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POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

OTHER WORKS BY E. V. LUCAS

ESSAYS

SAUNTERER'S REWARDS
ENGLISH LEAVES
FRENCH LEAVES
LEMON VERBENA
VISIBILITY GOOD
TRAVELLER'S LUCK
TURNING THINGS OVER
A ROVER I WOULD BE
A FRODED ISLE
EVENTS AND EMBROIDERIES
ZIGZAGS IN FRANCE
ENCOUNTERS AND DIVERSIONS
LUCK or THE YEAR
GIVING AND RECEIVING
LOITERER'S HARVEST
CLOUD AND SILVER
ONE DAY AND ANOTHER
FIRESIDE AND SUNSHINE
CHARACTER AND COMEDY
OLD LAMPS FOR NEW
URBANITIES
SPECIALLY SELECTED
AT THE SIGN OF THE DOVE
'THE MORE I SEE OF MEN . . .'
IF DOGS COULD WRITE
OUT OF A CLEAR SKY
' . . . AND SUCH SMALL DIER
THE DAY OF THE DOG

ANTHOLOGIES

THE JOY OF LIFE
THE OPEN ROAD
THE FRIENDLY TOWN
HER INFINITE VARIETY
GOOD COMPANY
THE GENTLEST ART
THE SECOND POST
THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FIVE DAYS
AND ONE MORE.

BIOGRAPHIES AND ART CRITICISM

READING, WRITING AND REMEMBERING
THE LIFE OF CHARLES LAMB
THE LIFE AND WORK of E. A. ABBEY
THE COLVINS AND THEIR FRIENDS

STORIES

THE BARBER'S CLOCK
DOWN THE SKY
WINDFALL'S EVE
ADVISORY BEN
GENEVRA'S MONEY
ROSE AND ROSE
VERENA IN THE MIDST
THE VERMILION BOX
LANDMARKS
LISTENER'S LURE
MR. INGLESIDE
LONDON LAVENDER
OVER BEMERTON'S
THE SLOWCOACH
ANNE'S TERRIBLE GOOD NATURE

VERSE

'MR. PUNCH'S' COUNTY SONGS.
THE PEKINESE NATIONAL ANTHEM
NO-NOSE AT THE SHOW
PLAYTIME & COMPANY

TRAVEL

A WANDERER IN PARIS
A WANDERER IN VENICE
A WANDERER IN HOLLAND
A WANDERER IN FLORENCE
A WANDERER IN ROME
A WANDERER IN LONDON
E. V. LUCAS'S LONDON
LONDON REVISITED
HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS IN SUSSEX
ROVING EAST AND ROVING WEST
INTRODUCING LONDON
INTRODUCING PARIS

EDITIONS

THE POCKET EDITION OF THE WORKS OF
CHARLES LAMB: I. MISCELLANEOUS
PROSE; II. ELIA; III. CHILDREN'S
BOOKS; IV. POEMS AND PLAYS; V.
AND VI. LITERS
MASTERFUL WILHELMINE

JOHN CONSTABLE, THE PAINTER
A WANDERER AMONG PICTURES
THE HAMBLETON MEN
VERMEER THE MAGICAL

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

ELICITED BY
E. V. LUCAS

' Let others do the work.'

BEAU BRUMMEIX

WITH 12 ILLUSTRATIONS



METHUEN & CO. LTD.
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PREFATORY NOTE

THIS book consists of extracts from the letters which I have been receiving since 1903, with the more personal passages left out. There would be a richer selection had not a fire intervened. The arrangement is chronological so far as a laxity about dating letters has allowed ; and indeed the importance of supplying dates should, I am convinced, be taught in schools, although, since every day the materials for a book of this kind will, as the telephone grows more popular, become more scarce, perhaps it hardly matters. In this connection I confess to dying very hard, and here reiterate an old determination to be more rung against than ringing.

I am indebted to the writers of the letters, whether dated or not, for permission to print them.

I am grateful to the Proprietors of *Punch* for leave to reproduce two pictures from that paper.

E. V. L.

September, 1933

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POTTS, R. A.	YOUNG, G. WINTHROP

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

VILLA DI MARIA
ISOLA DI CAPRI
ITALY, 2nd March, 1903

JOSEPH
CONRAD

I've been in correspondence with Barrie about an actress—a friend—who wanted an introduction to him. He has been very good about it. I should like however to know his mind about something much more personal—that is about a one-act play of mine. I sent it to him last November on his own demand. Now I would like to know what he thinks of it ; but I don't want to give him the grind of writing his opinion. As you see him pretty often you could perhaps ask him what may be his opinion—that is, if the thing is worth any sort of opinion. Very likely it is not. But it would be something to know even that for certain. Mainly I would be glad to know if that first essay shows any vestige of scenic sense which would be worth cultivating. If you were just simply to mention when opportunity offers—'Anything in Conrad's play?' or words to that effect, you could tell me whether he grinned or grunted or said something. A word so obtained would be enough ; whereas if I wrote to him it would take up his time unnecessarily and perhaps he would try to gild the pill for me or do something in the way of kindness. You understand me? You know me well enough also

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

**JOSEPH
CONRAD**
(cont.)

to know I've no susceptibilities that can be hurt.
And I am quite ready to take his verdict as final.

*The play was, I think, One Day More, adapted by
Conrad from his short story 'To-morrow' in Typhoon.
The Stage Society performed it on June 25, 1905, and it was
well received. But Conrad was not a dramatist.*

PARNASSUS CALLING

THIS FROM MY LITTLE HOUSE - H. BELLOC
IN CHEYNE WALK

[1904]

O, Lucas, *why* do you not come and see me ?
You fence yourself with silence, hoping thus
As does the foolish ostrich of the desert
By shutting sense to turn the world away.
Of those blue buses which from Kensington
Run down the Earl's Court Road, th' alternate
ones

Come to within two minutes of this house :
Those marked ' King's Road '—for those marked
' Redcliffe Arms'

Stop short, turn baffled, face the north, recoil
Long ere the goal be won. The fare is 2d.
You ask for *Milmarfs St.*, a little street,
Quite short, and close to where the buses stop.
You go down this, and when you reach the river
Mine is the house upon the *left* hand side :
A little, aged, cracked, neglected house,
And painted white in front; but Home to me.
(Here follow lines upon the English Home.)
So, Lucas, come.

Lucas, forswear ambition.

By that sin Angels fell, and how can you
That have not wings, nor night-gown nor blue eyes
Nor flaxen hair, nor anything at all
That appertains to angels, hope to win by it ?
It is Ambition nails you to your house,
It is Ambition makes you take the bus
And visit London daily and neglect
The sacred duty of amusing me.
Lucas, when Brutus had Pneumonia
Caesar would call and sit beside his bed
And pat his hands and ask him how he did :

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

H. BELLOC Did this in Caesar seem ambition ?
(*cont.*) Yet Caesar was an honourable man :
And are you more than Caesar, that did hold
Vast Fate and all the orb an Atlas bears,
His heritage of arms—that is until
On March the 15th, B.G. 44,
Close at the base of Pompey's statua,
Spouting thick Julian blood, while all the while
The senators were spouting rhetoric,
Great Caesar fell.

(An interval for lunch.)

Now that I have eaten a pheasant, drunk a bottle of Burgundy and put away a cigar I can write in prose—but there is no doubt that in periods of weakness the unrhymed heroic pentameter is the easier medium.

Answer this.

104 CHEYNE WALK
CHELSEA
Jan. 5, 1905

I send this line or two to prove to you my improved condition. Yesterday I wrote some very good prose and to-day I have already dictated four letters.

My lung mends with some rapidity, and in about ten days I am to be sent off South where it is to mend entirely. I make no doubt that under the pretence of some kind of work you are again taking a holiday in Paris, being now bitten and attracted by what is unquestionably the chief city of the world. But I do not see how you can take any pleasure, or how it can be other than a bewildering and an ignominy to you, unless you

PARIS THE INEXHAUSTIBLE

have read the first seven chapters of that book of mine which I wrote to pay my first quarter's rent and which yet contains so much learning. It, of course, suffers from not having more maps—an accident due to the parsimony of the publisher. But I do assure you that a man is only half a man who treads the sacred soil of Europe without feeling the solidity of the two thousand years beneath him.

H. BELLOC
[cont.]

Get yourself once interested in the continuous history of this town and I think it will never leave you. I who am by nature restless can spend \ an hour, and sometimes more, quite still in some one corner of Paris and remembering all that has happened within one yard or two of where I am. For instance, drinking beer at the cafe on the sth-western corner of the Place St. Jacques I am where the Normans took the castel-lurn which defended the city ; and I am where the first Protestant placard was stuck up attacking the sacrament ; and I am where Henry V, after that long slow ride from the north kissing the relics at every yard as he went, turned to the left to get to the Royal Palace and so on for ever. These things give me great joy.

The book referred to was Paris, Jitst issued in 1900 Bellows published works in this year of our Lord, 1933 fillthirty columns of the British are still many, I hope, to come.

A week later he wrote :

I 2.1.05

Fear not that the energy which has hitherto driven this machine will outrun itself buzz spend spark race or do any other of those technical things which show that power is running to

H. BELLOC waste. Believe me there is a good fly-wheel,
{cont.} heavy in the rim, well greased in the bearings,
admirably balanced in its weight.

I have a beard, like Marcus Aurelius, but no
such baker's face above it, thank God.

