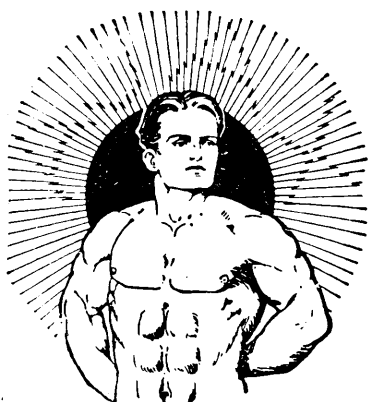
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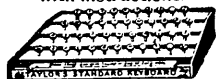
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**SHORTNESS OF BREATH,
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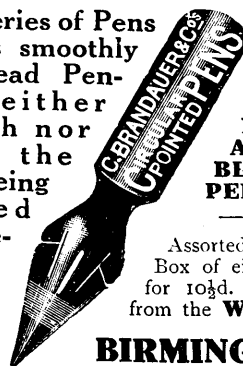
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I have just taken out a £1,000 Policy to give further financial support to my wife should she survive me, or to benefit both of us if I live to be 55. The insurance—for £1,000, to be paid even if I die to-morrow—costs me nothing. For the rest, it is simply putting by a fixed sum of money each year until I reach the age of 55. I pay no Income Tax on this money, which is a Government indication that I am protecting the Nation's interests as well as my own by adopting this form of thrift.

My age is 35. I have undertaken to deposit £55 a year for 20 years with the Sun Life of Canada. But I save in Income Tax through this arrangement the sum of £8 5s. per annum, so that my net deposit is really and truly £46 15s.

If I live to be 55 I shall receive from the Company £1,000 plus profits, which on a very conservative estimate will be £370, making a total of £1,370, against my net deposits in the 20 years of £935. I shall, therefore, receive by way of interest or dividends no less than £435, and I do not pay any Income Tax whatever on this accumulated dividend!—a further important Government concession. It is therefore equivalent to a profit of £621 10s. on an ordinary investment subject to an Income Tax of 6s. in the £. This is quite a good net return from the investment point of view, especially taking into consideration that the Capital cannot depreciate, that there are no market fluctuations to bother about.

Now for the Free Insurance, or, in other words, the financial protection for my dependents, which is not costing me one penny. Directly I deposited the first

£55, I was insured for £1,000, plus half the deposit I had made. If I were to die to-morrow my wife would receive £1,027 10s. If I die, say, after making four deposits, she will receive £1,110. This increasing value of the insurance is a great feature of this policy; indeed, it is unique. In the event of death, half the deposits that have been made are added to the policy. This is guaranteed.

The policy is remarkable also in other ways. For instance, on the back of it I learn exactly what the policy is worth at any period after it has been in force three years: (1) In cash (if I want to make an end to the transaction), (2) what loan on the account I can obtain, (3) the financial worth of the policy if I cease payment altogether and treat the back payments as full deposits for completely paid-up policy.

The Plan holds good for larger and for smaller amounts, at any age and for any fixed number of years. It therefore appeals to everyone.

The Company issuing this most advantageous policy is the Sun Life of Canada (the leading Company for annuities), whose assets amount to no less than £23,000,000.

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The Sun Life of Canada is, of course, the same Company which specialises in Annuities.

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"I have never had shoes to wear as your brogues have done," says a letter from the Transvaal, dated 27th October, 1921..... "Needless to say, I need experiment with makes of shoes no longer," says another from Michigan, U.S.A., November 19, 1921.....

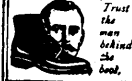
The sterling qualities of Norwell's 'Perth' Brogues, their splendid wear-resistance, shape-retention and comfort, continuously bring such appreciation from every corner of the British Isles and from Overseas.



**Black, 36/6
Brown, 37/6
POST FREE**

Lady's "Carnoustie," Style 32b, is a general favourite. Uppers cut to ensure a perfect heel grip—the sensible shape gives delightful freedom to the toes. Selected uppers from best quality of skins, Black or Brown Calfskin: hard-wearing Scotch tanned soles, welted for flexibility and inside smoothness.

When ordering state size or half-size usually worn; perfect fit assured.



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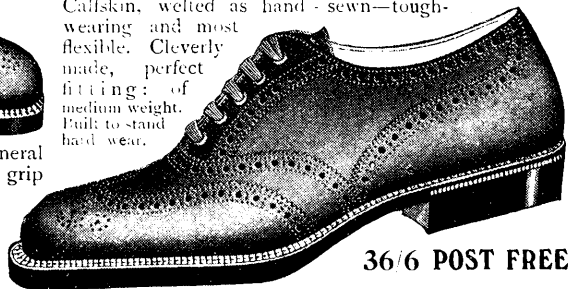
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**NORWELL'S 'PERTH' FOOTWEAR, Ltd.,
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Norwell's 'Perth' Brogues

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Gent's "Murray," Style 18a.—
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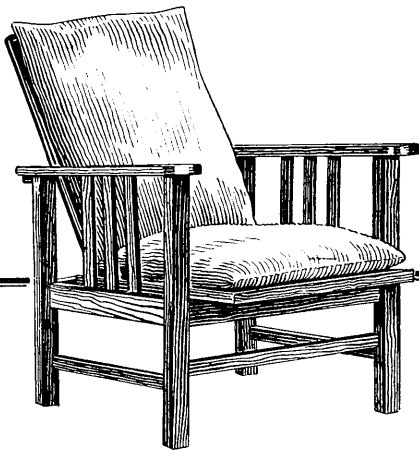
THE health value of Thermal (Hot Air or Vapour) Bathing is an established fact. Nothing else is so effective in preventing sickness, or for the cure of Colds, Influenza, Rheumatism, Sciatica, Blood, Skin, Liver, and Kidney Complaints. It eliminates the poisonous matters from the system, increases the flow of blood—the life current—freed from its impurities, clears the skin, recuperates and revitalises the body, quiets the nerves, rests the tired, creates that delightful feeling of invigorated health and strength, insures perfect cleanliness, and is helpful in every way.

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SELF-ADJUSTING EASY CHAIR

in solid oak. Back and seat self-adjusting to any position. No need to get up to change the angle. Finished in rich Jacobean colours. Cushions covered with grey, green, or brown corduroy velvet. Strong, well-constructed frame. **39/6** Just the thing for the week-end lounge.

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Without.



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THE B.L. APPLIANCE CO.,
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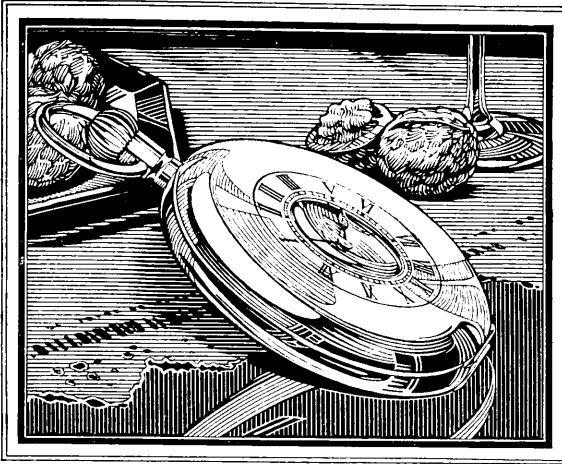
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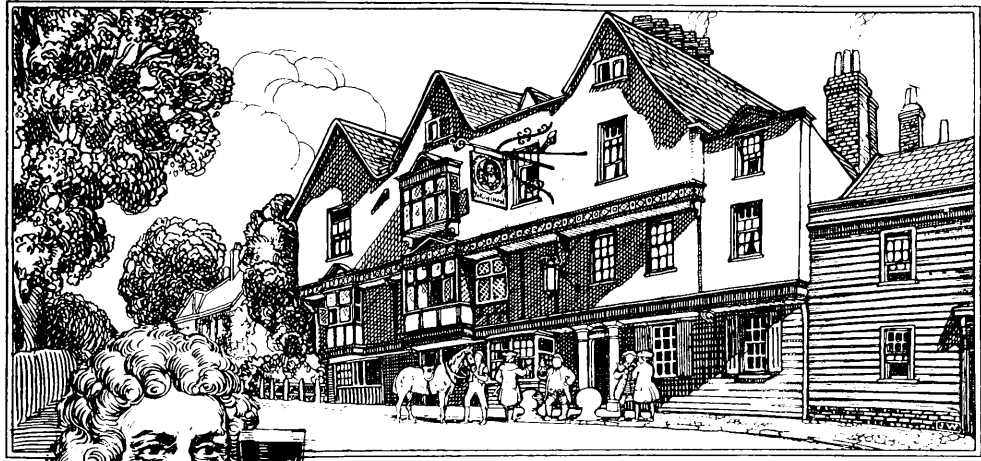
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IF YOUR
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Act Quickly

It may be Kidney disease and neglect of this leads to Rheumatic and Uric Acid troubles innumerable.

IF YOU FEEL LIKE THIS TODAY



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NO OTHER LIKE IT

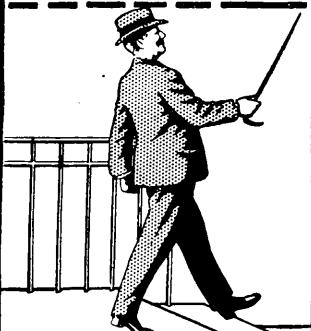


DISORDERED KIDNEYS

DO NOT NEED
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They only need a thorough flushing and cleansing. Nature will then do what no medicine can.

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ALKIA SALTRATES is a curative compound containing the essential medicinal constituents found in the waters of famous mineral springs. It enables you to enjoy the benefits of spa treatment in your own home. Alkia Saltrates acts naturally by quickly dissolving, neutralising and washing out of your body the uric acid and other impurities that directly cause Rheumatic or Gouty torture, Kidney disease, etc. etc. Millions of bottles of Alkia Saltrates have been sold during the past ten years, every bottle under our unqualified guarantee of absolute satisfaction to every user or money back immediately and without question. The sale is increasing daily. *This means something.*

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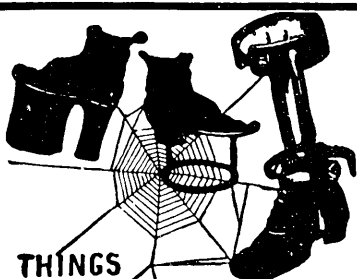


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SECRET FREE

My **FREE** Book tells all about the wonderful three days' method. Inexpensive, reliable. Also Secret Method for conquering habit in another without his knowledge. Full particulars, including my Book on Tobacco and Snuff Habit, sent in plain wrapper **FREE**.

Don't delay. Keep this; show it to others.

Edw. J. Woods, Ltd., 167, Strand (353 T.C.W.), London, W.C.2.

NEURASTHENIA

(NERVE WEAKNESS)

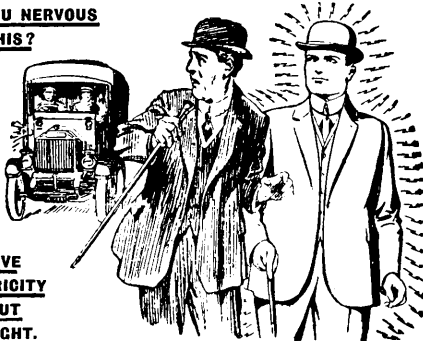
CURED BY ELECTRICITY.

To-day the conditions of life are causing a serious increase in Neurasthenia and other Nervous and Functional Disorders.

The symptoms of Neurasthenia are many and varied. They are mainly mental or nervous, and often the victim is quite unaware of the fact that he or she is travelling rapidly towards Nervous Exhaustion and Nervous Prostration.

ARE YOU NERVOUS LIKE THIS?

IF SO,
CURATIVE
ELECTRICITY
WILL PUT
YOU RIGHT.



The Pulvermacher Appliances are the only inventions for the administration of curative electricity, endorsed by over fifty leading Doctors and by the official Academy of Medicine in Paris.

HAVE YOU ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS?

Are you Nervous, Timid, or Indecisive?
Do you lack Self-Confidence?
Do you dread open or closed spaces?
Are you wanting in Will Power?
Are you "fidgety," restless, or sleepless?
Do you blush or turn pale readily?
Do you shrink from strange company?
Are you subject to sudden impulses?
Do you crave for stimulants or drugs?

If so, you can safely assume that you are suffering from Neurasthenia. The neurasthenic also often suffer from Indigestion, Liver Troubles, Constipation, Palpitation, Loss of Appetite, Excess of Appetite, and a host of other disorders due to faulty functioning of various organs. Electricity is the only force that naturally supplies this deficiency of Nerve Force, and restores tone to the whole nervous system. To-day you can be

CURED IN YOUR OWN HOME BY ELECTRICITY

by simply wearing the Pulvermacher Appliances, which are light, easy, and comfortable to wear. They give no shock, but all the time they are being worn they supply the nerve centres with a continuous flow of electricity, naturally stimulate the circulation of the blood, and increase nerve nutrition. This is the natural and physiological treatment of Neurasthenia, which drug treatments can never cure. The Pulvermacher Treatment has cured the most obstinate cases of Neurasthenia and Nervous Disorders when all other methods have failed. If you are suffering from any form of Nerve Trouble, or if you have any of the symptoms as described above, write to-day for a book that may well prove of incalculable health value to you, yet it costs you nothing. It is entitled "Guide to Health and Strength," and will be sent post free. Those who can call personally are cordially invited to do so, when Free Advice and Demonstration will be given absolutely free of charge and without obligation between the hours of 10 and 5.30 daily.

FREE COUPON

By posting this FREE FORM TO-DAY you will receive the "Guide to Health and Strength." You place yourself under no obligation by applying for this book and particulars of the Pulvermacher Appliances.

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Address.....

Post to the Superintendent, Pulvermacher Electrological Institute, Ltd., 56, Vulcan House, 56, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.
The Strand Magazine, February, 1922.



The Light of Hospitality

WITH a clatter of hoofs and a rumble of wheels the coach pulls up. The inn door is flung wide, and coach, driver, passengers and steaming horses are bathed in a stream of golden light.

Light is hospitable. Instead of the oil lamps and wax tapers of a century ago, the Royal "Ediswan," the lamp of to-day, shines a message of welcome from homes and hostelryes. Convenient, efficient, economical—there is a Royal "Ediswan" Lamp for every lighting purpose.

From all Electrical Contractors, Ironmongers and Stores.

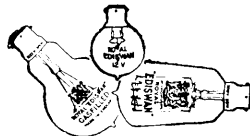
Every Genuine Lamp
Bears this mark.



Made by

The Edison Swan Electric Co.,
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Fully licensed under
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66 ROYAL
EDISWAN
GAS FILLED AND VACUUM
ELECTRIC LAMPS
for Home, Industrial and Motor Car Lighting

Are you a convincing talker?

Can you speak Interestingly, Forcefully, and Convincingly?

Can you speak Pleasingly and Correctly?

Can you speak well under ordinary or trying conditions, whether in business or social life? And do you know just what to say and how to say it?

These questions become all-important if you desire to express yourself well, whether in speech, writing, or gesture.

Correct speech increases the ability to perform better work—it has made careers. Correct speech enhances one's social attractions—people are ever ready to listen to an interesting and engaging talker.

Can you recall any splendid opportunities missed through your inability to find just the right words to say at the psychological moment? Do you remember those vexing "what might have been" that would have been avoided had you been able to express yourself properly? Perhaps not, perhaps yes! In any case, we feel sure you are not unwilling to interest yourself in any scheme that will greatly increase and improve your powers of speech.

If you have not heard of Dr. Frederick Law's Course on Business and Social Talking and Public Speaking, entitled "Mastery of Speech," we strongly urge you to study the following:

This splendid Course is composed of

eight lessons, in which the whole secret of effective speaking is disclosed. It is written in an extremely simple and interesting style, can be learned in your own home and in your spare time. No hard, grinding study is necessary; far from it—you get interested from the first page, realize its simplicity, and study becomes a pleasure.

It doesn't take long, either; students have written appreciative letters in which they tell us the secret was mastered by them *in one evening*. What they have done, you, too, can accomplish just as easily.

Here is a brief outline of what Dr. Law's Course enables you to master. The art of correct and pleasing speech. How to use words correctly. How to speak well under all ordinary or trying conditions. How to speak in business and private life, and in public places. How to find material for talking and speaking.

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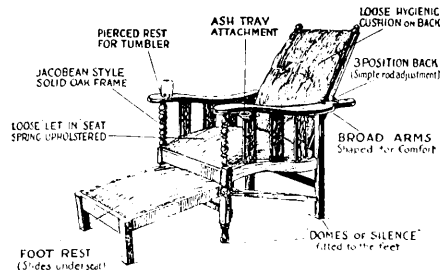
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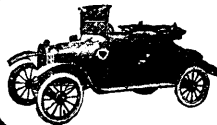
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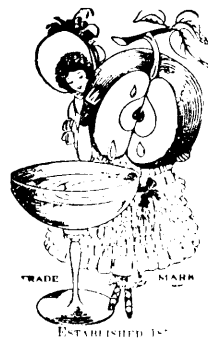
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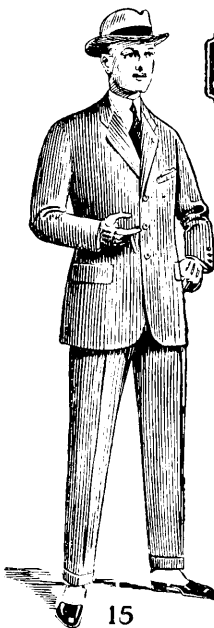
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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Contents for February, 1922.

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Frontispiece: "'It took some violence to do that,' said Holmes, gazing at the chip on the ledge. With his cane he struck the ledge several times without leaving a mark. 'Yes, it was a hard knock.'"

THE PROBLEM OF THOR BRIDGE	A. CONAN DOYLE ..	95
Illustrations by A. Gilbert, R.O.I.		
LOST "BAB BALLADS"	H. ROWLAND BROWN and ROWLAND GREY	105
Illustrations from Facsimiles.		
MUSTARD-POT—MATCHMAKER.. .. .	GILBERT FRANKAU ..	112
Illustrations by Gilbert Holiday.		
ACROSTICS		122
VARIATIONS ON A PERSONAL THEME	LANDON RONALD ..	123
III.—The First Time I Conducted.		
IV.—Accompanying at Windsor and Balmoral.		
Illustrations by Bert Thomas.		
"DEAR DUCKS"	LYNN DOYLE	129
Illustrations by Frank Gillett, R.I.		
THE GREEN BICYCLE CASE	H. TRUEMAN HUMPHRIES	136
Illustrations from Drawings and Photographs taken on the spot.		
TRICKS I SHOULD LIKE TO DO.. .. .	DAVID DEVANT	146
Illustrations by Tom Peddie.		
CREATURES OF HABIT	E. TEMPLE THURSTON ..	151
Illustrations by W. Hatherell.		
SCORING OFF JEEVES	P. G. WODEHOUSE ..	155
Illustrations by A. Wallis Mills.		
PERPLEXITIES	HENRY E. DUDENEY ..	163
Illustrations from Diagrams.		
DO CATS THINK?	W. H. HUDSON	164
Illustrations by Tom Peddie.		
THE SINISTER QUEST OF NORMAN GREYES	E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM..	170
III.—The Menwood Road Bank Robbery.		
Illustrations by Charles Crombie.		
A CORNER IN WORMS	WILLIAM CAINE	181
Illustrations by H. M. Bateman.		

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“‘IT TOOK SOME VIOLENCE TO DO THAT,’ SAID HOLMES, GAZING AT THE CHIP ON THE LEDGE. WITH HIS CANE HE STRUCK THE LEDGE SEVERAL TIMES WITHOUT LEAVING A MARK. ‘YES, IT WAS A HARD KNOCK.’”

(See page 103.)

A NEW SHERLOCK HOLMES STORY

THE PROBLEM OF THOR BRIDGE

by
A. CONAN DOYLE

SOMEWHERE in the vaults of the bank of Cox and Co., at Charing

Cross, there is a travel-worn and battered tin despatch-box with my name, John H. Watson, M.D., Late Indian Army, painted upon the lid. It is crammed with papers, nearly all of which are records of cases to illustrate the curious problems which Mr. Sherlock Holmes had at various times to examine. Some, and not the least interesting, were complete failures, and as such will hardly bear narrating, since no final explanation is forthcoming. A

problem without a solution may interest the student, but can hardly fail to annoy the casual reader. Among these unfinished

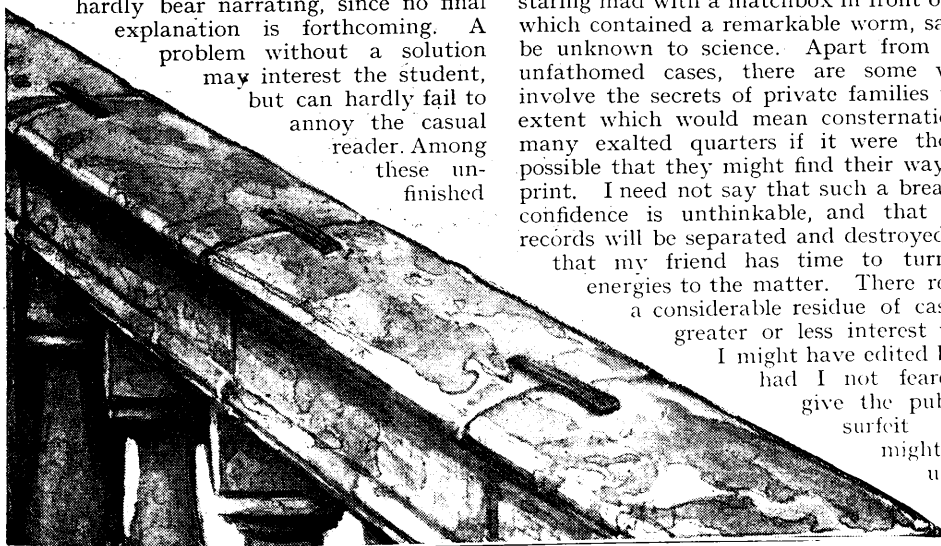
ILLUSTRATED BY
A. GILBERT ROY

tales is that of Mr. James Phillimore, who, stepping back into his own house

to get his umbrella, was never more seen in this world. No less remarkable is that of the cutter *Alicia*, which sailed one spring morning into a small patch of mist from which she never again emerged, nor was anything further ever heard of herself and her crew. A third case worthy of note is that of Isadora Persano, the well-known journalist and duellist, who was found stark staring mad with a matchbox in front of him which contained a remarkable worm, said to be unknown to science. Apart from these unfathomed cases, there are some which involve the secrets of private families to an extent which would mean consternation in many exalted quarters if it were thought possible that they might find their way into print. I need not say that such a breach of confidence is unthinkable, and that these records will be separated and destroyed now

that my friend has time to turn his energies to the matter. There remain a considerable residue of cases of greater or less interest which

I might have edited before had I not feared to give the public a surfeit which might react upon



The Problem of Thor Bridge

"the reputation of the man whom above all others I revere. In some I was myself concerned and can speak as an eye-witness, while in others I was either not present or played so small a part that they could only be told as by a third person. The following narrative is drawn from my own experience."

It was a wild morning in October, and I observed as I was dressing how the last remaining leaves were being whirled from the solitary plane tree which graces the yard behind our house. I descended to breakfast prepared to find my companion in depressed spirits, for, like all great artists, he was easily impressed by his surroundings. On the contrary, I found that he had nearly finished his meal, and that his mood was particularly bright and joyous, with that somewhat sinister cheerfulness which was characteristic of his lighter moments.

"You have a case, Holmes?" I remarked.

"The faculty of deduction is certainly contagious, Watson," he answered. "It has enabled you to probe my secret. Yes, I have a case. After a month of trivialities and stagnation the wheels move once more."

"Might I share it?"

"There is little to share, but we may discuss it when you have consumed the two hard-boiled eggs with which our new cook has favoured us. Their condition may not be unconnected with the copy of the *Family Herald* which I observed yesterday upon the hall-table. Even so trivial a matter as cooking an egg demands an attention which is conscious of the passage of time, and incompatible with the love romance in that excellent periodical."

A QUARTER of an hour later the table had been cleared and we were face to face. He had drawn a letter from his pocket.

"You have heard of Neil Gibson, the Gold King?" he said.

"You mean the American Senator?"

"Well, he was once Senator for some Western State, but is better known as the greatest gold-mining magnate in the world."

"Yes, I know of him. He has surely lived in England for some time. His name is very familiar."

"Yes; he bought a considerable estate in Hampshire some five years ago. Possibly you have already heard of the tragic end of his wife?"

"Of course. I remember it now. That is why the name is familiar. But I really know nothing of the details."

Holmes waved his hand towards some papers on a chair. "I had no idea that the case was coming my way or I should have had my extracts ready," said he. "The fact is that the problem, though exceedingly

sensational, appeared to present no difficulty. The interesting personality of the accused does not obscure the clearness of the evidence. That was the view taken by the coroner's jury and also in the police-court proceedings. It is now referred to the Assizes at Winchester. I fear it is a thankless business. I can discover facts, Watson, but I cannot change them. Unless some entirely new and unexpected ones come to light I do not see what my client can hope for."

"Your client?"

"Ah, I forgot I had not told you. I am getting into your involved habit, Watson, of telling a story backwards. You had best read this first."

The letter which he handed to me, written in a bold, masterful hand, ran as follows:—

CLARIDGE'S HOTEL,

October 3rd.

DEAR MR. SHERLOCK HOLMES,—

I can't see the best woman God ever made go to her death without doing all that is possible to save her. I can't explain things—I can't even try to explain them, but I know beyond all doubt that Miss Dunbar is innocent. You know the facts—who doesn't? It has been the gossip of the country. And never a voice raised for her! It's the damned injustice of it all that makes me crazy. That woman has a heart that wouldn't let her kill a fly. Well, I'll come at eleven to-morrow and see if you can get some ray of light in the dark. Maybe I have a clue and don't know it. Anyhow, all I know and all I have and all I am are for your use if only you can save her. If ever in your life you showed your powers, put them now into this case.

Yours faithfully,

J. NEIL GIBSON.

"There you have it," said Sherlock Holmes, knocking out the ashes of his after-breakfast pipe and slowly refilling it. "That is the gentleman I await. As to the story, you have hardly time to master all these papers, so I must give it to you in a nutshell if you are to take an intelligent interest in the proceedings. This man is the greatest financial power in the world, and a man, as I understand, of most violent and formidable character. He married a wife, the victim of this tragedy, of whom I know nothing save that she was past her prime, which was the more unfortunate as a very attractive governess superintended the education of two young children. These are the three people concerned and the scene is a grand old manor house, the centre of an historical English estate. Then as to the tragedy. The wife was found in the grounds nearly half a mile from the house, late at night, clad

in her dinner dress, with a shawl over her shoulders and a revolver bullet through her brain. No weapon was found near her and there was no local clue as to the murder. No weapon near her, Watson—mark that! The crime seems to have been committed late in the evening, and the body was found by a gamekeeper about eleven o'clock, when it was examined by the police and by a doctor before being carried up to the house. Is this too condensed, or can you follow it clearly?"

"It is all very clear. But why suspect the governess?"

"Well, in the first place there is some very direct evidence. A revolver with one discharged chamber and a calibre which corresponded with the bullet was found on the floor of her wardrobe." His eyes fixed and he repeated in broken words, "On—the—floor—of—her—wardrobe." Then he sank into silence, and I saw that some train of thought had been set moving which I should be foolish to interrupt. Suddenly with a start he emerged into brisk life once more.

"Yes, Watson, it was found. Pretty damning, eh? So the two juries thought. Then the dead woman had a note upon her making an appointment at that very place and signed by the governess. How's that? Finally, there is the motive. Senator Gibson is an attractive person. If his wife dies, who more likely to succeed her than the young lady who had already by all accounts received pressing attentions from her employer? Love, fortune, power, all depending upon one middle-aged life. Ugly, Watson—very ugly!"

deny it, for some passing villager had seen her there."

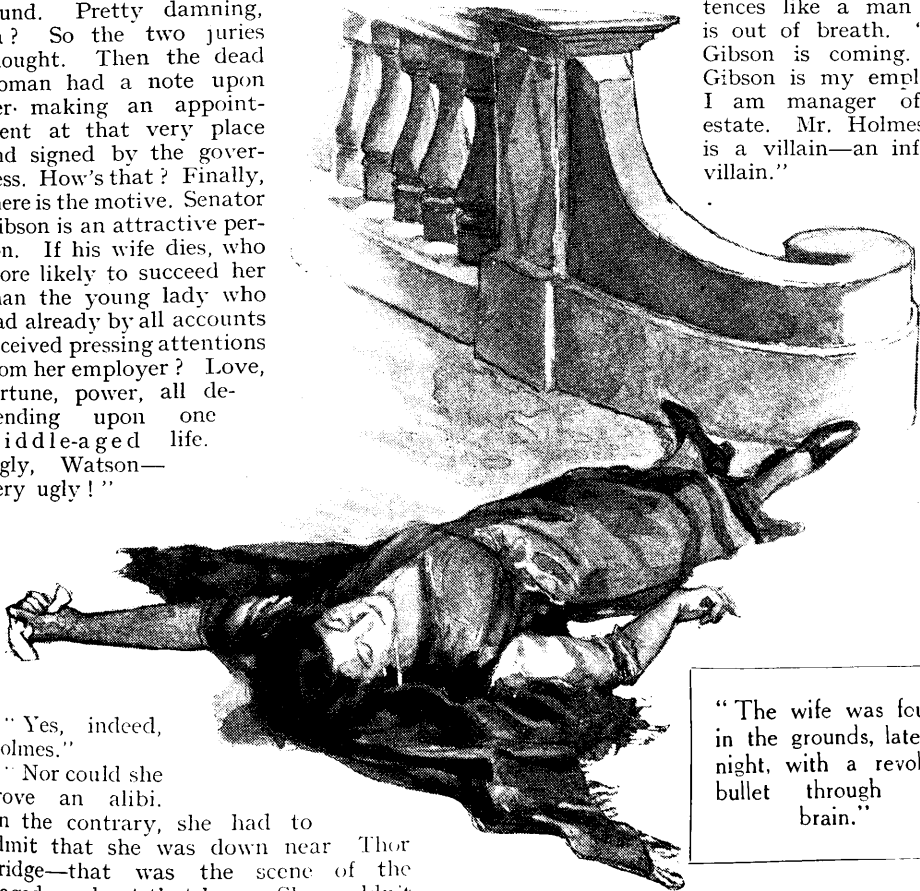
"That really seems final."

"And yet, Watson—and yet! This bridge—a single broad span of stone with balustraded sides—carries the drive over the narrowest part of a long, deep, reed-girt sheet of water. Thor Mere it is called. In the mouth of the bridge lay the dead woman. Such are the main facts. But here, if I mistake not, is our client, considerably before his time."

Billy had opened the door, but the name which he announced was an unexpected one. Mr. Marlow Bates was a stranger to both of us. He was a thin, nervous wisp of a man with frightened eyes, and a twitching, hesitating manner—a man whom my own professional eye would judge to be on the brink of an absolute nervous breakdown.

"You seem agitated, Mr. Bates," said Holmes. "Pray sit down. I fear I can only give you a short time, for I have an appointment at eleven."

"I know you have," our visitor gasped, shooting out short sentences like a man who is out of breath. "Mr. Gibson is coming. Mr. Gibson is my employer. I am manager of his estate. Mr. Holmes, he is a villain—an infernal villain."



"Yes, indeed, Holmes."

"Nor could she prove an alibi. On the contrary, she had to admit that she was down near Thor Bridge—that was the scene of the tragedy—about that hour. She couldn't

"The wife was found in the grounds, late at night, with a revolver bullet through her brain."

The Problem of Thor Bridge

"Strong language, Mr. Bates."

"I have to be emphatic, Mr. Holmes, for the time is so limited. I would not have him find me here for the world. He is almost due now. But I was so situated that I could not come earlier. His secretary, Mr. Ferguson, only told me this morning of his appointment with you."

"And you are his manager?"

"I have given him notice. In a couple of weeks I shall have shaken off his accursed slavery. A hard man, Mr. Holmes, hard to all about him. Those public charities are a screen to cover his private iniquities. But his wife was his chief victim. He was brutal to her—yes, sir, brutal! How she came by her death I do not know, but I am sure that he had made her life a misery to her. She was a creature of the Tropics, a Brazilian by birth, as no doubt you know?"

"No; it had escaped me."

"Tropical by birth and tropical by nature. A child of the sun and of passion. She had loved him as such women can love, but when her own physical charms had faded—I am told that they once were great—there was nothing to hold him. We all liked her and felt for her and hated him for the way that he treated her. But he is plausible and cunning. That is all I have to say to you. Don't take him at his face value. There is more behind. Now I'll go. No, no, don't detain me! He is almost due."

With a frightened look at the clock our strange visitor literally ran to the door and disappeared.

"Well! well!" said Holmes, after an interval of silence. "Mr. Gibson seems to have a nice loyal household. But the warning is a useful one, and now we can only wait till the man himself appears."

SHARP at the hour we heard a heavy step upon the stairs and the famous millionaire was shown into the room. As I looked upon him I understood not only the fears and dislike of his manager, but also the execrations which so many business rivals have heaped upon his head. If I were a sculptor and desired to idealize the successful man of affairs, iron of nerve and leathery of conscience, I should choose Mr. Neil Gibson as my model. His tall, gaunt, craggy figure had a suggestion of hunger and rapacity. An Abraham Lincoln keyed to base uses instead of high ones would give some idea of the man. His face might have been chiselled in granite, hard-set, craggy, remorseless, with deep lines upon it, the scars of many a crisis. Cold grey eyes, looking shrewdly out from under bristling brows, surveyed us each in turn. He bowed in perfunctory fashion as Holmes mentioned my name, and then with a masterful air of possession he

drew a chair up to my companion and seated himself with his bony knees almost touching him.

"Let me say right here, Mr. Holmes," he began, "that money is nothing to me in this case. You can burn it if it's any use in lighting you to the truth. This woman is innocent and this woman has to be cleared, and it's up to you to do it. Name your figure!"

"My professional charges are upon a fixed scale," said Holmes, coldly. "I do not vary them, save when I remit them altogether."

"Well, if dollars make no difference to you, think of the reputation. If you pull this off every paper in England and America will be booming you. You'll be the talk of two continents."

"Thank you, Mr. Gibson, I do not think that I am in need of booming. It may surprise you to know that I prefer to work anonymously and that it is the problem itself which attracts me. But we are wasting time. Let us get down to the facts."

"I think that you will find all the main ones in the Press reports. I don't know that I can add anything which will help you. But if there is anything you would wish more light upon—well, I am here to give it."

"Well, there is just one point."

"What is it?"

"What were the exact relations between you and Miss Dunbar?"

The Gold King gave a violent start, and half rose from his chair. Then his massive calm came back to him.

"I suppose you are within your rights—and maybe doing your duty—in asking such a question, Mr. Holmes."

"We will agree to suppose so," said Holmes.

"Then I can assure you that our relations were entirely and always those of an employer towards a young lady whom he never conversed with, or even saw, save when she was in the company of his children."

Holmes rose from his chair.

"I am a rather busy man, Mr. Gibson," said he, "and I have no time or taste for aimless conversations. I wish you good morning."

Our visitor had risen also and his great loose figure towered above Holmes. There was an angry gleam from under those bristling brows and a tinge of colour in the sallow cheeks.

"What the devil do you mean by this, Mr. Holmes? Do you dismiss my case?"

"Well, Mr. Gibson, at least I dismiss you. I should have thought my words were plain."

"Plain enough, but what's at the back of it? Raising the price on me, or afraid to tackle it, or what? I've a right to a plain answer."



"I sprang to my feet, for the expression upon the millionaire's face was fiendish in its intensity, and he had raised his great knotted fist. Holmes smiled languidly and reached his hand out for his pipe."

The Problem of Thor Bridge

"Well, perhaps you have," said Holmes. "I'll give you one. This case is quite sufficiently complicated to start with, without the further difficulty of false information."

"Meaning that I lie."

"Well, I was trying to express it as delicately as I could, but if you insist upon the word I will not contradict you."

I sprang to my feet, for the expression upon the millionaire's face was fiendish in its intensity, and he had raised his great knotted fist. Holmes smiled languidly and reached his hand out for his pipe.

"Don't be noisy, Mr. Gibson. I find that after breakfast even the smallest argument is unsettling. I suggest that a stroll in the morning air and a little quiet thought will be greatly to your advantage."

With an effort the Gold King mastered his fury. I could not but admire him, for by a supreme self-command he had turned in a minute from a hot flame of anger to a frigid and contemptuous indifference.

"Well, it's your choice. I guess you know how to run your own business. I can't make you touch the case against your will. You've done yourself no good this morning, Mr. Holmes, for I have broken stronger men than you. No man ever crossed me and was the better for it."

"So many have said so, and yet here I am," said Holmes, smiling. "Well, good morning, Mr. Gibson. You have a good deal yet to learn."

Our visitor made a noisy exit, but Holmes smoked in imperturbable silence, with dreamy eyes fixed upon the ceiling.

"ANY views, Watson?" he asked at last. "Well, Holmes, I must confess that when I consider that this is a man who would certainly brush any obstacle from his path, and when I remember that his wife may have been an obstacle and an object of dislike, as that man Bates plainly told us, it seems to me—"

"Exactly. And to me also."

"But what were his relations with the governess and how did you discover them?"

"Bluff, Watson, bluff! When I considered the passionate, unconventional, unbusinesslike tone of his letter, and contrasted it with his self-contained manner and appearance, it was pretty clear that there was some deep emotion which centred upon the accused woman rather than upon the victim. We've got to understand the exact relations of those three people if we are to reach the truth. You saw the frontal attack which I made upon him and how imperturbably he received it. Then I bluffed him by giving him the impression that I was absolutely certain, when in reality I was only extremely suspicious."