31 Jany. 1905

BURNAND

I'll suggest a subject : a House Picnic Party, i.e. a ' Surprise Party ' a PAmricainc. It is not much in fashion *now* but it was so about 2 years ago ; and some persons thinking a little eccentricity is ' The Thing ' may still keep it up. Everybody brings something eatable or drinkable, without previous consultation, and all agree to take *some one by surprise* and sup or dine as case may be. The letters might be *trying* to arrange—trying to suggest what *others* should bring—and finally all writing to say *why they didn't come*.

*Sir Francis Cowley Burnand was the Editor of Punch from 1880 until 1906. Burnand was succeeded by Owen Seaman, who retired in 1932, making way for K. V. AV/æ, the caustic * Evoe\ This suggestion was for a series that I was contributing called ' Life's Little Difficulties \ I find in a letter from Anstey Guthrie this comment on Burnand's retirement:*

8 Feb., 1906

T. ANSTLY
(iUT'HRIh

I needn't tell you that I am much disturbed by the news about F. O. B. I do not yet know who will be the new Editor. I hope (). S. but, whoever succeeds, I think F. C. B.'s tact and geniality at the Table will be sorely missed.

AUSTIN
DOBSON

10.1.1905

A propos of *The Wedding*, a relative of **the**
* Miss T's informs me that their name was
Thomas. And the song that Randal Norris sang
was Garrick's *Heart of Oak*, tune by Dr. Boyes.
It is in Hullah's *Song Book*, 1866, page 78. I hope
this is not too late to be of some use ; but I
only found it out a short time since. . . .

*The reference is to two of Lamb's essays: to 'The
Wedding', and to 'A Death-bed', where Randal Norris,
an old friend of the Lamb family, is called N. R.*

3 LITTLE CLOISTERS
WESTMINSTER
II Jan., '05**BEECHING**

I did not write at once to thank you for yr. kind pains because I was writing against time a lecture to be delivered at——a ridiculous place. (Shakespeare, you will remember, wrote some of his sonnets against Time, but he did not read them at——.) My journey and all connected with it was ridiculous. I stipulated for my expenses, wh. have not been paid me. Then after waiting $3/4$ of an hour at N'hampton I was nearly left behind, because the train started from a different platform from the one I was told, Seeing a train in motion, I waved my umbrella at it, and to my surprise it stopped—a ridiculous situation again, and still more ridiculous at Northampton than anywhere else—the home of Bradlaugh, who did not believe in that old story of Joshua stopping the sun under the old covenant. Well, under the new covenant I stopped the train, and so got to my lecture, having first lunched at the house of a brother of a friend of mine, who I found had married his housemaid—a ridiculous thing, and worthy of——, for no housemaid can be as good as all that. I think it asinine of my good Ernest to be leaving me for the sake of marrying the cook, but a cook is better than a housemaid. . . .

I hope Paris did you good. Paris reminds me of Helen [his daughter], who has *not yet* taken mumps, but we expect them every day. The rest are convalescent. My other reason for not writing before was that you were in an hotel—a dehumanizing place — and my correspondence

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

H. C. BEECHING {cont.) requires the most humane construction put upon it.

Henry Charles Beeching wrote the most amusing letters of any that I habitually received ; but I can find only four or five. A Harge number must have gone accidentally into the flames, When I first knew him he was Rector of fatten' don. In 1902 he was made a Canon of Westminster, and in ign Dean of Norwich. He died in igig, aged sixty.

His letters give an idea of his nimble glancing wit and the humorous angle from which he viewed life. With no little pride and assertiveness he mingled a remarkable gift of self observation and misgiving. He was curiously combative, always engaged in strife or argument with a theologian, a publisher, a critic, a neighbour, a landlord, or a parishioner; but always ready to record the progress of the battle without undue emphasis on his own Tightness. A slight stammer helped these narrations, which were often irresistible.

*One of his most doughty adversaries was Sir George Greenwood, M.P., their bone of contention being Shakespeare's sonnets. I remember the pleasure with which Beeching greeted Greenwood's reply to Sidney Lee and himself, in which these quotations were employed: ' / thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word' and * The bubble reputation at the Canon's mouth ',*

Beeching" s most popular work was the atumymom Pages from a Private Diary, which ran through Cornhill in 1896-7 and delighted all its readers ; but his own favourite was his anthology, A Paradise of English Poetry, 1893, dedicated to three Balliol friends, A. C. Bradley, J. W. Mackail and J. B. Bowyer Nichols.

[1905] MAURICE
HEWLETT

You talk of Venice ! I beg you not to do it. It will excite you too much. Go, rather, to the Greek islands or to Capri—and look at beautiful girls. If you go to Venice you will write a book. Books are rot. . . . I went up to London for the Fund meeting and to read a one-act play to G. Alexander. He didn't like it—which is a very good thing really, although it did not sound so at first flush.

I think Wells is doing a fine thing with his *Kipps*—best of all his works so far. He gets deeper and more remote from his creatures as he goes on. Pray Heaven he leaves the other world alone and sticks to this one. . . .

Several letters to me from Hewlett are put in the collection of his correspondence which Laurence Binyon edited in 1926, but I have since then found two or three others.

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

ROBERT
ROSS

CARFAX & Co. LTD.
24 BURY STREET
ST. JAMES'S, S.W.
Aug. 16th, 1905

I have just returned from my holiday. Switzerland is entirely peopled with Americans whose conversation exactly resembles Anstey's *Voces Populi*. I heard one lady express objection to calling a mountain (Pilatus) after a character in the Gospel ! and another one denouncing her husband for taking her to a Passion Play at Selzach which Cook's had assured her would be rendered in English ! The world is still delightful.

The major part of this letter deals, as was usual with its writer, with troubles connected with his duties as literary executor to Oscar Wilde. He also records that a French critic has declared that De Profundis is a sham, concocted by Ross himself; which would be peculiarly strange news to me, because it was I who was asked by Ross to prepare the printed version from Wilde¹'s very disorderly draft. The title was mine and, rightly or wrongly, I left out a great deal.

30 Sept., '05 *H. C.
BEECHING*

Since we came home a week yesterday, I have been going to and fro, and (let us hope) increasing knowledge ; but six of the bound volumes of Lee's great dictionary, full of the weightiest articles, having fallen on my little toe—(and I can't increase knowledge at that extremity)—I am put to my slipper, and have time to remember my friends and my sins. Did I tell you we scoured the Cotswolds in search of such an Eden—only a little one—a Zoar-Edcn—and found what we wanted in the village of Church Westcote (\vh. one's clerical friends of the neighbourhood indecently refer to as Cassock Vest)—and lo the landlord will only let it on a yearly tenancy, like our old Eden at Taynton—and we shall probably be asked, as we were there, to turn out as soon as we are comfortable. So I hesitate. Meantime, two old ladies, each living alone in a several house at Burford, each above ninety years of earthly age, are thinking of moving on to the Paradise above ; but they are neither in hurry to start and cannot promise me their houses by any definite date. So we have taken no steps. () happy those whose frogholes ' are their own—then neither the rapacious landlord can fleece nor the would-be agriculturist eject ; but they sit all day eating nuts and writing Lives of C Lamb ; which the *Times* newspaper buys five hundred at a time -to persuade an amazed public that their library is better than Smith or Mudie's.

Now resolve me a question.

¹ My house was called Frogholc.

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

H C
BEECHING
(cont.)

Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the
fire

Help waste a sullen day, that may be won
From the hard season gaining ?

I suppose you will soon be moving citywards, till sunshine re-inspire the frozen earth ; then will be the time. Can we not fix some regular festival, that shall be as immovable as Median and Persian law, and subject only to bronchial catarrh—and thus see something of each other before we go that long journey ? A small space of time in the electric carriage separates High Street from St. James's Park. One goes much farther and fares much worse. Why not consecrate the 1st or 2nd or 3rd or 4th Monday in each month to friendship ? Think of it. Sundays are with me *dies non*.

I am at the end of my proofs (1) Ainger, (2) Sermons, (3) Lectures. When I had finished correcting my lectures (3) Murray asked for a *synopsis*. Conceive a poor preacher going through his poor lectures, and analysing them ! It served him right. The sermons (2) contain a portrait of the homilist in the act of saying to his *cara sposa* :—' And are you a *little* better this morning, my dear ? ' So says my sister.

GT. BARRINGTON
BJRFORD, OXON.

28 Dec, '05

Great Barrington is a little place not so big as Little Barrington. I suppose it got its greatness from the great house here, wh. stands in a deer park, and has everything handsome about it. It comes into history rather disagreeably as the scene—at least the church was—of an act of

desecration, by some of the young blades at the House, for which excommunication was imposed ; I believe, the last instance on record. It was the death of the old Squire there that drove us away from the Cotswolds, as the heir wanted to let the farm and our house was wanted for the tenant. He is still abroad, letting the place to carnal millionaires to pay the death duties. How one pities these poor aristocrats! The house we are in has lately received a name, but I forget and ignore it. It's small but comfortable, and furnished with practicable furniture, removed hither from a real house. The library is extensive, but •theological, and we bring our own books or our friends send theirs.

H.C.
BEECHING
(cont)

I am looking around, enjoying the weather, and wondering what to lecture on at the Royal Institution. They put my subject down as blank Shakespeare, because the topic I suggested, ' S's religion ', had been anticipated by Churton Collins. They said politely—but I suspect wrongly—that Coleridge, when he lectured there, had the same vague subject.