"Perhaps he will come back?"

"He is sure to come back. He *must* come back. He can't leave it where it is. Ha! isn't that a ring? Yes, there is his footstep. Well, Mr. Gibson, I was just saying to Dr. Watson that you were somewhat overdue."

The Gold King had re-entered the room in a more chastened mood than he had left it. His wounded pride still showed in his resentful eyes, but his common sense had shown him that he must yield if he would attain his end.

"I've been thinking it over, Mr. Holmes, and I feel that I have been hasty in taking your remarks amiss. You are justified in getting down to the facts, whatever they may be, and I think the more of you for it. I can assure you, however, that the relations between Miss Dunbar and me don't really touch this case."

"That is for me to decide, is it not?"

"Yes, I guess that is so. You're like a surgeon who wants every symptom before he can give his diagnosis."

"Exactly. That expresses it. And it is only a patient who has an object in deceiving his surgeon who would conceal the facts of his case."

"That may be so, but you will admit, Mr. Holmes, that most men would shy off a bit when they are asked point-blank what their relations with a woman may be—if there is really some serious feeling in the case. I guess most men have a little private reserve of their own in some corner of their souls where they don't welcome intruders. And you burst suddenly into it. But the object excuses you, since it was to try and save her. Well, the stakes are down and the reserve open and you can explore where you will. What is it you want?"

"The truth."

The Gold King paused for a moment as one who marshals his thoughts. His grim, deep-lined face had become even sadder and more grave.

"I can give it to you in a very few words, Mr. Holmes," said he at last. "There are some things that are painful as well as difficult to say, so I won't go deeper than is needful. I met my wife when I was gold-hunting in Brazil. Maria Pinto was the daughter of a Government official at Manaos, and she was very beautiful. I was young and ardent in those days, but even now, as I look back with colder blood and a more critical eye, I can see that she was rare and wonderful in her beauty. It was a deep rich nature, too, passionate, whole-hearted, tropical, ill-balanced, very different from the American women whom I had known. Well, to make a long story short, I loved her and I married her. It was only when the romance had passed—and it lingered for years—that

I realized that we had nothing—absolutely nothing—in common. My love faded. If hers had faded also it might have been easier. But you know the wonderful way of women! Do what I might nothing could turn her from me. If I have been harsh to her, even brutal as some have said, it has been because I knew that if I could kill her love, or if it turned to hate, it would be easier for both of us. But nothing changed her. She adored me in those English woods as she had adored me twenty years ago on the banks of the Amazon. Do what I might, she was as devoted as ever.

"Then came Miss Grace Dunbar. She answered our advertisement and became governess to our two children. Perhaps you have seen her portrait in the papers. The whole world has proclaimed that she also is a very beautiful woman. Now, I make no pretence to be more moral than my neighbours, and I will admit to you that I could not live under the same roof with such a woman and in daily contact with her without feeling a passionate regard for her. Do you blame me, Mr. Holmes?"

"I do not blame you for feeling it. I should blame you if you expressed it, since this young lady was in a sense under your protection."

"Well, maybe so," said the millionaire, though for a moment the reproof had brought the old angry gleam into his eyes. "I'm not pretending to be any better than I am. I guess all my life I've been a man that reached out his hand for what he wanted, and I never wanted anything more than the love and possession of that woman. I told her so."

"Oh, you did, did you?"

Holmes could look very formidable when he was moved.

"I said to her that if I could marry her I would, but that it was out of my power. I said that money was no object and that all I could do to make her happy and comfortable would be done."

"Very generous, I am sure," said Holmes, with a sneer.

"See here, Mr. Holmes. I came to you on a question of evidence, not on a question of morals. I'm not asking for your criticism."

"It is only for the young lady's sake that I touch your case at all," said Holmes, sternly. "I don't know that anything she is accused of is really worse than what you have yourself admitted, that you have tried to ruin a defenceless girl who was under your roof. Some of you rich men have to be taught that all the world cannot be bribed into condoning your offences."

To my surprise the Gold King took the reproof with equanimity.

"That's how I feel myself about it now.

I thank God that my plans did not work out as I intended. She would have none of it, and she wanted to leave the house instantly."

"Why did she not?"

"Well, in the first place, others were dependent upon her, and it was no light matter for her to let them all down by sacrificing her living. When I had sworn—as I did—that she should never be molested again, she consented to remain. But there was another reason. She knew the influence she had over me, and that it was stronger than any other influence in the world. She wanted to use it for good."

"How?"

"Well, she knew something of my affairs. They are large, Mr. Holmes—large beyond the belief of an ordinary man. I can make or break—and it is usually break. It wasn't individuals only. It was communities, cities, even nations. Business is a hard game, and the weak go to the wall. I played the game for all it was worth. I never squealed myself and I never cared if the other fellow squealed. But she saw it different. I guess she was right. She believed and said that a fortune for one man that was more than he needed should not be built on ten thousand ruined men who were left without the means of life. That was how she saw it, and I guess she could see past the dollars to something that was more lasting. She found that I listened to what she said, and she believed she was serving the world by influencing my actions. So she stayed—and then this came along."

"Can you throw any light upon that?"

THE Gold King paused for a minute or more, his head sunk in his hands, lost in deep thought.

"It's very black against her. I can't deny that. And women lead an inward life and may do things beyond the judgment of a man. At first I was so rattled and taken aback that I was ready to think she had been led away in some extraordinary fashion that was clean against her usual nature. One explanation came into my head. I give it to you, Mr. Holmes, for what it is worth. There is no doubt that my wife was bitterly jealous. There is a soul-jealousy that can be as frantic as any body-jealousy, and though my wife had no cause—and I think she understood this—for the latter, she was aware that this English girl exerted an influence upon my mind and my acts that she herself never had. It was an influence for good, but that did not mend the matter. She was crazy with hatred, and the heat of the Amazon was always in her blood. She might have planned to murder Miss Dunbar—or we will say to threaten her with a gun and so frighten her into leaving us. Then

The Problem of Thor Bridge

there might have been a scuffle and the gun gone off and shot the woman who held it."

"That possibility had already occurred to me," said Holmes. "Indeed, it is the only obvious alternative to deliberate murder."

"But she utterly denies it."

"Well, that is not final—is it? One can understand that a woman placed in so awful a position might hurry home still in her bewilderment holding the revolver. She might even throw it down among her clothes, hardly knowing what she was doing, and when it was found she might try to lie her way out by a total denial, since all explanation was impossible. What is against such a supposition?"

"Miss Dunbar herself."

"Well, perhaps."

Holmes looked at his watch. "I have no doubt we can get the necessary permits this morning and reach Winchester by the evening train. When I have seen this young lady, it is very possible that I may be of more use to you in the matter, though I cannot promise that my conclusions will necessarily be such as you desire."

THERE was some delay in the official pass, and instead of reaching Winchester that day we went down to Thor Place, the Hampshire estate of Mr. Neil Gibson. He did not accompany us himself, but we had the address of Sergeant Coventry, of the local police, who had first examined into the affair. He was a tall, thin, cadaverous man, with a secretive and mysterious manner, which conveyed the idea that he knew or suspected a very great deal more than he dared say. He had a trick, too, of suddenly sinking his voice to a whisper as if he had come upon something of vital importance, though the information was usually commonplace enough. Behind these tricks of manner he soon showed himself to be a decent, honest fellow who was not too proud to admit that he was out of his depth and would welcome any help.

"Anyhow, I'd rather have you than Scotland Yard, Mr. Holmes," said he. "If the Yard gets called into a case, then the local loses all credit for success and may be blamed for failure. Now, you play straight, so I've heard."

"I need not appear in the matter at all," said Holmes, to the evident relief of our melancholy acquaintance. "If I can clear it up I don't ask to have my name mentioned."

"Well, it's very handsome of you, I am sure. And your friend, Dr. Watson, can be trusted, I know. Now, Mr. Holmes, as we walk down to the place there is one question I should like to ask you. I'd breathe it to no soul but you." He looked round as though he hardly dare utter the words.

"Don't you think there might be a case against Mr. Neil Gibson himself?"

"I have been considering that."

"You've not seen Miss Dunbar. She is a wonderful fine woman in every way. He may well have wished his wife out of the road. And these Americans are readier with pistols than our folk are. It was *his* pistol, you know."

"Was that clearly made out?"

"Yes, sir. It was one of a pair that he had."

"One of a pair? Where is the other?"

"Well, the gentleman has a lot of firearms of one sort and another. We never quite matched that particular pistol—but the box was made for two."

"If it was one of a pair you should surely be able to match it."

"Well, we have them all laid out at the house if you would care to look them over."

"Later, perhaps. I think we will walk down together and have a look at the scene of the tragedy."

This conversation had taken place in the little front room of Sergeant Coventry's humble cottage, which served as the local police-station. A walk of half a mile or so across a wind-swept heath, all gold and bronze with the fading ferns, brought us to a side gate opening into the grounds of the Thor Place estate. A path led us through the pheasant preserves, and then from a clearing we saw the widespread, half-timbered house, half Tudor and half Georgian, upon the crest of the hill. Beside us there was a long, reedy pool, constricted in the centre where the main carriage drive passed over a stone bridge, but swelling into small lakes on either side. Our guide paused at the mouth of this bridge, and he pointed to the ground.

"That was where Mrs. Gibson's body lay. I marked it by that stone."

"I understand that you were there before it was moved?"

"Yes; they sent for me at once."

"Who did?"

"Mr. Gibson himself. The moment the alarm was given and he had rushed down with others from the house, he insisted that nothing should be moved until the police should arrive."

"That was sensible. I gathered from the newspaper report that the shot was fired from close quarters."

"Yes, sir, very close."

"Near the right temple?"

"Just behind it, sir."

"How did the body lie?"

"On the back, sir. No trace of a struggle. No marks. No weapon. The short note from Miss Dunbar was clutched in her left hand."

"Clutched, you say?"
 "Yes, sir; we could hardly open the fingers."

"That is of great importance. It excludes the idea that anyone could have placed the note there after death in order to furnish a false clue. Dear me! The note, as I remember, was quite short. 'I will be at Thor Bridge at nine o'clock.—G. Dunbar.' Was that not so?"

"Yes, sir."
 "Did Miss Dunbar admit writing it?"

"Yes, sir."
 "What was her explanation?"

"Her defence was reserved for the Assizes. She would say nothing."

"The problem is certainly a very interesting one. The point of the letter is very obscure, is it not?"

"Well, sir," said the guide, "it seemed, if I may be so bold as to say so, the only really clear point in the whole case."

Holmes shook his head.
 "Granting that the letter is genuine and was really written, it was certainly received some time before—say one hour or two. Why, then, was this lady still clasping it in her left hand? Why should she carry it so carefully? She did not need to refer to it in the interview. Does it not seem remarkable?"

"Well, sir, as you put it, perhaps it does."
 "I think I should like to sit quietly for a few minutes and think it out." He seated himself upon the stone ledge of the bridge, and I could see his quick grey eyes darting their questioning glances in every direction. Suddenly he sprang up again and ran across to the opposite parapet, whipped his lens from his pocket, and began to examine the stonework.

"This is curious," said he.
 "Yes, sir; we saw the chip on the ledge. I expect it's been done by some passer-by."
 The stonework was grey, but at this one point it showed white for a space not larger than a sixpence. When examined closely one could see that the surface was chipped away by a sharp blow.

"It took some violence to do that," said



"Our guide pointed to the ground. 'That was where Mrs. Gibson's body lay.'"

Holmes, thoughtfully. With his cane he struck the ledge several times without leaving a mark. "Yes, it was a hard knock. In a curious place, too. It was not from above but from below, for you see that it is on the *lower* edge of the parapet."

"But it is at least fifteen feet from the body."

"Yes, it is fifteen feet from the body. It may have nothing to do with the matter, but it is a point worth noting. I do not think that we have anything more to learn here. There were no footsteps, you say?"

"The ground was iron hard, sir. There were no traces at all."

"Then we can go. We will go up to the house first and look over these weapons of

The Problem of Thor Bridge

which you speak. Then we shall get on to Winchester, for I should desire to see Miss Dunbar before we go farther."

MR. NEIL GIBSON had not returned from town, but we saw in the house the neurotic Mr. Bates who had called upon us in the morning. He showed us with a sinister relish the formidable array of firearms of various shapes and sizes which his employer had accumulated in the course of an adventurous life.

"Mr. Gibson has his enemies, as anyone would expect who knew him and his methods," said he. "He sleeps with a loaded revolver in the drawer beside his bed. He is a man of violence, sir, and there are times when all of us are afraid of him. I am sure that the poor lady who has passed was often terrified."

"Did you ever witness physical violence towards her?"

"No, I cannot say that. But I have heard words which were nearly as bad—words of cold, cutting contempt, even before the servants."

"Our millionaire does not seem to shine in private life," remarked Holmes, as we made our way to the station. "Well, Watson, we have come on a good many facts, some of them new ones, and yet I seem some way from my conclusion. In spite of the very evident dislike which Mr. Bates has to his employer, I gather from him that when the alarm came he was undoubtedly in his library. Dinner was over at eight-thirty and all was normal up to then. It is true that the alarm was somewhat late in the evening, but the tragedy certainly occurred about the hour named in the note. There is no evidence at all that Mr. Gibson had been out of doors since his return from town at five o'clock. On the other hand, Miss Dunbar, as I understand it, admits that she had made an appointment to meet Mrs. Gibson at the bridge. Beyond this she would say nothing, as her lawyer had advised her to reserve her defence. We have several very vital questions to ask that young lady, and my mind will not be easy until we have seen her. I must confess that the case would seem to me to be very black against her if it were not for one thing."

"And what is that, Holmes?"

"The finding of the pistol in her wardrobe."

"Dear me, Holmes!" I cried, "that seemed to me to be the most damning incident of all."

"Not so, Watson. It had struck me even at my first perfunctory reading as very strange, and now that I am in closer touch with the case it is my only firm ground for hope. We must look for consistency. Where there is a want of it we must suspect deception."

"I hardly follow you."

"Well now, Watson, suppose for a moment that we visualize you in the character of a woman who, in a cold, premeditated fashion, is about to get rid of a rival. You have planned it. A note has been written. The victim has come. You have your weapon. The crime is done. It has been workmanlike and complete. Do you tell me that after carrying out so crafty a crime you would now ruin your reputation as a criminal by forgetting to fling your weapon into those adjacent reed-beds which would for ever cover it, but you must needs carry it carefully home and put it in your own wardrobe, the very first place that would be searched? Your best friends would hardly call you a schemer, Watson, and yet I could not picture you doing anything so crude as that."

"In the excitement of the moment——"

"No, no, Watson, I will not admit that it is possible. Where a crime is coolly premeditated, then the means of covering it are coolly premeditated also. I hope, therefore, that we are in the presence of a serious misconception."

"But there is so much to explain."

"Well, we shall set about explaining it. When once your point of view is changed, the very thing which was so damning becomes a clue to the truth. For example, there is this revolver. Miss Dunbar disclaims all knowledge of it. On our new theory she is speaking truth when she says so. Therefore, it was placed in her wardrobe. Who placed it there? Someone who wished to incriminate her. Was not that person the actual criminal? You see how we come at once upon a most fruitful line of inquiry."

(The extraordinary solution of this enthralling problem will appear next month.)



LOST "BAB BALLADS"

SOME NEW LIGHT ON W. S. GILBERT AND THE SAVOY OPERAS.

By H. ROWLAND BROWN and ROWLAND GREY.

The writers of the following article, who were friends in his later years of Sir W. S. Gilbert, possess an unrivalled knowledge of the man and his methods of work. The "Bab Ballads" here given, which are illustrated by Gilbert's own drawings, were never reprinted in book form, and to most readers will be perfectly new.

OUR charming business here is to draw upon Gilbert's earliest contributions of wit and satire, poured forth in his literary youth, and to show how surely the masterpieces of his maturity have their source in those far-off golden years when all the town awaited the weekly "Bab."

To revert to magenta-bound volumes of the long-deceased *Fun* is not, however, a high road to the discovery of the lost Gilbert. Much he wrote in those pages is unsigned—how much, only we fortunate possessors of his own marked copies can be fully aware, for there are notably countless paragraphs, rarely without a characteristic initial letter, proving him as eager to play the chivalrous champion to the friendless and needy as to draw his glittering rapier against pretence and vulgarity. From the first "his foe was folly and his weapon wit," his heart softer than many guessed. When a girl employed by a fashionable milliner died of overwork, Gilbert attacked her "murderer" by name with burning words. Case after case did he castigate, till cowards learnt to wince under the whip of *Fun*.

Coming events cast their shadows before in such series as the "Comic Physiognomist" and "Men I Have Met" irresistibly portrayed. There is not a line uninteresting to the good Gilbertian, because between them lurk the origins of many a famous ditty. "Bores are of four kinds" may be instanced:—

"1. Those who neither amuse nor instruct. 2. Those who amuse without instruction. 3. Those who instruct without amusing. 4. Those who profess to combine instruction and amusement."

For each of such "prosy, dull, society sinners" he was, later, to apportion the punishment to "fit the crime."

There are those alive who recall passing the tuck-shop with stoicism in their youth to keep the penny that would ensure a "Bab." Yet Gilbert excuses publication in book form with his invariable modesty, on the ground that the verses sub-titled "Much Sound and Little Sense" "seem to have won a sort of whimsical popularity." "They are not, as a rule, founded on fact," he goes on, demurely. "I have ventured to publish the little pictures with them because, while they are certainly quite as bad as the ballads, I suppose they are not much worse." The pictures are, indeed, beyond criticism. They defy it. They may be technically all wrong; humoristically they are all right.

Alas! it was Gilbert himself who committed the essentially Gilbertian sin of tinkering these classics, for in the last edition he edited during his lifetime his "improvements" broke the spell of cherished illusions. He perpetrated another literary crime even harder to forgive in condemning nearly twenty innocent "Babs" to burial alive. They were not reprinted in the book.

One such—a veritable "Bab" in prose—is "Our Own Pantomime. Harlequin Wilkinson; or The Fairy Pew-Opener and the Vicar of Pendleton-cum-Turnip-Top." Surely no great discernment is required to find distinct suggestions, both of "The Sorcerer" and "Trial by Jury," here.

It is sad that space lacks to quote "Gemma di Vergy," "a five-act play in blank verse suitable for Miss Bateman," for it is noteworthy that Jumbles the Jester gives a hint of the incomparable Jack Point:—

"JULIA: A murrain on thee, thou fool!

"JUMBLES (*sarcastically*): Nay, it is thou

Lost "Bab Ballads"

that art the fool, and I, Jumbles the Jester, am a wise man.

"GEMMA (*sternly*): This jester has amused me oft by his rare wit.

"JUMBLES (*feeling himself called upon to say something smart*): Then art thou forsworn, and I, the fool, am the wiser of the twain."

THE LOST "BABS."

To pass to the rhymed "Babs," which have become lost because never republished, is at once to perceive their real literary importance. Lear, Calverley, "Bon Gaultier,"



Lewis Carroll, produced flowers of airy fancy which are perennial joys. These, however, are not flowers only. The "Babs" bore fruit—the fruit of the joyous operas compact of the art that conceals art. "The Story of Gentle Archibald," who wanted to be a clown, a cautionary tale Mr. Belloc could not surpass, is among the disinterred. "Archibald the All-Right" of "Patience" might have written it, and its analogy with those dear favourites of that opera, "Teasing Tom" and "Gentle Jane," need no underlining.

My children, once I knew a boy
(His name was Archibald Molloy)
Whose kind papa, one Christmas-time,
Took him to see a pantomime,
He was a mild, delightful boy,
Who hated jokes that caused annoy:
And none who knew him could complain
That Archy ever gave them pain.
But don't suppose he was a sad
Or serious, solemn kind of lad;
Indeed, he was a cheerful son,
Renowned for mild, respectful fun.

But, oh! it was a rueful day
When he was taken to the play;
The Christmas pantomime that night
Destroyed his gentle nature quite:
And as they walked along the road
That led to his papa's abode,
As on they trudged through muck and mire,
He said, "Papa, if you desire
My fondest hopes and joys to crown,
Allow me to become a clown!"
I will not here attempt to show
The bitter agony and woe,
The sorrow and depression dire
Of Archy's old and feeble sire.
"Oh, Archibald," said he, "my boy,
My darling Archibald Molloy!
Attention for one moment lend.
You cannot seriously intend
To spend a roving life in town,
As vulgar, base, dishonest clown,
And leave your father in the lurch
Who aways meant you for the Church,
And nightly dreams he sees his boy,
'The Reverend Archibald Molloy'!"

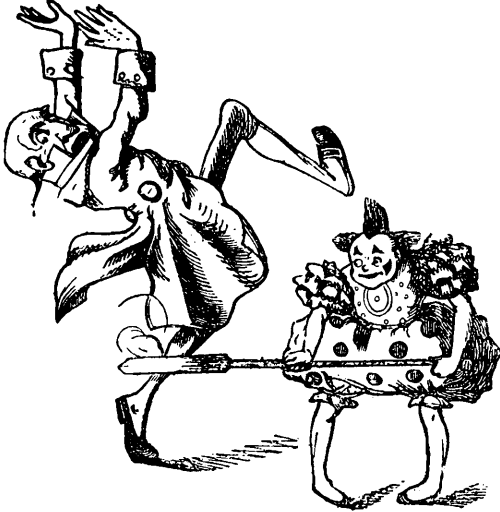
That night as Archy lay awake,
Thinking of all he'd break and take
If he but had his heart's desire,
The room seemed filled with crimson fire:
The wall expanded by degrees,
Disclosing shells and golden trees,
Revolving round and round and round:
Red coral strewn upon the ground;
And on the trees, in tasty green,
The loveliest fairies ever seen.
But one, more fair than all the rest,
Came from a lovely golden nest,
And said to the astonished boy,
"Oh, Master Archibald Molloy,
I know the object of your heart!
To-morrow morning you shall start
Upon your rambles through the town
As merry mischief-making clown!"

Next day, when Nurse Amelia called,
To wash and dress her Archibald,
She opened both her aged eyes
With unmistakable surprise
To find that Archy, in the night,
Had turned all red and blue and white.



Of healthy colour not a trace—
Red patches on his little face,
Black horsehair wig, round rolling eyes,
Short trousers of prodigious size,
White legs and arms, with spots of blue,
And spots upon his body, too!
Said she, "Why, what is this, my boy?
My gentle Archibald Molloy!
Your good Japa I'll go and tell,
You must be dreadfully unwell,
Although I know of no disease
With any symptoms such as these."

The good old lady turned to go
And fetch his good papa, when, lo!
With irresistible attack
He jumped upon her aged back,



Pulled off the poor old lady's front,
And thrashed her, while she tried to grunt,
"Oh, Archibald, what have you done?
Is this your mild, respectful fun,
You bad, ungentelemanly boy?
Fie on you, Archibald Molloy!"
Some dreadful power unseen, but near,
Still urged him on his wild career,
And made him burn and steal and kill
Against his gentlemanly will.
The change had really turned his brain;
He boiled his little sister Jane;
He painted blue his aged mother;
Sat down upon his little brother;
Tripped up his cousins with his hoop;
Put pussy in his father's soup;
Placed beetles in his uncle's shoe;
Cut a policeman right in two;
Spread devastation round—and, ah!
He red-hot-pokered his papa!
Be sure this highly reckless course
Brought Archibald sincere remorse;
He liked a joke, and loved a laugh.
But was too well-behaved by half—
With too much justice and good sense—
To laugh at other folks' expense.
The gentle boy could never sleep,
But used to lie awake and weep,
To think of all the ill he'd done.
"Is this," said he, "respectful fun?"

Oh, fairy, fairy, I would fain
That you should change me back again!
Some dreadful power I can't resist
Directs my once respectful fist.
Change, and I'll never once complain,
Or wish to be a clown again!"
He spoke, and lo! the wretched boy
Once more was Archibald Molloy.
He gave a wild, delighted scream,
And woke—for lo! it was a dream.

GILBERT'S "REJECTED ADDRESSES."

With possibly the exception of "Blabworth-cum-Talkington," an inferior version of "Sir Macklin," and even more virulent against the strait-laced opposers of Sunday excursions and innocent outdoor pleasures, Gilbert's "Rejected Addresses" alone would have given popularity to a lesser light. "Sir Conrad and the Rusty One" is an instance, with Conrad's battle-cry of "King Harry and Aunt Jane," as he had failed to find a younger fair to dub him knight. "The Sensation Twins" and "The Bandoline Player," "Sir Galahad the Goluptious," are men who should be met in handy volume form. "Fanny and Jenny," severally in love with Spiers and Pond and Bertram and Roberts, make the glad eye not unper-suasively. "The Ghost and His Ladye Love" belong to "Ruddigore," as will be shown, and to the "Prince il Balenie" it is alleged peculiarly romantic interest attaches, as written upon a wedding journey before fortune came to "Bab." It is hard to have to pick and choose, yet surely the portraits of "The Three Bohemian Ones" are equal to any, their story highly instructive:—

A worthy man in every way
Was Mister Jasper Porklebay;
He was a merchant of renown
(The firm was Porklebay and Brown).

Three sons he had, and only three.
But they were bad as bad could be;
They spurned their father's right-
eous ways,
And went to races, balls, and plays

On Sundays they would laugh
and joke,
I've heard them bet, I've known them smoke.
At whist they'd sometimes take a hand;
These vices Jasper couldn't stand.

At length the eldest son, called Dan,
Became a stock tragedian,
And earned his bread by ranting through
Shakespearean parts, as others do.

The second (Donald) would insist
On starting as a journalist,
And wrote amusing tales and scenes
In all the monthly magazines.

The youngest (Singleton his name)
A comic artist he became,
And made an income fairly good
By drawing funny heads on wood.



Lost "Bab Ballads"



And as they trod these fearful ways
(These three misguided Porklebayes)
They drew not on their father's hoard—
For Jasper threw them overboard.

Yes—Jasper, grieving at their fall,
Renounced them one, renounced them all.
And lived alone, so good and wise,
At Zion Villa, Clapham Rise.

By dint of work and skilful plan
Old Jasper grew a wealthy man;
And people said, in slangy form,
That Jasper P. would "cut up warm."

He had no relative at all
On whom his property could fall,
Except, of course, his wicked sons,
Those three depraved Bohemian ones.

So he determined he would fain
Bequeath his wealth (despite mortmain),
Freeholds, debenture stock, and all,
To some deserving hospital.

When his intent was known abroad,
Excitement reigned in every ward,
And with the well-experienced throng
Of operators all went wrong.

St. George's, Charing Cross, and Guy's,
And little Westminster likewise,
Bartholomew's and Middlesex,
Combined old Jasper to perplex.



House surgeons, spite of patients' hints,
Bound headaches up in fracture splints;
In measles, strapped the spots that come,
With strips of plain diachylum.

Rare leeches, skilled at fever beds,
For toothache shaved their patients' heads;
And always cut their fingers off
If they complained of whooping cough.

Their zeal grew greater day by day,
And each did all that in him lay
To prove his own pet hospital
The most deserving of them all.

Though Jasper P. could not but feel
Delighted at this show of zeal,
When each in zeal exceeds the rest,
One can't determine which is best.

Interea, his reckless boys
Indulged in low Bohemian joys;
They sometimes smoked till all was blue,
And danced at evening parties, too.

The hospitals, conflicting sore,
Perplexed poor Jasper more and more.
But, ah! ere Jasper could decide,
Poor charitable man, he died.



And Donald, Singleton, and Dan
Now roll in wealth, despite his plan:
So Donald, Dan, and Singleton,
By dint of accident have won.

Vice triumphs here; but, if you please,
It's by exceptions such as these
(From probability removed)
That every standing rule is proved.

By strange exceptions Virtue deigns
To prove how paramount she reigns
A standing rule I do not know
That's been more oft established so.

Nonsense, perhaps, but "Ah,
what precious nonsense!"
The world without the
"Babs" would assuredly be
duller.

Gilbert had no ear for
music in the accepted sense.
He taught a wonderfully
clever parrot to whistle "God
Save the Queen," or at least
his version of it, and it was
deplorably flat. But he had
a marvellous ear for rhythm,
as well as a marvellous
memory, and though there

is said to be one single metrical error in the operas, it is not easy to discover it. This error was the crux of a Gilbert examination paper many years ago in the *Westminster Gazette*. Indeed, he was never so happy as when quoting at length from the old burlesque writers, of whom H. J. Byron was his special favourite; and to the last he could reel off an "Æneid" learnt at school, and reams of Calverley's extremely difficult mnemonics. One who writes here asked him where he got the quaint names of the people of the "Babs." He did not go, as did Balzac and his favourite, Dickens, marking down the names over shops—the Boffins, the Snodgrasses. He said the names came naturally to the rhythm of his verses, and a remarkable collection they are. The illustrations were never begun before the ballad was in form, and from the days of the "Pinafore" onwards—the days when Lord Salisbury joined in its choruses at Hatfield with Disraeli, noting "Pinafore Smith" among the listeners—he provided Sullivan with a choice of lyrics over and above those finally included in the score. Unfortunately these extra pieces do not appear to have been preserved. Gilbert was an inveterate destroyer, and as soon as an opera was completed, even the MS., if not given to the *prima donna* or some other fortunate artist, was consigned to the wastepaper basket.

For a time Gilbert's libretti were in form more or less of the old burlesque. The first in collaboration with Sullivan, "Thespis; or the Gods Grown Old," is of this type. It was written and produced in a month at the Gaiety. But from that time forward Gilbert created his own forms. "I have translated three farces or farcical comedies from the French," he wrote in

1883, "and I have adapted two English works—namely, 'Great Expectations' and 'Ought We to Visit Her?' With these exceptions, all the plays I have written are original."

THE FIRST OF THE FAMOUS SERIES.

"Trial by Jury" opens the triumphal series. It is a skit on the then notorious procedure of breach-of-promise actions. The original "set" was adapted from the chief court of the Clerkenwell Sessions House, which had apparently a previous existence as a place of entertainment other than that afforded by Judge and Bar, who were the particular targets for Gilbert's arrows in the pages of *Fun*. Some alterations had to be made in the disposition of the dock and barristers' seats, but the scene as we see it to-day is substantially that of the old courthouse closed last year.

Then came "The Sorcerer." Its cradle is in the Christmas number of a bygone *Graphic*, and hints of its development occur in "The Cunning Woman"—"MacCatacombe de Salmoneye was her uncommon name." A long procession of churchmen in the "Babs," gentlemen all, are forerunners of the "pale young curate."

And then the "Pinafore," fresh to-day after its joyous cruise of four-and-forty years. Half-a-dozen "Babs," among them "The Martinet," "The Sensation Captain," "Joe Golightly," supply the motive, beginning with Captain Reece, commander of the *Mantelpiece*, who still holds premier pride of place in all subsequent editions of the Ballads. The model ship from which the set was made still stands in the entrance-hall of Grim's Dyke, and looking on it a vision rises of a far-away afternoon when three naval captains stood before it and the voice of Jellicoe pronounced the



Some unpublished rough sketches by
W. S. Gilbert.

Lost "Bab Ballads"

verdict, "Not a rope wrong." Gilbert enlisted the services of an old salt to adjust the rigging once a year; himself an expert yachtsman, holding a master's certificate, he was as familiar with the rigging and equipment of a three-decker as those admirals-to-be themselves. "Our saucy ship's a beauty," and Captain Corcoran, who appears later in "Utopia" as Sir Edward Corcoran, K.C.B., still proudly walks her quarter-deck. Yet another admiral inspected the doughty warship on the first occasion of the revival of "Pinafore," and here is a letter, dated "Admiralty, December 14, 1887," to the composer:—

"MY DEAR ARTHUR,—I was perfectly delighted with 'Pinafore' last night—quite excellent. You told me to tell you anything I saw which offended the eye of an expert. Don't be X. They are minor details, but make the difference in perfection and not absolute perfection. [Then follow suggestions on improved rigging, manning the yards, etc. These are a few details, the rest is quite excellent.

"Yours ever,

"CHARLIE BERESFORD."

Success at sea was clearly another link between Gilbert and his great ancestor.

"The Pirates of Penzance" in its inception is a travesty of the old melodrama which survived the date of its production principally in the toy theatres with cardboard characters Gilbert loved from his earliest boyhood. We often discussed the fascination of these "penny plain, tuppence coloured" sheets which emanated from the purlieus of Old St. Luke's, and the make-up of the Pirate King was surely suggested by the brigand chief who swaggered and strutted before the tin oil-footlights in the Theatres Royal of our youth.

GILBERT'S METHOD OF WORKING.

Gilbert's love of the theatre, indeed, dates from his earliest boyhood, and he wrote the plays for himself up to the cardboard characters. At school in the 'forties at Ealing, he wrote and produced plays for his school-fellows. Unfortunately there is no scrap of paper containing these first essays. But a "toy" theatre, or, rather, the stage, remained part of his author's stock-in-trade, and on it were manœuvred and rehearsed the positions of a little army of wooden blocks representing principals and chorus. Gilbert, indeed, harking back to classic precedent, was the first to assign intelligent interest and action to the chorus. The chorus plays a most important part in the operas, and is no mere group of automatons swaying backwards and forwards on one toe, wholly indifferent to the actions of the persons of the drama. The Policeman's chorus in the "Pirates" is

a classic. The "Babs" abound in policemen, for whom, both in prose and verse, he had a marked partiality. A bishop and a head-master of a great public school have, to our knowledge, recently collaborated in a Latin version of "When constabulary duty's to be done," and Gilbert often chuckled at the idea of the sixth-form boy required to turn his stanzas into hexameters and iambs.

"Patience," the first of the operas to be produced at the Savoy Theatre, is only linked to the "Babs" by "Gentle Archibald," as aforesaid. It was inspired by the æsthetic movement of the time (1881), when Gilbert's friend, George du Maurier, was holding up South Kensington to gentle ridicule in *Punch*—"good taste misplaced." The make-up of the ladies after Botticelli in the later revivals is therefore warranted, as well as more effective than that adopted in the earlier representations. Gilbert has been criticized unfavourably as harsh to old age, and the criticism is based largely on the song put into the mouth of Lady Jane in this opera. Anyone who takes the trouble to read the lyric, "Silvered is the raven hair," and others of similar nature, will find the satire directed, not against old age, but against the mature who play at youth—mutton dressed as lamb. For this dish he had no liking.

In "Iolanthe," the only opera of which the original notes, sketches, and scenarios exist, to our knowledge, Gilbert returns with renewed vigour to an idea crystallized in the "Babs" of a fairy wedded to a mortal, whose offspring partakes corporeally of both parents. In the "Babs" the father is an attorney; in the opera, after several incarnations as stockbroker and attorney, he blossoms out into the "highly susceptible Chancellor." Gilbert invariably rehearsed chorus and principals. We remember him at the dress rehearsal of an "Iolanthe" revival imploring the procession of peers to "wear their coronets as if they were used to them." It has been said that he never entered the theatre after the first night. This is as foolish a fable as that during first nights he paced the Embankment in a state of abject nervous excitement. As a matter of fact, he was usually to be found at the Beefsteak Club at such moments.

"Princess Ida" cannot be better described than by the author himself. "A respectful operatic version of Tennyson's Princess." He had already been attracted to the Laureate's poem in pre-Savoy days, making of it "a whimsical allegory."

THE ALL-CONQUERING "MIKADO."

"The Mikado" followed. It has no discoverable prototype in Gilbert's realm of topsy-turvydom, whether in the "Babs" or

elsewhere. It has been played all over the world and in many languages. A time-worn telegram signed "Malet" (Ambassador) announces its immediate success in Berlin, as in Budapest. The only unoriginal lyrics are the Japanese. These, or at least the foundations of the choruses built to usher in his Imperial Majesty, were furnished by the Hon. B. Mitford, afterwards Lord Redesdale, then in the British Legation at Tokio.

The brilliancy of "The Mikado" perhaps rather overshadowed "Ruddigore." At all events, the run of the piece was shorter than was customary at the Savoy. It has its origin in one of the "German Reed Entertainments" written by Gilbert in the 'sixties—"Ages Ago," where ancestors also stepped from their frames. A forecast of the famous Ghost Song of the second act occurs in *Fun*, with a characteristic illustration:—

Fair phantom, come!
The moon's awake,
The owl hoots gaily from
its brake,
The blithesome bat's
a-wing.
Come, soar to yonder
silent clouds,
The ether teems with
peopled shrouds:
We'll fly the lightsome
spectre crowds,
Thou cloudy, clammy
thing!

And there is a further "Bab" hint in the "Modest Couple," descriptive of the carryings on of Peter and Sarah Bligh. To resume the ridiculous after the sublime, when the ghosts have returned to their frames, was evidently a matter of concern to author and composer. On the day after the production, January 22nd, 1887, Gilbert writes:—

"38, Harrington Gardens,
"23rd January, 1887.

"DEAR SULLIVAN,—I can't help thinking that the second act would be greatly improved if the recitation before Grossmith's song were omitted, and the song reset to an air that would admit of his singing it desperately—almost in a passion—the torrent of which would take him off the stage at the end. After the long and solemn ghost scene, I fancy a lachrymose song is out of place, particularly as it is followed by another slow number—the duet between Jessie and Barrington. I

feel this so strongly that I send this by hand, so that if you are of my opinion the matter could be put in hand at once, and perhaps sung on Wednesday next. The *Observer* is kindly.

"Yours truly,

"W. S. GILBERT.

"P.S.—I will call and talk it over this afternoon at three if you like."

GILBERT'S FAVOURITE OPERA.

Gilbert's industry was as ready as his wit. In "The Yeomen of the Guard" he strikes out in a new direction altogether. Confessedly Gilbert's favourite, it sounds a note of pathos wanting to its predecessors, but by no means always to the Gilbertian Muse. In it we have to deal with men of flesh and blood, not delightful fairies and whimsicalities; and the women are real—a very rare occurrence in the operas. Indeed, it is remarkable how the male element predominates throughout the series. The "Yeomen" contains one of the most exquisite lyrics in the language—the song of Fairfax, "Is Life a Boon?" fit to rank high—a true Elizabethan—in our selectest anthologies.

The sweet serious mood did not last long. In "The Gondoliers" "Bab" is back at his old pranks: changeling babes—a constant "Bab" motif—and universal topsyturvydom; the gondolier boatmen-monarchs blacking their own boots, and Grand Inquisitors cutting discreet capers with pretty contadine.

"AN ARTIST AND A GENTLEMAN."

Naturally reticent and proud, with the artistic temperament brought to its highest pitch, he had a reputation wholly unmerited for aloofness and mordant bitterness of tongue. True, he had a rooted hatred for pretence and ostentation, a perfect disdain for meanness and miserliness. In his library there stood, and yet stands, a full-length statuette of Thackeray, for whose character and personality he had the deepest respect. Indeed, to a great extent, as a young man he seems to have modelled his attitude towards morality and art on that of the author of "Vanity Fair." Thackeray was detested by the snob of his day—so was Gilbert. But he once said he never said a hard thing of anyone who did not deserve the castigation.



Two unpublished sketches by W. S. Gilbert.



MUSTARD-POT-MATCHMAKER

BY

GILBERT FRANKAU

Illustrated by Gilbert Holiday.

I.
MY dear Victor, why not admit that you funk'd the place—and let it go at that?" Naomi Braundston flicked the lash of her heavy hunting-crop scientifically at a twig in the leafless hedgerows, re-coiled the thong round her hand, and trotted off—rising squarely as a man from her man's saddle—into the gathering twilight.

For a moment her companion thought to follow. Then, changing his mind, he walked his tired roan on up the hill. A flush deep as the mud-flecked scarlet of his hunting-coat mantled his wind-tanned cheeks. Under the auburn of the cropped moustache, his fine teeth bit on the lower lip. His eyes, steel-blue beneath the black brim of the high silk hat, were the eyes of a shamed schoolboy.

And perhaps it *was* schoolboyish for a man of thirty-eight with Victor's service record to take such a remark seriously. But when you happen to have been born in the very centre of that particular England which folk call "The Shires"; when, from the hour you first straddled a Shetland pony no bigger than the stable mastiff to the day you came back twice wounded and four times decorated from the conquered Rhine, everything you thought worth living for (and fighting for, and, if necessary, dying for) has been comprised in the three syllables of the word "fox-hunting"; when you're "damned if you know what to do with yourself" from the time of the "stinking violets" to the time when the "dahlias are dead"; when the only music you love is the high note of hounds breaking covert on a breast-high scent, and all the pictures you care to see are the pictures a man may espy from the back of a mettlesome horse as he follows the speeding pack; when, all about you, for forty hard-riding miles on either side, neither man, woman, nor child worries if you

be lord or steeplechase jock, poet or profiteer, so long as you go straight at your fences and don't gallop more than absolutely necessary over Farmer Thompson's wheat; and when—in addition to all these things—you happen

to be Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Victor Plowright Lomondham, Baronet, Royal Horse Artillery (retired), of Lomondham Hall, Leicestershire, and Charles Street, Mayfair, with thirty thousand pounds a year inherited income, a moderate conceit of yourself, and an immoderate desire to share both with your neighbour's daughter Naomi—then, quite conceivably, you allow that kind of remark, especially from her, to rankle.

Besides—and this was the worst of it—the remark happened to be true. Victor Lomondham—as he now admitted to his private soul—had funk'd not only the particular place of which Naomi spoke, a double-oxer with a nastyish ditch on the take-off side and a still nastier one on the landing, but half a hundred other leaps during the last half-dozen weeks. Ever since the opening meet of the season—to be perfectly frank with himself—he had been "going like a pair of boots." Something, some Peculiar Thing, seemed to have got hold of him. To-night, riding at a snail-pace toward the lights of his home, Lomondham knew, for the first time, that the name of that Peculiar Thing must be "Fear."

And at that he thought, grimly, "Afraid! Me! Good God, this won't do—this won't do at all." It seemed almost incredible that, after five years of warfare—years during which, inwardly, he had so often scoffed at others "getting the wind up"—Fear should have singled *him* out, in the hunting-field of all places, for its victim. Yet the incredible had to be faced. "I am afraid," he thought. "I'm scared stiff of my own gee-gees."

The roan, as though in confirmation of his master's newly-acquired self-knowledge, stumbled—sending the rider's heart into his mouth. Lomondham damned the beast, damned himself for his injustice (no horse stumbles on purpose), and so came past the lodge-gates of Lomondham Hall, round the drive, into the great quadrangle of his stables. As he dismounted a boy ran to take the horse, and Walters, the stud-groom—a burly, clean-shaven worthy who had been in the Lomondhams' service all his life—approached with touched cap and a deferentially cheerful: "How did it go after the change, Sir Victor?"

"Pretty fair, thanks, Walters." Lomondham stamped his booted feet on the gravel, and the pair of them followed the tired nag under the stable archway—for the habits of the Regular Army are not lightly discarded, nor was the master of Lomondham Hall one of those who leave the care of their horses to underlings, however trustworthy those underlings may appear to be.

II.

HUNTING over for the day, his hour in "Stables" had always been Lomondham's supreme and particular joy. But this evening—and weariness, even after the hardest galloped run, was rare with him—he felt weary, almost too weary to make his usual round. Yet the physical fatigue in him seemed paltry when compared with the mental unease.

Breaking one of his own stable-rules, he lit himself a cigarette, and began to pace—the silent stud-groom at his elbow—disconsolately down the red-brick-floored, electric-lit corridors, opening each door as he came to it, entering here, merely peering in there, while the rugged occupants of the odorous stalls stamped and whinnied to his known approach.

Two dozen first-class horses there were at Lomondham Hall—as fine a string of hunters as the poorest hunting-man ever dreamed of in his poverty; and master and stud-groom visited two-and-twenty of them, from Quick-silver, the chestnut pony with the white stockings, who had leaped Little Overdine Brook clean from poached bank to poached bank on the day when Farmer Thompson's cart-horses and tackle-chains had worked till dusk dragging bogged thoroughbreds from the mire, past the two grey Arabs, Selim and Ali, whose tails stuck up like gigantic ostrich-feathers, and whose actions were smooth as a cat's canter over turf, to the slim seventeen-hand Nigger Princess, with her ears bent wickedly backwards, the whites of her eyeballs gleaming, and her hind hoofs itching to lash out at the visitors.

It was on Nigger Princess—quiet as a lamb once mounted but a devil unleashed in

stables—that Victor, just before "change of horses," had funk'd the "place" of which Naomi spoke; and he stood watching the mare for a long while, wondering whether she too realized her master's cowardice.

"About to-morrow, Sir Victor?" interrupted Walters, anxious for his tea.

"Selim and Ali's turn, isn't it? I sha'n't need the car—" Lomondham stopped, chewing at his moustache. To-morrow, thank the Lord! would be an easy day—the meet practically at his own gates, the country known to a post, Selim and Ali—rides for a baby.

"Very good, Sir Victor." Walters, his duties almost over for the day, made a slight movement towards the last two loose-boxes, from one of which came the hiss and scrape of the stable-boy cleaning the roan. But his master halted him with a sharp, "Walters! Did you have Mustard-Pot shod this morning?"

"Yes, Sir Victor."

"Good. I'll have a look at him."

Master, a vague idea simmering at the back of his mind, and man, concealing his annoyance, made their way to the end loose-box of all, clicked on the light, opened the high grilled door, and passed in.

The first peculiarity which struck the observer's eye about Mustard-Pot was his colour; the next his size. Stripped of his rugs, the enormous horse, standing prehistoric in the glare of the naked light-bulb above his manger, showed as near butter-yellow as a steed can be and live. In build, he might have been model to some equine sculptor of the gigantically symbolic. Judging from the slope of his huge shoulders, from the set of his lean pasterns, from the muscled swell of his gaskins, and the sinuous perfection of his hocks, any man might have said to himself—as Lomondham had said when he bought him, preternaturally cheap at a little-frequented show: "Here is the leaper of the world!"

And as a fact, in cold blood, over schooling-fences or the bar, Mustard-Pot could have held his own, and more than his own, with a kangaroo. As a show-jumper, he had no equal; as a hack, his paces and his temper were no less perfect than his appearance was bizarre. It was only in the hunting-field—and possibly on the steeplechase course, though Victor, who at that period of his life hated racing, had never tried the experiment—that Mustard-Pot became entirely unman-ageable. Whether, according to stable-legend, the animal had circus-blood in him, and could only perform in a ring; whether he suffered from that obscure human complaint known as "crowd-panic"; or whether, in the words of Tom Sampey, the Little Overdine horse-breaker whom he had brought

Mustard-Pot—Matchmaker

back white and shaking like a leaf after a three-mile bolt up and down the stiffest country in the Vale of Screever, "The trouble with him is that he's got a nose like a hound and follows scent on his own"—appeared to Mustard-Pot's owner, as he ground one spurred heel pensively into the clean peat-moss litter, the most unprofitable of speculations. Remained, as solid certainty, only the fact that if—instead of Selim—he rode the yellow horse on the morrow, nobody, not even Naomi, could accuse him of funk.

"I think I'll give the Arabs a day off," he said, tersely. "We'll make it Mustard-Pot first, Quicksilver second"; and leaving the stud-groom to astonished speculation and the re-rugging of the horse, strode off.

III.

THE dwelling-house of Lomondham Hall, a vast brown-stone pile, tall of chimney-stack and mullioned of window, backed by the great oaks and green rides of Lomondham Wood, and fronted, mile upon mile, by the terracing down-sweep of Lomondham Vale, is separated from the stables by a good three hundred yards of gravel drive and shrubbery—distance enough, if a man take it slowly, for him to change his mind more than once. But Victor, having given his order to the stud-groom, did not turn back.

He came—a tall, powerful figure, the last person in the world one would have suspected of "nerves"—between the tall opal lights either side the open front door, up the steps, and into the big square galleried hall. He handed his hat, his gloves, and his hunting-crop to his waiting valet; he sank into his big chair by the blazing fire; he permitted himself to be served with tea and muffins from massive Georgian silver; he patted his rough-haired terrier with a firm, capable hand; and went up the balustered staircase to his warmed bathroom as coolly as any other millionaire aristocrat without a care in the world save his own enjoyment.

Yet, inwardly, Sir Victor Plowright Lomondham, of Lomondham Hall, knew himself all one shivering apprehension. Dressing for dinner, in the beamed Tudor bedroom, he remembered the Biblical phrase, "His bowels turned to water"; and found it amazingly applicable to the morrow. Dining, alone with his gloomy pictured ancestors, the men-servants manœuvring like trained shadows behind his back, it seemed to him that the foods were tasteless, the wine soured in his mouth. In the smoking-room—dinner over, whisky-and-soda at his elbow, a cigar between his teeth—he fell to wondering why, for the past month, he had never invited a guest.

Then he grew introspective; and in this mood of introspection, a mood never before experienced, he thought, suddenly, "I'm lonely, the most damnably lonely fellow in the world."

From which—and this, perhaps, furnishes the psychological diagnosis that a nerve-doctor, had Sir Victor ever dreamed of consulting one, would have made on his mental condition—the baronet's thoughts switched, longingly, to Naomi. Vividly and acutely he became conscious of her—of the long lithe limbs, breeched knees gripping saddle, booted feet thrust home in the stirrup-irons; of the broad shoulders and the deep bosom which the riding-coat hid without concealing; of the hands capable as his own; of the fine little head, beclustered with darkling tresses; of the eyes, big and jet-black under jet-black brows; and the red ripe fullness of those lips which had said to him: "You funked the place—let it go at that."

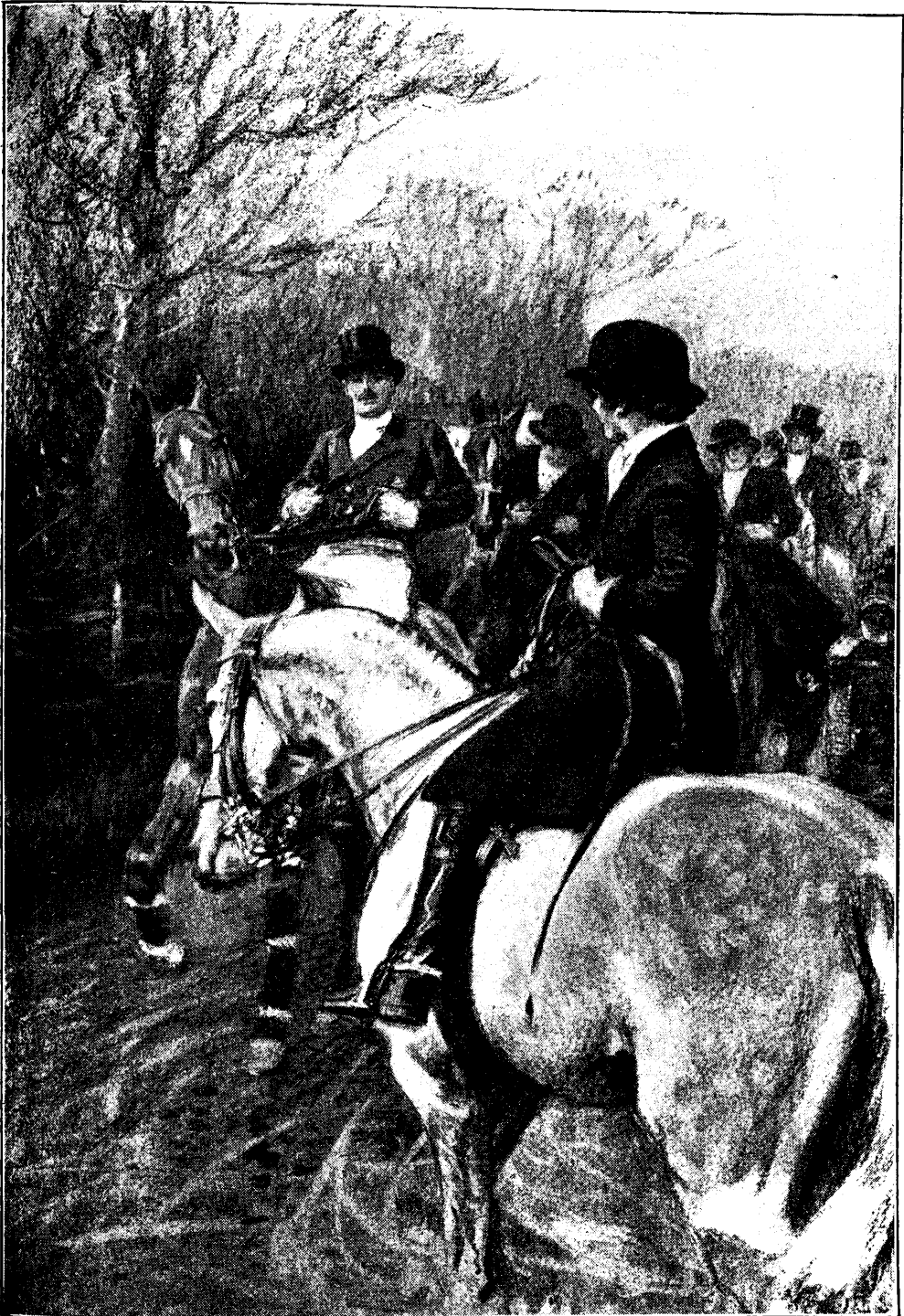
Followed, hot on the heels of this sudden vision, a rage of self-questioning. Even admitting that he had "got the wind up" in the hunting-field, what the devil difference did that make to his marrying Naomi? Hadn't hundreds, thousands of other men been forced—sooner or later—to give up riding in the "first flight"? Didn't a man's nerve, naturally, break down when he reached a certain age? Weren't there cases of steeple-chase jockeys, fellows cool as cucumbers in the hell-for-leather leap-and-gallop between the flags of a marked and prepared course, who didn't dare—simply didn't dare—ride straight to hounds across a couple of miles of cut-and-laid and ridge-and-furrow? Didn't a chap's nerve come back, come back quite miraculously, if only he took a really good toss over timber? And, finally—finally, wouldn't Naomi, the very moment she saw him on Mustard-Pot, realize that her taunt had been unjust, and apologize for it?

That imagined apology, you see, was the real crux of the whole business. Lomondham had been on the verge, on the very verge of proposing. But a man, a man of his temperament and outlook, couldn't very well propose to a girl who—who had the whip-hand of him. In matrimony as in life, the master of Lomondham Hall must be top-dog; capable of controlling his woman as of controlling his staff and his gee-gees.

Many a man, by the way, has broken his neck in the hunting-field for far less reason!

IV.

LOMONDHAM, according to custom, left the smoking-room at half-past ten to the tick; dismissed his valet at ten-forty-five; got into bed at five minutes to eleven—and never slept a wink till 4 a.m. Alternately, through the long restless hours,



"Good morning, Victor. So Tom managed to break Mustard-Pot for you, did he?"

Mustard-Pot—Matchmaker

Naomi, Nigger Princess, and Mustard-Pot haunted him; and when at long last he did sleep, the yellow horse galloped through his dreams—dreams in which he heard himself praying, voicelessly to the heedless gods, for a frost severe enough to stop hunting for ever and ever, amen. Morning, however, brought neither frost nor storm; but a greyly perfect winter's day, almost warm and with hardly a breath of wind.

Morning, too, brought its mental reaction; so that it seemed to Naomi's lover, sitting down spurred and scarlet-clad to his ample breakfast, as though the night had never been. His mood of the moment was sheer recklessness—that particular kind of recklessness which is so often mistaken for true courage. He thought, a little bombastically: "I'll show that saffron quadruped, I'll show Naomi Braunston, who is master."

And this mood of swaggering recklessness—a mood as foreign to the real poised Lomondham as the introspection of the night before—endured all through breakfast-time, all through his post-breakfast cigar and his half-hour with his newspaper in the bow-windowed library, right up to the very moment when—at ten-thirty to the second—Mustard-Pot's big hoofs halted on the gravel drive. Then, abruptly, "nerves" once more had their way with him.

Neither his hands, as—his gleaming silk hat already on his head—he took his buckskin gloves and his short-handled long-thonged crop from his man; nor his white-breeched, top-booted legs—as he stood on the broad steps looking down at the saddled horse—actually trembled; yet, to prevent them from trembling took every ounce of his self-control. He wanted to say to Walters, whose curiosity had not been able to resist the temptation of allotting himself the post of second horseman for the day, and who was even now wondering whether he should ask permission or simply go back to the stables and bring Quicksilver on: "I've changed my mind." He wanted to tell the stable-boy at the horse's head: "Take that brute away; and bring Selim round as quickly as ever you can."

Instead, he went slowly down the broad stone steps; gentled the steady yellow muzzle; cast a quick eye over girthing and bridling; let out a link of the burnished curb-chain; thrust his foot into the iron; swung himself to saddle with a terse, "You needn't hold his head as if he were going to eat you, lad," to the stable-boy; gave Walters his orders about Quicksilver—and set off down the drive as though the curious domestic heads peering from the various windows did not exist.

All the same, when Mustard-Pot—apparently the gentlest creature ever foaled—

stepped daintily between the lodge-gates, Mustard-Pot's rider felt acutely self-conscious. With his terror—for now that he was actually astride that vast butter-coloured back, only terror describes his emotion—mingled a peculiar pride. For the first time in his life he wanted, not merely to do things for the pleasure of doing them, but so that others, particularly Naomi, should be witnesses of his accomplishment.

Nor were spectators lacking to gratify the man's desire! Already, a mile from Lomondham Ruffs, immaculate limousines occupied by immaculate sportsmen, fat farmers in grunting Fords, slim farmers' wives in smart traps, grooms with two horses and grooms with one, men in pink frock-coats and men in black cut-aways, bowler-hatted girls astride and top-hatted women in side-saddles, boys on ponies and greybeards on cobs, folk on foot and folk on push-bikes, came crowding along the road and along the grass at road-side.

But now, Lomondham's thoughts were all for the great horse. The great horse, already conscious of the chase, had pricked his ears. His neck arched to the reins. He tossed at his bit. His clipped skin twitched and twitched. His gentle walk became an amble. He began to dance among the crowd. The foot-folk drew to hedge-side. A hunting-mother shepherding two flapper daughters cursed "that ass Lomondham, who ought to know better than to bring circus-horses into the hunting-field."

Victor—his terror momentarily in abeyance—managed to simmer the horse down just as Naomi on a big grey and her father on a fat dun trotted slowly out of the bridle-path from Little Lomondham on to the high-road.

She greeted him easily: "Good morning, Victor. So Tom Sampey managed to break Mustard-Pot for you, did he? I'm so glad. He is a topper." Her father said: "Hallo, Lomondham. Going to give us all a lead, what?"

Lomondham looked at the big black-eyed, black-moustached landowner, at his tall black-eyed, black-tressed daughter; and answering, "Yes, it's a good thing we've broken him to hounds at last," wondered what the devil *would* happen when hounds actually appeared.

Then Mustard-Pot began dancing again, and he had no time to think, no opportunity to observe that sudden flash of terrified understanding in the girl's eyes.

V.

FROM the western edge of Lomondham Ruffs—a twenty-acre patch of gorse through which the green rides cut straight as cricket-pitches—three hundred horsemen

and horsewomen listened to the shrill music of hounds to scent, listened for the twang of the silver horn and the loud "Gone away" which signals a fox pushed from covert. But the three-hundred-and-first horseman listened not at all.

Mustard-Pot, at first sight of the pack jig-jogging up the road, had been mad enough, now, hearing them, he seemed to have gone utterly crazy. The gentle hack had disappeared; in its place was a snorting, plunging, rearing, buck-jumping, pig-jumping saffron maniac whose one idea seemed to be to fling his rider out of the saddle and join the hounds on his own. Lomondham, wrenching at the near reins as a man wrenches at the tiller of a racing-yacht, had just managed to draw away from the rest of the field; and was still managing—though every leap of the crazed animal sapped a little more of his strength—to hold him from bolting into the gorse. Curiously enough, the man's terror had disappeared. Clinging—thigh, knee, and calf—to the smooth ox-hide; cursing—as only hunting-men can curse—at the back of Mustard-Pot's heedless ears; giving him every inch of rein he dared, yet conscious that the inch too much would mean disaster; swaying to him as he spun like a top; leaning back to him as he buckjumped, and forward, feet scarcely touching the irons, as he reared—he thought only: "Why don't the fox break? Why the devil don't he break?" Nerves, love, pride, self-consciousness—all these had momentarily disappeared from Victor's mind. He was just a horseman; fighting for mastery; feeling—with each pitched second—that mastery at ebb from his hands and body; feeling the demon under him grow stronger and always stronger to his own weakness; knowing instinctively that his one chance, his one and only chance of ultimate victory lay in letting Mustard-Pot have his head and gallop till the power went out of his jaw-bones.

Mustard-Pot gave one last frantic buck, head between forelegs, hind heels high in air—and abruptly, from beyond The Ruffs, came the twang-twang of the huntsman's horn, the roared "Gone away—gone away" of a galloping whipper-in. Looking about him, in the second of time his horse allowed, Lomondham saw the rest of the field preparing to follow—an orderly stampede of horsemen and horsewomen, thrusters pushing to the front, second-flighters hanging back, wise ones rounding the gorse and weak ones making for road or bridle-paths. Then he gave the yellow gelding his head.

It wasn't a case of "cutting down the field." Mustard-Pot, once loosed, went past the swiftest of them like a torpedo-boat past fishing-smacks; and as he went—green turf thudding under him, black turf flying from

his flying heels—panic, the sheer panic of Things Uncontrollable, entered once again into his rider. Instinctively, Lomondham knew that the fox would make due east for Saxenham; instinctively, a map of the country beyond The Ruffs flashed through his mind; instinctively, he tried to steer Mustard-Pot to the right, away from the most dangerous line in all the Vale.

But Mustard-Pot's long-cheeked curb might have been a watering-bridle. Straight for The Ruffs he made—his speed increasing with every gigantic bound; straight across them he went—his rider, feet back, body forward in the saddle—seeing rabbit-holes and bramble slide under and past them as ground slides past and under the mounting plane.

AND now, as they flew for the far edge of The Ruffs, all hope went from Victor.

At that pace no horse could hope to come safe across the one stone wall in the Vale, and up the big bank beyond the wall, and down the bank into Tupper's Lane. There was nothing—nothing in all the world to do save sit down, and sit still, and pray that the fall would throw him clear. As for hounds, fox, whippers-in, or huntsman—Lomondham had forgotten clean about them.

But Mustard-Pot had not forgotten. Mustard-Pot's keen ears heard, away beyond the high thing his fiery eyes had just perceived, the music of the pack. Lomondham, still praying, felt the mad pace slacken for the fraction of seconds; saw the jagged top of the wall racing at him; felt the saddle rise between his thigh-bones, as the horse gathered hocks under belly for the leap; glimpsed the jagged wall-top flash below; knew one danger safely over-past; was conscious of the man-tall bank ahead, of Mustard-Pot hurling himself to top of it, of Mustard-Pot poised for the down-spring, of the green lane below and a grey thoroughbred checking in the lane, of his own back touching Mustard-Pot's croup as they alighted, and of the twelve-foot bullfinch—impenetrable as barbed wire—a bare six inches from his nose.

How horse and rider went through that bullfinch, Naomi, mud-splashed to the eyes, never knew. She merely saw Victor's scarlet crop-arm fling up to shield his face, and the yellow horse charge head down at the interlaced thorns, buck his way into them, and disappear to a crashing of wood and a thudding squelch of steel plates among rotten leaves and stagnant water. As for Lomondham, he could see nothing. He was conscious only of a million cats trying to scratch the skin from his face, the clothes from his body, and of a million claws trying to drag him backwards over the cantle. Then

Mustard-Pot—Matchmaker



"How horse and rider went through, Naomi,

—hat snapped from its cord, left spur wrenched off its strap, one pink coat-tail left in the hedge and the other torn to tatters—he was through and in sight of the pack.

The pack, in full cry and so close on each other's sterns that they looked like one hound, were three good fields ahead; the huntsman and a whipper-in, alone in their glory, one. A little of his old coolness came back to Lomondham. The going—uphill across the switchback of deep furrows and high ridges which had been ploughland in Cromwell's day—steadied Mustard-Pot's stride; and glancing over his right shoulder, Mustard-Pot's rider could see half-a-dozen horsemen pelting to be level with him. He thought, vaguely: "By gad, that was a short-cut with a vengeance. We're giving 'em all a lead." Then he thought of Naomi's grey, checking in the lane—and shivered in his saddle at the realization that he might have jumped clean on top of it.

Followed realization of the fence ahead—a double post-and-rails with a thorn-filled ditch on the far side. Mustard-Pot gathered speed, hurling himself across the ridge-and-furrow. The wind of their going whipped through Lomondham's hair. Fifty yards from the timber he took a pull at his reins. But the yellow horse raced on unheeding, balanced himself in mid-career, and, clearing

the obstacle with feet to spare, saw the two scarlet coats ahead.

No holding the lunatic yet! Still uphill, still over ridge-and-furrow, he tore like a steed possessed. The two scarlet coats were coming back to them. Back and back! Lomondham tried to steer round. But the yellow horse held straight on and shot between the galloping pair, missing them by a hair's-breadth, scattering his clods in their faces. Victor heard the huntsman's outraged blasphemy die away down wind as Mustard-Pot took the next post-and-rails in his stride.

And now—now neither hill nor fence nor furrow checked them. For eight hundred yards the ground underhoof was flat as a racecourse. Across that flat ground, hounds and quarry had gone like a flame—gone over the brow of the rise—down into the heart of the Vale. And desperately—desperately, as though his red nostrils told him the way they had travelled—desperately as a prairie-fire leaps the crackling grasses—Mustard-Pot fled after. No foam flecked his useless bit. No sweat darkled on his striding muscles. He was still fresh—fresh and fearless and strong as the storm. But his rider was still afraid—afraid of the ground to come.

And suddenly, they were over the brow of the rise; suddenly, Victor saw the Vale below



mud-splashed to the eyes, never knew."

—bad lands dropping terrace-like through patches of leafless coppice to a grey road and a brown, smoke-plumed village. Beyond these, broad as a river, gleamed the Saxenham Canal. "Steady, you fool! For God's sake, steady!" roared Mustard-Pot's rider, shoulders back, knees iron on the saddle-flaps, hands iron on the curb.

But Mustard-Pot heeded not a whit. Mustard-Pot saw only the hounds—the towing-rowling hounds that poured like a cascade of black-white-and-tan down the slope of the Vale.

Followed incredible seconds—seconds of slip and slide and scramble, of plunge and stumble and miraculous recovery—seconds when it seemed to the horseman as though no power on earth could keep him from pitching yards over that enormous down-stretched yellow neck—seconds when head, neck, and shoulders reared up like a giraffe's before his eyes as Mustard-Pot glissaded fifty sheer yards on his tail—seconds when the loose iron-stone of the hill-side rained like shrapnel from their hoof-strokes—seconds when the tree-roots tip-tilted them at every bound—seconds when it seemed as though they left solid earth and flew, flew for dear life down the whistling void.

Down Mustard-Pot went, and down, scrambling through ditches, scrambling over

fences, scrambling among trees, scrambling his rider's heart in his mouth as a servant-girl scrambles eggs in a pan.

Yet, even so, hounds gained on horse. Hounds made the grey road and flashed left along the green grass at road-side five hundred yards clear ahead of the pair plunging like a scarlet-and-yellow plummet, downhill. Hounds saw their fox streak dark across the grey road and swing away from the brown village just as Mustard-Pot—sweating at long last—crashed through the young larch plantation at hill-foot and paused for the hundredth part of an instant, ears cocking to the far music.

Lomondham, his face white as his hunting-stock, sweat blinding his blue eyes, was too blown to take advantage of that momentary pausing; and before he could shorten rein Mustard-Pot had leaped out of the plantation—into the road—over the road—up the bank and through the hedge on to ridge-and-furrow again.

One minute later, Saxenham Village, turning out to a man, cheered one ha less horseman over the hedge of Farmer Thompson's paddock. Two minutes later, Saxenham Village, turning out to a boy, called, "Yes, sir. Yes, m'lady. That way, sir. That way, m'lady," to the scattered field who came, pounded and pounding, after

Mustard-Pot—Matchmaker

him. Three minutes later, Saxenham Village, dashing, every mother's son and daughter of it, through the churchyard and up the slope behind, saw the dog-fox lolloping red across the chocolate loam that hid Farmer Thompson's winter wheat, and



Mustard-Pot cracked on the last ounce of his astounding speed. Beyond— up the himself as though

howled to Naomi Braunston as she galloped by, "You keep to the left, missie. He's making for the canal."

Taking the far hedge of the paddock, Victor—a little of the breath back in his body and a few of his wits back in his mind—wondered how much longer the horse under him could keep on bolting. He even began to wonder whether the horse were bolting at all. Mustard-Pot, for all that he refused to answer the reins, seemed to know his business. Foam-flecked, he still went straight as a railway-train. Nothing stopped him—neither the stile they cleared to a rap of steel horse-shoes on sodden plank—nor the double-oxer with the ditch beyond—nor the five-foot cut-and-laid on to the new-sown corn. And "God help Thompson's wheat to-day," thought Lomondham, as they hared across it close behind the crazy hounds. Then he, too, heard voices: "You keep to the left, sir. He's making for the canal."

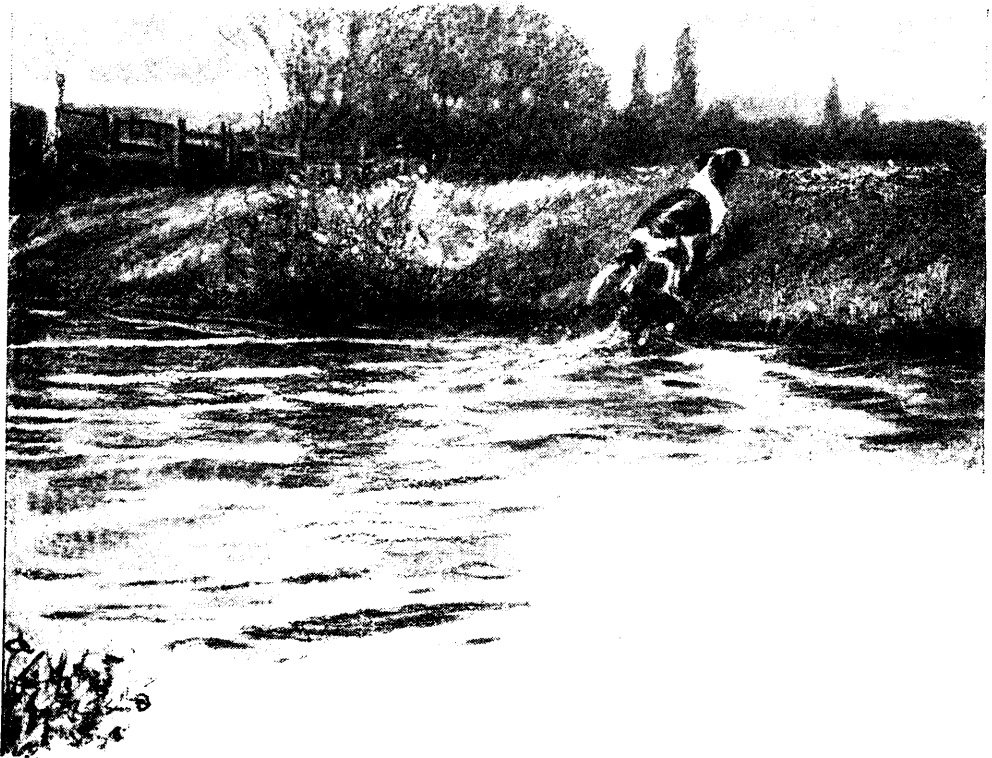
Before the meaning of those voices penetrated to the hatless horseman on the foam-flecked horse, Mustard-Pot was on turf again, barely a hundred yards behind the pack. But the pack, once off ploughland, had the heels of him. They ran nearly mute

now, their sterns straight as ramrods, their hackles up, fury in their eyes, and fire in their blood. For their fox was in view. Their fox sank as he ran—ran gasping for the water they could smell when their blood-frantic eyes lost him.

Lomondham, mute as the pack, watched the beaten fox across the tow-path, saw him tumble over the canal-bank; watched hound after hound tumble-over after him; remembered the ten-foot drop to the twenty-foot water—and realized in one thrilling spout of superhuman exaltation that all fear had departed from him.

At last, at long last, the hot dashing courage of Mustard-Pot was into Mustard-Pot's rider. At last, at long last, Sir Victor Plowright Lomondham of Lomondham Hall rode straight again—rode straight and whooping for the kill. "Hallo! Hallo! Hallo! little bitches," he whooped—the reins loose on his horse's neck, the huntsman behind him and the canal before.

And at that whoop, impossibly, incredibly, Mustard-Pot cracked on the last ounce of his astounding speed. No need to touch him with crop or spur! The very ground rocked under his drumming hoofs. Bound on



bank—toiled the last eager hound. Then Victor was aware of Mustard-Pot gathering to clear the moon."

Mustard-Pot—Matchmaker

gigantic bound, he hurtled at the hazard. The mud of the tow-path was fifty yards ahead—twenty—ten. Below it—still rippling to the passage of the pack—gleamed the brown and the desperate water. Beyond—up the bank—toiled the last eager hound. "Yooi, yooi, yooi to him, Winsome," whooped Lomondham.

Then he was aware of Mustard-Pot gathering himself as though to clear the moon, of the tow-path dropping away, of brown water scurrying under, of brown water leaping up, of a bombshell splash that flung white fountains high and high above his drowning eyes, and of a Force, a Force enormous and earthquake-like under his thighs, driving him up and up through the desperate waters. Then the fountains subsided; and Lomondham knew himself still in the saddle, knew his horse swimming like a sword-fish to be in at the death.

Dripping steed under dripping rider scrambled out of Saxenham Canal and up the far bank of it just in time to see what came in after years to be known as "Mustard-Pot's Fox" rolled over in the open.

VI.

Mustard-Pot's fox had been torn and eaten a good ten minutes, but belated

riders on blown horses were still clattering across the canal-bridges, when Lomondham—reins over bridle-arm, the water oozing over the tops of his boots—glanced up at a girl on a grey mare and remarked, meaningly: "I'm going to toddle home, Naomi. It looks to me as though Silver Glory's had about enough. You'd better come, too."

He swung to saddle with a squelch, and the yellow horse—after one regretful glance at the blooded pack—stepped daintily away; Naomi Brannston on a perfectly fit Silver Glory following them as obediently as a cavewoman her mate.

Mustard-Pot, from whom I first had this tale one midsummer afternoon as he grazed leisurely among the fragrant grasses of Lomondham Park, assures me that his master's wife dropped her whip on the way home and that neither she nor Victor noticed it. But Silver Glory, who usually grazes with him, seems confident that Lomondham heard that whip fall from Naomi's hand just at the very moment she confessed, "Victor, you—you mustn't ride like that again. It frightens me."

Silver Glory, being a grey mare, did not approve.

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 103.

(The Third of the Series.)

In number one time number two is eaten,
And as a vegetable can't be beaten.

1. She did great service in the war.
2. Once water, harder than the floor.
3. In Latin this is one, less one.
4. Gives shelter from the rain or sun.
5. You cannot do this, speaking truth.
6. Colour of cheeks in healthy youth.