I don't think this letter must go on. I am tired with walking—and fat with the last Turkey leg of Christmas. But I am still human enough to wish you all a clean bill of health and a happier new year. When we all are at home again I want you to meet my poet. Since I wrote he has taken a wife, and before you meet he will probably have a large family. These poets are so impulsive.

I remember meeting Compton Mackenzie (the poet referred to) and his beautiful wife at the Beechings house in Little Cloisters. Since those days he has forsaken poetry for prose, as novel readers know to their great content.

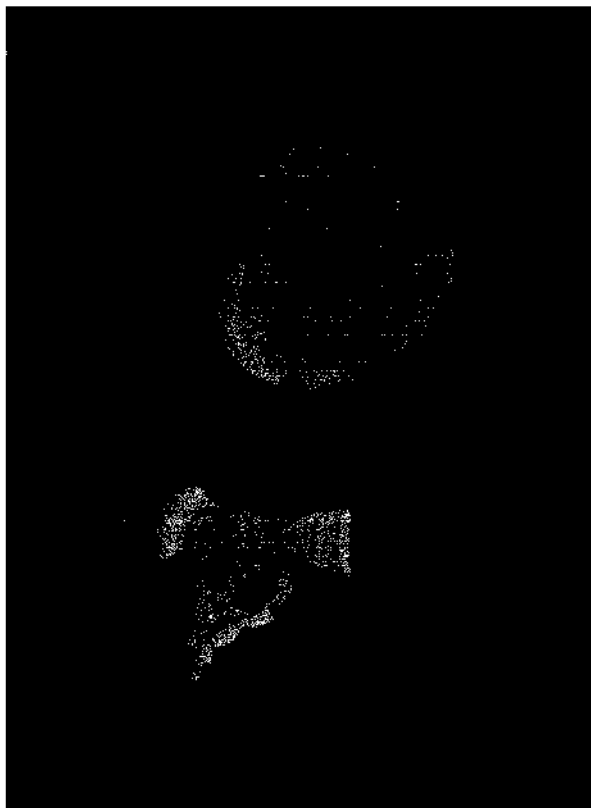
JOHN
GALS'
WORTHY

BOLT HEAD HOTEL
Nr. SALCOMBE
DEVON
Dec. 30, '05

After reading your 'Holland' I take pen to wish you a happy New Year, & to pass a few words on the land of dykes. We ended our travels in Holland and saw most of the pictures you speak of. I fall in with you completely in the main especially over 'Elizabeth Bas', Peter Hooch & Matthew Maris. Does it not strike you that the latter has achieved 'quality' beyond every other painter alive or dead? I know that word is baffling, but there is no other word, and it can't be described but only felt. He combines absolute *solidity* with gossamer, or essence of pearl. The Elizabeth Bas is the most wonderful *portrait* I've ever seen.

I'm sorry—for all its cleverness I don't like the 'Anatomy': it strikes me as altogether too posed; and I do like 'The Bull' in spite of its obvious lack of said quality—there's no nonsense about it. I looked carefully to see whether you employed the same word of the Dutch that we did—'Tusky'; perhaps you don't catch it at this distance. They are a perpetual refutation of homogeneity in the English, a perpetual reminder that half of our blood at least is eminently not *plat deutsch*; and I think *they* are the most homogeneous of nations that I know. After being out of England eight months it was the quaintest sort of out-Englishing of England to wake up in the Vicux Doelen at the Hague.

I can't think how we missed the Girl's Head of Vermccr, but alas we did. The only thing to be



From the Portrait by Rembrandt in the Rijks Museum in Amsterdam

THE THREE MARISES

said against Holland is incidentally the best of *JOHN* tributes to its painters: the pictures are more *WORTHY* real and intense than the country. You can say *(cont.)* that of Italy too, but of no other countries and their painters that I know. Though Constable makes one waver a bit over a certain district of England.

Well good luck to you and many more books.

The 'Elizabeth Bas' is Rembrandt's portrait of the wife of the Dutch Admiral. It hangs in the Ryks Museum in Amsterdam, and I reproduce it here because it is interesting to have Galsworthys favourite portrait under our eyes ; but of course between 1905 and 1933, when, to the world's loss, he died, he may have changed his mind. The 'Anatomy' is Rembrandt's great group at the Maurilshuis, where Paul Potter's 'Bull' also hangs, 'the 'Head of a Young Girl' by Jan Vermeer of Delft, is there too. Matthew Maris is a modern : one of three brothers, all artists—James, or Jacob, who painted landscape in the Constable tradition; William, who painted cows; and Matthew, who painted dreams. His lovely ' Butterflies ' may be found at the Tate.

H. C.
BEECHING

4 LITTLE CLOISTERS
WESTMINSTER
[1906]

We are deep in your lure¹—and we ernploy subterfuges to occupy the other with less attractive baits, that we may be left alone with it by the sea coal fire. (By the way our last housemaid bore that strange epithet for a surname. I always wanted to say to her like Dogberry—' God hath blessed you with a good name', but she would have given notice at once.)

I don't know what they do at the Sesame Club—perhaps live in oil jars and pour hot water on each other.

I am still writing that article on Shakespeare's religion. ' An excellent piece of work, madam lady, would 'twere done.' Curzon has just sent me somebody else's edition of the sonnets for a keepsake. I suppose the tactful thing to do would be to send him Kitchener's speeches scrumptiously bound.

I am reduced to penury by my moving. So far it has cost me £150 and so little to shew for it. I must preach a charity sermon for myself.

Beeching and Curzon were undergraduate poets at Balliol in the late seventies and early eighties.

¹ A story called *Listener's* Lure*.

LONDON RIOTERS

This seems to be the only letter I have preserved from the late R. A. Potts, a chemist in South Audley Street, a lover of the best literature and a very catholic scholar, who helped me in tracking many of Lamb's quotations. I remember him telling me that he re-read Paradise Lost every Christmas Day. In A Wanderer in London I had written of a little house in South Audley Street as one of the snuggest in London. ^{POTTS}

November 3, 1906

I am amused that you particularize a house in S. Audley St. as being so very enviable a dwelling. Inasmuch as I know pretty well every house in the street, I cannot share in your liking.

It was formerly a stationer's shop, kept by a man of the name of Carter. When his lease fell out, it was decreed by the Duke of Westminster's (the ground Landlord's) trustees that no shops were to be allowed in the street lower than South St., consequently the shop was deprived of its plate-glass windows and converted into a sitting or dining room of some sort, now tenanted by a medical man. The old private door was likewise improved by the substitution of a new one—the fascia (or faschia) still remains. I well recollect about 20 years (perhaps 25) ago when the riots from Trafalgar Square brought up a rowdy crew who looted Carter's shop and dispersed photograph albums, stationery cases ^k et hoc genus omne ' in the street. This was only one of their milder acts, for before they came to S.A. St. they had smashed the windows in Piccadilly of a wine and mineral water dealer at the corner of Half Moon St. and seeing Brandy, Gin and Whisky with Hunyadi Frederickshall Waters &c. in their ignorance taking each with each, I

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

R. A.
POTTS
{cont.)

leave you to imagine the effect. They likewise aimed at my red lamp with tins of corned beef! And sent a bullet through a plate glass window of large dimensions. Fortunately I was insured and accordingly was subjected to only slight annoyance.

I 'gin to be aweary of my life because I am so beset in ordinary reading by constant requests for the solution of sources of quotation from all sorts of Authors and from all sorts of people, which become irksome as memory (with advancing age) fails—and likewise time fails.

I must some day try and see you for some few minutes just for ' auld lang syne ⁵ when we were so frequently the slaves of pen and ink over dear C.L.

A PUNCH CARTOONIST

THE ATHENAEUM
PALL MALL, S.W.
4 Novr., 1906

LINLEY
SAM-
BOURNE

Many thanks for your letter which I was very glad to receive. I am rejoiced the Parody of Rembrandt's Painting strikes you at first sight as a good cartoon. I only wish I had had just one hour longer at it, or even half an hour would in its effect have had all the difference. But I was forced by the hands of the clock to let it go. It is very unfinished. I had difficulty in getting the Portraits and the Principal Figure of the Archbishop. I had to draw the Head from a full face as none were obtainable 3/4 face as in the Picture. It was imperative he should be in the same attitude to his audience as the Picture, so I had to chance it. Originally it was to have been Lord Lansdowne as the Expositor, but it was all altered at the dinner on Wednesday. Luckily you lent me the photo of the Picture before or I would not have got it all done in the 2 days I had.

All these little difficulties don't always occur to any one looking at a cartoon. Of course it's mainly due to the *time dit* disposal to produce it.

This letter is evidence of the care which that great draughtsman, Linley Sambourne, brought to his work. The cartoon in question, dated November 7, 1906, entitled 'Cutting it up' depicted the defunct Education Bill, upon whose corpse the Archbishop of Canterbury was lecturing, with various statesmen as his audience.

20.111.07

PAUL
CINQUE-
VALLI

. . . Allow me to thank you for the book you kindly sent me. As requested in your letter I at once opened pages 65-67 and it was indeed a surprise, at same time a pleasure to me, to know that my endeavours and appearance should create such favourable impressions, and must thank you for the high praise you have bestowed upon me.