KING COLE.

Answers to Acrostic No. 103 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on February 9th.

To every light one alternative answer may be sent: it should be written at the side. At the foot of his answer every solver should write his pseudonym and nothing else.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 102.

Thus is the old-time season of Noël;
That brings you cheer from those who wish you well.

1. A calling this, high-sounding, but plebeian.
2. An epithet of darkness Tartarean.
3. Mere blue or grey, or colour red as roses.
4. Cut out—a custom that our state imposes.
5. The verdant green, making the Wild West smile.
6. Write down in Latin and curtail meanwhile.
7. A realm that, in its centre, owns the king.
8. No end to this, unless it be a sting.

EDI.

1. Y	ellin	G
2. U	tte	R
3. L	ak	E
4. E	xcis	E
5. T	enderfoo	T
6. I	nter	I
7. D	ominio	N
8. E	verlastin	G

NOTES.—Light 3. Mere, a lake; crimson lake. 6. Interim. 7. Central syllable, in.

EIGHTEENTH SERIES: RESULT.

As many as eighteen solvers answered the four acrostics quite correctly; they will divide the prizes, each one receiving fourteen shillings. They are: Anvil, Mr. C. Dance, 45, Cowick Road, Tooting, S.W.; Arden, Mr. R. W. Bates, Royal Naval College, Dartmouth; Beehive, Mrs. Eaton, 98, Ebury Street, S.W.; Beggar, Mr. B. G. Pearce, 5, Ethelbert Road, Bromley, Kent; Corisande, Mrs. Bridges, 7, Alexandra Road, Clifton, Bristol; Digby, Rev. M. Elrington-Bisset, 8, Chantrey House, Eccleston Street, S.W.; Junius, Mr. F. C. W. Grigson, Amesbury, Hindhead; Landor, Mr. H. W. Arnold, 7, Forester Road, Bath; Lilcat, Miss L. Eaton, 597, Kingston Road, Raynes Park, S.W.20; Lobo, Mrs. L. Morris, 74, Larch Road, Cripplewood, N.W.2; Nolue, Mrs. R. M. Milne, Eggardon, Dartmouth, S. Devon; Phanta, Mrs. Ludlow Handcock, 85, Chester Square, S.W.; Rumball, Sir Alfred Croft, Rumbleigh, Bere Alston, Devon; Sant, Mr. W. H. Harsant, Tower House, Clifton Down Road, Clifton, Bristol; Splosh, Mr. L. Dale, Christ's Hospital, Sussex; Wals, Mr. W. Stradling, 12, Bardswell Road, Oxford; Yoko, Mr. F. Rawson, 10, Richmond Mansions, Earl's Court, S.W.5; Zyme, Mr. J. W. Pulsford, 57, Deauville Road, Clapham, S.W.4.

VARIATIONS

on a personal theme

by

LANDON RONALD

Illustrated by Bert Thomas.

VARIATION III.

The First Time I Conducted.

IT was a curious concatenation of circumstances which led up to my becoming a conductor, though the wish was always there and I was only awaiting the opportunity. It arrived sooner than I expected—and found me unprepared. It all came about through that silly little curtain-raiser called “Did You Ring?” for which I had composed the music. The libretto was by a Mr. J. W. Mabson, whom I had met at Sheffield, and he got John Houghton (the editor of a paper called *Fun*, long since defunct but very well known at the time) to write the lyrics. Charles Lauri, having made money over running “L’Enfant Prodigue,” thought it would be a good idea to mount another play without words.

I wonder how many of my readers remember Charles Lauri in the heyday of his popularity. He

was the famous portrayer of the Cat in the Drury Lane pantomime “Dick Whittington,” and perhaps no man ever impersonated so many different animals on the stage with the same consistent success. He was a curious-looking little fellow off the stage. Short, clean-shaven, thin, very plain, and amazingly agile. One day, when I was seeing him into a hansom cab, he took my breath away by climbing on to the wheel, getting on the roof, and jumping from the

top into his seat inside. The whole thing took a few seconds, and I saw the cabman rubbing his eyes, wondering if he had lost his senses. He loved playing this sort of joke, but there was a serious side to his nature, and he was a pretty good business man, with a natural instinct for artistic things. His choice of “L’Enfant Prodigue” proved this, and his second production, to which I am now coming, was quite a delight, although it was a failure with the public. It was, like its



“He took my breath away by jumping from the top into his seat inside.”

Variations on a Personal Theme

predecessor, a play without words, entitled "La Statue du Commandeur," but it lacked the simplicity, the charm, the pathos of "L'Enfant Prodigue," and the music was in nowise as good. It was superbly acted, the chief part being taken by M. Tarride, who, since those days, made a big reputation for himself in Paris. The piece was too short to fill an entire evening's bill, and, in any case, curtain-raisers were all the fashion and were looked upon as a necessity. I had the very thing ready and waiting, so trotted off with it one Sunday afternoon to Charles Lauri's house in Camden Town, played him the music, read him the libretto, and he accepted it there and then for production at the Prince of Wales Theatre. It was put into rehearsal immediately, with two well-known artistes of that period, Templar Saxe and Katie James, both of whom performed it admirably. I have some sort of idea that the theatre conductor asked me to conduct the first band rehearsal of my little piece, and that I tried to do so and completely failed. But I am in no way certain of this, so I would prefer not to count this as the actual first time I had a baton in my hand.

"Did You Ring?" was received very well by the Press. It was on this occasion that *Punch* thought fit to make the joke on my name which has been used since in a hundred different ways. "This *lever-du-rideau*," said *Punch*, "is a bright and well-written sketch which should prove attractive. The authors, Messrs. Mabson and Houghton, were fortunate to *Land on Ronald* to compose the music." After a run of about three weeks, Charles Lauri thought he had dropped enough money over the two pieces, so he informed M. Tarride that he intended closing down. But that didn't fit in with Tarride's plans at all. He couldn't afford to return to Paris as a declared failure in London. Something had to be done. He was a man of considerable means, and made an offer to Charles Lauri to buy him out lock, stock, and barrel, and run the theatre himself. The terms were duly arranged, and Charles Lauri vanished from the scene. I had by this time become on very friendly terms with Tarride, whom I admired both as artiste and man, and at his special request I would often go down to the theatre and spend an hour with him in his dressing-room. I sauntered in on the first Saturday *matinée* given under his own management, and found everybody in a state of excitement. Not getting anything very coherent from the French members of the company, I sought out the conductor, who was English, and he explained to me what had occurred. Tarride, being entirely ignorant of the way we ran a theatre in this country, had failed to provide the necessary cheque to pay the orchestra. It being

Saturday, the doors of the *Crédit Lyonnais* were closed, and it was impossible to obtain the money. The members of the orchestra swallowed the tale with a lot of water, as they had been caught by foreigners before. Eventually, however, they were persuaded to play at the *matinée* on the condition that they should receive their salaries before the evening performance began.

AS far as I can remember, the sum required was something between one hundred and fifty and two hundred pounds. Unfortunately, there wasn't twenty pounds in the house at the *matinée*. I took a cab to Charles Lauri's house to explain the position to him, only to find that he was somewhere in France. Tarride knew literally no one in London, and as the time approached for the evening performance the outlook could not have been worse. The meagre audience began to wander in, and by eight-fifteen the few dozen people present began to get impatient, hissing and clapping and showing other signs of resentment at the delay. The members of the orchestra stuck to their guns and steadfastly refused to go in. Eventually Templar Saxe went in front of the curtain and announced that owing to the sudden indisposition of M. Tarride the performance that night could not take place, but that all moneys would be returned on application at the box-office. A few boos and a few jeers, and the audience filed out. I always have thought it fortunate that someone had had the presence of mind to lock Tarride in his dressing-room, as he was a very powerful man, and was in such a state of violent anger at the behaviour of the orchestra that had he got anywhere near any one of them there would undoubtedly have been great damage done!

I bearded the lion in his den and calmed him down and got him to talk rationally. I went with him to his hotel and we sat talking and planning until midnight. He had made up his mind to reopen the theatre on the Monday night, to pay off the present orchestra and conductor on the Monday morning, and not allow one of them in the theatre again. He insisted that I should in the meantime obtain another orchestra for him, rehearse it Monday afternoon, and conduct it in the evening. Although I had not the remotest idea where a single orchestral player was to be found, and although I was absolutely ignorant how to beat time correctly, I cheerfully and willingly undertook the job, and thought it all the fun in the world. Such is the confidence of youth! I announced most casually to members of my family, just as if it were an everyday occurrence, that I had been appointed "the conductor of the Prince of Wales." I was

asked by my brother whether I was referring to the public-house in Harrow Road, the theatre in Coventry Street, or the son of Her Majesty the Queen. Some people always will be funny at the wrong moment! The thing that worried me was the fact that it was Sunday, which meant my waiting twenty-four hours before I could get busy. I had duly settled in my own mind my plan of campaign, and sure enough on the Monday morning I was walking up and down Bond Street waiting for Keith Prowse, Ashton, and Hayes to open their respective doors. I had seen various advertisements of these firms announcing that they could supply bands for

dances and parties, so why shouldn't they be able to supply me with one for a theatre? At all events, this is what I had hoped and believed might be arranged! Disillusion, alas! was quickly to follow. I shall never forget the expression on the face of the first man to whom I confided in a very meek voice that all I required was an orchestra of forty musicians to be at the Prince of Wales Theatre by three o'clock that afternoon. He looked me up and down, twirled his horrid waxed moustache, and said in an airy, sarcastic tone, "And are we to deliver the goods packed in cases or will you send the Royal carriages to fetch 'em?" I pleaded with him seriously, only to elicit the amazing retort, "'Ere, young fellow, 'op it, and don't act the giddy goat." I had never heard the expression before, but during the morning I heard many other expressions which were new to me, but scarcely fit for publication.

After obtaining two or three indefinite promises that I should be supplied with some sort of band, I wended my way to the theatre after lunch, to find the stage door entrance crowded with orchestral men holding instruments of every description under their



"Hundreds of 'unemployed' in the orchestral profession turned up on chance of obtaining an engagement."

arms or in their hands. It appeared that the whole story had spread like wild-fire throughout the orchestral profession, with the result that hundreds of "unemployed" turned up on chance of obtaining an engagement. Entirely ignoring the fact that I had ordered at least three Bond Street orchestras, I promptly engaged forty men, who gave me the most wonderful testimonials of their respective abilities, and within half an hour had taken my place at the conductor's desk and was endeavouring to rehearse them. I doubt whether such weird and uncanny sounds have ever been heard in a theatre before or since. Most of the men turned out to be "duds," who could neither read nor play, and I, of course, could not conduct. I was just asking a cornet player if he would be so kind as to play in the same key as the rest of the orchestra, when a message came from the box-office that *three* orchestras were on their way to the theatre. This was unthinkable, but sure enough they came. The Fates were very kind to me, as they all proved to be Hungarians who could only play czardas or a rhapsody. After being extremely courteous to them and getting them out of the theatre, I continued

Variations on a Personal Theme

rehearsing till half an hour before the doors opened, and conducted from that night till the end of the run of the piece. It was the first time I had ever held a baton, and I caught the fever. Awful as the orchestra was, awful as my conducting was, I loved it all. Visions of conducting great concerts and great orchestras floated through my brain, though it was many years before those visions were to be realized.

And thus it was that I became a conductor.

VARIATION IV.

Accompanying at Windsor and Balmoral.

IT was in the year 1887 that I first had the honour of appearing before Queen Victoria—if playing second fiddle in a students' orchestra can be called "appearing before Queen Victoria." I was just fourteen years of age, but looked somewhat younger. I was a student at the Royal College of Music, where I was studying pianoforte as my principal subject under Franklin Taylor; violin under Henry Holmes, and afterwards under Mr. Gompertz; composition under Sir (then Dr.) Hubert Parry; and counterpoint under Sir (then Dr.) Frederick Bridge. I had incidentally to attend lectures and play second violin in the orchestra under Sir (then Dr.) Charles Villiers Stanford. The students' orchestra was commanded to appear at Windsor at the great banquet which was given either on the night of the Jubilee or the following night. (I know for certain it was either one or the other, but I couldn't positively assert which.) I remember quite distinctly my great indignation at my dear mother, because she would insist on my wearing a velvet knickerbocker suit which, for some ungodly reason, I possessed at the time. We were all to leave from Paddington Station in a couple of third-class coaches attached to a special train. This special train turned out to be the one which was to take the various Royalties to Windsor Castle. I can still feel the thrills I experienced when I arrived on the platform carrying my violin and was told by some fellow-student, "You see that couple there? Well, that's the King and Queen of Norway! Just standing by them are the King and Queen of Denmark. And you see these three men grouped together? Well, the old man is the Kaiser, and the man with the beard is the German Crown Prince (afterwards Kaiser Frederick), and the youngster is Prince Wilhelm." I remember I was quite enthralled and felt very much the same as when I was first taken to Madame Tussaud's.

Only two outstanding memories remain of what occurred at the Castle that night. The first is that some kind official hoisted me on his shoulder and let me have a peep at the great

banqueting-hall through a tiny little window, and told me to be sure and have a look at the gold plate, which duly impressed me. The second is my intense nervousness and anxiety lest I should play a wrong note, as I was obsessed with the idea that Queen Victoria would at once detect it, and that I should be promptly sent to prison.

My next appearance before Queen Victoria was a very different affair, but oddly enough it took place on the evening of her Diamond Jubilee (or, once again, it might have been the night after). Signor Tosti (as he was then) occupied the unofficial position of Court accompanist. Tosti was an extremely popular song-writer of that epoch, and will always be remembered in this country by his setting of Whyte-Melville's lyric, "Good-bye," which Melba helped to make a household word. He was a great favourite at Court. The whole of the Royal Family were attached to him, and Society followed suit. He and I were friends for years. I knew him to be a delightful humbug and a *poseur* of the first order; but he had a charm and fascination all his own, and possessed many qualities that endeared him to his friends. He could accompany his own songs admirably, but otherwise his powers in this direction were decidedly limited. And he was clever enough to realize his limitations.

Thus it came about that when Queen Victoria commanded Mme. Albani and M. Plançon (the greatest French bass of modern times) to appear before her on the night of her Diamond Jubilee, and also commanded Tosti to accompany them, he suddenly developed rheumatism in the hands, and asked permission to bring me to play all the items excepting his own songs. He further promised to turn the pages for me! Naturally, I was mightily pleased to get the opportunity, and sincerely grateful to him for giving it to me. I can see the whole scene as clearly as if it were yesterday. We arrived at Windsor, and a Royal carriage was sent for Plançon and myself to take us to and from the Castle Hotel. Tosti and Mme. Albani were staying at the Castle itself. When we arrived there we were first ushered into a small room, and were then led to a large *salon*, where we found members of the Court standing about, with Tosti and Mme. Albani keeping near to the grand pianoforte. There was a sofa for the Queen near the piano, and a small table just by with a programme on it and a powerful pair of binocular glasses. I can say without fear of contradiction that we were all fearfully nervous. Nobody spoke much above a whisper, and the whole atmosphere of the room was horribly depressing and unnerving.

Ten long minutes elapsed before the

Queen entered, and then everyone seemed to me to be petrified. She advanced very slowly, walking with a stick in her right hand and leaning heavily on the arm of a stalwart Indian attendant, who seemed mightily proud of his job. She looked very much like the pictures and portraits I had seen of her, but was much stouter than I had imagined, and her expression was so very stern that I got the impression (a wrong one) that something had occurred which had greatly annoyed her. I must conscientiously admit that I was frightened to death of her, although I had reached man's estate! I probably never accompanied quite so badly in my life as I did the first song or two, and it was only after I found her bowing very graciously to Plançon and smiling quite sweetly to Mme. Albani that I began to feel at all at my ease. The little concert only lasted about three-quarters of an hour, and at the end of it Mme. Albani, Plançon, and Tosti were all presented to Her Majesty, who appeared to be most gracious and affable, more particularly to Mme. Albani. Some kind Equerry-in-Waiting noticed me standing by the piano alone, came up, and in the most charming manner congratulated me on my accompaniments, and added: "I'll have you presented in a minute." When the

Queen had finished talking to Mme. Albani, I saw him approach her and say something in a low voice. She took up the big pair of glasses on the table and looked at me through them (although I was only a few feet away) and nodded her head. The Equerry promptly came and, lightly holding my arm, duly presented me. I bowed low, and wished that the earth would open. Tosti told me afterwards that I went as white as the proverbial sheet. My hopeless embarrassment was added to by the fact that for some unconscionable reason the Queen kept the opera-glasses to her eyes and stared at me through them! I suppose she did this for about ten seconds, but it seemed to me ten years. It was just bad luck, because it was certainly not a habit of hers, as she had never been known to do it before. She thanked me for what I had done, and my reply was a low bow. A pause ensued, and I didn't know whether to retire or stay where I was. Another ten years passed, and she remarked, "Accompanying is a very great gift," which elicited another bow from me. Still another pause, and then I was unmistakably dismissed from the Royal presence by a very sweet smile. I had the good fortune to walk backwards without upsetting anything or anybody, and soon recovered my spirits under the influence of a delightful little supper-party, with Lord Farquhar as our host.

The next day I received an enamel and diamond pin as a souvenir of the event. The Victorian jewellery could not be compared with that given by King Edward and Queen Alexandra, or the present King and Queen. Some of these designs are quite beautiful, but the pins and studs I had from Queen Victoria were all ponderous and big, and could only be worn on very special occasions. Still, I was very proud of this particular pin, and am quite sure I should have adorned myself with it every day but for the fact that it took the form of a very big



"I bowed low, and wished that the earth would open."

Variations on a Personal Theme

monogram V.R., and as my initials are L.R. I was afraid of my friends thinking I had suddenly taken to wearing my own initials as a scarf-pin.

This appearance at Windsor Castle as accompanist was the forerunner of many others, which call for no special mention; but one experience in connection with a command to appear at Balmoral is worth recounting. Others have given their impressions of Balmoral so infinitely better than I could ever hope to do that it is not my intention to describe what actually occurred there, but just to narrate an unforgettable incident on the way home. A certain well-known American baritone, who was very popular in this country twenty-five years ago, had been commanded to sing to the Queen on this particular occasion, and as usual I had to accom-

pany. He was fearfully pleased with himself; indeed, the whole affair went to his head, and on the return journey he bored me unutterably by talking of nothing else but of his "wonderful success," and how "Queen Victoria had never been known to be so amiable to any other big singer or artiste," etc., etc., etc.! The luncheon-hour arrived and we went into the dining-car, which was packed with people. Everything

went smoothly till my friend was unable to get any potatoes with his meat. Once he asked, twice he asked, without any result.

Imagine my horror when he got up and said, in a very loud voice, "Waiter, are you aware that I have just been singing to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, and that you have kept me waiting nearly ten minutes for a potato?"

It is well known that Queen Victoria, besides being very fond of music, was quite a good pianist herself. I was told an incident by one of the Equerries, at one of the many supper parties we had after a Royal concert, which I think worth relating. Queen Victoria had been told that one of her Ladies-in-Waiting possessed an extremely good voice and sang very well. She was asked by the Queen one

evening to sing, and with fear and trembling she at once consented to do so, choosing a famous operatic aria which ended with a long shake. The Queen expressed her surprise that the performer never attempted to end the aria as it was written. Her Majesty turned smilingly to the performer's sister, who was sitting near her, and said, "Doesn't your sister shake, Lady X.?" to which the lady promptly replied, "Oh, yes, ma'am; she is shaking all over!"



A CARICATURE.

By Bert Thomas.

(To be concluded.)

WEE MR. ANTHONY, the solicitor, said Mr. Patrick Murphy, was one of them men that hasn't room in their heads for more than one idea at a time. Him bein' a solicitor, ye might think it was law his head was full of, but not a bit of it. Outside of his own office, or the Petty Sessions Court, law never troubled him; he just passed his final examination an' then placed the whole business in the hands of the divil. Sport was his weakness. In the summer he played tennis as if he made his livin' by it; an' it was well for him he didn't, for with him bein' so short-sighted he stopped a deal more balls with the pit of his stomach than ever he did with his bat. But with the end of the good weather he dhropped the tennis like a hot potato an' took to the shootin'. An' then the coroner sharpened his pencil; for when Mr. Anthony turned out a charge of shot on the world only an all-seein' Providence could tell where some of the pickles would come to a full-stop.

I was standin' whettin' my scythe one October evenin' when Mr. Anthony comes into the yard.

"Pat," sez he, "is there any wild duck about that a body could shoot handy?"

"Lashin's of them," sez I. "Do you want a brace or two?"

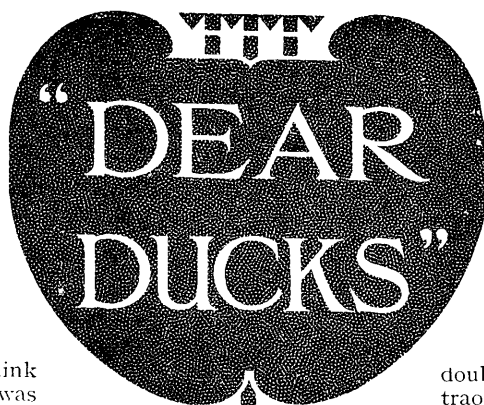
"I do," sez he. "The fact is, Pat," he goes on, "Miss Livingston an' I is a bit friendly lately——"

"Oh, well," sez I, "what odds? If it comes to a breach of promise ye can conduct your own defence."

"I haven't got the length of a promise yet," sez he, "let alone a breach of it."

"What's holdin' ye?" sez I, "that can talk round a whole bench of magistrates, let alone an innocent slip of a girl that might be your daughter."

"You're a liar," sez Mr. Anthony. "I'm not even ten years older than her. It's the shootin' is holdin' me back," sez he. "She's clean death on my takin' up a



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gun; an' I'd as soon live single all my life as give it up now that I have mastered it."

"Masthered it, God forgive ye!" sez I to myself—an' then out loud: "There's no

doubt you've come on extraordinary well at it this last winter or two."

"Haven't I, Pat?" sez he, all pleased, "haven't I now? D'ye mind that grouse I shot, last June was a year?"

"Wheesht, Mr. Anthony!" sez I.

"I don't care a fig," sez he. "Close season or no close season, didn't the bird rise up fornent me an' just ask for it! I never made a prettier shot in my life. Hang it; why wasn't it in the month of August, when

I could ha' told people! But that's neither here nor there," sez he. "It's in my mind to shoot a couple of nice ducks an' send them round to Miss Livingston. If she had the wing and a bit of the breast of one of them sittin' before her on a plate she might think betther of my shootin'."

"Does she not think well of it as it is?" sez I.

"Well," sez Mr. Anthony, lookin' a wee bit foolish, "there was an accident happened me one day lately when I was walkin' across the fields with her. A rabbit got up in front of us, an' I fired a bit hasty an' missed it."

"Is that all?" sez I. "She surely wouldn't expect even you to hit everything you fire at."

"It wasn't that," sez Mr. Anthony, rubbin' his chin. "The fact is, Pat," sez he, "I hit her dog. It was that blasted wee Pomeranian that goes along with its tail arched over its back, as if it was as proud of its hind end as it is of its face; an', of course, in the tail it got it. Curse the misbegotten little brute; if it carried its tail decently out behind it like an ordinary dog the divil a pickle it would ha' got, an' I might even have killed the rabbit. However, that's past prayin' for now. Where do you think I could get a pair of ducks?"

“Dear Ducks”

“Try the marshy ground where the Ballygullion river flows into the lake,” sez I. “It’s clean alive with ducks, an’ most of them flappers, an’ flyin’ very slow.”

“Flyin’ slow,” sez Mr. Anthony, a bit vexed. “Flyin’ slow, is it? What do I care whether they’re flyin’ slow or fast? You’d think I was a novice to hear you talkin’.” An’ off he goes in a huff.

BUT about three days afther, back he comes again, an’ not near as cocky this time.

“Did she like the ducks?” sez I.

“I always thought this tennis playin’ was bad for a man’s shootin’,” sez Mr. Anthony. “Would you believe it, Pat, but I’ve been down at the marshes these three evenin’s, an’ fired away as many cartridges as would fill a counsellor’s wig, an’ the devil a feather I’ve brought down.”

“Did ye not as much as wound somethin’?” sez I, chaffin’ him.

“Well,” sez he, “there *was* one, a drake, I think, that flew away very slow an’ heavy afther I fired at him.”

“I wouldn’t think much of that,” sez I. “He might have a touch of rheumatism. sleepin’ in the damp. You’ll have to take another evenin’ or two at them.”

“It’s no good,” sez he, “till I get this infernal tennis out of my system. Besides, I haven’t time. There’s a dinner party at the Livingstons’ on Friday, an’ I wanted the ducks for that.”

“Ye needn’t bother your head,” sez I. “My wife has a pair of young ones fattened for them.”

“Has she?” sez he, lookin’ disappointed; “that’s a pity. Pat,” sez he, all excited, “would she sell them to me? Hold your tongue now; let her send word to the Livingstons that the rats ate them; an’ then I’ll come along with a pair just in the nick of time. Don’t talk to me,” sez he, hoppin’ round as the notion took hold of him; “there’s not a bein’ about the place would know a wild-duck from a wather-hen barrin’ Mr. Livingston himself, an’ sure they’ll be plucked clean naked before they get his length.”

“Ye’ve no sense, Mr. Anthony,” sez I. “Wouldn’t the very scullery-maid know when a bird has its throat cut instead of bein’ shot?”

“So she would,” sez Mr. Anthony. “That’s awkward. Wait now,” sez he. “I’m not beat yet. Dhrove them through the gap in the hedge there, one at a time, an’ I’ll shoot them as they come through. What about that, eh? It’s hard to get the betther of me, mind ye, when I lay my brains to a thing. Go on now an’ get them. What are ye waitin’ for?”

“It’s clean murder, Mr. Anthony,” sez I, “forbye that ye might miss them.”

“Miss them!” sez he, “Miss them, ye imperent ould vagabond! An’ them walkin’! Didn’t ye see me bringin’ down a woodcock in the Drumnaquirk wood only last February?”

“I did,” sez I; “but you were aimin’ at a wood-pigeon at the time. However, I suppose I’ll have to be as big a fool as yourself. Away an’ post yourself, an’ I’ll bring the ducks. What size of shot are ye usin’?”

“Number three,” sez he.

“It’s too big,” sez I. “Ye’ll damage them.”

“It’s all I have,” sez he. “I’ve killed ducks with it before.”

“Ye have,” sez I, “an’ ye killed a terrier dog of mine with it too. If Mr. Livingston breaks one of them gold teeth of his on a pickle of number three shot I wouldn’t give much for your chance of marryin’ his daughter. But have your own way. Ye’ll have it anyway, I know.”

So off I goes and brings the two ducks, an’ them quackin’ away as if they’d ten years to live. Ye’d ha’ thought somebody had told them what sort of a shot Mr. Anthony was. When I came back he was on the far side of the gap with the gun in his hand.

“Are ye ready now?” sez I. “Here’s the first of them.”

“Hold on a minit,” sez he, an’ I could tell by his voice he was flustered. “I want a good steady shot. I’m goin’ to lie down on my belly.”

“If one of them two-year-old bullocks of mine steps on ye ye’ll get up again,” sez I.

“Bless my soul!” sez I to myself, as a thought struck me; an’ I ran over to the gap an’ peeped through. It was well I looked at Mr. Anthony first. If I hadn’t ha’ shouted I was a dead man.

“Good heavens, Pat,” sez he, lowerin’ the gun, “I thought it was one of the ducks.”

“Ye didn’t think a duck had a pair of nailed boots on it, did ye?” sez I. “Ye’ll do ten years for manslaughter yet. I wanted to make sure the bullocks was out of your line of fire.”

“Will ye dhrove out them dratted ducks an’ have done with it?” sez Mr. Anthony in a rage. “Ye have my nerve near ruined as it is.”

“Come on, then,” sez I. “Blaze away!”

I wished the first of them through the gap—keepin’ well to the rear myself, I may tell ye. There came a terrible roar of a report. When I run through the gap there was as much smoke dhritin’ down the field as if the kitchen chimney was on fire, an’ Mr. Anthony rowlin’ over an’ over in the middle of it, an’ cursin’ most lamentable.

“In the name of goodness, Mr. Anthony,”



"There was as much smoke as if the kitchen chimney was on fire, an' Mr. Anthony rowlin' over an' over in the middle of it."

sez I, "what's wrong? Did ye shoot out of the wrong end of the gun?" For troth he was capable of it.

"It was you, ye ould fool ye," sez he, risin' to his feet an' rubbin' himself. "Ye had me scared into thinkin' I might miss the beast, an' I pulled the two triggers at the one time. My back-bone is out of joint," sez he, reachin' round between his shouldher-blades. "But I'll go bail I killed the duck, anyway."

"Where is it, then, if ye did?" sez I, lookin' all round. For there was no duck to be seen.

"It's the most extraordinary thing," sez Mr. Anthony, stickin' the eye-glass in his eye an' lookin' all round him. "I'll swear an' kiss the book that I hit it."

"I'll tell ye what ye've done," sez I. "Ye've blew it to pieces." An' that's what he had done. We searched up an' we searched down, but divil a all we ever

“Dear Ducks”

discovered of the same duck but the neb an' one of the feet.

“Aw, well,” sez I, at the last, “it had a lovely death, even if there isn't much eatin' about the carcass. Will I dhrive out the other one for ye now?”

“Dhrive it to blazes if ye like,” sez Mr. Anthony, fair boilin' over. “Have ye any whisky about the place? Then come an' rub my shoulder with some of it. An' ye may throw that blasted gun in the well,” sez he, an' stalks off into the house.

But by the time his shoulder was well rubbed with the whisky an' him had a good jorum of it in his inside, he began to come round.

“Say what ye like, Pat,” sez he, “it was a great shot. Plump in the middle I must ha' got that duck.”

“Ye must have,” sez I, sootherin' him. “It was only outlying bits like the neb that we found. There's no doubt ye have a very straight eye.”

“Haven't I, Pat?” sez he, swellin' himself out. “Haven't I now? Curse that tennis,” sez he; “if I had let it alone an' practised with the gun all summer I could shoot midges by now. Look here, Pat,” sez he, “I'll send Miss Livingston that brace of wild duck yet. They'll be late for the dinner party, but what matter?”

“They needn't be,” sez I. “Couldn't ye come out to-morrow evenin' to the marshes?”

“I can't,” sez he. “The Quarter Sessions is on. It's a pity, too, an' me shootin' the way I am. But I'm prosecutin' in some poachin' cases an' I must turn up. Look here, Pat,” sez he, “the ducks'll be plentier in a week or two, won't they?”

“With the first touch of frost,” sez I, “there'll be dhrives of them.”

“Very well,” sez he; “the next likely evenin' that ye see any plenty of ducks in the marshes send for me an' I'll come should it be rainin' conveyances an' snowin' wills. I've got the true knack of shootin' this time. Give me the neb of that duck till I show it to my articled clerk. Ye'll not forget, now, to send me word.”

SO I promised I would not; an' clean forgot all about it till a fortnight atherwards, when I was out myself lookin' for ducks with the old muzzle-loader, an' Big Billy Lenahan of the Hills with me. It was a fine frosty evenin', with just enough ice about to fetch the ducks to the open water, an' I knowed there'd be strings of them comin' down the river presently.

“Billy,” sez I, “this is just the very night for Mr. Anthony. I must send him word.”

An' then I remembered I was makin' a mistake.

“Let him stay at home, the wee gas-bag,”

sez Billy, with a growl. “Five pound his long tongue cost me at the Quarter Sessions, bad luck to him.”

“If ye let yourself be caught poachin', Billy,” sez I, “ye needn't blame Mr. Anthony. He's prosecutin' solicitor, an' he has his duty to do.”

“I know he has,” sez Billy, “but he needn't have done it that wicked. He promised me he wouldn't press the case; an' then he goes an' gets himself all blew up with his own talk; an' I'm fined five pound through him, the vain wee cockatoo. But take your time,” sez Billy. “I'll be even with him yet.”

“Ach, don't bear malice, Billy,” sez I. “There's no harm in Mr. Anthony.”

“There's a deal too much of the blether about him in a law-court,” sez Billy, still very sore. “He's all gab and guts, like a young crow. But let him come. We'll have some fun out of him, anyway.”

So we sent one of the young Robinsons for Mr. Anthony, an' Billy and I went on ather the ducks. In about half an hour's time he come up behind us, an' him an almighty swell with a fur-lined coat an' his evening-dhress below it.

“You're never goin' to shoot ducks in that rig, Mr. Anthony?” sez I.

“I am not,” sez he, “worse luck. I'm going out to dine at Miss Armytage's of the Hall. Have ye shot many?”

“Half-a-dozen up till now,” sez I; “but they'll be coming along thicker presently.”

“Well, bad cess to it,” sez Mr. Anthony, very savage. “An' just the evenin' I can't get at them. You'd think they knew they were safe.”

“Away home an' change your clothes,” sez I, “an' send Miss Armytage word you're not well.”

“I can't,” sez he, bitin' at his nails; “no, hang it, I can't. Miss Livingston is to be there. Between you an' me, Pat,” sez he, “I've given her a hint that I'm goin' to ask her a question to-night. But do you an' Billy go on, an' I'll walk with you. I've been readin' up about duck-shootin' since I saw you, and I might be able to give you a wrinkle or two.”

“Come on, then,” sez I, for I seen some very offensive expressions thremblin' on Billy Lenahan's tongue.

A couple of minutes later along comes a pair of ducks just barely within range, an' I fetched the near one down.

“If ye'd waited till the two of them was in line,” sez Mr. Anthony, “the one shot would have killed both.”

“If he could fly ather them, he could catch them with his hands,” sez Billy, very sour. “It's a pity it's not you is carryin' the gun.”

“I wish I was,” sez Mr. Anthony. “Bad

cess to it, I wish I was. I could shoot to-night, I know I could. An' look at the strings of ducks comin' along there, far out. Where's that old pair of wadin' boots I gave you, Pat? If you were only out in the middle there you could shoot rings round you. Pat," sez he, dancin' round with excitement, "away home for them, quick. Damme, I'll put them on an' have a shot myself. Run; an' don't waste a minit.

have no great experience with a muzzle-loader."

"Blethers," sez Mr. Anthony, layin' hold of the gun. "You'd think I was a beginner to hear you talkin'. I blew the nail off my



I must turn up at the dinner. My whole future life might depend on it. But I'd like to have a couple of shots before I commit myself to matrimony. There's no tellin' what effect marriage might have on my shoot-in'. Away with you now, quick."

"Ye'd better wait till you've come back from the dinner, Mr. Anthony," sez I. "The moon'll be up by then."

"There'll be two moons up by then," sez Mr. Anthony.

"Did you ever taste Miss Armytage's port wine?—Go on an' get the boots. Gimme your gun an' the powder an' shot. I'll be loadin' the empty barrel while you're away."

"Better let Billy load it," sez I. "You

"In the name of goodness, what kept ye all this time? The toes is near froze off me."

thumb with a muzzle-loader before Billy was born."

"Keep an eye on him while he's chargin' her," sez I to Billy in an undertone; "only if you're wise it'll be from behind a tree. I'll be back before he has time to shoot much

“Dear Ducks”

more than the dog.” An’ off I went, hot-foot; for I knowed there would be fun before the evenin’ was over.

WHEN I got back he was sittin’ on a stone in his stocking feet, waitin’.

“In the name of goodness, what kept ye all this time?” sez he. “The toes is near froze off me. An’ there’s not less than five hundhred ducks gone past us far out. Here, pull the boots on me, the pair of you, an’ I’ll lean on the gun.”

“If ye fill the muzzle of that gun wi’ dirt, Mr. Anthony,” sez I, “all ye’ll kill this evenin’ ’ll be a solicitor; for the charge’ll come through the near end of her.”

“Hang it,” sez he in a splutther, “am I doin’ that? Wait a minit, an’ I’ll lean on the butt.”

“Well, if you think I’m goin’ to pull on your boots with the muzzle of a loaded gun proddin’ me in the small of the back,” sez Billy, “you’re mistaken. I’ll hold him, Pat, an’ do you pull. There you are. Away ye go now; straight in front of you.”

“Where are ye sendin’ the man, Billy?” sez I. “Come back, Mr. Anthony. You’re headin’ right for the main dhRAIN, an’ if ye go in there it’s a submarine ye’ll need instead of wadin’ boots. Keep to your left. Easy now; don’t fire! That’s only a coot scutterin’ along the top of the wather. Wade as far out as the boots’ll let ye. The ducks is frightened of us on the bank here.”

“Bad manners to you, anyway, with your main dhRAIN,” sez he. “My nerves is all janglin’! How will I know the main dhRAIN, if I come on it?”

“You’ll know by goin’ in over your ears,” sez I. “But you’re not headin’ that way now.”

So off he moves through the wather an’ mud, goin’ very cautious.

“Why didn’t ye let him go on the way he was goin’,” sez Billy. “There’ll be no sport with him now.”

“I never seen him go out with a gun yet that there wasn’t sport,” sez I. “He’ll shoot somethin’ he oughtn’t to before he goes home; take care it isn’t yourself, ye black-hearted ruffian. Wait; here, he’s comin’ back. What has he done now? Listen to the language of him. What’s wrong, Mr. Anthony?”

“It’s them cursed coots,” sez he. “The wather was just lippin’ up to the top of the boots when a couple of them came splattherin’ by, makin’ a wake like a steamer; an’ there’s about two gallon of mud gone down the legs of my evenin’ breeches. An’ the moths has ate the seat out of the only spare pair I have. Curse it, anyway,” sez he. “I may stay at home now.”