I have read your book and find same highly interesting and instructive, and it shall always occupy a prominent place in my book-case, not for the kind praise which it contains in reference to myself, but as a highly interesting work. . . .

The only letter I ever received from a juggler of genius, and I am very proud of it.

Since the current edition of this book, A Wanderer in London, does not include the passage in question, I quote from it here :

It is impossible to believe that greater skill and precision than Cinquevalli's will ever be attained. For my part I cannot think that we shall ever see accomplishment so great; but even if we do, I feel certain that it will lack the alliance of such charm and distinction. It is not merely that the incomparable Paul can instantly subjugate and endow with life every article of furniture that he touches : that in a moment billiard-balls run over his back like mice, billiard-cues assume the blind obedience of sheep ; it is not only this, but take away his juggling genius and there would still remain a man of compelling, arresting charm, a man visibly and fascinatingly pre-eminent. 'Here is a power,'⁵ one says, immediately his lithe figure enters. 'Here is a power.' As it happens, he goes on to prove it by neutralizing with exquisite grace and lighthearted-

PAUL CINQUEVALLI

ness the life-work of Sir Isaac Newton ; but were he to do nothing at all—were he merely to stand there—one would be conscious of a notable personality none the less.

No one can enjoy watching a good conjuror more than* I do—I mean a conjuror who produces things from nothing, not a practitioner with machinery—but a good juggler is even more interesting. The conjuror's hands alone are beautiful, whereas every line and movement of the juggler's body has grace. This at least is so with Cinquevalli. As I watch him Blake's lines keep recurring to me :

' What immortal hand or eye
Gould frame thy fearful symmetry ? '

Not that Paul is a tiger, or that the words are wholly appropriate ; but the law of association is the only one which I never break, and I like to put some of its freakish manifestations on record, especially as fundamentally it always has reason.

I suppose there has never been such mastery over matter as Paul Cinquevalli's. Like the great man and humorous artist that he is, he has deliberately set himself the most difficult tasks. What, for example, is less tractable than a billiard-ball—a hard, round, polished elusive thing, full of independence and original sin, that scarcely affords foothold for a fly, and often refuses to obey even John Roberts on a level table ? But Ginquevalli will not only balance a billiard-ball on a cue, but will balance another ball on that, and will even run two together, one resting on the other, backwards and forwards between two parallel cues. This feat I am convinced is as much of a miracle as many of the things in which none of us believe. It is perfectly ridiculous, after seeing it performed by Cinquevalli, to come away with petty little doubts as to the unseen world. Everything has become possible.

With Paul one may use the word ' perfection '

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quite comfortably, without fear of molestation. **And** I know I am right by an infallible test. Anything perfect moves me in the way that anything pathetic ought to do ; and to watch Cinquevalli performing some of his feats is to be wrought upon to a curious and, perhaps, quite comic degree. ' You beauty, You beauty', I have caught myself saying again and again as he conquered one difficulty after another with his charming ease. In talking about Cinquevalli to an artist—and a very level-headed artist, too—after the performance, he said, before I had mentioned this peculiarity of mine, ' I must go and see him again. But the odd thing about Cinquevalli is that he always makes me cry.' Then I confessed too ; for after that I could have no shame in my emotion. Nor, indeed, had I before ; for, to quote Blake again :

' A tear is an intellectual thing.'

Paul Cinquevalli died in 1918. He has never had a successor with such charm and accomplishment combined, but Rastelli is not less a master of actual tricks of dexterity.

H. C. BEECHING

A7 H. c.
BEECHING

My symptoms of sanctity are returning with the Christmas season ; and I have become once more, erect and acquisitive. I attribute the change to an abdominal belt—the gift of my Cara Sposa. I am so proud of it that I feel inclined to wear nothing else, but I consider the feelings of my brethren in the Chapter. It is good of you to add to your unnecessary baggage by taking my letters to Paris. I hope the change of air will do them good. They sadly want esprit (wasn't it Handel who hung Greene's anthems out of the window, because they lacked *air* ?). There can be no hurry to have them back. Reginald can hardly wait to issue them for Lent reading—altho'—(no, I excuse you a reference to Mudie. You see how evil communications corrupt good manners).

I have just heard from one of my nephews that the *Bevis* I sent him had been already sent by him to another nephew, and that he had just begun it when he had to send it off, so that he was delighted to get to it again. (This is poorly expressed, but you take the meaning.) The book of which I have accumulated copies this holy season is *Notes by a Church Goer*. I put it down to Leonard Courtney, but *he* says no, it's Mr. W. H.

Which brings me down to the great topic. I shall not reply to Lee, because I don't want to quarrel. 'Truth is my friend, but Lee a greater.' Or else I shd. tell him that the world is waiting for his reply to my criticism of his case, not for Olympian platitudes. I wish however some third person wd. chime in with that remark.

The Letters formed an entertaining book called Provincial Letters, 1907. Reginald was the late Reginald Smith of Smith, Elder & Co. Bevis is a book for boys, by Richard Jefferies, which I had recently edited.

THE NYREN FAMILY

Dec. 5 [1907] **ANDREW
LANG**

Can you find out if Nyren really= Nairne ? There is a legend that that Jacobite family came south and begat Nyrens. In Ireland in the 18th century *a* (as in paper) was sounded *j*, or *l*, as in Cockney now, and Nairne was pronounced as a dissyllable.

Nairn
Nyren.

Dec. 13 [1907]

Lord Nairne indeed ! Not in /15 and /45 ! I shall let you know exactly about that. A *major* Nairne was not in /15. I need not tell you that Nairn or Nairne was never spelled with a *y*, Nyren is phonetic, from 18th century cockneyism in Scotland.

Nyren never wrote his book ; his tiny article proves that. Cowden Clarke wrote it from Nyren's talk.

Compare tale of R. Nyren's birth with the Lord Nairne yarn.

Dec. 14 [1907]

Lord William Murray (Atholl) married Lady Nairne—her title being 6 Heirs General, and he and his son were out in 1715. He died in 1724. His son, Lord Nairne, by Jacobite title, was also out in 1745. He died in France, 1770, leaving a son who had issue William, to whom the title was restored in 1824, thanks to Scott. Major Nairne was not at Preston in 1715. John Nyren may have been a Nairne of some branch of the family, but is not in the line of the title.

ANDREW
LANG
{cont.)

I got mixed thinking that no Nairne was out, probably confusing the first Lord Nairne, in exile with James I I , with the whole lot. Of course, in Jacobite circles, the son of the Master of Nairne, ob. 1770, was called Lord Nairne.

Feb. 22 [no year]

This is neat ! A Celtic scholar wants to hint that Cuchulainn's *hole* was only *goal*, but as the text says [£] got all his balls into the hole ' it is clear that he used many new balls in playing the One Hundred and Fifty, whereas in mere hockey he only needed to get the ball into the one hole to score a goal. Besides you see the evolution in ' Cat and Dog' and the old English mode of running out.

Andrew Lang's handwriting is so difficult to decipher that there may be errors in the foregoing notes, written to me as sponsor of an edition of John NyrerCsⁱ Cricketers of My Time' in a collection called The Hambledon Men, in which Lang had allowed me to print hisⁱ Ballade of Dead Cricketers'

STREATLEY
BERKS.*T. ANSTEY
GUTHRIE*

7 Oct., 1908

I Jiave had a very pleasant two months down here—chiefly cycling, but with an occasional afternoon's sculling on the river.

The country all round is lovely. I made an expedition to Uffington last week to see Alfred's White Horse cut on the down, and discovered it at last, after some weeks of trudging and leading a bicycle up and down the old Roman way. I also went over to see the remains of the Roman City at Silchester, near Reading. Not much of the city to be seen, as all the excavations are covered in—but the lines of the Forum and Basilica are still visible—and show that both were on a large scale. But the interesting thing is that the city walls are still standing—massive and 15 feet high, with the gaps and a few marble slabs where the gates once were, surrounding a site of about 100 acres.

I have been attending local sales of Live-stock and Farming implements, in the hope of getting a subject—I think I may find one when I've seen one more. I have a catalogue, which is very useful to make notes on, but I don't bid, for fear of getting a job lot of five hay-forks, or an oil-cake cutter, or a self-binder knocked down to me. I might have picked up a plough the other day for a couple of shillings ; and a dozen hurdles for the same amount—while there was an elevator that did not strike me as dear at £10. But I refrained.

I was much more tempted by a sheep-dog, but a farmer who bought the shepherd's hut bought

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T. ANSTEY *him, I think, for about sixteen shillings. But the*
GUTHRIE *dog was a most lovable beast, about two years*
{cont} *old. Chained to a wheel of the hut, and trying hard to induce a very superior fox-hound to play with him—only it wouldn't, and kept just beyond the length of the sheep-dog's chain, and pretended not to know he was there—like the snob it was.*

I had one proud moment before the Sale began. I was looking on while a man was stuffing six scandalized fowls into one very small hen-coop, and the man, being anxious to know whether he ought not to find room for a few more, looked to me for deductions, asking me (and I am anxious to explain that this was not satire, he really thought I was) if I wasn't Mr. So and So, the Auctioneer ! Which made me feel quite at home.

I shall be back by the end of the month—and shall be rather sorry when the time comes, though the mornings and evenings are getting very foggy now, and I know the country fairly well for twenty miles round. But it never looks quite the same as it did the time before.

From the author o/Vkv Versa.