“Such nonsense,” sez I. “Won’t your

feet be undher the table? If it was your shirt front was round your legs you might be talkin’. Hurry up an’ try a shot. The light’s goin’.”

“I might as well let it alone,” sez he. “I’m goin’ to have no luck to-night. But I’ll have a try, secin’ I’m here.” An’ off he wades again.

“It’s the first time I ever went out with him,” sez I to Billy, “that he wasn’t cock-sure he’d fill his game-bag with one shot. It’s a good sign. He’ll hit somethin’ to-night, see if he doesn’t. Do ye think he loaded that second barrel all right?”

“He did,” sez Billy. “I kept a careful eye on him. Just a fair charge he put in, an’ no more.”

“Watch him, then, Billy,” sez I, “till we see how he does. Juke down! There’s a sthring of ducks comin’ between us an’ him. He doesn’t see them, the wee donkey. Shout to him, Billy.”

“No, don’t shout,” sez Billy. “There’s some beyond him as well. Is he never goin’ to shoot,” sez he, fidgin’. I could see Billy was near as excited as myself. “He sees them,” chuckles he. “Look out for fun now.”

Up goes Mr. Anthony’s g’n to his shoulder. He followed the ducks with the muzzle till I was near bursted holdin’ my breath. I could see him bracin’ himself up as he pulled the trigger.

“Now for a shower of ducks, Billy,” sez I,

There came nothing but the crack of a cap.

“Bad luck to it,” sez I; “a miss-fire. I knowed he wouldn’t load her right. Behind you, Mr. Anthony!” I shouts, leppin’ up. “Behind ye!”

He wheeled half round at the sound of my voice, seen the second lot of ducks, up with the gun again, an’ fires. There was a report like the blastin’ of a quarry. Mr. Anthony staggered back, recovered himself a bit, clawin’ in the air, an’ then souse down he went on the broad of his back, an’ disappeared.

“Quick, Billy,” shouts I; “follow me. He’ll be dhrowned! He’s in the main dhRAIN!”

“Easy,” sez Billy, quite cool, layin’ hold of my arm. “He’s fifty yards from the main dhRAIN. There he is on his feet again. Oh, great Christopher,” sez he, beginning to laugh, “will ye look at him?”

An’ troth, though I was heart sorry for the wee man, I could hardly keep my own face straight. He was just like one of them sea-lions bobbin’ up out of the tank at the circus, only instead of havin’ a sealskin coat on him he was one solid mass of mud an’ glar. He turned round a couple of times, goopin’ in front of him with his hands, an’

then he started off straight for the main dhraín.

"This way, Mr. Anthony," I calls out, when I could find my voice. "Come this way."

He started to come towards the voice, all the time gropin' with his hands, an' wandherin' here an' there as if he was playin' blind man's buff, an' at last he made the land. The only feature ye could make out in his face was his mouth, an' that only because he kept spittin' out mud an' bits of bulrushes.

"What happened to you at all, at all, Mr. Anthony?" sez I, when we got him a sort of a way cleaned. "Did you trip on anythin'?"

"Take me home," he splutthers; "take me home out of this. An' send word to Miss Armytage that I'm dyin' of typhoid. I will be, too, before break-

fast time to-morrow," sez he, spittin' out another mouthful of mud. "There's as much sewage gone down my throat as would give typhoid to a carrion-crow. It was all that dratted old blunderbuss of yours. I can handle an ordinary fowlin'-piece with anybody," sez he, "an' well you know it; but I won't undhertake to stand up again the kick of a field-gun. By heavens, it has a recoil like a howitzer. Take me home, I tell ye; an' if ye ever



"Take me home, take me home out of this," sez he, spittin' out another mouthful of mud."

dig that old infernal machine out of the marsh where it's lyin' this minit, by this an' by that I'll be hanged for ye."

An' not another word could we get out of him till we helped him into his own hall, afther persuadin' the housekeeper that it *was* him.

I walked down the road with Billy thinkin' very hard, an' every now an' then takin' a look at his face. But he was as solemn as a judge.

"Look here, Billy," sez I. "Tell me the truth. Did Mr. Anthony put only a fair charge into the empty barrel of that gun?"

"He put a fair charge in," sez Billy. "The only thing I wasn't quite sure of at the time," sez he, backin' away from me a step or two, "was whether he was puttin' it into the empty barrel."

I suppose I shouldn't ha' done it, but afther a minit or so I sat down beside Billy an' laughed till I minded that it was my gun was lyin' at the bottom of the marsh.

HERE IS SOMETHING NEW! Every reader will remember the dramatic Green Bicycle Case. Ronald Light was found innocent, but the mystery remains—who shot Bella Wright? The writer of this story, after a most careful investigation, here puts forward, in the novel form of mingled fact and fiction, his theory of what actually occurred.

THE GREEN BICYCLE CASE

by
H. TRUEMAN HUMPHRIES

*Illustrated by
Drawings and
Photographs
taken on the spot*

The circumstances of this sensational trial will be fresh in the memory of all newspaper readers. Briefly, the facts were these: Late on the evening of July 5th, 1919, the body of a young working girl, Bella Wright, was found by a farmer lying beside her bicycle in a lonely country lane in Leicestershire. The doctor first stated that she had met her death through a fall from her bicycle, but the subsequent discovery of a dead bird (stated by the policeman to have been either a raven or a crow, "gorged with blood") led to a re-examination of the girl and the discovery that she had been shot through the head. It was then ascertained that immediately prior to the tragedy the girl had been seen cycling in company with a young man riding a green bicycle. A hue and cry arose, lavish offers of reward were made, but no trace of the green bicycle or of its owner was found until the following February, when, by an extraordinary chance, parts of the bicycle, together with an empty revolver-holster, were

recovered from the bottom of a canal. The manufacturers' identification numbers had been filed off, but its ownership was eventually traced to one Light, who was arrested and put on trial for the murder. In the witness-box Light admitted he was the man who was last seen with the girl, that his were the cycle and holster, his were the cartridges found in the canal—cartridges which corresponded with the bullet picked up in the lane—and that he had

thrown the bicycle and holster into the canal after filing off the numbers. Nevertheless, he affirmed that he was innocent of the girl's death. Pressed to explain why he maintained his long silence, and why he took steps to hide the cycle and holster, he frankly said that, fearing the non-acceptance of the truth of his story, he was at first afraid to speak; from that he slipped into a policy of concealment, and had to go on with it. Light was acquitted, and the case was written off as another "Unsolved Crime."

These are the facts. What follows is fiction.

I. **I**T was Professor Bayne's theory that all human problems were reducible to terms of mathematics. There were times when he declaimed this faith to his secretary in so vehement and violent a fashion that, had Millicent Meston been an ordinary secretary, she would have fled from his presence in terror. To the girl "her professor," as she described him in the intimate circle of her own family, had long ceased to be an enigma. There were

moments when he was a veritable Caliban—there were times when he was a frolicsome Puck. This was the side of him that students of mathematics never saw, even in his lightest lectures. These were the occasions when Millicent realized with a start that he was only thirty-five.

The Green Bicycle Case was one which at first glance would not seem to be susceptible to a mathematical solution, and yet—

"Love, hate, joy, grief, pain, pleasure," he said one evening, glaring up from the

chess problem which was apparently occupying his mind, they are the logarithms of emotion."

The heavy oak table at which the professor was seated was bare but for the chessmen and board, a quire of square drawing-paper, and a large, bronze ash-tray. Around him on the walls of his large, lofty, well-lit office were rows of books, from the massive tomes of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" on the lowest shelves to the thin format of "Bayne's Note on the Analysis of Unconscious Cerebration." It was a dead Sahara of facts without a solitary oasis of romance.

Here and there about the room hung charts and diagrams of mysterious import, and in a glazed cabinet in one corner was piled a medley of instruments—delicate Ramsay scales detecting half-a-millionth of an ounce, a bolometer that would feel the heat of a candle half a mile away, a microscope, a theodolite, electroscopes, Crookes tubes, spectroscopes with lovely refraction gratings with lines too close together for the microscope to see—and a collection of poisons enough to supply individual choice of death to a whole Suicide Club.

To anyone who did not understand the spirit of system that hid in it, the room was a mess of tangled disorder. But out of the pile of newspapers which lay on the floor every little detail that was useful to the professor would be carefully removed, docketed, précised, classified, and sub-classified, indexed and cross-indexed, and not until every slip was tucked away would that disorderly heap vanish.

The room symbolized his orderly and efficient brain as much as his impetuous scrapping of non-essentials. Life was too short to be tidy so long as everything that served a purpose was in its effective place: his old, shabby coat and tousled hair expressed his contempt of vanity.

A CALL had taken Millicent from the room. When she returned it was with that precipitancy which the professor so detested.

"Inspector Pell, of Scotland Yard, to see you."

This interruption breaking the chain of his reasoning, the professor spun round in his chair, glaring at her.

She waited a moment, and then:—

"Shall I show him in?"

"Eh? Yes, yes," he said, testily, and retrieved his scattered chessmen.

Turning again at the sound of footsteps, Bayne inquired of the well-set-up man who had entered:—

"Well, inspector?"

The man seated himself at a motion from

the professor, glanced at the girl, and made no immediate reply. Divining the cause of his embarrassment, Bayne said:—

"This is Miss Meston, my confidential secretary, and, I might add, my colleague. She has my confidence, and may be entrusted with yours."

The man nodded.

"To come straight to the point, the Yard wants your help. There have been too many unsolved crimes." The newspapers are stunting 'em and crying for scalps. There are questions in the House. Something has got to be done to redeem our prestige. But what, frankly, we don't know. Thought I'd look in and get your views about some of the crimes that've beaten us. There was that Green Bicycle case and——"

The inspector broke off abruptly, for the professor's attention appeared to be riveted to his chess problem. Would he—could he—help?

It would have been a strange request to have made of a professor of mathematics had not Professor Bayne figured with such prominence in the Moat Tower and the Parkstone murder cases. In the latter he had proved to fourteen places of decimals that it was humanly impossible for the accused man to have been the person whose footprints were found.

The professor, apparently without having listened, moved three pieces on the board. Then:—

"Well? But one at a time, please. The Green Bicycle case, you said? I seem to remember something about it. Very unusual sort of case, wasn't it? What was the date of the trial?"

"It opened on June 9th."

"Get my cuttings from June 9th," called the professor to the girl. Then to Pell he said: "The tragedy happened more than a year ago, didn't it?"

The inspector nodded.

"Unfortunate. I expect many possible clues have disappeared by this time."

Millicent returned to her seat, bearing a pile of newspaper cuttings.

"Read!" commanded Bayne in his lordly way, and lay back comfortably in his chair, closing both eyes as he did so. For one moment only during the long reading did he move; then he sprang forward in his chair and cried, sharply:—

"A what? Did you say 'crow'? 'Gorged' with blood? Read that paragraph again!"

She re-read the paragraph, and he chuckled:—

"Well, well, well!" Then: "Go on, please!"

At the conclusion of the recital of this absorbing narrative the professor aroused

The Green Bicycle Case

himself, turned to the inspector, and interrogated him:—

"Have you been to the scene of the tragedy since it happened?"

"Yes."

"Have you a plan of the place?"

"No, but I saw the one at Headquarters."

"Just see if you can sketch it from memory."

The man came to the table and sketched the plan on a sheet of the squared paper. The professor examined the sketch for a few minutes, then:—

"Umph! Was that all?"

"Yes, I don't think there was anything else on it."

"No other measurements?"

"No, I'm sure of that."

"This road—is it level?"

"No. It slopes downwards in this direction," and the inspector inscribed an arrow, adding, "the girl was riding down the slope when she was shot."

"Now, was Miss Wright tall or short?"

"I believe she was about five feet two inches."

"And this gate here—about how high was it?"

"I don't know. The police plan did not give the measurement."

"I suppose you cannot say anything about the condition of the hedges hereabouts?"

"I recollect that most of them had not been trimmed for a long while; some of them not since the beginning of the war."

"Ah!"

The professor jumped up, strode to the bookshelves, and deposited two volumes on the table. These he consulted, and then for ten minutes engaged himself in inscribing a mass of figures, symbols, and diagrams on the back of the plan. Suddenly he turned to the inspector and exclaimed:—

"All right, Inspector, I can clear this up. If—if, mark you—the *gate's not more than four foot two and the right hedge is thick and high*. Now, meet me at Great Glen Station next Wednesday. I shall go up by the nine-thirty. And bring with you the tenant of the field to which the gate belongs. We'll deal with your other little worries later on."

II.

AS Professor Bayne alighted on the platform of Great Glen Station he was met by Inspector Pell and a weather-beaten farmer in fustian and heavy boots. After introductions the trio drove off behind a speedy little pony, skilfully handled by the inspector.

After covering a few miles of country the inspector, with a "Here we are, sir!" pulled up the pony, and the three dis-

mounted from the vehicle. Leaving the pony to the care of the farmer, bag in hand the professor, accompanied by Pell, at once commenced his investigations.

"This is the gate, sir," said Pell, pointing to a very rickety-looking wooden gate opening into a field on the right of the lane.

"Oh! And can you show me the exact spot on the gate where the blood-marks of a bird's feet were found—they were mentioned at the trial?"

"Just about here, sir," answered Pell, placing his index finger on the top bar of the gate.

"About? Wasn't the position marked?"

"No; but it was about an inch to the left of this knot in the timber."

The professor took from his bag a number of metal pegs, each headed with a white disc, two inches in diameter, and drove one of these into the gate at the point the policeman had indicated. Then with a tape he carefully measured the height of the gate at that place, and uttered a grunt of satisfaction as he noted the measurement in a pocket-book, followed by a veritable trump of triumph as he glanced to the left of the gate and saw a hedge, fully nine feet high and eight feet wide, its untrimmed branches extending beyond the end of the gate.

"It is four-two and the right thick and high," he chuckled.

The inspector then indicated the position at which the body was found, and the farmer, from the pony's head, confirmed it with the words: "Aye, that's the place."

Bayne noted that it was about two feet away from the middle of the gate.

"And now can you show me where the bullet was found?"

"I'm afraid I cannot say *exactly*," said Pell, a little sarcastically, "but this is within a foot of it," and he took up a position about six yards up the lane, and to the left of the roadway. The professor drove a second peg into the grass.

"And where was the dead bird found?"

Again Pell gave the approximate spot, and a peg was planted. Then Bayne said, sharply:—

"What happened to the bird? Was it preserved?"

"No. I believe it was left on the ground."

"It is not here now, anyway, not even the skeleton. I suppose it has been removed by a field rat," grumbled Bayne. "Never mind. Just help me with this tape," and with the aid of Inspector Pell the professor carefully measured the positions of the pegs in relation to the gate, as well as the height and width of the hedge, and noted the results in his book.

He then fixed the theodolite on a tripod and surveyed the lane, sat on the grass by

the roadside, and for five minutes studied a mass of numerals and diagrams which he inscribed in his notebook, at the end of which he jumped suddenly to his feet, looked over the gate, and ejaculated: "Ha! There it is!"

Shutting his notebook with a snap, he said:—

"Hold the pony, inspector, and send the farmer with me."

Opening the gate he passed into the field, followed by the farmer, and walked up to a sheep trough which was lying in the grass about twenty-five yards from the gate. This he carefully examined and measured, at the same time plying the farmer with questions:—

"How long had the trough been lying there? Did he feed his sheep in the evening? When were the hedges of the field last trimmed? Was he responsible for trimming the hedges and repairing the gate?"

Then, again setting up the theodolite, he said to the farmer:—

"Now will you please go back to the lane and hold your hand up exactly over the indicator which you will see stuck in the grass?"

The farmer returned to the lane, took up the position, and raised his hand. Bayne took an observation, then, shouting "All right, that will do," unslung his camera and snapped the tumbledown old gate. He then turned round and walked across the field. At the opposite side he stood for some minutes contemplating a light, open fence topped with barbed wire, then made a circuit of the field, paying particular attention to the hedges as he walked. This done, he returned to the waiting men.

ON the following day the professor paid two calls in Leicester. He first visited one of those charming residences which lend distinction to the suburbs of the city, and after nearly an hour he emerged, disappointment written on his face, for Sir Walter Watson was not at home.

His second call was at the police-station, where he arranged for a list of the licensed owners of firearms in that district to be posted to him.

On the third day he spent several hours at Sir Walter's residence, and his persistence must have been rewarded, judging from the manner in which he blithely packed his traps, paid his bill, gave a generous tip to the porter, and strode along to the station booking-office.

One morning, about a month later, the postman delivered to Bayne a sealed and registered postal-packet, the contents of

which occupied him for several hours. They were entry forms for a rifle-shooting competition, and each bore a number at its head, whilst the gaps in the typed matter below were filled with ink inscriptions by various hands. The professor carefully scrutinized each form, and deposited it on one or other of two piles, a small one to his right, a larger one to his left. He then subjected the smaller heap to a second scrutiny, at the same time comparing the entries on the forms with the items in the schedule which he had received from the police. He then picked up the four only which remained after this process of elimination, studied them, muttered "My money's on No. 172," and entered the numbers in his notebook. Collecting these papers together, he repacked them, attached a label, and called to Millicent in the adjoining room to bring her shorthand notebook.

After giving orders for the dispatch of the parcel, he commenced to dictate:—

"The Shooting of Bella Wright. Confession—" followed by a recital, the sensational nature of which was evidenced by the expression in Millicent Meston's face as she rapidly plied her pencil. Reaching the end of the confession, he turned to her and whimsically inquired: "And what do you think of that?"

"You're wonderful!" she replied. "But you haven't given me the name of the person who fired the fatal shot. Who was it?"

He pondered for a moment, and then said:—

"For the present we'll call him No. 172."

III.

PROBABLY in no part of England is the sporting spirit stronger than in the districts of which Leicester is the centre; and in the hunting, football, or cricket-field no one was more popular or held in higher esteem than Major the Hon. Sir Walter Watson, member for the Leicester Division. A wealthy man, an enthusiastic patriot, a thorough sportsman, and a generous benefactor of every worthy cause, it was small wonder that whatever "Wally" Watson took in hand the men of his constituency would support.

Therefore, when the *Leicester Chronicle* announced that, in order to revive the waning interest in riflemanship, Major Watson had undertaken the promotion of a Midlands' Bisley, the success of the enterprise was a foregone conclusion, and when fuller particulars of the forthcoming event were given in the local papers and on the hoardings, and a windowful of magnificent prizes were exhibited at Harmer's Stores in High Street, local interest in the event

The Green Bicycle Case

seriously rivalled that taken in the fortunes of the Leicester City football team. In factory and on farm the "Bisley" was the principal topic of conversation.

The meeting took place on the first Saturday in September, and at nine o'clock in the morning the first batch of competitors arrived at the old Volunteer range.

Satisfaction radiated from the open, healthy face of Major Watson as, sitting in the shade of his shamiana, he explained to Mrs. Lloyd, the Mayoress:—

"You see, we were bound to enclose that special range in order to secure the element of surprise which is the essential part of that test. We sought to reproduce the natural conditions under which men are called upon to use rifles. The competitors enter the enclosure one by one, and are given a sporting rifle. They lie down, up goes the screen, and they have to get in a shot at whatever they see moving before the screen drops. The test calls for expert marksmanship and an instant estimation of distance. It also tests the quickness of the senses. Of course, it is hard lines on the spectators here that they can't see this snap-shooting, but if the range were exposed, competitors would be able to study the targets and estimate the ranges beforehand, and so the 'surprise' element would disappear."

ABOUT four o'clock, when the stands were crowded with spectators and the relatives of the competitors, Inspector Pell, his jacket off and his sleeves rolled up, displaying arms on which were the marks of perspiration, oil, and soot, quietly slipped into the rear entrance to the enclosed range, deposited a tray of tea, cakes, and bread and butter before the coatless marker seated at a small table to the right of the butts, whispering, "Here you are. Now we sha'n't be long!"

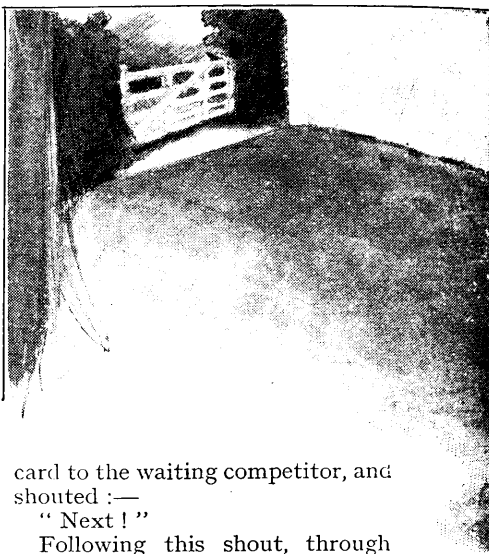
The man addressed lifted his eyes from the card upon which he was marking the score of a competitor standing in front of him, and revealed the tired features of Professor Bayne.

"I sincerely hope we sha'n't," he said, with a yawn, as he rose and stretched himself, looked again at the number at the head of the card in his hand, and muttered, "171."

"Shall I pour out your tea?" inquired the inspector, solicitously.

There was an undercurrent of excitement in Bayne's voice as he quietly said: "No, Pell. Not until the next one has finished." Then, under his breath, he added: "Just go to the back there and clean a rifle. Or, better still, slip behind that rifle-cabinet, and don't show yourself until I call!"

With a puzzled face Pell retired behind cover. Then Bayne handed the scoring-



card to the waiting competitor, and shouted:—

"Next!"

Following this shout, through the door stepped a youth of about fourteen, dressed in a coarse, brown tweed suit and a soft collar. He walked in with the awkward diffidence of a country boy, met the professor's eyes with a sullen glance, and produced his card.

"Number 172. By George! you have done well, my boy. If you keep this average you ought to get one of the biggest prizes," said the professor, encouragingly, at which the boy's face brightened. He then explained the conditions of the contest to the boy, warning him to focus his whole attention in readiness for the raising of the screen, or he would not pick up the targets. He then placed four cartridges in the magazine of a rifle, handed the weapon to the boy, and said, "Get ready!"

As the boy stretched himself on the raised turf, wriggled to secure a comfortable firing posture, and then fixed his eyes on the white screen before him, the professor slipped quietly from his seat and sat on the floor at the boy's side.

"Ready!"

The boy strained his eyes along the barrel, the professor pulled a signalling-cord, and up went the screen to disclose, about a hundred yards away, the figure of a running hare.

"Crack!" a puff of smoke as the boy pulled the trigger, and down dropped the screen. A few moments after a bell rang, and Bayne said, "Well done, boy!"

The youth smiled his gratification and awaited the raising of the screen.

"Ready!"

The youngster stiffened to a rigid pose, the screen was elevated, the form of a flying partridge arose from the grass fifty yards ahead and whirled upwards.



"The truth is out, sonny! You need not fear, but you must own up."

"Crack!" a puff of smoke, and down came the screen. Again the bell rang.

Another sharp command, "Ready!" and once more the boy's body and mind centred on the screen, his hand gripped the barrel of the rifle, up went the screen, and two hundred yards away the silhouette of a deer sped across the field of vision. Another sharp "Crack!" Down came the screen. "Tang!" rang the bell, and the professor patted the boy's shoulder.

"Hit the next one and you win the Championship!"

For the fourth and last time the professor called "Ready!" A slightly longer pause than before. The eyes of Bayne fastened to the face of the boy as he tightened his grip on the rifle, focused his eyes on the screen, straining like a hound in leash, then up rattled the screen—a sharp, awful shriek

of terror as the boy's grip loosened from the rifle, the weapon tumbled to the floor, his body sagged, and his hands covered his face to hide the horror of the view.

Before him, seventy-six feet away, stood an old, broken-down gate, framed at the right by the hedge, and on the gate sat a black bird.

Quietly the professor called "Pell," and then rose to his feet, bent over the youth, and said, gently:—

"The truth is out, sonny! You need not fear, but you must own up. You can't undo—that—but you can clear the character of a misjudged man."

Between them they picked the boy up.

IV.

THE following morning as Millicent Meston emerged from the lift at Dover Street Tube Station her eye

The Green Bicycle Case

was arrested by a newspaper scare-bill announcing in large red capitals :—

BELLA WRIGHT CASE.

SENSATIONAL CONFESSION.

Securing a paper, she retired to a back-water in the moving stream of workgoers and read in the emotional electric phrases of "Our Special Correspondent" the story of the "Bisley," concluding :—

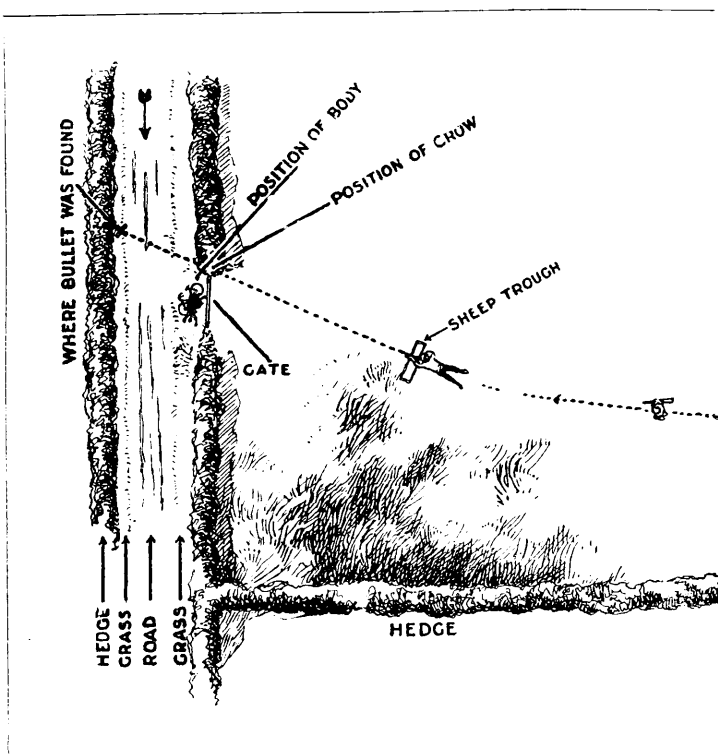
"By courtesy of Professor William Bayne I am able to publish the sensational confession which was signed by the boy after his arrest :—

"I confess that I shot Bella Wright. It was an accident. I took my father's rifle whilst he was away from home, and went into the fields. I entered the field where the accident happened, climbing through a fence in the corner, and walked towards the gate leading to the road. As I approached the gate I saw a black bird standing on the top bar, near to the hedge on the right. I crept up to a sheep trough which lay in my path, about twenty-five yards from the gate, lay behind it, rested the rifle on it, took careful aim, and fired. As I pulled the trigger a girl, riding a bicycle, passed in front of the fore-sight and crashed to the ground by the gate. Frightened, I fled back home, cleaned the rifle, and hung it up. I did not know that I had killed the girl until the next day, and I have since been afraid to confess."

"The whole thing was really absurdly simple," said the professor, looking nearer to thirty-five than she had remembered him looking before. "And it proves beyond doubt that the most abstruse of mysteries may be cleared up by the application of a little commonsense and a little trigonometry. The police had the truth staring them in the face all the time! Here it is!" and taking

up one of the press-cuttings, he read: "And P.C. Hall added the gruesome fact that in an adjoining field was found a dead crow *or* raven that had been gorged with blood!" That piece of 'intelligence,' the validity of which passed unchallenged in the court, and the tremendous significance of which they missed, was the key to the problem, and the starting-point of my investigation.

Had the police grasped its significance they would not have started on a wild-goose chase after a green bicycle. For what did it



Plan showing where Bella Wright's body was found, and

imply? First, that a bird, with plenty of food around it, would drink human blood. Improbable, and contrary to all known facts. Next, that in the very short time between the tragedy and its discovery the bird could gorge itself to death from such a meagre source. That, also, was impossible. Finally, that the effect of the 'gorging' was so rapid that before the bird could move from the scene it fell dead! Well, now—I ask you. And from this followed the finding of the bullet, the hue and cry for the green bicycle, the arrest, confinement, and nearly the hanging of an innocent man!

"When," Bayne proceeded, "I saw that

paragraph I recalled the habits of the crows which I had observed in India. I have seen them gobble up Dewali flies until they could barely flap away. I have seen them devour carrion as big as themselves, but I have never seen a crow die from 'gorging,' and no naturalist has recorded such a death. The truth underlying this policeman's statement was clear to me. *The bird had been shot!*

"This point settled to my satisfaction," the professor went on, "I concluded that if the bird and the girl had been shot at the

both are hit with one bullet, by all the laws of probability *that bullet was aimed at the smaller object!*"

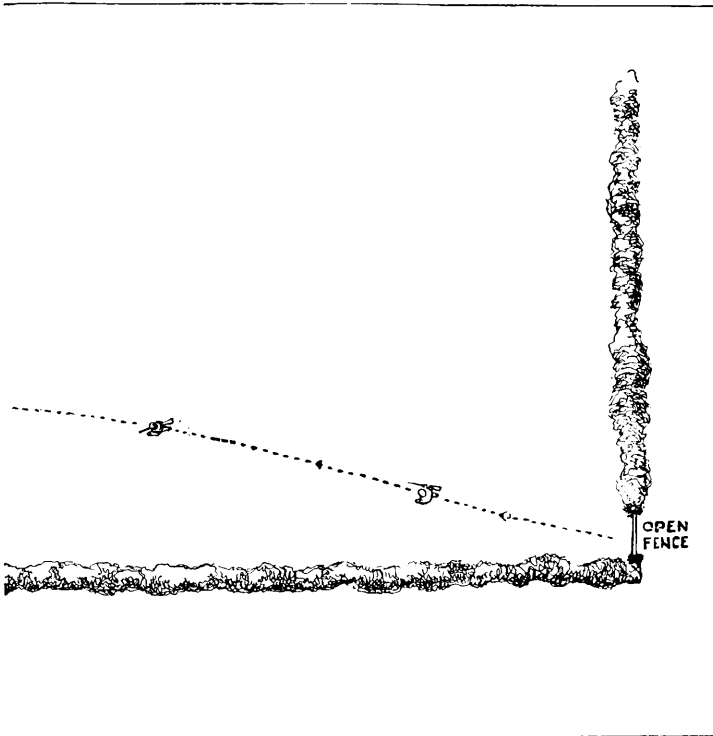
"Yes, I see that," said Millicent, "but you are assuming that the bird was stationary?"

"Assuming!" retorted Bayne, indignantly. "Didn't the policeman find the bloody impression of a bird's feet on the gate?"

"Of course. I had forgotten that."

"Such," continued Bayne, pulling at his pipe, "such was the conclusion that I arrived at from reading the printed reports

of the trial—that Miss Wright had been accidentally killed by the person who shot the bird. But so far it was only a theory, a theory which was unsound unless"—and he ticked off each point on his fingers—"one, the position of the bird on the gate and the position of the girl's head came within the same elevational line of the bullet's flight; two, the girl's body lay between the gate and the place where the bullet was picked up; three, there was some object between the crow and the road which hid the girl from the person aiming the bullet up to the moment that the trigger was pulled; and four, there was some cogent reason for the presence of the culprit at a position in the field beyond the gate, from which the line of fire and of vision satisfied *all* the foregoing



illustrating Professor Bayne's theory as to the cause of her death.

same time, then they must have been hit by the same bullet. The only alternative to such a conclusion was that after shooting the girl the murderer stayed to shoot the bird, which obligingly posed for the bullet within a few minutes of the crime! The next question which had to be settled was: of these two objects, which was the one aimed at? The crow or the girl? I won't bother you with the mathematics of it, but"—and he placed his pipe on the table and moved the large ash-tray to and fro behind the pipe to illustrate the proposition—"given a small stationary object, such as the bird, and a large moving object, such as the girl, if

conditions. Each and all of these conditions were essential to the soundness of this 'accident' theory; if but one was lacking the theory was unsound.

"At my request Pell drew from memory a sketch of the very inadequate plan which was submitted at the trial, but with one exception it was of little service to me. However, after questioning Pell on a few minor points, I was so far satisfied that I promised him an early and conclusive solution of the problem. At the same time, I had a notion that I could find the culprit.

"But," he continued, taking a charted paper from his bag, "I admit I was more

The Green Bicycle Case



A photograph of the gate by which the body was found—taken from inside the field. The figure outlined in white is firing at the bird on the gate, and the further course of the bullet is shown in the photograph on the opposite page.

than a little surprised, when I saw the scene of the tragedy, to find there not only the four factors I required to establish my theory, but also—why, there was the trough!

"The trough!" echoed the girl, considerably mystified. "What has the trough to do—?"

With his finger tracing each point on the drawing before him, he explained:—

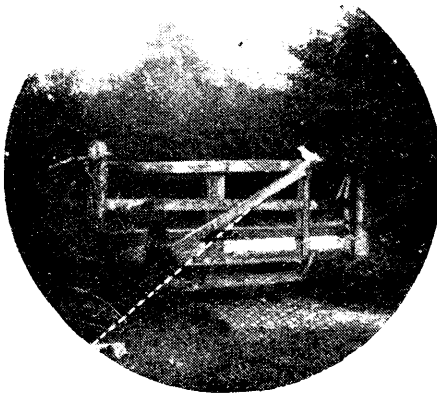
"This is the plan. Here is the gate, and here the crow. The gate you'll see is four feet two inches high. At the side of the gate, near the crow, is a high and thick hedge extending the whole length of the field. Here is the place where the bullet was found, on the opposite side of the lane to the gate, and a few yards higher up the slope. Now follow the dotted line—that is, the line of flight of the bullet, extended from the point where it was picked up, through the crow, and for a distance of seventy-six feet across

the field—and there is the blessed sheep trough!

"Now look at the elevational sketch a minute. To ascertain the position of the girl's head above the top line of the gate I was obliged to take various factors into consideration—her height, the machine she was riding, the fact that she was riding down a slope with the wind behind her, and would therefore most probably be sitting back in the saddle with head held up. All these points were involved. The position of the crow was settled more easily.

The next step was to trace the course of the bullet backwards from the two points of contact which I had established to the beginning of its flight. This was fairly easy, because, as you see, the course of the

bullet from the crow to the girl was an upward one, and therefore the two objects were hit at the early stage in the traverse;



An enlargement of the portion of the above photograph shown in the white circle.

had it been downwards, then the bullet would have come from a long distance. As it was, it was a matter of a few moments to figure out that the bullet had travelled only about seventy-six feet when it hit the crow, and, don't you see—we are back to that sheep trough again! Now, is that clear?"

She nodded.

"I would also ask you to note that the line of fire so reconstructed is exactly the one at which the approach of the girl is *entirely obscured by the hedge!*"

"Why, of course!" gasped Millicent,

"So now you see that my introduction of the trough into the confession was done on something safer than guesswork?"

"Yes," she conceded. "But how did you surmise that the boy had entered the field through the open fence?"

"Look at the position of it! It is almost in direct line with the trough and the gate! After settling the point from which the weapon was fired, I said to myself, 'Now, what brought the culprit to this trough?' and, turning round—why, there was the fence!"

"Just one more point, professor. How could you deduce that the culprit was a boy? Surely *that* was a guess, at any rate?"

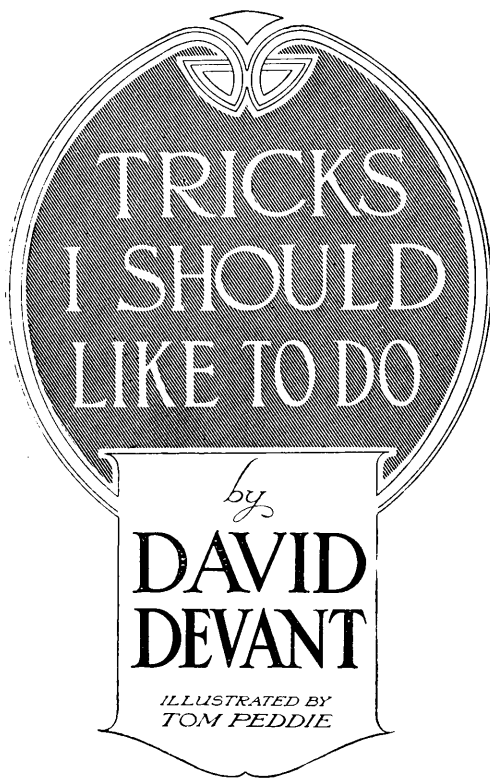
"Guess!" the professor roared, perhaps too forcibly. "No, woman! Just common-sense! To lie on the grass behind a sheep

trough and shoot at a sitting bird, to waste ammunition on a useless object and fire across a public thoroughfare to the danger of human life, was obviously the action of a young and thoughtless boy. Also," he supplemented, "I remembered that the accident happened on a Saturday evening, when the grown-ups of those villages make their weekly pilgrimage to Leicester.

"For the rest," he went on, "the strategy I adopted to force a confession—The story is soon told. Realizing that some very great inducement would be necessary to lure the culprit into the open, I persuaded Sir William Watson to promote the 'Bisley' and introduce the snap-shooting test. I baited the trap with irresistible prizes, and framed a handicap that was particularly favourable to the youngsters. The gate I used for the target was a copy of the real gate, which I had made from a photograph I took—one gate looks very much like another—and the real terrorizer was the stiff bird on top. Before the meeting all the entry-forms, which gave names, addresses, and ages, were submitted to me. I had no difficulty in parting the men from the boys, and by comparing the latter with a list of the licensed owners of firearms within a four-mile radius of Great Glen, I eliminated all the competitors but four—and competitor No. 172 was one of those four!"



A photograph of the scene of the tragedy, to which is added an outline of Bella Wright on her bicycle. The white line indicates the course of the bullet after hitting the bird shown on the gate.



TRICKS I SHOULD LIKE TO DO

by
**DAVID
DEVANT**

ILLUSTRATED BY
TOM PEDDIE

SOMETIMES, when I am sitting in an easy chair, with only a cigar and my thoughts for companions, I am reminded of a little magical problem that I have often tried to solve.

I want to do on the stage just what I am then doing in my study, but, of course, something else is to happen. The trick will really begin—if ever I succeed in solving this puzzle—when the smoke from my cigar collects in a little cloud and remains a few feet above my head. And as I sit there, smoking and trying to convince the audience that I am thinking, the little cloud of smoke will drift slightly and, in moving, will gradually form itself into a kind of "smoke statue" of a woman. The smoke will slowly disperse, and the audience will then see a woman floating in mid-air; she will show by her expression and movements of the hands and head that she is a living being.

When the audience have been convinced that the woman is really a living being I shall put down my cigar, stand up, and look rather incredulously at the figure for a few seconds. The figure will then dissolve into a cloud of smoke which will disperse and disappear altogether. I shall return to my easy chair and my cigar, and the curtain will fall slowly.

This is not an "impossible" illusion by any means, but I have not yet hit upon a method which appeals to me.

This illusion reminds me of another which is rather more difficult. I imagine that everyone has seen the illusion in which a woman, reclining on a couch on the stage, floats away from the couch and up above the head of the performer. The magician passes a solid hoop over the figure to prove that the woman is quite isolated (and, in passing, I may say that the hoop is exactly what it is claimed to be—a solid steel hoop). After a few moments the figure slowly sinks down again to the couch.

This is a very effective illusion, but just a little hackneyed nowadays. I have always thought, however, that the fact that the illusion was presented entirely on the stage seemed to rob it of some of its effect. How much better it would be, I think, if the figure, after rising in mid-air, slowly floated away from the stage and passed over the heads of the audience and returned to the stage.

Here, again, we have an illusion which is not impossible, but I have not yet discovered a way out of certain difficulties.

An illusion or trick which seems to be very complicated is not always the most difficult for the performer; on the other hand a plain, apparently simple little trick, can be very bothersome.

Here is an idea which was given to me by a pupil of mine. It seems simple enough, but though I have known of it for years I have



"The little cloud of smoke from my cigar
'smoke statue'"

not been able to find a good way of doing the trick.

The conjurer borrows half a crown, opens his right hand, shows that he has nothing in the hand, places the half-crown on the palm, and closes the hand. He then addresses the owner of the money :—

"You can have various kinds of change for half a crown. What change would you like?"

We will suppose that the reply is: "Two separate shillings and a sixpence." The conjurer immediately opens his hand and shows two separate shillings and a sixpence.

If the conjurer knew that he was going to be asked for that change the trick would be fairly easy, but that is not the trick. The performer has to be ready to give any change in silver without opening his hand until the end of the trick. My pupil kindly suggested that to make the trick "really difficult" we ought to allow the owner of the half-crown

to choose part of his change or all of it in coppers, but I gave an emphatic "No" to that idea. Imagine what would happen if some sweet child of nine, after a little calculation, prompted the owner of the money to ask for a hundred and twenty farthings! No, the trick is quite difficult enough if you limit the choice to silver, and partly because it is difficult it remains among the tricks I want to do.

Here is another little effect which seems absurdly simple—till you try to do it.

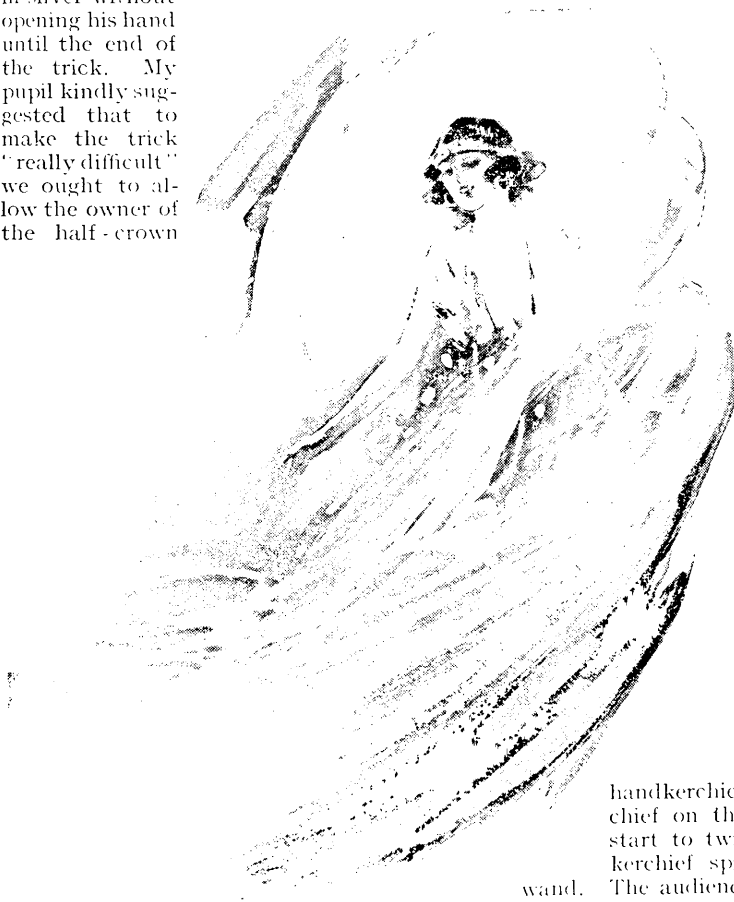
The conjurer has a blotting-pad, some paper, pens, and ink. He asks someone to come up to his table, select a pen, and write anything he pleases in ink. The conjurer holds the paper so that everyone in the audience can see it, and asks his volunteer assistant to hold the blotting-pad in a similar position. The conjurer then blots the writing on the pad, but when he removes the paper the audience see that the writing on the blotting-paper is not reversed—as, of course, it should be. It seems to me that the only way of doing this would be by secretly detaching the sheet of blotting-paper from the pad and turning it over, but how to do this without letting the audience see you do it—to say nothing of the assistant who is holding the blotting-pad—is beyond me at present. The trick appeals to me because it is quite different from any other trick with which I am acquainted.

Let us return to the big stage for a moment. I come on with a magic wand (I have never used one) and a small

handkerchief. I place the handkerchief on the end of the wand and start to twirl it round. The handkerchief spins on the end of the wand. The audience see that the handkerchief gets larger and larger until finally it becomes a huge sheet, practically concealing me from the audience, although the very sharp people in the front rows of the stalls will notice that my feet are still on the stage.

Somebody fires a pistol; there is a crash of cymbals from the orchestra; the revolving

will gradually form itself into a kind of of a woman."



Tricks I Should Like To Do

sheet disappears in a flash, disclosing four swing-boats. The audience then see that the wand which I used in the first place is now a stout rod of iron and serves as the axis on which the four swing-boats revolve. There are to be two persons in each boat and the whole structure is to be brilliantly illuminated.

I once worked this out—on paper—and I believe my scheme would answer, but there are two difficulties which I cannot get over. The expense of making the apparatus would be small in comparison with the expense of carrying it about the country and paying the small army of assistants who would be required to work it. The other difficulty is the time which would be occupied in setting and striking the illusion; that difficulty is insuperable unless you make the illusion the first item on the programme, and I should strongly object to that idea.

I once mentioned this idea to a pupil of mine. He suggested that for the first little effect—spinning the handkerchief on the end of the wand—I might have a pin on the wand—just to make it easy. I thanked him and asked him to continue with his solution. The handkerchief is to get bigger while it is in motion. . . . He is still thinking about it. And, as a matter of fact, that is the chief difficulty in working out the illusion.

ANOTHER pretty illusion which I want to do is down in my note-book as "The Bubble." A large bubble floats on the stage; if you think this would be too easy you can begin by blowing the bubble from a pipe. After a few moments the audience see the picture of a woman on the bubble, which sinks down on to the table and bursts, disclosing the woman standing on the table.

This is rather a "teaser," and so is the sequel.

The woman is dressed in a plain white frock. At my suggestion she walks down to the audience, and two or three ladies are asked to inspect her white dress and to satisfy themselves that there is no trickery about it.

The woman returns to the stage and lies on a couch. I then ask the audience to name any of the colours which they saw on the bubble—in short, any colour they like. I ask them to watch the white dress on my assistant; the dress slowly becomes dyed with the colour the audience have chosen, and to satisfy the audience that the effect is not produced by coloured lights the assistant walks down to the auditorium again.

Quite a pretty illusion—if I could do it!

Among the little tricks I want to do is an entirely new card trick, but I have not the ghost of an idea of what it is to be. All I do

know is that it must be different from the usual card trick.

And I have not got very far with another little trick. I want to borrow some rings—ordinary finger rings—from members of the audience and put them in a glass, take them out of the glass and show them all linked together. Then they are to be unlinked and returned to their owners.

Here is a little idea which forms part of a trick. I have not yet decided on the complete effect, but, roughly, this is the part which forms the stumbling-block at present.

In the course of the trick I have to use an empty cup. A cup is on the table and in the centre of the table there is a tall glass vase. When I am about to use the cup I pretend to be surprised to find that it is full of water. I pour the water into the vase and put the cup down again. Later on I want to use "this empty cup," but it is not empty; it is again full of water, although there is apparently no way of getting water into the cup except by pouring it in in the usual way. I empty the cup into the vase and start the trick again, and again I find the cup full of water, which I pour into the vase. The effect is repeated for just as long as the audience will stand it—or until the vase is full of water. Finally, I decide that I will do the trick some other way, and I call an assistant and ask him to clear away the things from the table, but just as he is about to pick the things up they clear themselves away by—and there my notes stop.

The most difficult trick is not always the most effective. I think the following would be difficult and not very effective because the end would be too long.

I have a number of cards about the size of a double sheet of note-paper and some blue pencils. I also have a very large letter file, which I hand out to anyone in the audience for a moment, so that everyone may be convinced that the file is empty.

I then ask several members of the audience to write any one letter of the alphabet on each of the large cards, using the blue pencils for the purpose so that the audience may see the letters. I then take the cards, cover them with a handkerchief for a moment, and cause them to disappear. I go to the letter case, and the cards are found in their right places there.

After the first card had been shown the audience would naturally guess that all the other cards were in their right places, and so you would have a wearisome repetition of the same effect, and for that reason the trick, which would be very difficult, does not quite please me. At the same time I want to do it because I feel sure that when once I had got on the track of the right method I should find a way of bringing the trick to a sudden

climax. In thinking out a trick you generally find that it is something like a jig-saw puzzle. When you have got two little bits done you generally see a way of joining them and making them one big bit, and then the rest comes to you.

I was asked some weeks ago how I could make a two-legged man appear effectively as a one-legged man in a play. This is not a trick which I particularly want to do myself, but it reminded me of one which suggested itself to me by my seeing a very handsome tiger-skin rug in the house of a friend. I said to him:—

"Wouldn't it be a fine trick if I could just pick up this rug, give it a shake, and produce a real, live tiger!"

My friend paid me a compliment. He said:—

"Fine trick—very fine. Would you mind waiting till I get to the cellar?"

Every schoolboy has seen the trick of taking a cannon-ball out of a hat. I have often said to myself when I have been doing this trick—it forms part of another trick of mine—"Why am I doing this? Why am I taking a cannon ball out of a hat? Why not out of something else?" So—

I take a large sheet of stiff paper, twist it into a cone-shaped bag, and produce a large silver ball, completely filling the bag. I take it out and it drops on the stage; it is obviously quite solid. I repeat the effect many times, until there is a pile of solid balls (not solid silver!) on the stage, all produced from the paper bag. At the end I untwist the bag and show the plain sheet of paper again.

An exceptionally good orchestra at a music-hall unconsciously suggested an illusion to me. I was waiting for the curtain to rise one evening and thinking that my opening music seemed to be much better than usual when it occurred to me I might make a different entrance altogether. I would

dispense with all music, would do without the customary "chord on." When I was in the middle of the stage I would apologize for the absence of the band and ask an assistant if he had seen the lost band. The assistant would reply by handing me a large box.

"What is that?"

"A bandbox, sir."

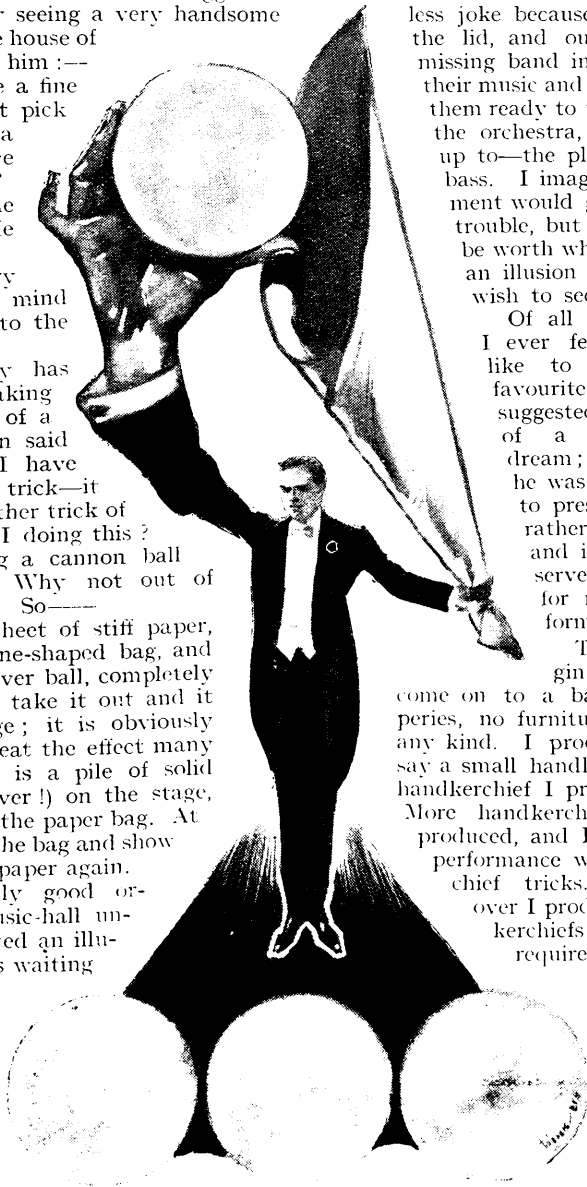
"Oh, I see—a band in a bandbox—little joke, eh?"

But it would not be a meaningless joke because I should take off the lid, and out would come the missing band in a procession, with their music and music stands, all of them ready to take their places in the orchestra, even down to—or up to—the player of the double-bass. I imagine that his instrument would give me some little trouble, but I am sure it would be worth while. I should have an illusion which people would wish to see more than once.

Of all the illusions which I ever feel I should much like to do I think my favourite is one which was suggested to me by hearing of a dream within a dream; a man dreamt that he was dreaming. I wish to present an illusion—or, rather, a series of tricks and illusions—which will serve as a kind of frame for my customary performance.

The thing would begin in this way. I come on to a bare stage—no draperies, no furniture, no "props" of any kind. I produce—well, we will say a small handkerchief. From the handkerchief I produce a small table. More handkerchiefs are magically produced, and I begin my regular performance with some handkerchief tricks. When they are over I produce from the handkerchiefs all the materials I require for the next trick,

and so I go on until I come to my largest illusions—bulky things which are not easily pushed about the stage by a couple of men. The materials for each separate trick and illusion



"I take a sheet of stiff paper, twist it into a cone-shaped bag, and produce a large silver ball."

and our floor boards are covered with it rather than the real material woven out of the warp and the weft of life.

THE person of Miss Constantia Martingale is a case in point. By reason of the revenue coming in from the possession of certain house property in the West-end of London, she was able to afford the luxury of respectability in one of the most respectable sideroads off the Brixton Road.

From the front, No. 15 presented all those unmistakable signs of starched and ironed propriety which are to be found expressed in stiff lace curtains, in the eternal aspidistra standing in a glazed earthenware pot in the front window, its leaves just appearing through the space between the curtains. The brass bell-handle was always carefully polished, the steps were always scrupulously white and clean. If there were any sounds of music on Sunday, they were those of Miss Constantia playing one or the other of two hymn tunes she knew on an ancient upright Collard and Collard piano from which you heard the sound of the hammers striking, as well as the metallic vibrations of the strings.

And at the back, although Miss Constantia was no gardener, the little square of grass with its surrounding laurel bushes was religiously in order. A man from the neighbourhood came once a fortnight for two hours and attended to it.

In Morpeth Road, Brixton, Miss Constantia Martingale was considered as respectable as any of the twenty-five respectable families which gave those places of residence an atmosphere dear to the adherents of the cult of the aspidistra. Those lace curtains, that polished bell-knob, even the two hymn tunes, and certainly that Sunday attendance of divine worship in her best apparel, had become so close a habit in the life of Miss Constantia Martingale that to have deprived her of them would have been to bring the whole world in dust and *débris* about her ears.

They were not, however, the complete habits of her life. One other she had which, if the truth be admitted, would have wrought by its absence as violent a cataclysm in her life as the destruction of that atmosphere in Morpeth Road.

Once every quarter it was her invariable habit to go up to the West-end to collect her rents. She did this from motives of economy. Long ago she had argued it all out satisfactorily to herself that it was foolish of her to pay a percentage out of her livelihood to a solicitor for collecting her rents when she could quite easily do the business herself. One day out of every quarter of the year was not so very considerable an amount of

time lost from the desirable atmosphere of Morpeth Road.

The rents to be collected were nearly all from shops and close together—Nos. 15 to 21, all in one street. She had only to walk from one to another, with her black silk bag on her arm, as though she were a customer out purchasing her necessities for the day.

They were very polite to her. Undoubtedly they recognized her respectability. Never once in all the time she had collected these rents had she been met with discourtesy or incivility.

"Here's the landlord," they said amongst themselves, when they saw her arrive punctually every quarter-day, but to her face they always called her Miss Martingale.

She took her little sums of money; carefully she put each one in her black silk bag, and she went away, not to be seen again by them until the next quarter-day. Vaguely they knew she lived in Brixton. Some of them had her address when the occasion of repairs necessitated their writing to her. None had ever had the curiosity to go down and see No. 15, Morpeth Road, or they would have realized how accurate their estimation of her respectability had been.

She went away, right out of that district, generally on foot, and, it usually being then about three in the afternoon, she made her way to one of those small confectioners' shops where they supplement their trade in bread and pastries and cakes with the service of lunch or tea, with no pretensions of aspiring to the functions of a restaurant.

Seated at a table there in a back part of the shop, where almost invariably she was alone, Miss Martingale ordered two ham sandwiches and a glass of port. It was cheap port, immature, sweet, and strong. To expect any other class of wine in a pastry-cook's is ill-advised. But Miss Martingale was blind to vintage qualities. She liked the pastry-cook's port because it was so sweet and so strong.

And while she consumed this refreshment she laid the black silk bag on the table, with the help of a little notebook checking off the various amounts of her rents and counting them for the second time that day.

For some time after the two sandwiches and the glass of port were consumed she was still at work. Finance was not a strong point with her. Over and over again her calculations proved incorrect. There were division and multiplication and addition all to be done, and her fingers played on the American oilcloth-covered table, lending assistance to her efforts until they ached.

It was the most natural sequence of events that, while in the throes of these calculations, she should order another glass of port. It



"It was the most natural sequence of events that, while in the throes of these calculations, she should order another glass of port."

Creatures of Habit

helped her to the completion of her work. She felt the fire of it tingling in her blood. It seemed to make her brain so clear, alert, and vigorous that addition, multiplication, and division became almost child's play to her quickened perceptions.

"I don't think I could manage it without my second glass," she often said to the waitress who attended to her; and no doubt it was true. The trouble lay in the fact that not only did it assist her in her mathematical calculations, but left in its wake a subtly enjoyable feeling of lassitude: a feeling that those back premises of the pastry-cook's shop were the most pleasant she had ever known; a feeling that it would be a happy circumstance to stay there for a very long time; that there was nothing in the world so serious as to really matter one way or another; that No. 15, Morpeth Road, nice, quiet, respectable though it was, was a little dull compared with this, and that, viewed through a mist of lassitude, it seemed very far away.

Always for some little while she pondered over these pleasant feelings; fingered her empty glass again and again, but always in the end she beckoned to the waitress, and invariably, as though it were a decision not completely arrived at, she said:—

"I think I might have another glass of port."

ONCE every quarter, before a certain magistrate in one of the many police-courts existing in the metropolis, they bring a certain elderly spinster lady, who, sitting on some pavement or gloriously disporting herself in some doorway, has been found intoxicated and incapable. She never makes any disturbance. Though it may be with difficulty, it is with no wilful obstruction on her part that the policeman conveys her to the police-station where she spends the night.

"Whatever the old lady does," said one of the officers on one occasion, "she seems to do it respectably."

For the first three occasions she took it sorely indeed when she found where she was in the morning. She begged them with tears rolling heavily down her cheeks to keep it out of the papers.

They laughed at her.

"One 'ud think you was the wife of a Cabinet Minister," they said. "There are thirty other cases like yours this morning."

"But, you see, I live in Morpeth Road, Brixton," she explained through her tears. "If they knew there, I don't know what would happen!"

"Wait till you move to Carlton 'Ouse Terrace, missis," she was told. "Then you can begin to fret about it."

She gave her excuses, still through her tears, to the magistrate. He just had time to listen to what she said, nodding his head in quick comprehension.

"Collecting rents—what you might call a sudden rush of money to the head. Five shillings. Next."

It was cursory—it was abrupt. On consideration she was grateful for that. It drew no attention to her case. But very possibly it had the effect of belittling the enormity of it in her mind. She said to herself as she went home:—

"They wouldn't take it like that in Morpeth Road."

Two or three quarters later, when she appeared for the second time, the magistrate looked at her sharply.

"Sorry to see you again," said he. "Rents?"

"Yes," she replied, only whimpering this time.

"Sch! Sch! Sch! Five shillings. Next."

The third time, he just said, "Rents?"

And so every quarter it became the habit of that court to try Miss Constantia Martingale for drunkenness and incapability, and every quarter-day, when she left No. 15 in the morning, it had become her habit to say to her maid:—

"I shall stay with a friend of mine in London to-night."

And then one day, between the Michaelmas and the Christmas quarter, to his considerable astonishment, the magistrate saw Miss Constantia Martingale before him.

"You?" said he.

She bent her head.

"But rents are not due in November. What's happened?"

"I came up," said she, tremulously, "to see about a few repairs."

The magistrate sat upright in his seat upon the bench, and there shot from his eyes a severity that concealed his sense of the ridiculous from those only who did not know him well.

"Repairs!" said he. "No—no—we can't have that. We allow that you may be a creature of singular habit, but not of frequent custom. You will be coming up to buy a latch for one of your back doors next. There is no end to this. Rents—yes; but repairs—oh, no!—oh, no! I can't allow you repairs. Three days without the option. Next!"

When Miss Constantia returned after three days to Morpeth Road she explained to her maid how pressing her friends had been.

"But I must not leave you alone so long again," said she. "It's not right. I'm sure it's not right. I sha'n't stay longer than one night next time."

SCORING OFF JEEVES

by

P. G. WODEHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY
A WALLIS MILLS

IT gave me a nasty jar, I can tell you. You see, what happened was this. Once a year Jeeves takes a couple of weeks' vacation and biffs off to the sea or somewhere to restore his tissues. Pretty rotten for me, of course, while he's away. But it has to be stuck, so I stick it; and I must admit that he usually manages to get hold of a fairly decent fellow to look after me in his absence.

Well, the time had come round again, and Jeeves was in the kitchen giving the under-study a few tips about his duties. I happened to want a stamp or something, or a bit of string or something, and I toddled down the passage to ask him for it. The silly ass had left the kitchen door open, and I hadn't gone two steps when his voice caught me squarely in the eardrum.

"You will find Mr. Wooster," he was saying to the substitute chappie, "an exceedingly pleasant and amiable young gentleman, but not intelligent. By no means intelligent. Mentally he is negligible—quite negligible."

Well, I mean to say, what!

I suppose, strictly speaking, I ought to have charged in and ticked the blighter off properly in no uncertain voice. But I doubt whether it's humanly possible to tick Jeeves off. Personally, I didn't even have a dash at it. I merely called for my hat and stick in a marked manner and legged it. But the memory rankled, if you know what I mean. We Woosters do not lightly forget. At least, we do—some things—appointments, and people's birthdays, and letters to post,

and all that—but not an absolute bally insult like the above. I brooded like the dickens.

I was still brooding when I dropped in at the oyster-bar at Buck's for a quick bracer. I needed a bracer rather particularly at the moment, because I was on my way to lunch with my Aunt Agatha. A pretty frightful ordeal, believe me or believe me not. Practically the nearest thing to being disembowelled. I had just had one quick and another rather slower, and was feeling about as cheerio as was possible under the cirs, when a muffled voice hailed me from the north-east, and, turning round, I saw young Bingo Little propped up in a corner, wrapping himself round a sizable chunk of bread and cheese.

"Hallo-allo-allo!" I said. "Haven't seen you for ages. You've not been in here lately, have you?"

"No. I've been living out in the country."

"Eh?" I said, for Bingo's loathing for the country was well known. "Whereabouts?"

"Down in Hampshire, at a place called Ditteredge."

"No, really? I know some people who've got a house there. The Glossops. Have you met them?"

"Why, that's where I'm staying!" said young Bingo. "I'm tutoring the Glossop kid."

"What for?" I said. I couldn't seem to see young Bingo as a tutor. Though, of course, he did get a degree of sorts at Oxford, and I suppose you can always fool some of the people some of the time.

Scoring Off Jeeves

"What for? For money, of course! An absolute sitter came unstitched in the second race at Haydock Park," said young Bingo, with some bitterness, "and I dropped my entire month's allowance. I hadn't the nerve to touch my uncle for any more, so it was a case of buzzing round to the agents and getting a job. I've been down there three weeks."

"I haven't met the Glossop kid."

"Don't!" advised Bingo, briefly.

"The only one of the family I really know is the girl." I had hardly spoken these words when the most extraordinary change came over young Bingo's face. His eyes bulged, his cheeks flushed, and his Adam's apple hopped about like one of those india-rubber balls on the top of the fountain in a shooting-gallery.

"Oh, Bertie!" he said, in a strangled sort of voice.

I looked at the poor fish anxiously. I knew that he was always falling in love with someone, but it didn't seem possible that even he could have fallen in love with Honoria Glossop. To me the girl was simply nothing more nor less than a pot of poison. One of those dashed large, brainy, strenuous, dynamic girls you see so many of these days. She had been at Girton, where, in addition to enlarging her brain to the most frightful extent, she had gone in for every kind of sport and developed the physique of a middle-weight catch-as-catch-can wrestler. I'm not sure she didn't box for the 'Varsity while she was up. The effect she had on me whenever she appeared was to make me want to slide into a cellar and lie low till they blew the All-Clear.

Yet here was young Bingo obviously all for her. There was no mistaking it. The love-light was in the blighter's eyes.

"I worship her, Bertie! I worship the very ground she treads on!" continued the patient, in a loud, penetrating voice. One or two fellows had come in, and McGarry, the chappie behind the bar, was listening with his ears flapping. But there's no reticence about Bingo. He always reminds me of the hero of a musical comedy who takes the centre of the stage, gathers the boys round him in a circle, and tells them all about his love at the top of his voice.

"Have you told her?"

"No. I haven't had the nerve. But we walk together in the garden most evenings, and it sometimes seems to me that there is a look in her eyes."

"I know that look. Like a sergeant-major."

"Nothing of the kind! Like a tender goddess."

"Half a second, old thing," I said. "Are you sure we're talking about the same girl?"

The one I mean is Honoria. Perhaps there's a younger sister or something I've not heard of?"

"Her name is Honoria," bawled Bingo, reverently.

"And she strikes you as a tender goddess?"

"She does."

"God bless you!" I said.

"She walks in beauty like the night of cloudless climes and starry skies; and all that's best of dark and bright meet in her aspect and her eyes. Another bit of bread and cheese," he said to the lad behind the bar.

"You're keeping your strength up," I said.

"This is my lunch. I've got to meet Oswald at Waterloo at one-fifteen, to catch the train back. I brought him up to town to see the dentist."

"Oswald? Is that the kid?"

"Yes. Pestilential to a degree."

"Pestilential! That reminds me, I'm lunching with my Aunt Agatha. I'll have to pop off now, or I'll be late."

IN Society circles, I believe, my Aunt Agatha has a fairly fruity reputation as a hostess. But then, I take it she doesn't ballyrag her other guests the way she does me. I don't think I can remember a single meal with her since I was a kid of tender years at which she didn't turn the conversation sooner or later to the subject of my frightfulness. To-day, she started in on me with the fish.

"Bertie," she said—in part and chattily—"it is young men like you who make the person with the future of the race at heart despair!"

"What-ho!" I said.

"Cursed with too much money, you fritter away in selfish idleness a life which might have been made useful, helpful, and profitable. You do nothing but waste your time on frivolous pleasures. You are simply an anti-social animal, a drone—" She fixed me with a glittering eye. "Bertie, you must marry!"

"No, dash it all!"

"Yes! You should be breeding children to—"

"No, really, I say, please!" I said, blushing richly. Aunt Agatha belongs to two or three of these women's clubs, and she keeps forgetting she isn't in the smoking-room.

"You want somebody strong, self-reliant, and sensible, to counterbalance the deficiencies and weaknesses of your own character. And by great good luck I have found the very girl. She is of excellent family—plenty of money, though that does not matter in your case. She has met you; and, while there is naturally much in you of which she disapproves, she does not dislike you. I

know this, for I have sounded her—guardedly, of course—and I am sure that you have only to make the first advances——”

“Who is it?”
I would have said it long before, but the shock had made me swallow a bit of roll the wrong way, and I had only just finished turning purple and trying to get a bit of air back into the old wind-pipe. “Who is it?”

“Sir Roderick Glossop’s daughter, Honoria.”

“No, no!” I cried, paling beneath the tan.

“Don’t be silly, Bertie. She is just the wife for you.”

“Yes, but look here——”

“She will mould you.”

“But I don’t want to be moulded.”

Aunt Agatha gave me the kind of look she used to give me when I was a kid and had been found in the jam cupboard.

“Bertie! I hope you are not going to be troublesome.”

“Well, but I mean——”

“Lady Glossop has very kindly invited you to Ditteredge Hall for a few days. I told her you would be delighted to come down to-morrow.”

“I’m sorry, but I’ve got a dashed important engagement to-morrow.”

“What engagement?”

“Well—er——”

“You have no engagement. And, even if you had, you must put it off. I shall be very seriously annoyed, Bertie, if you do not go to Ditteredge Hall to-morrow.”

“Oh, right-o!” I said.

Vol. lxiii.—11.



“There was no mistaking it. The love-light was in the blighter’s eyes.”

AMAN may be down, but he is never out. It wasn’t two minutes after I had parted from Aunt Agatha before the old fighting spirit of the Woosters reasserted itself. Ghastly as the peril was which loomed before me, I was conscious of a rummy sort of exhilaration. It was a tight corner, but the tighter the corner, I felt, the more juicily should I score off Jeeves when I got myself out of it without a bit of help from him. Ordinarily, of course, I should have consulted him and trusted to him to solve the difficulty; but after what I had heard him saying in the kitchen, I was dashed if I was going to demean myself. When I got home I addressed the man with light abandon.

“Jeeves,” I said, “I’m in a bit of a difficulty.”

“I’m sorry to hear that, sir.”

Scoring Off Jeeves

"Yes, quite a bad hole. In fact, you might say on the brink of a precipice, and faced by an awful doom."

"If I could be of any assistance, sir——"

"Oh, no. No, no. Thanks very much, but no, no. I won't trouble you. I've no doubt I shall be able to get out of it all right by myself."

"Very good, sir."

So that was that. I'm bound to say I'd have welcomed a bit more curiosity from the fellow, but that is Jeeves all over. Cloaks his emotions, if you know what I mean. Wears the mask and what not.

HONORIA was away when I got to Ditteredge on the following afternoon. Her mother told me that she was staying with some people named Braythwayt in the neighbourhood, and would be back next day, bringing the daughter of the house with her for a visit. She said I would find Oswald out in the grounds, and such is a mother's love that she spoke as if that were a bit of a boost for the grounds and an inducement to go there.

Rather decent, the grounds at Ditteredge. A couple of terraces, a bit of lawn with a cedar on it, a bit of shrubbery, and finally a small but goodish lake with a stone bridge running across it. Directly I'd worked my way round the shrubbery I spotted young Bingo leaning against the bridge smoking a cigarette. Sitting on the stonework, fishing, was a species of kid whom I took to be Oswald the Plague-Spot.

Bingo was both surprised and delighted to see me, and introduced me to the kid. If the latter was surprised and delighted too, he concealed it like a diplomat. He just looked at me, raised his eyebrows slightly, and went on fishing. He was one of those supercilious striplings who give you the impression that you went to the wrong school and that your clothes don't fit.

"This is Oswald," said Bingo.

"What," I replied, cordially, "could be sweeter? How are you?"

"Oh, all right," said the kid.

"Nice place, this."

"Oh, all right," said the kid.

"Having a good time fishing?"

"Oh, all right," said the kid.

Young Bingo led me off to commune apart.

"Doesn't jolly old Oswald's incessant flow of prattle make your head ache sometimes?" I asked.

Bingo sighed.

"It's a hard job."

"What's a hard job?"

"Loving him."

"Do you love him?" I asked, surprised. I shouldn't have thought it could be done.

"I try to," said young Bingo, "for Her sake. She's coming back to-morrow, Bertie."

"So I heard."

"She is coming, my love, my own——"

"Absolutely," I said. "But touching on young Oswald once more. Do you have to be with him all day? How do you manage to stick it?"

"Oh, he doesn't give much trouble. When we aren't working he sits on that bridge all the time, trying to catch tiddlers."

"Why don't you shove him in?"

"Shove him in?"

"It seems to me distinctly the thing to do," I said, regarding the stripling's back with a good deal of dislike. "It would wake him up a bit, and make him take an interest in things."

Bingo shook his head a bit wistfully.

"Your proposition attracts me," he said, "but I'm afraid it can't be done. You see, She would never forgive me. She is devoted to the little brute."

"Great Scot!" I cried. "I've got it!"

I don't know if you know that feeling when you get an inspiration, and tingle all down your spine from the soft collar as now worn to the very soles of the old Waukeesis? Jeeves, I suppose, feels that way more or less all the time, but it isn't often it comes to me. But now all Nature seemed to be shouting at me "You've clicked!" and I grabbed young Bingo by the arm in a way that must have made him feel as if a horse had bitten him. His finely-chiselled features were twisted with agony and what not, and he asked me what the dickens I thought I was playing at.

"Bingo," I said, "what would Jeeves have done?"

"How do you mean, what would Jeeves have done?"

"I mean what would he have advised in a case like yours? I mean you wanting to make a hit with Honoria Glossop and all that. Why, take it from me, laddie, he would have shoved you behind that clump of bushes over there; he would have got me to lure Honoria on to the bridge somehow; then, at the proper time, he would have told me to give the kid a pretty hefty jab in the small of the back, so as to shoot him into the water; and then you would have dived in and hauled him out. How about it?"

"You didn't think that out by yourself, Bertie?" said young Bingo, in a hushed sort of voice.

"Yes, I did. Jeeves isn't the only fellow with ideas."

"But it's absolutely wonderful."

"Just a suggestion."

"The only objection I can see is that it would be so dashed awkward for you. I

mean to say, suppose the kid turned round and said you had shoved him in, that would make you frightfully unpopular with Her."

"I don't mind risking that."

The man was deeply moved.

"Bertie, this is noble."

"No, no."

He clasped my hand silently, then chuckled like the last bit of water going down the waste-pipe in a bath.

"Now what?" I said.

"I was only thinking," said young Bingo, "how fearfully wet Oswald will get. Oh, happy day!"

I DON'T know if you've noticed it, but it's rummy how nothing in this world ever seems to be absolutely perfect. The drawback to this otherwise singularly fruity binge was, of course, the fact that Jeeves wouldn't be on the spot to watch me in action. Still, apart from that there wasn't a flaw. The beauty of the thing was, you see, that nothing could possibly go wrong. You know how it is, as a rule, when you want to get Chappie A on Spot B at exactly the same moment when Chappie C is on Spot D. There's always a chance of a hitch. Take the case of a general, I mean to say, who's plan-

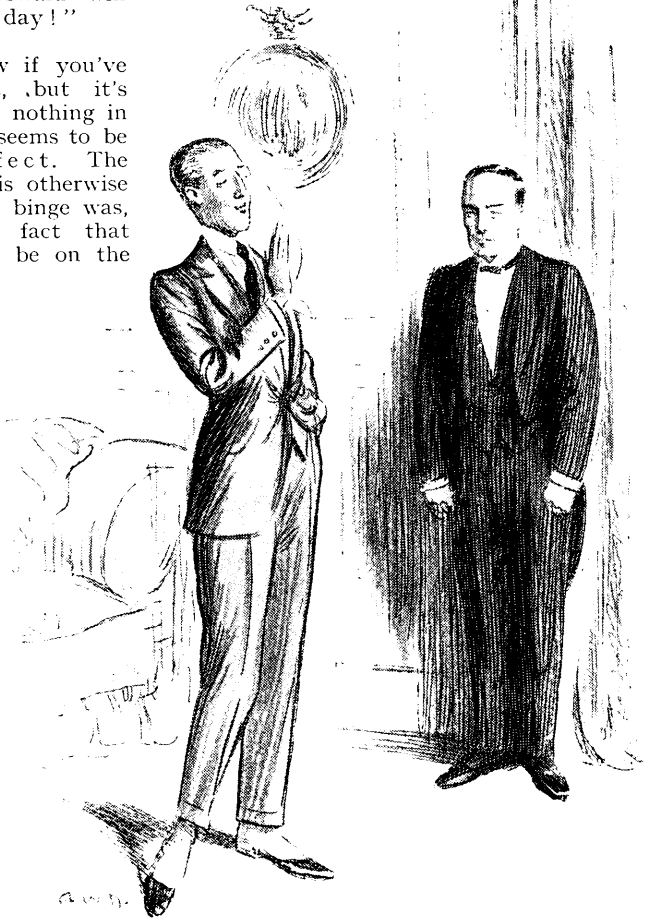
ning out a big movement. He tells one regiment to capture the hill with the windmill on it at the exact moment when another regiment is taking the bridgehead or something down in the valley; and everything gets all messed up. And then, when they're chatting the thing over in camp that night, the colonel of the first regiment says, "Oh, sorry! Did you say

the hill with the windmill? I thought you said the one with the flock of sheep." And there you are! But, in this case, nothing like that could happen, because Oswald and Bingo would be on the spot right along, so that all I had to worry about was getting Honoria there in due season. And I managed that all right, first shot, by asking her if she would come for a stroll in the grounds with me, as I had something particular to say to her.