NORMAN DOUGLAS

3*

ALDINGTON FOREHEAD

Nr. HYTHE, KENT

29 March, 1909

JOSEPH
CONRAD

I am addressing you again on the subject of my friend Norman Douglas, whose work you may remember you've judged favourably.

His book on the Sorrento Peninsula under the title *Syren-Land* is now ready. He is in London with it ; and he wishes to call on you in acknowledgment of the kind interest you took in placing his work.

He is an interesting personality to know, with wide experience and culture. I encouraged him to write—as I told you before—when we got acquainted in Capri. I would take it as a personal kindness if you would drop him a note telling him at what hour any day he may call on you. His MS. is jolly good—a distinguished and interesting piece of work.

Siren Land was published by Messrs. Dent in 1911, and a companion volume to it, *Old Calabria*, by Martin Seeker in 1915. Since then, Norman Douglas found a new public with his capricious novel *South Wind*, 1917.

T.. ANSTEY
GUTHRIE

5 Jan., 1911

Delina Delaney is indeed, in the author's own phrase, 'a work that defies the comments even of the educated \ I never read anything to approach it in unconscious absurdity. *Delina* has quite supplanted Hon. Mr. Justice Mookerjee in my affections.

And Lord Gifford is a thing of joy throughout. I don't know whether he is more precious when he 'dressed himself fully in London's proud] fashion, masking his slender extremities in velvet slippers with heels of stiff crimson morocco', or when 'large tear drops fell from his eyes and found shelter on his boot-tops \ And when in a state of maudlin intoxication—which he not infrequently is—he is quite irresistible.

Then the refined magnificence of Clapham Hall, with its 'bewitching furry curtains, dazzling glass, painted cushions, sneering statues, water-colours, only one or two of which were daintily done in oils, its oriental wares built in artistic piles on rocks of richly carved oak, 'oddly shaped gasalics' and ceilings that were 'sheets of fine large mirrors'—its view from four large windows of 'London's great town, high-roofed edifices of refuge, sacred churches, gaols, charitable institutions, and such like'—*could* anything more appropriate have been imagined for his 'jaded sanctum'?

I like Lady Mat tie Maynard too—and admire her taste in garters, though I am inclined to think that to have the word 'garter' worked in emeralds about the centre of each was a little superfluous. But I doubt if it was that con-

sideration that caused Lord Gilford to exclaim ' Ah, ha ! ' on p. 32.

T.AXSTEY
GUTHRIE
{cont.}

I'm not quite sure that I quite follow the method by which Lady Mattie continued to assume Madam-de-Maine's personality, even though she did succeed in ^A bribing a west-end physician ' to certify her death as suicide. But she was incendiary and rufianous enough for anything. And her quick changes from a hideous spinster with ⁴ long thin walloping legs' to a fascinating siren with glossy black locks are rather bewildering. Nor was I *quite* prepared for Lord Gifford's recognition of her by the fact that she had six toes on her right foot.

Combined with his familiarity with her garter, it seemed to present him in a less favourable light. But of course he may have been informed by that ⁴ raging highbred daughter of distinguished effeminacy ' , his Mother.

I looked forward eagerly to Delina's trial, and I wasn't disappointed, especially when ' through the same door came the members of the learned counsel', and ' lettered tools of graded love visited the benches '—and the Judge's summing up, with his eloquent allusion to Delina as ' possessed of a jealous amount of personal beauty and amiable charms chorused with a string of loveable traits ' was most impressive.

A minor character I like is * Mr. Darley ' whose father was ' a clever theologian and a healer of the brute tribe, what the vulgar term a HoofM.D.'

I ought to have been appalled by the description of poor old Jos. Danvers ' lying in a Pool of blood with the upper portion of his head stuck in ragged tufts against the walls '—but I'm afraid

T.ANSTEY
GUTHRIE
(cont.)

I laughed—and even now I don't quite know why the sentence contrives to be comic instead of horrible.

I wonder what kind of journalist 'a beggar editor of a penny birdie weekly' may be. . His circulation cannot be large, or he wouldn't have been so ready to pick up the rejected stub of Lord Gifford's 'deeply flavoured cigar'. I think he must have offended Mrs. Amanda Ros in some way. On the other hand, I observe she gives certain local tradesmen a very kindly notice.

I love Delina when she sits 'counting the faint snores that issued from Lord G's delicate nostrils and when she 'thought she saw her mother towering aloft, and flapping above her her snow-white wings \

But perhaps she is dearest when she tried her luck in London and 'vaguely conjectured that something surely would turn up for an orphan in such a great scat of business \

The book is full of unforgettable phrases—'ecstatic eclat', 'eyes tossing wildly \ 'ineffeminate flattery', 'heartless hearts' and so on.

I was immeasurably struck, too, by a description of a sunset—* golden plumes and arms of cloud 'that died in a death-pail! There is a grandeur about that image of which only Mrs. Ros *could* have been capable.

What a wonderful mind she must have! To have written 260 closely printed pages without a single character, incident or sentence that even remotely resembles possibility—to keep up an unfathoming flow of that deliriously inconsequent nonsense from start to finish with absolute sincerity—surely that is an accomplishment that means nothing short of genius! It is a national

reproach that so great a book should be known only to the poor. I should like to see it a Classic in large popular editions. T.ANSTKY
GUTHRIE
{cont.}

But I have a suspicion that there is quite a respectable 'maximum sect' of readers who would take it quite seriously, and think it uncommonly pathetic. The author might even run Marie Corelli herself rather hard.

I feel now that I shall know no rest till I have procured a copy of *Irene Iddesleigh*. . . .

Mrs. Amanda Mch'ittriek Rus has had many eulogists, but none more thorough and discriminating than the in iter of this letter. Irene Iddesleigh is the title of het utlur novel.

JOHN
GALS-
WORTHY

14 ADDISON ROAD, W.
July 26, 1911

Sign the enclosed if you can. It's to be published along with Protests from France and -Germany if they can be got. Signatories to start with are Alfred Russel Wallace, Hardy, Murray, Sir George Trevelyan, Wells, Elgar, Frampton, Sadleir, Mackail, Archer, Brunner, Victor Horsley, Oliver Lodge, Bishop of Lincoln, Dr. Clifford, Dr. Horton, Gen. Sir Alfred Turner, Conan Doyle. Barrie probably etc. etc. It's to be non-political, & evidence that thought generally doesn't welcome this development of War.

This was the time when Galsworthy, a humanitarian and reformer before he was a novelist, was working to get aeroplanes ruled out of warfare. Would that he had been successful!

A few weeks later came another note with this charming passage in it:

14 ADDISON ROAD, W.
Sep. 2, 1911

Lucky you, together with the swallows, who I believe change at Rimini on their way south.

SLIPS AT NORWICH

DEANERY
NORWICH

H. C.
BEECHING

18 June [1912]

Where in the world are you and when are you coming to see us? I have an idea to bring you here and get you to serve your old friend Crome. The Church where he lies buried is not watertight and we are trying to raise funds for repair. Now a lecture on Crome would make a pretty penny. I am not sure if it shd. be in a public hall, or at the Colmans', where there are Cromes and Cromes. What do you say? This wd. be in the autumn, when people begin to care for their souls. But do not delay till then coming to see us. We won't make you address a mothers' meeting—well as you would do it.

I read a paper on Crome, according to request, in Mr. Colmarfs drawing-room at Crown Point, near Norwich; but I fancy that I was not much heard. So far as I was concerned the event was, however, triumphant, for I had the pleasure of Beeching's company in his Deanery {where he would have been happier if he had not succeeded a wealthy bachelor cleric}, and I saw Mr. Colmarfs unrivalled collection of Cotmans.

Two unfortunate mistakes marred my lecture. I had been very carefully warned by Beeching that Mousehold Heath, the scene of Crome's greatest landscape, was pronounced Mussle Heath, and that the Colman family were insistent upon being called not Cole-man but Coil-man. Into both of the pitfalls I tumbled, and then, realizing the offence, was, for a while, more than normally inaudible,

THOMAS
SECCOMBE

STAFF COLLEGE
CAMBERLEY
3 Oct., 1912

I must say that I was not a little shocked at your complete omission of any reference to my military rank and status at this great centre of learning. Let me tell you, sir, in response to the licentious ribaldry which you are pleased to throw into the form of a sonnet, that I lecture here to audiences composed exclusively of colonels, majors and cadets, who are marched to the Hall of Study under the strictest form of discipline known, and that a smile on the face of a cadet subjects him to a penalty of seven days' restriction and stoppage of leave.

In my former capacity as a parasite of Parnassus I admit however that your lines are a gem of the first water. If I can find an officer who has heard of Wordsworth I shall communicate your results to him at mess to-morrow evening—carefully concealing the fact that the thing is a sonnet, which would scare him horribly. Merriman and Kipling are the only authors here. Your interview with Meredith was the real thing. I borrowed a big slice of it and it was cut out by the Biographer Royal. Will you accept herewith my swansong in the way of Introductions—at anyrate to Mrs. Gaskeli? Farewell, you merry irresponsible civilian. It affects me to think that you still remember one once as thoughtless as yourself.