She had arrived shortly after lunch in the car with the Braythwayt girl. I was introduced to the latter, a tallish girl with blue eyes and fair hair. I rather took to her—she was so unlike Honoria—and, if I had been able to spare the time, I shouldn't have minded talking to her for a bit. But business was business—I had fixed it up with Bingo to be behind the bushes at three sharp, so I got hold of Honoria and steered her out through the grounds in the direction of the lake.

"You're very quiet, Mr. Wooster," she said.

Made me jump a bit. I was concentrating pretty tensely at the moment. We had just come in sight of the lake, and I was casting a keen eye over the ground to see that everything was in order. Everything appeared to be as arranged. The kid Oswald was hunched up on the bridge; and, as Bingo wasn't visible, I took it that he had got into position. My watch made it two minutes after the hour.



"'Jeeves,' I said, 'I'm in a bit of a difficulty.'"

Scoring Off Jeeves

you. You've been seeing too many moving-pictures. I suppose the next thing you would have done would have been to set the house on fire so as to rescue me." She looked at me in a proprietary sort of way. "I think," she said, "I shall be able to make something of you, Bertie. It is true yours has been a wasted life up to the present, but you are still young, and there is a lot of good in you."

"No, really there isn't."

"Oh, yes, there is. It simply wants bringing out. Now you run straight up to the house and change your wet clothes or you will catch cold."

And, if you know what I mean, there was a sort of motherly note in her voice which seemed to tell me, even more than her actual words, that I was for it.

AS I was coming downstairs after changing, I ran into young Bingo, looking festive to a degree.

"Bertie!" he said. "Just the man I wanted to see. Bertie, a wonderful thing has happened."

"You blighter!" I cried. "What became of you? Do you know—?"

"Oh, you mean about being in those bushes? I hadn't time to tell you about that. It's all off."

"All off?"

"Bertie, I was actually starting to hide in

those bushes when the most extraordinary thing happened. Walking across the lawn I saw the most radiant, the most beautiful girl in the world. There is none like her, none. Bertie, do you believe in love at first sight? You do believe in love at first sight, don't you, Bertie, old man? Directly I saw her, she seemed to draw me like a magnet. I seemed to forget everything. We two were alone in a world of music and sunshine. I joined her. I got into conversation. She is a Miss Braythwayt, Bertie — Daphne Braythwayt. Directly

our eyes met, I realized that what I had imagined to be my love for Honoria Glossop had been a mere passing whim. Bertie, you do believe in love at first sight, don't you? She is so wonderful, so sympathetic. Like a tender goddess—"

At this point I left the blighter.

TWO days later I got a letter from Jeeves.

"... The weather," it ended, "continues fine. I have had one exceedingly enjoyable bathe."

I gave one of those hollow, mirthless laughs,

and went downstairs to join Honoria. I had an appointment with her in the drawing-room. She was going to read Ruskin to me.



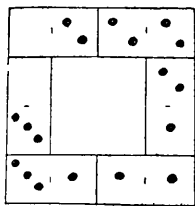
"Oh, Bertie, you are funny!"

Next month: "Sir Roderick comes to lunch."

PERPLEXITIES. By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

584.—THREE DOMINO FRAMES.

It will be seen that with six dominoes I have formed a frame so that the pips add up 6 on every side. Now, from the remaining dominoes form two new square frames in exactly the same manner (with six dominoes each) so that the sides of one shall add up 12 and the other 18. Remember that the three frames have to be built up at the same time from one set, so no domino can be repeated, and you must place 1 against 1, 2 against 2, and so on, in the usual way.



585.—A CLOCK PUZZLE.

The following very interesting little clock puzzle is sent to me by Mr. N. O. Jasper. There is only one possible solution to it. At what time are the two hands of a clock so situated that, reckoning as minute points past XII, one is exactly the square of the distance of the other?

586.—AN AMUSING DEFINITION.

SOMETIMES it is quite perplexing to identify a common object from a quaint, though quite accurate, description of it. A friend suddenly sprang this on me: "I have just seen something with two heads, one tail, four legs on one side and two legs on the other. What was it?" Can the reader guess?

587.—MONKEY AND PULLEY.

HERE is a funny tangle sent to me by a correspondent (M. M.). It is a mixture of Lewis Carroll's "Monkey and Pulley," Loyd's "How old was Mary?" and some other trifles. But it is quite easy if you have a pretty clear head.

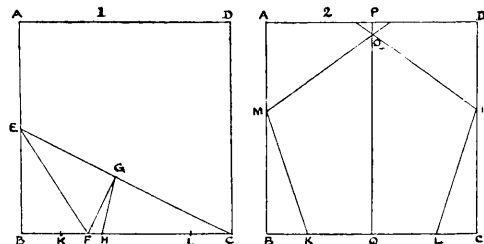
A rope is passed over a pulley. It has a weight at one end and a monkey at the other. There is the same length of rope on either side and equilibrium is maintained. The rope weighs 40z. per foot. The age of the monkey and the age of the monkey's mother together total 4 years. The weight of the monkey is as many pounds as the monkey's mother is years old. The monkey's mother was twice as old as the monkey was when the monkey's mother was half as old as the monkey will be when the monkey is three times as old as the monkey's mother was when the monkey's mother was three times as old as the monkey. The weight of the rope and the weight at the end was half as much again as the difference in weight between the weight of the weight and the weight and the weight of the monkey. Now, what was the length of the rope?

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

579.—FOLDING A PENTAGON.

FOLD A B on itself and find the mid point E. Fold through E C. Lay E B on E C and fold so as to get E F and F G. Make C H equal to C G. Find K, the mid point on B H, and make C L equal to B K. B C is said to be divided in medial section, and we have found K L, the side of the pentagon. Now (see second diagram) lay K M and L N equal to K L, so

that M and N may lie on B A and C D respectively. Fold P Q and lay M O and N O equal to K M and L N.



Then K M O N L is the pentagon required. For this solution I am indebted to a little book, "Geometrical Exercises in Paper Folding," by T. Sundara Row (Madras, 1893).

580.—EXPLORING MOUNT NEVEREST.

DUMP 5 rations at 90 mile point and return to base (5 days). Dump 1 at 95, return to base and dump 1 at 90, stopping there (1 day). Dump 2 at 80 and return to 90 (2 days). Fetch one from 95 and dump it at 80,

stopping there (1 day). Dump 1 at 70 and return to 80 (1 day). Return to base (1 day). We have thus left 1 at 70 and 1 at 90. Now dump 6 at 10 and 1 at 15, returning to 10 (7 days). Dump 2 at 20 and 1 at 25, returning to 20 (3 days). Dump 1 at 30, returning to 20, picking up 1 at 25 (1 day). Fetch 1 at 15 to dump at 30 (1 day). March to 50, 70, and 90 (3 days). March to base ($\frac{1}{2}$ day). These 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ days cannot, I think, be reduced. If the route had been in a straight line of 100 miles across a desert, I believe the shortest time necessary is 104 days, but the reader will find it difficult.

581.—TIMING THE MOTOR-CAR.

As the man can walk 27 steps while the car goes 162, the car is clearly going six times as fast as the man. The man walks $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour; therefore the car was going at 21 miles an hour.

582.—A MUSICAL ENIGMA.

I HAVE no solution yet, but suspect it has something to do with "Don't be flat. Be upright and be natural." This is a mere suggestion.

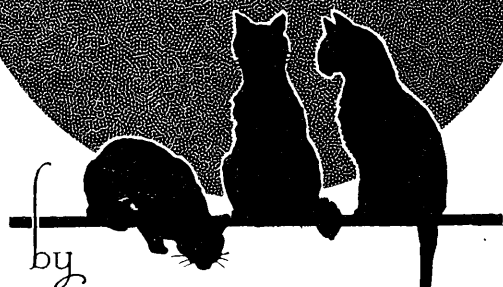
583.—A NEW ALPHABET PUZZLE.

THE following is a solution: DUCKS, FROG, VEN, JIB, WALTZ, NYMPH. As the Q is always followed by two vowels it must be the letter omitted.

572.—ANOTHER VICTORIAN ENIGMA.

SCORES of correspondents have suggested EMPTY, and I think this is probably the intended answer. I have seen no other word anything like so good.

DO CATS THINK ?



by
W·H·HUDSON

(Author of "Green Mansions," "Adventures Among
Birds," "The Purple Land," etc., etc.)

ILLUSTRATED BY
TOM PEDDIE

II.

AN Editorial
note at
the foot of
an article

on the above sub-
ject in the August
number of this
magazine inviting
correspondence
has resulted in an
abundant shower
of letters, sufficient
I think to make a
good-sized volume,
from all over the
land, with others
from Continental
countries, and some
from outlandish
places still farther
removed. The
narratives received
relate to a great

variety of animals, and perhaps the most
interesting, as showing the power to reflect
in our poor relations, are about pet monkeys
in India and Africa. Some of these may
find a use at a future time ; at present I can
only express my warm thanks to those who
have placed so much good material in my
hands. In the small space available here I
must confine myself to the subject of cats
and their ability to think.

Quite a large number of the letters contain
accounts of cats that have found out by
observation and practice how to do difficult
things, as, for instance, the opening of doors
by fiddling at the handle or latch until they
have mastered the trick. Or, when this has
been impossible, of finding out a way of
communicating their wishes to the people
of the house. In one instance the cat,
unable to get a door open himself, would
always go to the big dog of the house, who
could open most doors, and the dog would

know just what he
was wanted for,
and was pleased to
render this small
service to his
friend.

It came as a sur-
prise to me to find
that more cats than
the one I described
in a former paper
have acquired the
habit of begging
from seeing it in
dogs. It was by
thinking the cat
made the discovery
that by assuming
this unnatural pos-
ture a readier at-
tention would be
given to its wants.

The cat acquires

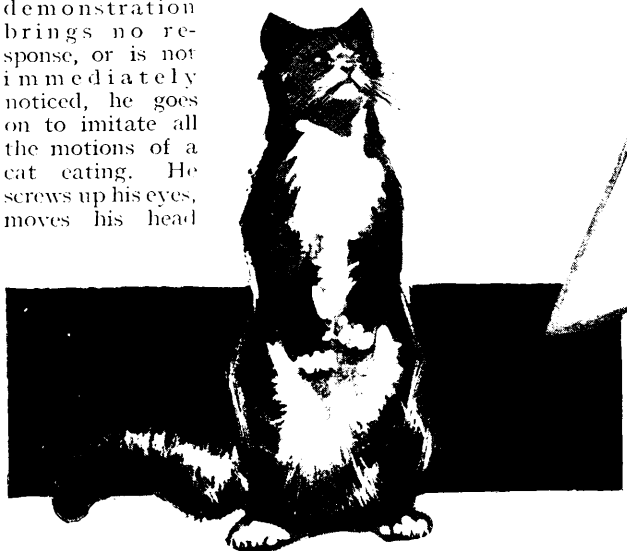
the trick from the dog, but begs in a different,
a more cat-like, a less obtrusive way. The
dog can never understand why there is not
an instant response to its begging. The cat
who has not been taught the trick, but has
learned it himself, sits up vertically with its
forepaws hanging down like arms, and remains
in this position without a sound, and as
patient and still as when waiting and watching
for a mouse. The expected or hoped-for
morsel, like the mouse, will come in due time :
if not, not.

There are other curious instances of cats
finding out a way of calling attention to their
wants. One relates to a cat in Scotland,
named Major, a small, compact, powerful,
and very natural cat, who would not sit or
lie close to the fire, but preferred sitting on a
table some distance from it. He was a great
rat-hunter, rats being very numerous in the
place, and when he was old and had lost

quickly by biting, it was observed that he dragged a struggling rat he had captured to the stone steps of the house and pounded the rat's head on the stones until it was dead. As an act of this kind, which is common enough in birds, is not instinctive in the cat, it can only be set down to observation and experience.

The way this cat had discovered of indicating his desire to be fed was most remarkable. He invariably appeared in the dining-room at meal times, and if no notice was taken of him he would trot off to the kitchen where there was always to be found a dish of hard crusts put by for another purpose. With one of these crusts in his mouth he would return, and jumping into a chair so as to make his presence conspicuous to the diners, he would begin gnawing, or rather pretending to gnaw, the hard crust, and making as much ado over it as possible until some food on a plate was put down for him, whereupon he would immediately drop the crust and concentrate on his dinner.

Now, I should have thought, and so, I believe, would any reader of the above instance, that no second cat in the land could have hit upon so original and far-fetched a device as this Scotch animal, but I have received a similar instance from Chard, in Somerset, and in this second one the cat goes one better, since he performs the trick without the crust. This one also has the habit of attending at all meals, and seats himself on a chair so as to command a view of the table. As soon as the eating is in full swing he begins grinding and clicking his teeth, and if this demonstration brings no response, or is not immediately noticed, he goes on to imitate all the motions of a cat eating. He screws up his eyes, moves his head



"The cat acquires the trick of begging from the dog, but begs in a different, a more cat-like way."

from side to side as if laboriously trying to masticate a tough piece of gristle.

Another amusing instance of a greatly favoured cat getting what he wants in an indirect way comes from Gloucestershire. He was particular, not to say fastidious, about his food, and always had it in a plate put on the floor. One day he came in and sat down before the plate, but declined to eat. The housekeeper, knowing what was in his mind, told him sharply that he would get nothing more till he had eaten that. One can only suppose that Puss knew what was in *her* mind. After a while he stood up and trotted out of the room and returned by-and-by followed by the cat from next door, an underfed animal glad to devour anything he could get. He quickly licked the plate clean, and then his entertainer was rewarded with the more delicate fare he had desired, and concerning which his olfactory had given him notice. On no other occasion did he



ever allow this neighbour cat to come into the house.

Now we come upon another aspect of the feline character. We are familiar with the fact that they hunt for others as well as for themselves. Their manner of life in a state of nature has made them comparatively solitary, but they are not more unsocial on this account than is the human hunter in the wilderness or the angler by the brook. Everyone acquainted with the cat knows that he is as capable of disinterested affection and gratitude as any so-called gregarious animal—the wolf and the jackal, let us say, and their not very nice relation, the domestic dog.

A lady correspondent has supplied me with a charming instance in a cat named "Jim," a sad poacher whose poaching was finally his

Do Cats Think ?

undoing. One day he ate some poison intended for vermin, and came home apparently in a dying condition. She administered a dose of brandy and castor oil and he crawled off and disappeared for several hours. Then he reappeared, quite recovered, and laid an offering at the lady's feet—half of a rat—the tail half. He had never brought her anything before and never did again. She adds that he probably intended giving her the whole rat, but was hungry after his illness and was unable to resist the temptation of eating a part himself.

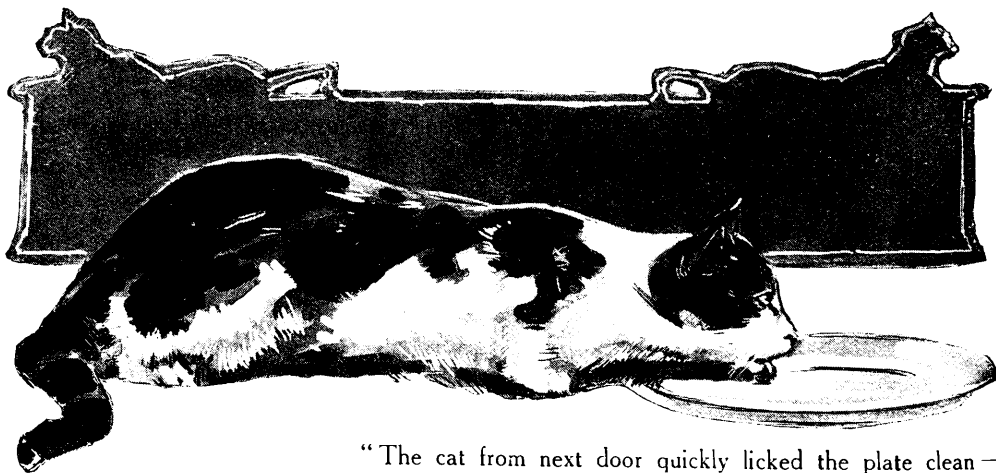
I have known many cats both in this country and in South America that have regularly or frequently brought in their captures to the master or mistress of the house, and as the hunting cat often confines himself to certain species he has found out how to circumvent—a rabbit or partridge, let us say—his gifts in such cases are gratefully accepted. But the cat's tastes in food do not always correspond with those of his human fellow-creatures, so that his presents of game are not invariably appreciated. The main point in the foregoing instance is that the cat was of a selfish disposition and hunted for himself alone, and that in this case his gratitude to his mistress overcame his greed. The higher nature conquered.

More instances of this kind, which are very common, need not be given. As a rule

who had her kittens in a cupboard downstairs, and after some days took them one by one upstairs to the drawing-room to give them a change and exhibit them to the family. After allowing them to play for half an hour on the carpet, she laboriously carried them all down again to their bed. This task was repeated every day: then on one occasion the lady of the house, seeing puss struggling with one of her kittens on the stairs, took pity on her and carried them all down for her. From that time onward she would not carry the kittens down herself. She would bring them up as usual with much labour, and after they had had their half an hour's play on the carpet she would take them one by one to her mistress, and, laying them at her feet, insist on having them carried down for her.

Another interesting case of this kind is of a puss who suffered intense pain in bringing out her first litter, and who in some way was relieved by her mistress. There were many more litters to follow during this cat's life, and she never suffered again as on the first occasion, but invariably when her time came she would go crying as if terrified at the prospect before her, to her mistress, and insist on her attendance in the room until the anxious business was over.

There are some anecdotes about the different effect on cats of seeing themselves



"The cat from next door quickly licked the plate clean—

the cat is readier to take than to give, as he no doubt knows that the beings he lives with in a domestic state are the greatest of all animals, able to compass all things, so that the cat's ministrations are not needed.

It is not, however, only in the matter of food and shelter from the storm, with bed and firing and caresses added, that he looks up to us. Here, for instance, is an anecdote of a cat prettily named *Aspronla* (modern Greek),

in a looking-glass, also about showing portraits to a cat. As a rule it is not looked at; it is simply a flat surface with marks or colours on it which mean nothing. And here the cat is, mentally, no lower than many primitive human beings or savages. My American friend and correspondent, Mr. Charles Finger, who edits a monthly called *All's Well*, has given me an account of a boy in *Tierra del Fuego*, who, for no reason,

became attached to him and followed him about like a dog during his rambles in that outlandish place. Finger showed a picture or portrait of a woman to this boy and asked him what it was. The boy was greatly puzzled; he held the paper or card before him at all angles and distances, turning it about, yet not able to say what it was. Then, reproached for his stupidity, he held it close to his face and stared again until the tears actually came into his eyes. Finally he had to be told that it was a representation of a human being, a woman, and in the end he managed to understand it. Yet this same boy would pick up a flint which he would instantly detect among hundreds of flints as the one suited to his purpose. With a few deft blows with another flint he would shape it into a very small arrow-head, then put it in his mouth and, turning it about with his tongue, bite the sharp edges with his teeth, and in five minutes there would be the finished arrow-head with serrated edges.

The cat, too, like the Fuegian boy, has his arts and accomplishments, useful in his feline state, but he is not, like the monkey, a seeker after useless knowledge. It is only when the monkey has grown



--and then his entertainer was rewarded with the more delicate fare he had desired."

to man that this idle curiosity begins to bear fruit, as the author of that clever little book, "Our Simian World," has just been telling us.

But the cat's mind is not always in the condition of the Fuegian boy's with regard to pictures. A correspondent writes from Chard, Somerset: "Have you ever come

across any instance of cats recognizing photographs? My dear old Fluff was still a kitten, although we had had time to get attached to each other, when I was sent from home for a lengthy change of air. Fluff was found more than once standing on a chair, his forepaws resting on the back of it, gazing fixedly up at a cabinet-size full-length portrait of myself, recently taken, placed on the wall above. After this had been

Do Cats Think ?

noticed my father would often take the cat up and say, 'Where is your little master?' and instantly he would run, and, jumping upon a chair, begin staring at the photograph."

It is hardly to be supposed that this young cat understood the matter as we, with our life-long training and perhaps higher intelligence, are able to do, but that he saw the picture *as* his young master. The boy he loved had vanished from his sight, and lo! there he was, strangely diminished in size, motionless and voiceless, stuck up against the wall.

I believe the chief interest to readers of the article in the August number of this magazine was in the case of telepathy described. I then said that it was the first case I had encountered of telepathy between a human being and a cat; that other cases I had met with concerned the dog, and one between horse and man related by M. A. Lower in one of his Sussex books. I have now to thank one of my correspondents for informing me of a second authentic case in Everard A. Calthrop's book, "The Horse as Friend and Companion," an extremely interesting work to everyone who knows and loves the horse, and a valuable one to every student of animal psychology. In this place I can only deal with cases between man and cat.

It is a somewhat delicate subject, and I am obliged to dismiss from consideration all those cases in which the facts may be accounted for without the aid of this mysterious faculty of the mind.

And here I must explain the reasons for not having given the names and addresses of my correspondents. In some instances I have been asked not to publish these, and, not to make distinctions, I think it best to publish none, but to keep the whole of the letters for future reference and to supply an address to anyone who may want it.

One case sent me closely resembles the one I gave in the first article, of Bishop Barry's wife and her cat. In this instance the cat was left in a locked-up house in Buxton after arrangements had been made with the lady next door to go in and feed the cat every day. The cat was a great favourite and would have been taken by its mistress but for the fact that it was about to become a mother. A fortnight later the mistress, staying at Bordon, had a distressing dream in which she saw her cat drowning, fighting for its life and unable to climb out of the water, while she struggled in vain to rescue it, but was unable to reach it with her hand. On her return she found her cat well and happy, nursing a single kitten, but on relating her dream to her neighbour she was told that that very thing had happened on the night of her dream. The cat had her kittens

under the grid of the cellar, which was flooded by a heavy downpour of rain one night. The lady next door on waking at midnight heard its cries, and jumping up and hastily dressing, she went in the house and found the cat plunging about in the water with all her kittens in a half-drowned condition. She succeeded in reaching the cat and pulling her out, and after more trouble she managed to save one of the kittens.

Most of the undoubted cases of telepathy we meet with are of this kind—the message is from one in extreme peril and terror, or in the agonies of death, to one it loves and looks to for protection; and the phenomenon appears to be precisely the same between man and man and man and animal. Other examples of this kind I have received relate to the dog, and have a close resemblance to the familiar one recorded by Rider Haggard.

MY last case of undoubted telepathy is the best, but as it comes into the life histories of two or three cats, all of it peculiarly interesting, I must give the whole story in full. My correspondent writes from North London, where she now resides, but the history begins in the house in the country, her former home. First of the three is Pinnie, received as a present in its kittenhood, who grew up to be a great favourite. She was, unhappily, of an excessively nervous disposition, and had an ineradicable terror of strangers and workmen in the house. She would take refuge from them in a disused chimney. In due time Pinnie became a mother, and then many times afterwards. One of her first litter, named Warder, was preserved, and became her life-companion. Warder was not a nervous cat, but was taught by Pinnie from childhood to fly to the refuge in the chimney when workmen came into the house. Pinnie could practise deception on occasions. Once there was a particularly handsome kitten in a litter, and she appeared not to like the amount of attention paid to it. One day she was seen jumping through the scullery window with this kitten in her mouth, and by and by she came back without it. What had she done with it? The whole house was excited over the question, and a great search for the lost little beauty was started, Pinnie herself going about with the searchers, but without exhibiting any signs of anxiety. At length someone heard a feeble mewling from the coal cellar, and there the kitten was discovered, packed in some dry straw, which the cat had taken there to make it a bed. It was at once taken back to its basket and placed with the others, but quickly disappeared again, and was again found in the cellar. And there they had to leave it.

Pinnie had lived several years and had brought many kittens into the world before she came to her end. The great adventure, the removal to London, was about to take place, and it was decided that Pinnie could not be taken on account of her extreme nervousness. The change to that thunderous world swarming with strangers would be too terrible for her. Nor could she be left to the care of others. The only way was to put her to sleep.

One evening the family were at dinner, Warder, but not Pinnie, being in the room. My correspondent did not know that on this day Pinnie's life would end. Presently the master of the house was called out to see someone, and as this was not an unusual thing no notice was taken of it. In a few minutes he returned and, carefully closing the door, resumed his seat at the table. Suddenly Warder jumped up and rushed to the door, uttering a series of unearthly cries, and then furiously clawed at the door to get out, and finally collapsed in a forlorn heap on the floor.

At this very moment, at the far end of the house, Pinnie was being put to sleep by the vet.

This is the first authentic instance of telepathy between animal and animal I have encountered. No other explanation of what happened is possible. No faintest sound was uttered by the dying Pinnie, and at that distance no cry could have been heard in the closed dining-room. Such cases may be extremely common in wild animal life, for all we know to the contrary, but it is only in domestic animals and in a rare concurrence of favourable circumstances that such a phenomenon can be observed.

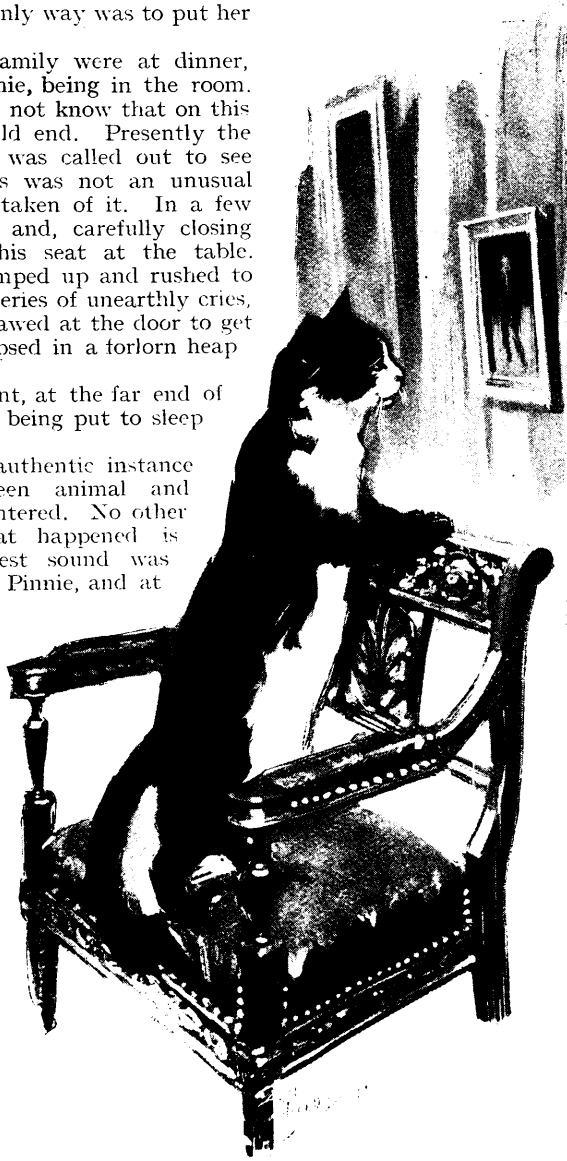
It only remains to add a few facts concerning Warder's subsequent history. Warder is looked on as a very important cat, for he is still living, aged fifteen years, and, my correspondent adds, "rules the house." He

cannot open doors himself but makes others open them for him by rattling the locks. He had, after losing Pinnie, one great friend, Tipperary, a stray which he brought into the house and delighted to honour. Every day they were fed together, but each had a separate plate, and invariably after eating part of the food they changed plates, and

from the time that Tipperary disappeared, after four years' companionship, Warder has left a portion of his food on his plate at every meal. That, however, does not say that he has a distinct recollection of his lost friend every time he eats. No doubt he remembered him for days and weeks after his disappearance until leaving something for him on his own

plate became a settled habit.

One incident in Tipperary's career is worth recording as an example of the powerful effect of association. He was eating his supper one evening, gnawing a rabbit bone, when the Silvertown explosion took place. He jumped into the air, then rushed out of the room. From that time the sight or smell of rabbit on his plate would send him at a run out of the room. To eat rabbit, according to his idea, would cause another Silvertown explosion.



"My father would often say, 'Where is your little master?' and, jumping upon a chair, the cat would begin staring at the photograph."

THE SINISTER QUEST OF NORMAN GREYES

by
**E. PHILLIPS
OPPENHEIM**

ILLUSTRATED BY
CHARLES CROMBIE

Nº 3. "THE MENWOOD ROAD BANK ROBBERY"

Sir Norman Greyes, the chief figure in this thrilling series of detective stories, having resigned his high position at Scotland Yard, makes a practice of studying the criminal world from the outsider's point of view.

By **MICHAEL SAYERS.**

I had taken months to collect all the necessary information and make the preliminary arrangements, but the moment had arrived at last. At twenty minutes to twelve on a Friday morning I descended from a rather shabby Ford car exactly opposite Bailey's grocery stores at the corner of Menwood Street, in one of the northern suburbs of Leeds. It is a neighbourhood of six-roomed houses and long cobbled streets; a neighbourhood teeming with men and women when the great factories close at hand are empty, but at this particular hour of the day, before the children's schools have finished their morning session, and whilst the men and a considerable portion of the women are still in the mills, showing signs of something approaching desertion. There was a handsome grey touring landaulette containing two passengers, a man and a woman, drawn up on the other side of the way, apparently to take advantage of the shade of some tall advertisement hoardings whilst the chauffeur filled up with petrol. Otherwise, a careful glance up and down the street convinced me that not a soul was in sight.

I walked along a hot asphalt path, and turned the corner into what was known as the Boulevard almost unnoticed. On my left was a stretch of waste ground, black and stinking with refuse, empty tins, and bottles,

abandoned even by the children as an undesirable playground. On my right were more houses in course of erection, deserted to-day by reason of an opportune strike amongst the masons. The only inhabited edifice was the one where my business lay. A brass plate upon the door indicated that this was a branch of Brown's Bank, planted out here in this uncomely spot for the convenience of the huge factories which dominated the neighbourhood.

With my hand upon the swing-door I glanced around. My luck was certainly in, for there was still not even a child to be seen. Inside, behind the counter, both the manager and his clerk were busy counting out bundles of Treasury notes. They looked up inquiringly as I entered. Strangers in such a place, I imagine, were rare. Such a stranger as I was a rarity which they were never likely to experience again in this world.

My plans were cut and dried to the last detail. I wasted no time in any silly attempt to hold the place up, but, brief though the seconds were, it was amazing how my brain chronicled a host of varying impressions. I saw the bland smile fade from the manager's lips, I saw the dawn of suspicion in his eyes, the gleam of terror followed by the spasm of pain as I shot him through the right shoulder-blade. His assistant had not the courage of a rabbit. White-faced, gasping for mercy, he stood there with his hands above his head and his knees shaking.

I am convinced that if I had left him alone for another five seconds he would have collapsed hopelessly without any interference on my part. I was not able to take risks, however, so, leaning over, I struck him on the point of the jaw. He fell in a crumpled heap behind the counter. I then helped myself to seven thousand pounds odd in bank and Treasury notes, and in about a minute and a half after I had entered the bank I strolled back again the way I had come.

At the corner of the street I looked back. There were no signs of life about the bank, no one apparently on his way towards it. There were a few children playing about the unoccupied houses, and behind the windows of the cottages in the street where I now was were women intent upon various domestic duties. One woman was scolding her child just outside the door. She glanced at me only in the most perfunctory fashion. My panama hat was pulled well over my head, a reasonable precaution with the sun at its greatest power. A man was bending over the open bonnet of the Ford car which I had left at the corner. I passed him by without a glance and stepped into the grey touring-car behind. The engine was purring gently, the chauffeur's fingers were upon the gear-handle as I appeared. I took my place by the side of Janet, unrecognizable beneath her motor-veil, and we glided off northwards. There were no signs of any disturbance as we shot into the broad main street. We gathered speed up the Chapel-town Hill, and very soon we were racing for Scotland.

JANET handed me a silver flask soon after we had passed out of the suburbs. I shook my head.

"You know that I never take anything until one o'clock," I reminded her. "Why should I drink in the middle of the morning?"

I fancied that I caught through her veil a gleam of that almost worshipping fidelity which had led me to trust this woman as I had trusted no other in my life.

"What a nerve!" she murmured.

"I have no nerves," I rejoined, "neither have I any fear. By this time you ought to realize it."

"All went smoothly?" she asked.

"Absolutely according to programme. A chance customer would have been the only possible disturbance, and the position of the bank rendered that unlikely."

"What happened?"

"I shot the manager through the shoulder-blade," I told her. "The heart would probably have been safer, but the blinds of the bank were all drawn to keep out the sun, and my panama was as good as a mask. His

clerk was almost dead from fear before I touched him. I had not to waste a bullet there."

"And how much?" she inquired.

"Only just over seven thousand pounds," I admitted. "It seems a pitiful amount for so much planning and risk. Still, something had to be done."

We were up on a stretch of moorland now, well away from curious eyes. Janet and I were busy for some ten minutes, making three parcels of my stock of notes. Then she looked at the map.

"Arthington should be the next village," she remarked.

I nodded. We descended a steep hill. Half-way up the next we came upon a small motor-car, drawn up by the side of the road, the bonnet thrown open, its owner seated in the dust. The latter rose to his feet as we approached. I handed him the black bag which I had been carrying, in which was my panama hat and one of the packets of notes. He raised his cap nonchalantly.

"According to plan?" he asked.

"According to plan," I replied.

We sped on for another twenty miles, when almost a similar occurrence happened. A man seated by the side of his motor-bicycle rose to his feet as we approached. I handed him the second packet.

"All well?" he inquired.

"Perfectly," I assured him.

We were off again in less than ten seconds. Our third stop was at the top of a hill forty miles farther north, after we had partaken of a picnic luncheon in the car. A man was seated motionless in a large touring car, headed in our direction. He held out his arm as we approached, and glanced at his watch.

"Wonderful!" he murmured. "You are three minutes to the good."

I handed him the third packet. He waved his hand and started up his engine. Soon we left him, a speck behind us. I leaned back and lit a cigarette.

"I have now," I remarked, "only one anxiety."

"And that?" Janet inquired, quickly.

"About the greens at Kinbrae," I confided. "I met a man last year who told me that they were apt to get dried up."

She smiled.

"We had plenty of rain last month," she reminded me. "I thought you were going to speak of our friend."

I shook my head.

"Norman Greyes is in Norway," I told her. "I am not sure," I went on, after a moment's hesitation, "whether I do not sometimes regret it."

"Why?"

"Norman Greyes has made life inconvenient for us for several years," I said.

The Sinister Quest of Norman Greyes

"One of our best men has had to devote the whole of his time to watching him. We have been obliged to stay away from places which I very much wanted to visit. He has that absurd gift—he always had—of being able to connect a particular undertaking with a particular person. For that reason we have had to remain idle until we are practically paupers. When we have paid the expenses of this *coup*, and paid the staff, there will be barely enough left to keep us until Christmas. If we could get rid of Norman Greyes, we could seek wider fields."

"Why not?" she asked, indifferently. "He is only a man like the others."

I pretended to be deep in thought. As a matter of fact, I was studying Janet. No creature or servant in this world could render such faithful service as she has rendered me, yet I am one of those persons gifted with instincts. I know that she has a strange mind, a strange, tumultuously passionate nature. I have, so far, been the man of her life. If it were not I, I sometimes wonder whether it might not be Norman Greyes.

WE were to have one tense few minutes before we reached our stopping-place for the night. We had just passed through a small town, and our silent chauffeur was preparing to let out his engine again, when we were confronted by what was, in the circumstances, a very sinister sight. Two men on bicycles, approaching us, dismounted and stood in the middle of the road with outstretched hands. The sun, even in the distance, flashed upon their uniforms. We realized at once that they were policemen. The chauffeur half-turned towards me.

"What shall you do?" Janet demanded.

"Do?" I replied. "Why, the natural thing, of course. All this is provided for. Oliver," I added, leaning forward, "those policemen seem to want to speak to us. Pull up."

We came to a standstill a yard or two away from them. The larger of the two men, who wore the uniform of a sergeant, made a solemn and portentous approach.

"Good afternoon, Sergeant," I said. "I hope that we are not in trouble?"

He looked at me as he might have done at a man whose hands were dripping with the blood of his best friend.

"It's your number-plate, sir," he announced. "They telephoned us through from Ripon to stop your car and call your attention to it."

"What is wrong with my number-plate?" I asked.

"Why, you've been driving where they've watered the roads freely," the sergeant

pointed out, "and it's muddled it up entirely. There's no one can read a letter on it."

I felt Janet's fingers clutch mine, and they were as cold as ice. It was not a moment which I myself forgot, less for its significance than for its effect upon my companion. The chauffeur, the police-sergeant, and I solemnly inspected the number-plate, and the former, with a duster from his tool-chest, carefully rubbed it clean.