Thomas Seccombe, one of the most enthusiastic of hook-men, always glowing from the discovery of a new genius, was now Professor of English at the Royal Military College at Sandhurst. The sonnet which I sent to him is printed

in Reading, Writing, and Remembering. *Seccombe wrote Introductions to all Mrs. Gaskell's novels.*

*Seccombe had been from 1891 to 1901 Sidney Ise's **right-hand** man on the Dictionary of National Biography, doing for him what Lee had done for Leslie Stephen, the first 'editor-in-chief. After he had finished with instilling a love or suspicion of literature in the minds of our youthful warriors, Seccombe became, in 1921 the Professor of English Literature at Queen's College, Ontario, returning home, in 1923, only to die.*

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

HILA IRE
BELLOC

December 13th, 1913

As to my favourite book as a boy, that is easily answered. It was Dasent's *Tales from the Norse*, the only book I could read without nausea, until I was eleven years old.

45 ROLAND GARDENS, S.W.
3 Feby., 1914

C. LOVAT
FRASER

About Ralph Hodgson's poems. I am most glad that you like them. I had feared, at an heretical moment, from your dispraise of ^k 'A Song', that they would not have appealed to you and am happy that that nymph 'Eve' has captured you. . . . In all his forty odd years I don't suppose that he has written forty poems. A poem from him is an event that only too rarely happens, as far as I am concerned. In the four years that I have known him your five fingers could count his poems.

He is my friend, but I can say well and truthfully and apart from all friendship, that his poetry has done a great deal to make my life the happy affair that it is. I hope this doesn't read melodramatically.

Claud Lovat Fraser, the artist and stage-designer, who was twenty-four at the time of this letter, died all too soon, in 1921, after a period of fighting in the War. Ralph Hodgson is, of course, the poet of 'The Song of Honour', 'Eve', and 'The Bull', all of which Lovat Fraser decorated. When last I heard of Hodgson, he was lecturing on English literature to the Japanese; and if he does not return, it may be because of the conflict between his devotion to his bull-dogs and the Quarantine laws. I hope that in the intervals of instruction he has found time to add a few more stanzas to his slender golden store.

Another letter from C. L. F. follows :

5 Feby., 1914

Here are a few poems by Oliver Davies. They shall speak for themselves. You shall have the

C. LOVAT
FRASER
(cont.)

'Song of Honour' with the 'Eve' — I am delighted at your appreciation of them and I know R. H. will be so, too. . . . Some time or other you might like to go through some of my old street literature. I have rather an armising collection of broadsides of the Catnach period and earlier.

Have you ever written a book on the *real* England? None of yer artful & crafty patch-work business but good cobby stocky jolly countryside? I'd illustrate it. Let me have Oliver Davies MSS. back. The Outdoor Song is the best.

Of Oliver Davies I know little, but this is the first stanza of his 'Outdoor Song' ;

O, hips and haws arc scarlet,
And all my time's my own,
So I will go to Yarlet
Or maybe into Stone.
For Autumn is the season
And golden is the morn,
And clearly shows the reason
That ever I was born.

MCGILL UNIVERSITY
Feb. 9, 1915

STEPHEN
LEACOCK

I hope that next time I am in London I may hunt you up on my own account (which, when it will be—to use a Latin form of speech—I do not know). I think that perhaps you are right about the greater freedom of satire allowed to writers on this side of the water from the editorial point of view : not however from the point of the public ; as far as they are concerned, you (that is *one*) may get ' away with it ' or one may not. You can never tell whether they will say in a lazily amused fashion, ' How very true \ ' How extremely entertaining ', or whether all of a sudden there will descend on you a dense flock of clergymen, temperance workers, women-rights-women, municipality purity people and all the whole battalion.

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ARNOLD
BENNETT

CoMARQUES
THORPE-LE-SOKEN
2nd Jany., /16

Thy letter was an agreeable event in my sombre and stern existence. When meet we? As to your 'brief flights', I like them also, and wish I could see them oftener. I regret to say that I wrote 272,000 words last year. Equal to the British casualties for six months. Shorter had the cheek to write and ask me for an autographed copy of one of my books the other day. I sent him *The Author's Craft*. He has not seen the joke.

This is the first of many letters from Arnold Bennett which is sufficiently impersonal to be quoted. He was a very conscientious correspondent\ often writing several pages where most people would have been irked by writing one, and never resenting requests for advice whether on literary or practical matters. Here, for example, are passages of criticism on the manuscript of a play which I never ought to have bothered him to read, but to which he applied himself as though he had no work of his own on hand.

22.11.18

Pardon my frankness. This is most distinctly an idea for a play. And you have put everything into it except the play. Bits of the play have got into it, in spite of you, here and there; but I think only by accident. It is not dramatic. I wouldn't mind that. What is worse is that I think you *mean* to be not dramatic. A lot of the dialogue is really first-class. Ditto jokes. The last scene between Kate and Herbert is masterly—in my opinion. But the basis of a play is the plot, and your plot is just the part of the work that you have scorned, You don't care a damn about

it. You regard it only as any old peg on which to hang your dialogue. In the first scene, e.g., nothing whatever happens. And indeed there is no drama till Scene m. and not much then. Some of the incidents sin by excessive improbability, and some of the dialogue is very stilted—as though you had forgotten who was writing the play. The atmosphere, original and amusing, of a play is there, and if the first stages of composition had been handled in an entirely different creative spirit, something immense could have been accomplished. I repeat : pardon my frankness. If you have any more ideas as good as this, and care to impart them, do impart them, and we will perpend thereupon. But I am definitely, finally, and forever up against your attitude towards plot. And so that's that. Come and dine with me. You prefer lunches. I prefer dinners. We have had a whole series of lunches. It is now my turn. I write this in bed waiting for my august bath.

ARNOLD
BENNETT
(cont.)

Just to show how two minds do not always beat as one, I quote from a letter from Anstey Guthrie on a similar request:

Oct. 25 T. ANSTEY
GUTHRIE

Are you writing another comedy ? If not I expect you will say that the reason is that you can't think of a plot. But, as I needn't tell you, humour in incident, character and development is much more important—especially nowadays—than plot.

EDMUND
GOSSE

March 25, 1916

Will you allow me to quote—with proper acknowledgment of course—a sentence from your diverting picture of life at 'The Pines', in my forthcoming biography of Swinburne? It is that about his personal appearance. I read between the lines—what a dreary visit! I have a difficulty in restraining my anger within the bounds of prudence when I think of* life at the Pines \

I should like some day to tell you the real history of that wretched place.

Gosse's Life of Swinburne appeared in 1917. The article 'At the Pines' is printed in full in Reading, Writing, and Remembering.

The following passage from a well-known American bookman and critic bears upon the same theme :

GILDER

30 Sept., 1932

You describe Swinburne's gait, or carriage, exactly as it appeared to me, about thirty years ago ; but I've a very strong feeling that it wasn't a pose but an infirmity, like locomotor ataxia, or something of the sort—a stiffness as if he had swallowed a ramrod or broom handle. Maybe he *had*. If he hadn't, Sir Herbert Barker, or some good osteopath, would have set him right in no time !

GODS IN THE FLESH

26 March, 1916 *F C*
CONSTABLE

Never see your Gods in the flesh,—especially when at home. I saw my God, Charles Dickens, once,—a nightmare : the blackest and most straight kind of evening coats; the whitest and most starched of white waistcoats; the most staring red of red roses; the *most* oiliest of smoothed hair, with the most aggressive of two projecting curls. Even the wrinkles on the face were suggestive of stage effect and the voice was the voice of an actor. That was *not* Dickens, Dickens lived even then in the unseen.

F. C. Constable, the author of an excellent comic novel called Aunt Judith's Island, is a retired Anglo-Indian official who has spent much of his leisure in writing letters to The Saturday Review.

P. D.
LUCAS

This was my last letter from my brother, Second Lieutenant Perceval Drewett Lucas, written in hospital after being wounded at Fricourt in July 1916 :

As everything is in the papers there is no harm telling you that I was between Fricourt and Mametz. I ' went over the top ' in the first line of my battalion as I indicated to you in my last letter, leaving at 7.27 a.m. and lying out in front between our shell-bursts and theirs. Ours stopped at 7.30 and we dashed on, but I was hit at about 8 by two machine-gun bullets from the flank which broke my thigh high up, going right through but missing blood vessels and nerves. So I sat where I was for nearly 8 hours till a doctor & stretcher-bearers came. I was fortunately in a sort of natural crater, so, though shells were bursting quite near all the time, I was under cover. The battalion swung past me very quickly, but there was a fair amount to watch.

Then an agonising journey of about two miles on a stretcher to the first dressing station. Then in ambulance wagon to another dressing station where I spent the night & went under chloroform.

Then two tedious days down the Somme in barges.

Now at a base Hospital where I shall stay till considered fit for England. The wounds don't tire me so much as the splint, which is hellish. And I have had no sleep for days & a lot of acute biliousness & dyspepsia. However I am getting on to the food again now, and all things considered am not feeling so bad. My nerves are a bit rocky but probably owing to lack of sleep. My eyes are funny & my mouth permanently

dry. I hoped to cross tonight but have just heard ^{P.D.}
it is not to be. Shall probably go somewhere in ^{IA¹ CAS}
London & will notify you on arrival. ^(eoHt)

*My brother died two or three days later\ on July 6\ aged
forty, and was buried in the War Cemetery at Abbeville.
The following intimation came from the Medical Officer :*

13.7.16

Your Brother was admitted with a compound
comminuted fracture of the left thigh and pelvis.
There appeared to be a fair chance of recovery
until gas gangrene set in. The leg was amputated
& everything possible done but he died about
six hours after the onset of the complication. It
will be some satisfaction to you to know that his
end was quite peaceful, as he gradually became
unconscious & died free from pain.

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

CECIL
SHARP

HOTEL ALGONQUIN,
NEW YORK, U.S.A.
Aug. 7, 1916

The terrible news reached me a couple of days ago. I cannot realize it. I was very, very fond of him. His bright boyish generous nature always appealed to me very insistently. And he was one of the very first men who saw what I was aiming at and to become one of my strongest supporters.

My only boy is at the Front and I am trying to prepare myself to receive bad news. It is awful to think of this terrible sacrifice of young lives—I do not say uselessly, because I believe it is necessary. But even so the price is a big one to pay.

I have been out here some months and so far as I can see will have to remain here until the War is over. My income in England has practically disappeared, so I am keeping my family going by the work I can get over here. At the present moment the vacation is on and I am spending my days in the North Carolina mountains collecting songs and ballads from the inhabitants. They look, talk and behave like English peasants except that they are a century or more behind. They sing beautifully and I have taken down some very interesting tunes and words. . . .

This letter refers to the death of my brother Perceval, The results of Cecil Sharp's researches in the Appalachian mountains were gathered into two or three publications. His zeal in capturing and perpetuating folk songs and dances was magnificent to watch. I accompanied him once into Oxfordshire, and once into Sussex, admiring the way in

which he coaxed very old men to quaver and taper yet again, while he recorded every note and movement. In honour of this zeal there now exists the great Cecil Sharp Memorial Hall, on the north side of Regent's Park, the headquarters of the English Folk-dance Society. He died in 1924.

SIDNEY
COLVIN

July 24, 1916

So you have been consoling yourself with Scott's Journal—one of the noblest, though, in the end, the nobly painfulest—of human, documents. What a style the old man's sheer greatness and sweetness of soul forces upon him in that passage where he first realizes his bankruptcy—in 1825. I suppose you know Lockhart's Life, in which personally I delight and which I never and nowhere find too long. You ask about the best two Waverleys : impossible to answer. I wonder which two Barrie will choose. For me there are six or seven best : *Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, *Rob Roy* (for all its utter carelessness of construction), *Heart of Midlothian* (in spite of the unfortunate epilogue), *Old Mortality*, *Fortunes of Nigel*, and *Redgauntlet*. Some have worse faults than the rest, but for genius and creative humanity I don't feel that there is a pin to choose between any of those seven.

The fighting grows direr every day. For the moment it looks as though the Somme lines might be our Verdun : but I suppose we shall stick it and smash through in the end. But the cost ! friends and friends' friends down every day : and those the best of the best : a hundred Boches not worth a little finger of any one of them.

This is the first letter of many from Sidney Colvin, the devoted friend of R.L. Stevenson, which deals with generalities. Both he and his wife lived the life of the War almost too poignantly.

This is part of the entry in Scott's Journal on the day, December 18, 1825, on which he heard of the disaster :

December 18th—Ballantyne called on me this morning. *Venit ilia suprema dies*. My extremity is

THE GREAT SIR WALTER

come. Cadell has received letters from London which all but positively announce the failure of Hurst and Robinson, so that follow, and I must go with poor James Ballantyne for company. I suppose it will involve my all. But if they leave me £500, I can still make it £1000 or £1200 a year. And if they take my salaries of £1300 and £300, they cannot but give me something out of them. . . . I think nobody can lose a penny—that is one comfort. Men will think pride has had a fall. Let them indulge their own pride in thinking that my fall makes them higher, or seems so at least. I have the satisfaction to recollect that my prosperity has been of advantage to many, and that some at least will forgive my transient wealth on account of the innocence of my intentions, and my real wish to do good to the poor. This news will make sad hearts at Darnick, and in the cottages of Abbotsford, which I do not nourish the least hope of preserving. . . . I was to have gone there on Saturday in joy and prosperity to receive my friends. My dogs will wait for me in vain. It is foolish— but the thoughts of parting from these dumb creatures have moved me more than any of the painful reflections I have put down. Poor things, I must get them kind masters ; there may be yet those who loving me may love my dog because it has been mine. I must end this, or I shall lose the tone of mind with which men should meet distress.

Sir James Barrie writes :

12 Sep., 1933 /s. M.
BARRIE

Among the Waverley novels, *Waverley* itself must be included as it opened the door to all the others. I think *Redgauntlet*, *The Antiquary* and *Guy Mannering* are my favourites (in that order), but I could pick another three (or more) into which I delve with a delight that never palls.

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

ELIZA-
BETH
ASQUITH
(now
PRINCESS
ANTOINE
BIBESCO)

[1916]

Raymond had all the qualities that make life worth living—both for yourself and other people. The least military of men, he refused to compromise between the War and his intelligence by doing staff work, or work of national importance, but preferred to fight and die as a soldier. And he always declared that his time in the regiment was the happiest of his life. Perhaps his death is the most splendid of a series of splendid achievements, and we mustn't grudge what he gave so gladly. But the pride can't keep out the misery.

Raymond Asquith, the late Lord Oxford's eldest son, was killed in the War on September 18, 1916. His step-sister's letter says nothing of the brilliance of his intellect and the privately issued jeux d'esprit by which he was known in literary circles.

In another letter from Elizabeth Asquith I find this characteristic sentence :

Feb. 26th, 1917

I never remember having felt more surprised in my life than when Lord Burnham swept into the room—all his exuberant pessimism fully mobilized.

ITALY AND GARIBALDI

April 6, 1917

SIR
G. O. TRE-
VELYAN

I venture to tell you how much my wife and I envy you for your having visited Italy at such a moment as this, and having seen our dear son in the middle of his strangely interesting work, and his brave and loyal comrades, men and women. Your account of that visit gave us vast gratification, and George feels most keenly the friendly character of what you said about him and his. I saw the hero of George's book, from very close—indeed within the space of a couple of yards—at the lowest moment of his life's fortunes : and at that terrible and depressing conjuncture—seven in the evening on Monday, November third, 1867—he was the most heroic, simple, kindly, quiet presence that I ever saw, or could imagine. And so I end by congratulating you on having seen Garibaldi's Italy on her feet, and intent on battle.

This letter from the biographer of Macaulay and Charles James Fox bears upon the account of a visit that Sir Robert Hudson asked me to pay, in 1916, to some of the Red Cross centres in the Italian War Zone ; afterwards to describe my impressions in a book. The book was published, as propaganda, in 1917, under the title Outposts of Mercy.

One of the principal hospitals was that controlled by George M. Trevelyan, now OM., and Mrs. Trevelyan, at Udine. 'The hero of George's book' was, of course, Garibaldi.

Sir George Otto Trevelyan died in 1928, aged ninety. In a letter written just afterwards, his son says :

My father had no wish to stay after my mother's death. But though I cannot wish him to have lingered, his going makes me 'feel chilly and grown old'. I owe him as much as any man ever owed another.

G. M. TRE-
VELYAN

**GEOFFREY
WINTHROP
YOUNG**

When making the Italian visit of which I have spoken I stayed at Gorizia with Mr. Geoffrey Winthrop Young, the Alpinist (so determined a climber that even after losing his leg, in igij, during his Ambulance Command, he has continued the pursuit), and we had some exciting-times. On one morning the windows of the room where we had been breakfasting were smashed by an Austrian shell a few moments after we had left; on another occasion our car, proceeding in the open from one Red Cross station to another, was beset by shells; while every crossing of the river bridge, screened, as were most of the roads, by a curtain of reeds, was a new peril. That was in December igi6. Writing to me in May 1917, he said :

I am still in the old house, writing in the next room to the shell-struck one : which latter is occupied by three fascinating puppies, in the boot-licking stage.

We expect events' shortly ⁵, and are screwed up to the last sparking-plug ! The shells continue to miss my skirmishing car, but it has held no agreeable company since the Cipranisce run (with the Major !).

Please attribute to the monotony this long screed. Outside there is only sun, and flower-stragglers and a new bird-song that I can't identify, like a blackbird singing its contralto notes under water.

Later, he found it to be the golden oriole, which, to my ear, always says, 'Cceur de Lion'

I find one more letter from Geoffrey Tounge, written in 1919:

This is really to tell you that on my birthday arrived, as you wished, a magnificent athlete of a son. With the muscles of a mountaineer, and a lot of brain room. I'm calling him Jocelin, because he is such a 'joyous young sportsman',

57 SIEGE BATTERY
FRANCE
[No year]

A WAR
CORRE-
SPONDENT

You would seem to be interested in the * Songs that the soldiers sing' as opposed to the songs that they are supposed to sing ; I therefore send you this which you may not have heard :

I like to stand on the fire-step all night,
I like to see the glare of the Verey light,
I like to hear the ' pinny ' of the rifle fire,
I like to hear the cheer when the Allemands
retire,
I like to hear the clang of the pick and the spade.
The trenches are ' tres bon '—
Look out, boys, here comes the gas.
Put your respirators on.

I haven't heard this personally for a long time but at the latter part of '15 and the early part of '16 it was very popular.

Then there is another sung to the Gitana dirge, Never mind " :

There are Germans over there. Never mind !
There are Germans over there. Never mind !
If they should drop a shell
We shall all be blown to hell:
There'll be Germans there as well, never mind !

The thing I like about the first example is the complete ' volte face ' effected in the last two lines. To get the full benefit of these things I consider a bathing party should be chosen when their clothing consists chiefly in a couple of identity discs.