"That will be all right now, Sergeant?" I inquired.

"That will be quite all right, sir," he admitted, taking off his helmet and wiping the perspiration from his forehead. "It's a warm day, this, for they bicycles."

It was my policy not to overdo the matter, and, indeed, it was not necessary, for the man's eyes glistened as I deposited a couple of half-crowns in his hand.

"I am sorry to have given you this trouble," I said. "We tourists are proverbially thoughtless about our number-plates. I hope you will accept this and have a drink with me."

"We will that, sure, sir," the sergeant promised, saluting first me and then Janet. "Come along, Jock," he added, "we'll pay a little visit to the Widow MacGill on the way back."

So we drove off again northwards. My chauffeur was an elderly man, who has faced all that the world may hold of evil with me many a time, but his driving for the first few miles was erratic. Janet, I could see, although outwardly she had recovered herself, was on the point of hysterics. I settled myself down in my corner, adjusted my horn-rimmed spectacles, and drew from the pocket of the car a new half-crown book on the principles of golf, written by a late beginner. So we travelled until we reached the inn where we stayed for the night, and late on the afternoon of the following day we arrived at our destination. There was just a bare white house, a lodge, the gate of which was held open by a great, raw-boned gillie, miles of what seemed to be interminable moorland, and below, the sea. I looked around with satisfaction.

"You're Sandy MacLane, the caretaker here?" I asked, leaning out of the car.

He made a noise which sounded like "Oo ay!"

"Which way might the golf links be?" I inquired.

He pointed with a long and hairy forefinger.

"The club-house is yonder," he vouchsafed; "a step across the road is the fifteenth tee."

I sighed with content.

"Come up to the house," I ordered. "After tea I shall play a few holes."

By **SIR NORMAN GREYES.**

MY friend Rimmington called to see me on the night of my return from Norway. He looked around with an air of dismay at my various travelling paraphernalia.

"So you're really off, then?" he remarked.

"On the contrary, I've just returned," I told him. "It was too late in the season to do any good, and I made a mistake in changing my river. The whole thing was a frost."

Rimmington sighed.

"Well, I'm glad to see you back," he declared, sinking into my easy chair. "All the same, London in August isn't exactly a Paradise!"

"Tell me about Leeds?" I suggested. "To judge from the newspapers, you seem to be having a lot of trouble about a very simple case."

Rimmington frowned. He was silent for several moments and, glancing across at him, I noticed that he was pale and apparently out of sorts.

"I think I'm stale, Greyes," he confessed. "The Chief pretty well hinted the same thing, and worse, when I got back last night. I really dropped round to see whether you could help me."

"If I can, I will with pleasure," I promised him. "You know that."

"You read the bare account of the affair, of course," Rimmington went on. "Two fairly credible witnesses deposed to seeing a man in a grey flannel suit, with a panama hat pushed over his eyes, drive up in a Ford, leave it outside Bailey's grocery stores, walk down the street and turn into the Boulevard where the bank is situated, exactly at the time that the robbery took place. Three women and two children saw him pass up the street two minutes later, and thirty seconds after that he crossed the street and entered Bailey's grocery stores. The man who served him with some marmalade, tea, and bacon saw him climb up into the Ford and drive away. The man was known at the shop as Ralph Roberson. There is no doubt that it was his car. Half an hour after the robbery he was arrested at his house—he was cleaning the car at the time—and although he had changed his clothes, the light grey suit which he had recently worn was discovered in his bedroom, and the panama hat, warm with perspiration, in a cupboard. His excuse for changing his clothes was that he put on older things in which to clean the car, and his account of his morning was that he had driven straight up to Bailey's stores for some groceries, and straight back again. Two witnesses are

ready to swear that they saw him get out of the Ford and go towards the bank; the grocer's assistant, who served him, is absolutely certain that he was in the shop within thirty seconds of the Ford pulling up outside, and that when he left he drove straight away."

"What sort of a man is this Roberson?" I asked.

"A man of bad character," was the prompt reply. "He was once a bookmaker, but failed. He has been in prison for obtaining goods by false pretences, and there are half-a-dozen summonses for debt out against him at the present moment. The only little money he earns, nowadays, seems to be by acting as a bookmaker's tout. He knew the neighbourhood well, and has once been heard to remark upon the isolated position of the bank. In every respect he is just the man to have done it, and yet there are all my witnesses swearing to different things. Furthermore, he had scarcely a shilling in his pocket, and he confessed that he was going to try and sell the car that afternoon to raise a little money."

"It seems to me," I admitted, "that you have been a little premature in framing your case against Mr. Ralph Roberson."

"So the magistrates thought," Rimmington rejoined, dryly. "We managed to get two remands. This morning he was discharged."

"If the grocer's assistant is telling the truth," I remarked, "Roberson could not possibly have committed the robbery. What sort of a young man is the assistant?"

"Highly respectable and very intelligent," Rimmington replied. "It would be quite impossible at any time to shake his evidence."

"So much for Mr. Ralph Roberson," I said. "And now who else is there?"

"That's the difficulty," Rimmington confessed. "One doesn't know where to turn. The only other two people who were about the spot at the same moment were a man and his wife touring up to Scotland in a big Daimler car. They stopped to make some purchases at Bailey's stores, but neither of them alighted."

"Any description of the man?" I asked.

"Yes, the grocer's assistant who went out to take the order remembers him. He describes him as a sporting-looking gentleman wearing a brown alpaca dust-coat and a grey Homburg hat. Such a person could not possibly have left the car and walked down the street without notice."

"Any description of the woman?"

Rimmington shook his head.

"To tell you the truth," he confessed, "I didn't ask for one. There were guns, golf clubs, and other luggage on the top of the car. The two were apparently

The Sinister Quest of Norman Greyes

motoring up to some place they had hired in Scotland."

ON the face of it, there seemed no possible connection between these tourists and a local bank robbery. Yet the thought of them lingered obstinately in my mind. A man and a woman, a bank robbery, and the fact that I was supposed to be safe in Norway! I began to take up the pieces of the puzzle once more, and fit them in according to my own devices.

"You seem to have done everything possible, Rimmington," I said, at last; "but I think, as my Norway trip has fallen flat, I shall go up to Scotland for a fortnight. Would you like me to call over at Leeds and see if I can pick up anything?"

"Exactly what I hoped you would suggest," he confessed, eagerly. "I have brooded over the affair so long that I can think of nothing but the obvious side. The Chief will give you a letter to the Leeds people. Would you like me to come with you?"

I shook my head.

"Better not," I told him. "Better for me to go as a stranger."

That night I travelled down to Leeds.

There was nothing about the neighbourhood which differed materially from Rimmington's description. I paid a visit to the

place at exactly the hour the robbery had been committed, walked from the grocery store to the bank, carefully timing myself, and made some trifling purchases inside the shop. Later in the day I tracked Roberson to ground in his favourite public-house. Choosing my opportunity, I addressed him.

"Are you the man whom the police made such idiots of themselves about in this bank robbery?" I asked.

"What the hell's that to do with you?" he answered.

His tone was truculent, but he obviously only needed humouring.

"Just this much," I replied. "I am a journalist representing one of the picture papers. It would be worth a fiver to you if you would let me do a sketch of you."

His manner changed at once.

"You don't want an interview?"

"Not likely," I assured him, commencing a rough sketch in a notebook which I had put into my pocket for that purpose. "I read the case myself. A fool could see that you had nothing to do with it."

He stopped drinking and looked at me curiously.

"If I were the police," I went on, "I should want to know a little more about the two tourists on their way to Scotland."

"Then you're as big a fool as the police," he retorted, gruffly. "They hadn't nothing to do with it. They were filling up with petrol and neither of them budged from the car."





"It was a curious moment. I saw the flash of the man's gun, and I saw the woman's hand restrain him, heard the single word whispered in his ear."

I smiled in a superior way and went on sketching. He watched me with thinly-veiled anxiety.

"Toffs they were," he went on, "on their way up for a bit of sport."

"Maybe," I commented. "They didn't seem in any hurry about it."

"What do you mean?"

"I don't see why they stayed at the Queen's two nights," I remarked.

"Who said they did?" he demanded. "They stayed one night, and grumbled at having to do that."

"How do you know?" I asked, looking up at him.

"I spoke to the chauffeur," he replied, sullenly. "He told me my oil was leaking."

I changed the subject, finished my ridiculous sketch, and handed over the five pounds. That night I caught the mail train to Scotland.

It took me less than a week to discover the whereabouts of the man and the woman who I learned were passing under the name of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Grover. On the morning after my arrival at the very remote corner of Scotland where they had taken up their temporary abode, I committed an indiscretion. I donned a knickerbocker suit and set out for a tramp over the moors. I had just clambered up to the top of a little ridge overlooking the sea, when I came face to face with a little party ascending it from the other side. The little party consisted of the person I had known chiefly as Mr. Stanfield, his wife, a villainous-looking gillie, and two dogs. It was a curious moment, full of the suggestions of tragedy, afterwards ridiculous in its conventionality. I saw the flash of the man's gun, and I saw the woman's hand restrain him, heard the single word whispered in his ear. I raised my cap, he followed suit. His gun hung idly under his arm. My hand was inside my coat-pocket, clutching something hard.

"What an extraordinary meeting!" Janet exclaimed, with a faint smile. "So you sometimes take holiday, also, Sir Norman?"

"Sometimes," I admitted. "I came home unexpectedly from Norway. I was disappointed in my fishing."

"Are you aware that you're trespassing, mon?" the gillie demanded, severely.

"I'm afraid I didn't know it," I replied.

"There were no notices."

"It doesn't matter," Janet intervened. "We happen to be walking up a covey of birds this way."

"I put nothing up," I assured them.

"How long are you staying in these parts, Sir Norman?" Stanfield inquired.

"About a week, if I like the golf," I answered.

"I've taken the Lodge, down there," he pointed out. "Call and see us before you leave."

"Won't you come and dine with us to-night?" Janet invited, with a challenge in her eyes.

I hesitated. The invitation appealed to me in one way as much as it repelled me in

another. Stanfield watched me as though he were reading my thoughts.

"You need not take salt," he said, grimly. "I shall be delighted," I assented.

I spent the afternoon wandering about the moor, inspecting the golf links, and speaking on the telephone. Punctually at twenty minutes to eight I presented myself at the sombre-looking house. The summons of a harsh bell was answered by an immaculate butler. Janet, from the other end of the cool, white hall, came forward to meet me. Almost simultaneously the gong rang. The dinner was well cooked, the champagne of an excellent brand, and my host, with a twinkle in his eyes, called my attention to the fact that it was opened in my presence. As soon as the last course was concluded, Janet led the way out on to the flagged terrace. We sat in easy chairs, gazing over a strip of moorland away to the sea.

"You are a brave man, Sir Norman," my hostess said, abruptly.

"Why?" I asked.

"You know—and you alone—that I once killed a man—although you don't altogether know why," she went on, softly. "How do you know that I have not within me the makings of a modern Lucrezia? I have read quite a good deal about poisons—I may be said even to have studied the subject—and you have delivered yourself into my hands."

"Why should you poison me?" I argued. "I will do both you and your husband the credit to believe that you don't bear malice. Revenge is a senseless sentiment. As regards our last conflict, I probably prevented your drawing a matter of a hundred thousand pounds from the insurance company for the pretended loss of your necklace, but that was all in the day's work. I was paid to match my wits against yours, and I did it. There is no one particularly anxious to take proceedings against either of you for that little—error of judgment."

My host leaned forward in his chair. His face was solemn and brooding, his gaze was hard and intent.

"You have things against me dating from before that," he said.

I nodded.

"But I am in the same position as Scotland Yard," I reminded him. "For those things I have no case. For those misdemeanours of which I suspect you in the past, I could at the present moment go only so far as to procure a warrant charging you with feloniously wounding a police inspector. For the rest, I suspect but I have no proof."

"You suspect what?" he asked.

I shook my head.

"There are limits to my candour," I protested, mildly. "You must admit that

I am not secretive or unduly aloof, inasmuch as I dine at your table, discuss your peccadilloes, and pass on, like an ordinary guest. What I may suspect in the past I keep to myself. I am your enemy, and you know it. If it pays you to attempt to murder me, I imagine you will try."

"Janet would desert me if I did," he declared, with a grim smile. "She finds these little conferences with you so inspiring."

She looked at me with that wonderful smile of hers.

"I do not like to hear you say that we are enemies," she murmured. "I would rather think that we are like the soldiers who fight in two opposing armies. We fight because it is our duty. So we are enemies because it is our duty. Even that does not interfere with personal feelings."

"That is true," I admitted, carelessly. "I could never absolutely dislike a man who played such good golf as your husband."

"And what about me?" she demanded, with some simulated show of peevishness.

"You drive me to be obvious," I replied. "No one could possibly dislike a person who contributed to the beauty of the world."

She laughed softly.

"Why, you are a courtier, Sir Norman," she declared. "Your compliments and the perfume of those roses and the flavour of the Benedictine are getting into my head. I begin to picture you as the serpent who has crawled into this Utopian Paradise."

"Talking about golf," her husband intervened in a harsh tone, "what about a game, Sir Norman? Will you play me to-morrow morning?"

"With pleasure," I assented.

"At ten o'clock?"

"I will be in the club-house," I promised him.

AT five minutes to ten on the following morning I watched Mr. James Stanfield stroll across towards the club-house. I waved my hand and stepped back into the locker-room. Three or four men in tweeds and golfing outfit were waiting there. In five minutes my prospective opponent entered. In five seconds the handcuffs were upon his wrist and one of the three apparent golfers had the matter in hand.

"You are charged," he said, "with feloniously wounding William Harmell, manager, and John Stokes, clerk, of Brown's Bank, in the Menwood Road, Leeds, and with stealing from the premises the sum of seven thousand pounds. I should recommend you to come with us quietly and to reserve for the present anything you may have to say."

Looking at him as he stood leaning a little against his own locker, I could have sworn



“‘If it pays you to attempt to murder me, I imagine you will try.’
‘Janet would desert me if I did,’ he declared.”

that there was no manner of change in the face or expression of my enemy. He ignored the others and looked across at me.

"This is your doing?" he asked.

"Altogether," I admitted.

"You knew it—last night?"

"It was you who reminded me that I need not take salt," I replied.

"The trick is to you," he confessed. "I am ready, gentlemen."

He walked quietly out to a waiting motor-car, with a burly policeman on either side of him, and a very important man from Scotland Yard in the party. Rimmington and I were left behind, and presently we essayed a round of golf. All the time my eyes kept straying towards the Lodge. No sign, however, came from there.

"I still," Rimmington remarked, as we waited for a few minutes on the tenth tee, "don't quite understand how you tumbled to this affair so quickly."

"It was quite easy when you once admit the possibility of the occupants of the Daimler car being concerned," I replied. "Of course, Roberson was in it up to the eyes. It was Stanfield who drove up in Roberson's Ford and went direct to the bank. The Daimler car was already there, containing Janet Stanfield and Roberson, wearing a grey Homburg hat and a linen duster. The chauffeur brought into the store a small order which the grocer's assistant packed and took out. The chauffeur was taking advantage of the delay to fill up with petrol. The moment Stanfield descended from the Ford and made his way to the bank, Roberson slipped off his linen duster, produced a panama hat which he pulled over his eyes, and made his purchases in the shop. He came out just as Stanfield reappeared, and drove the Ford away. Stanfield just stepped into the Daimler, put on his linen duster and grey Homburg hat, and off they started. The idea was to confuse, and at first it succeeded. The whole affair was ingenious, from the selection of that particular bank, which is wickedly isolated, to the exact location of the Daimler car, which made anyone on the off-side almost invisible."

"It's pretty generous of you to let me take the credit of this," Rimmington remarked.

"If Stanfield turns out to be Pugsley, and Pugsley the man I believe him to be," I said, "I shall need no other reward than the joy of having brought him to book."



"Hands up—like lightning!"

"Do you believe him to be Michael Sayers?" Rimmington asked.

"I am absolutely certain of it," I answered.

We completed our round, lunched and played again. There came no sign from the Lodge. Somehow or other, the silence seemed to me ominous. Towards evening I began to get uneasy. Just as we were sitting down to dinner, I was fetched to the telephone.

"Inspector McCall speaking," the voice I



'If you are going to shoot, let's have it over quickly,' I answered.'

heard declared. "Are you Sir Norman Greyes?"

"Yes," I answered.

"Have you heard the news?"

"I have heard no particular news since early this morning," I replied.

"Stanfield escaped eleven miles from here," the Inspector declared, gloomily.

"Escaped? Ridiculous!" I exclaimed.

"He did it, anyhow. He shot both his guards with an automatic pistol fixed in the sole of one foot and worked with the toe of

the other. Mr. Gorman from Scotland Yard is seriously wounded, and one of the others is shot in the leg. Stanfield then threatened the driver until he released him from the handcuffs and took him to within a mile of a railway station. There he tied the man up, drove the car on himself, and disappeared. So far we have no news."

I could make no intelligible reply. I muttered something to the effect that Rimmington and I would come on to the police-station the first thing in the morning.

The Sinister Quest of Norman Greyes

Then I walked outside, a little giddy, sick at heart, furious with myself and Fate. I stood looking towards the Lodge until at last I yielded to an irresistible impulse. I hastened across the few yards of heather-grown common, crossed the road, made my way up the straggling avenue, and rang the great front-door bell. There was a suggestion of emptiness about its rankling echoes, no sound of anyone moving or stirring within. I was indeed on the point of turning away when the great door swung silently open. Janet stood there, looking out at me.

I freely admit that I lost my nerve. I lost my poise, and with it all the gifts which enable a man to face an exceptional situation. For this woman showed no signs of any mental disturbance. I had never seen her look more beautiful. She wore a loose white gown, open at the throat and tied with a girdle at the waist. Her hair shone like burnished copper, her eyes were almost fiercely, yet softly, bright. She moved away from the door.

"Come in," she invited. "I have been expecting you."

She led the way to the terrace, and sank back on to the divan, where, apparently, she had been resting.

"Judas!" she murmured.

"You know, then?" I demanded, harshly.

"Everything—even the last little episode. What fools you policemen are!"

"He isn't safe yet," I muttered.

She laughed mockingly.

"I worry no more about him," she declared. "It is not an equal struggle. I worry only about myself."

"Alone—here!" I echoed, dimly conscious of the fact that I had been aware of it all the time.

She nodded.

"Harding, our butler-chauffeur and confederate, has taken the car—where, you can guess. Our gillie broke his leg this morning and has gone to hospital. I am not afraid of burglars, but I am terrified of mice, and the place is overrun with them. Also, I simply loathe the idea of having to get up and make my own coffee in the morning."

I rose to my feet.

"There are empty rooms at the Dormy House," I told her, "where you could obtain service and be made quite comfortable. I am going back now. Shall I bespeak one for you?"

"You would really have me there," she asked, curiously, "under the same roof as your august and respectable self?"

"Why not?"

"The wife of a famous criminal," she reminded me, "the wife of the man whom

you have betrayed! You and I share a secret, too, don't we? Would you vouch for my—respectability?"

I moved a step towards her. Her eyes were filled with a mingled light, a light of allurement and cruelty. Her lips were moist and quivering—was it with anger? A long, bare arm was withdrawn from behind her head. Then a voice fell upon the throbbing silence like a douche of cold water.

"Hands up—like lightning!"

I obeyed. I recognized the voice of the man in Harding's livery. It was Stanfield who had crept in upon us, unheard.

"A mixture of Lothario and Inspector Bucket!" he mocked. "Any prayers to say?"

"If you are going to shoot, let's have it over quickly," I answered.

The woman slipped from the divan and stood between us.

"Don't be absurd," she said to the newcomer. "We couldn't afford to part with Sir Norman. Life would be too dull without him. Put him on parole. He is perfectly trustworthy."

Stanfield lowered his pistol.

"You are right," he admitted. "Take your choice, Greyes—twelve hours' silence or Eternity."

"I will be silent for twelve hours," I promised.

He pointed to the door.

"I cannot have the last few hours I may ever spend with my wife disturbed," he said. "Kindly leave us."

I went without a backward glance. I opened and closed the front door and walked down the straight avenue. In the woods beyond, the owls were hooting. Bats flew through the twilight before me, and a quarter of the yellow moon showed behind the hills. I realized all these things dimly. There was a mist before my eyes, a cloud befogging my brain. For those few moments, Stanfield's escape, the steadiness of his automatic pointed directly at my heart, were vague memories only. I was angry and humiliated. I was filled with a man's hatred of his own weakness.

Rimington was sitting in the porch smoking when I got back. He moved his head towards the Lodge. It was obvious from his dejection that he, too, had heard from McCall.

"What do you think about taking a look round there?" he suggested.

I think that, if anything, I went beyond the obligations of my parole.

"Quite useless," I replied, tersely. "Let's have a game of billiards and try to forget the damned business."

(Next month: "The Honour of Monsieur Lulard.")



A Corner in Worms

by

WILLIAM CAINE and H. M. BATEMAN

MY old friend Wienershnizel—I should say Wynne, for that is how he prefers nowadays to see his name spelt—is the proprietor of one of the oldest-established and most reputable bucket-shops in Cophall Avenue. There is no shrewder man of business in the City. Never once has Wynne been in jail. I can't tell you how often they have tried to put him there, but he has done them every time. I tell you, he is clever. But it is not with Wynne as a man of business that I am concerned.

He has another side. You will never guess what it is, so I may as well tell you. He is a sportsman to the core of his being. Yes, this astute, rapacious adventurer of the Stock Markets is a sea angler of the most earnest description. Not a Sunday passes from January to December without witnessing the arrival of my dear old Wynne, loaded with his rods, his paternosters, and his bait-cans, upon the point of Brighton, Deal, or some other pier. He is as indefatigable as he is regular; always the first angler to arrive, he is ever the last to depart. You would hardly know Wynne at these times. He is no longer the keen man of business, with an eye open singly to the main chance; he is the sportsman, with a soul aflame for the capture and destruction of dabs, gurnards, and starfish. Business affairs, though in their way splendid enough, are, after all, sordid when compared with the things (whatever they may be) which occupy the thoughts of the sea angler.

That the thoughts of Wynne are not sordid when he is fishing is pretty conclu-

sively proved by the fact that he never catches anything at all except, now and then, the girders of a pier or somebody else's baits. Never yet has he landed a fish. He is either the most unlucky or most incompetent sea angler in Great Britain; that is clear. But what I say is, a man who can go on fishing year after year, winter and summer, rain or shine, storm or calm, freezing or boiling, with never a fin to show for it, cannot—I say he cannot—be actuated by motives of gain. Such a man can be nothing but a sportsman of the very purest ray. It is obvious.

I hope you won't think that I reflect upon his sportsmanship when I tell you that Wynne has nearly all his life cherished the ambition to obtain a prize in an angling tournament. That doesn't dim his lustre for you, I believe. It should, on the contrary, brighten it. If it were a mere suitcase or tantalus that he was after, it might dim him, I admit. But to think that would be to wrong Wynne grievously. He has all the suit-cases and tantalus he can possibly require. Prizes to a man like Wynne are symbols merely. They are glory in material form. It has been glory—reputation—that Wynne has been after all these years.

He wants to be pointed out in Lothbury as the man who, for example, came out top of thirty thousand at Bexhill, or the man who broke all the records for Pegwell Bay, or the man who landed the biggest known codling at Broadstairs in August, 1914. That's all he wants. Anyone else may have the barometers and the brandy-flasks.

A Corner in Worms

I repeat, the man is a sportsman through and through.

Now listen to this and then tell me if you think there is anything sordid or material about Wynne—Wynne the angler, I mean, of course.

A few months ago the championships of Goodwin's Bay were about to be held, and Wynne (who belongs to every sea-angling club in South-Eastern England) had entered his name as usual and for every event. Some weeks before the date that had been fixed he had what is at present called a brain-storm. He had just made a hundred and twenty thousand pounds, he and several associates having engineered a highly successful corner in calico. His thoughts were naturally attuned to the engineering of corners. And so, while he was furbishing up his tackle one evening for the coming contest at Goodwin's Bay, he suddenly slapped his knee and cried: "Eureka!" He didn't know what Eureka means; he only knew that it is the proper exclamation with which to hail the birth of a bright idea.

And what was his bright idea?

Nothing less than to go down to Goodwin's Bay, just before the meeting, and corner lug and rag.

What, pray, is lug? What may rag be?

Lug, my poor friend, is an obscene and hairy worm, about as long as your foot, which lurks in the sand and is dug up and dragged out in hundreds by the longshoremen and sold to sea anglers for bait. Rag is another outrage of the same kind. It

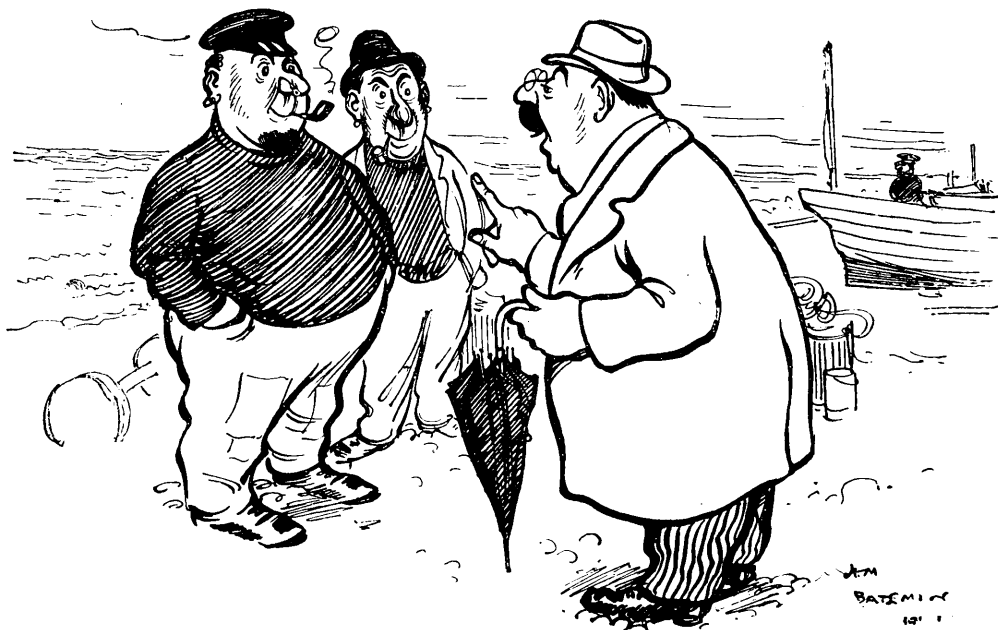
differs from lug only in the degree of its obscenity. Lug and rag are odious-looking creatures, but the fishes love them, and the sea anglers swear by them, beyond all other baits. In fact, without a large supply of lug and rag no sea angler will approach the ocean with any kind of confidence. To be without lug or rag is, to the sea angler, almost what to be without cartridges is to the gunner, or to be without beer is to the yachtsman.

Do you grasp the significance of Wynne's project now? I hope so. You see—don't you?—that if he could secure all the available supplies of lug and rag for the day of the championships, he would be in an almost unassailable position. No one else would have a chance against him.

I maintain, therefore, that for a brain-storm Wynne's brain-storm was something like a brain-storm.

He did this thing. He turned over all the bucket-selling to his partner, went down to Goodwin's Bay three clear days before the date of the competition, and got into touch with the entire bait-digging population of the place. When, on the eve of the contest, he rested from his labours, he had contracts in his pocket covering the entire local harvest of lug and rag for the succeeding twenty-four hours. This, I may tell you, cost him a good deal in earnest money; but what were trouble and money to Wynne when his reputation as a sportsman was concerned? Nothing. Nothing whatever.

You are to know that lug and rag can



"He got into touch with the bait-digging population."



"They begged for worms at any price. In vain."

only be delved out of the sands when the tide is out. You are also to know that the competition was timed to last from 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., when there would be water under the whole length of the pier, and, consequently, over those sands where dwell the worms aforesaid. Of all this Wynne was well aware; indeed, his whole scheme depended on it. He was quite certain of his ground, because these tidal arrangements are not accidental. The officials of Trinity House decide them in consultation with the editor of Whitaker's Almanack and the secretary of the British Sea Anglers' Association. Oh! Wynne knew exactly what he was doing.

Day dawned upon the backs of a hundred and fifty longshoremen howling out the lug and rag from their holes. When the tide flowed and interrupted their labours the number of the worms which were held at Wynne's sole disposal staggers belief and imagination.

Wynne, furnished with a large bag of coin, stood at the foot of the pier; one by one the longshoremen brought him their treasure and poured it out of buckets into the bait-cans with which Wynne had surrounded himself. At last the final lug was delivered up, the ultimate rag exchanged for copper.

Wynne, owner of every sand-worm in Goodwin's Bay, stood, master of the situation, to await the arrival of the sea anglers. Their train was due in at 10.12.

As for the longshoremen, having nothing more to do at the pier, these persons betook themselves to the drinking-houses of Goodwin's Bay.

The 10.12 arrived, the sea anglers precipitated themselves out of the station and ran furiously to the pier, feeling in their pockets for money wherewith to purchase bait. They made no doubt, the unsuspecting wretches, that they would, as always upon this great day of the Goodwin's Bay year, be greeted with the lusty cry, from a hundred and fifty longshore throats, of 'Fine lug, gentlemen; good rag, gentlemen. Six a penny. Good lug. Fine rag. Thirteen fer tuppence.'

To their stupefaction there was not a single worm-merchant in sight. Only Wynne, the centre of bait-cans, stood by the turnstiles, hellishly smiling.

The sea anglers halted in a body, questioning with large eyes the meaning of this sinister spectacle. Then suddenly they realized what had happened (for sea anglers have brains, I may tell you), and at once they were again in motion, charging down upon Wynne with shouts of "How much the lug? What price the rag?"

Wynne waved them away and held up his hand for silence. "No price the lug," he said. "The rag is not for sale."

A scream of anguish arose. Poor devils! they knew Wynne's City reputation and they understood that they were up against it. They wasted no time in supplication, but began instantly to bid against one another for the bait.

"I'll give you sixpence a dozen," they shouted. "I'll give a shilling. Two shillings. Half a crown. Five bob."

Now this is where the proof of Wynne's perfect sportsmanship appears. He had

A Corner in Worms

these men at his mercy. They were crazy for the lug and the rag without which their angling must be a mockery. They were losing their heads all round him, offering shillings for penn'orths, bidding crowns for what had cost him but a copper or two. Yet he held to his purpose. He kept his vision. He stuck to his worms.

After that I imagine that you won't be inclined to think that there was very much sordidness about Wynne—I mean always Wynne the angler.

Presently the sea anglers understood that they were losing their time with Wynne. They began to scatter in search of longshoremen. The longshoremen were already beginning to straggle, refreshed, out of those places into which they had lately vanished. The sea anglers prostrated themselves before

promptings of his mercantile instincts. He bade them be silent. He gave up gold for glory. Well, I say that was a fine thing, finely done. That's all. I only say that.

The pity is that Wynne should have got nothing out of it. He deserved a better fortune. The fact remains that, for all his worms, he never caught a thing all day but a pair of old trousers. Awful old trousers they were, obviously discarded by a longshoreman, and a longshoreman, as is well known, has to be practically arrestable before he discards his trousers.

Yes, that's all that Wynne fished out of the sea, and with only a pair of trousers to show he could qualify for none of the prizes. Whereas (for no other sea angler, naturally, caught so much as a button) if he had managed to secure even a pale-green crab he



"Wynne deserved a better fortune."

those longshoremen and begged for worms at any price. In vain.

Worms in Goodwin's Bay were "off" until the tide should recede. And by that time the competition would have been fought out. Well, I don't want to linger over the sorrows of these poor men, and I don't want unduly to prolong this history. I was, after all, only concerned to show you how sportsmanship can ennoble a man, how it can purge him of all desire for material gain. I suppose Wynne could have made as much as two pounds ten, or perhaps even three pounds profit, if he had listened to the

would have won every prize there was—for the greatest number of fishes, greatest aggregate weight, greatest average, heaviest single fish, and fish in best condition, as well as all the booby prizes for the smallest number, smallest aggregate weight, smallest average, lightest fish, shortest fish, and worst-conditioned fish. But it was not to be.

However, he has the consolation that he acted like a true sportsman. Of that Wynne is not to be robbed. And he is able, at any rate, to be pointed out in Threadneedle Street as the man who cornered worms.

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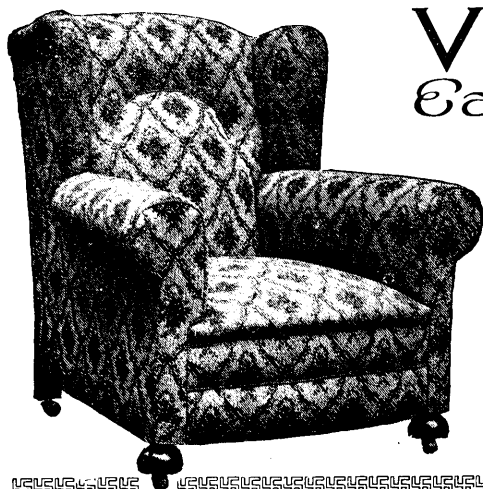
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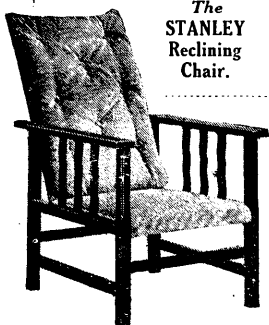
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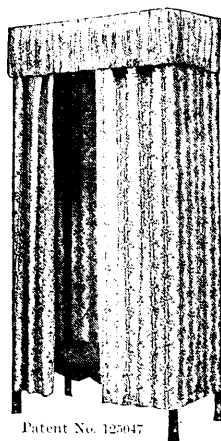


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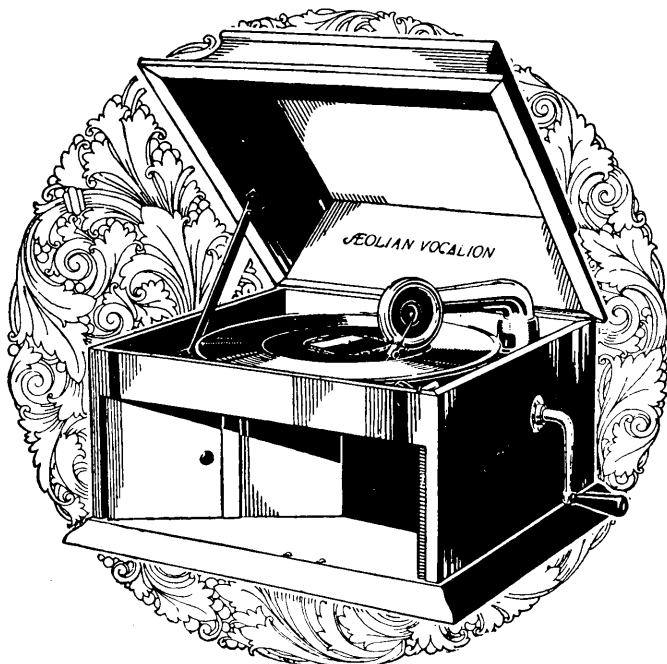
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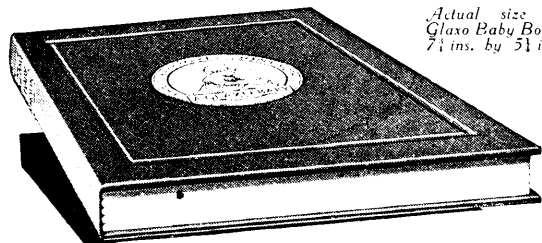
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Yet everywhere women throw away one of their greatest beauties. They spend hours trying to improve their features, which are unalterable, but take no heed of their hair, which needs perpetual attention to keep it at its best.

Dyeing the hair is inartistic and ugly; the wise woman knows that nature has provided her with the exact shade that goes with her complexion.

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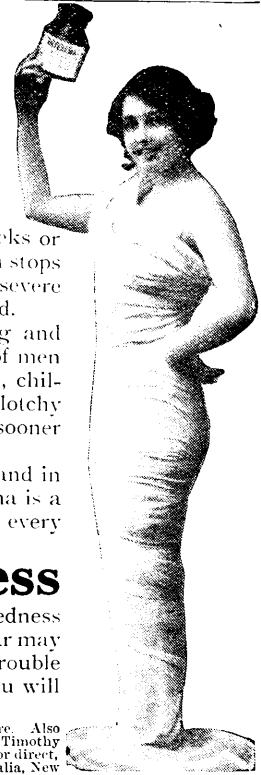
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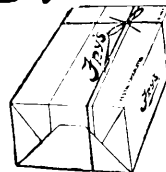
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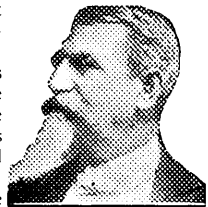
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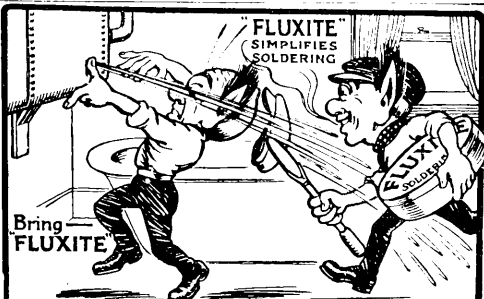
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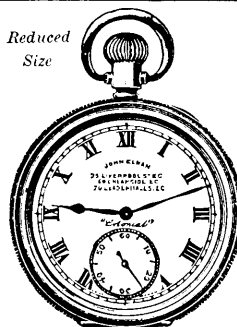
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