OSCAR
VINEY

Somewhere in a book I had recorded a meeting with a man who seemed to me to dovetail his two occupations with the most perfect skill. In the months from September to April he opened oysters; in the months without an R in them he took pennies for chairs in Hyde Park.

Another stranger reader, Captain Oscar Viney, wrote as follows:

NORWOOD
WENDOVER ROAD
AYLESBURY
27th Dec, 1917

An incident yesterday reminded me so vividly of the man who did the chairs in the park when oysters were out of season that I think I must let you know of it. We have been skating here the last few days and on Sunday last we cycled to Hartwell lake a mile or two away as we heard that it was bearing. I was wondering as we went whether we should find the inevitable seedy man with a chair, gimlets and some rusty skates, but I thought the war would have 'combed him out', especially as we are not near to London.

But when we arrived, sure enough there he stood as usual quite alone (we were early) with his chair, a dirty face, long ragged coat and cold hands, aged perhaps 50. Thinking of your oyster man, I asked him what he did when there was no skating. * I helps the war on,' he replied. 'How do you help it on?' 'I'm an 'erbalist.' 'What do you mean?' 'I picks belladonna.'⁵

Isn't that delightful! His ordinary work is hunting for belladonna (deadly nightshade, isn't it?) and in winter he fills in with fixing skates.

MIXED OCCUPATIONS

According to his story belladonna came from ^{OSCAR} Germany and is now of course much in request. ^{VINEY}
He said he could earn as much as a £1 a day, ^(cont.)
though I doubt it.

**RUDYARD
KIPLING**

Kiplings poem ' The Islanders? just after the Boer War, appealing as it did for a more serious effort towards preparedness and condemning our frivolous worship of sport, contained the lines :

Idle—except for your boasting—and what is* your
boasting worth

If ye grudge a year of service to the lordliest life
on earth ?

From the very first the words ' the lordliest life on earth' were taken to refer to the Army ; and when the Great War came they were again much quoted with the same application. Having an idea that their author did not mean that, I asked him for a ruling ; and here is his reply :

Aug. 20
[No year]

But don't the lines following on ' the lordliest life on earth ' make it clear what that life was ? They run :

Ancient, effortless, ordered, cycle on cycle set—
Life so long untroubled that ye who inherit
forget

It was not made with the mountains, it is not
one with the deep.

Men, not Gods devised it. Men, not Gods,
must keep.

By that I meant to picture the ordinary English life that they were born to—not the life of a ' year of service ', which they grudged. As to the Territorials, the next war will be a civilian's affair. The People themselves will be attacked from overhead without warning and before Army or Fleet can mobilize. If we have not enough fighting planes up and out (it will be a question of hours) to beat off the enemy bombers, we shall be gassed and burned to quietude in a few days.

May 11, 1917 *STEPHEN
LEA COCK*

Oddly enough the Hambledon cricket stuff was more appropriate than you could guess. My mother's people (the Butters) came from there and their house, Bury Lodge (now owned by my cousin Captain Thomas Butler), overlooks the little hamlet. So that you may well imagine that, rotter as I am as a correspondent, I felt, when I received that book, a positive rush of ink to the head.

Possibly you could find time to write two words of forgiveness for my (apparent) rudeness. If you did it might lead to correspondence terminated only by death—and, even after that, printed and sold like that of Goethe to Carlyle.

The cricket stuff was a book called The Hambledon Men. In Reading, Writing, and Remembering / describe a visit to Hambledon in Stephen Leacock's company.

LEWIS
SYDNEY

17 BLENHEIM ROAD
ST. JOHN'S WOOD, N.W.
May 19, 1917

A pleasing little ceremony took place yesterday at the above address : my wife presented me with the Second Prize for ' Natural History ' ! the prize being another splendid boy. So I am now, mark you, the Master of the Buck-hounds (2) and we are going to call him ' Lord Dribblesdale '

Lewis Sydney was one of the most irresponsible of that band of benefactors gathered together by the late Harry Pelissier under the name of ' Follies ' One or two of the survivors, notably Fay Compton and Morris Harvey, are still to be seen on the stage ; but when the founder died, the spirit died too. As for Lewis Sydney, he laid down the sock and buskin to be director of printing-works, which may be more lucrative but does not remove so much gravity.

An earlier Master of the Buck-hounds, as everyone knows who has seen Sargent's magnificent portrait at the Tate, is Lord Ribblesdale.

FOREIGN OFFICE

[15.1x.17](#)**HUGH
WALPOLE**

I have watched your career for several years and, although I am a stranger to you physically, I am not, I am sure, unknown to you through my works. I on my side have appreciated the brave way in which you have struggled on, showing by your publication of book after book that you are resolved, by hook or by crook, that you are resolved to reach a worthy position on the ladder. I admire, I say, such ambition and am anxious to encourage it. It has been the fashion of late for those who wish to draw the attention of the public to themselves to dedicate their new works to me. I need not say that I deprecate such a practice. It savours somewhat of sycophancy. Nevertheless I must do what I can for my fellow-men and my nature has been from birth a generous one. Well, sir, having as I say watched your struggles with a sympathetic eye and feeling, as I do, that although nothing very worthy may yet have emanated from your pen, there are nevertheless signs of possible future mint, I grant you permission to join the ranks of your fellow workers and dedicate your next book to myself. The dedication might I suggest run as follows : ' To Hugh Walpole, who has touched the greatest, from a humble striver ' ? Simple and to the point. Amongst those who have already dedicated books to me this year are Mr. Douglas Sladen, Mr. Horatio Bottornley, the Vicar of Woking and the Chief of Sanitary Inspection at Balham (Our drains and how to flush them). Others to whom I am writing on this subject are Sir Gilbert Parker and Mr. Compton Mackenzie.

HUGH
WALPOLE
(cont.)

The result of this letter was that I took a dozen or so new books, very mixed, from the Review Table at Punch, and prepared a dedication for each, which, when printed and pasted in, looked exactly as though it was the author's own work. These I sent to Hugh, and he still has them.,

In another note I find him saying :

I've been reading the Browning letters and feel inclined to end up to everyone * Your own dearest Ba'. WhyBa?

Jan. 15th, 1918

W. MAC-
NEILE
DIXON

. . . Sir W. Raleigh (hell-bird) proposes to consume food and drink at the Bishops' Mortuary on the evening of Feb. 12, in or about the hour of seven o'clock. He desires me to convey to you the suggestion that you might resort thither for the same vulgar purpose on the same day and at the same hour. I propose to ask myself to the company in order to study the table manners of modern men of letters.

From the Regius Professor of English Language and Literature in the University of Glasgow.

If there are no letters from Sir Walter Raleigh to me in this book it is because they are in the edition of his correspondence published in 1926.

CAPTAIN
HARRY
GRAHAM

H.Q., 40 Div., B.E.F.

April 22, '18

I had some unpleasantly exciting adventures, and never removed my clothes or boots for about 3 weeks ! As for washing or even getting any decent sleep, such luxuries were unknown. I spent one most unpleasant night at a place called Gomiecourt. I had been dispatched thither with a message, & on approaching the spot found it being heavily shelled. So I left my horses in a safe place half a mile away and crept up (with my heart alternatively in my mouth and my boots) until I managed to reach a deep cellar under the only remaining building in the village, where I found an assembly of Brigadiers.

After delivering my message I proposed to return, not much heartened by the news brought in by a runner to the effect that the Huns had been seen *between* Gomiecourt & my final destination. My groom meanwhile (his excuse was that he was the father of 5 children) had removed our two horses to a place of greater security a mile away, and I spent over an hour searching for him—and being shelled intermittently the while.

On my way home I had to visit another Brigadier whom I found defending a railway embankment—information having arrived that the Hun had broken through near by—and I stayed with him, with a Highland Colonel & a rapidly collected body of Sappers & stragglers, and we lay on the railway lines in the moonlight awaiting the advent of Fritz. The Highlander was an ass & would insist upon talking about dying in the last ditch—a thing I particularly dislike doing—

and indeed the scene was pure melodrama. We were never attacked after all, and I got home at dawn quite safely !

CAPTAIN
HARRY
GRAHAM
(cont.)

My other tiresome experience was on the morning of the last show (April 9th) when I was sent to find out what had happened to our dear neighbours the Portuguese. I had to pass through 3 villages all of which were being heavily shelled & gassed—one house tumbled down partially at my feet as I passed—and when I reached the Goose's H.Q. I found that 2 shells had just fallen through the roof, and, with the exception of the old General and 3 *British* liaison officers, the rest of his forces had deemed discretion the better part of valour ! !

When I started to return home I found that all my roads were cut off by fallen houses, & had to go miles & miles round, eventually reaching H.Q. to find my General & staff mourning my obvious demise !

The worst thing, to my mind, about these last two shows—& especially the last—has been the awful casualties among harmless civilians. One can stand the sight of battlefields covered with our own or Boche dead—but when it comes to villages with their streets full of mutilated women and children & old people—it is too much.

Captain Graham, who is widely known as a dramatist and as the author of Ruthless Rhymes for Heartless Homes, The World We Laugh In, and many other humorous books, joined the Coldstream Guards in 1895 and served in South Africa. When the Great War broke out, he rejoined the Coldstream Guards and saw much service.

LORD GREY

April 13, 1918

Adrian Graves died very gallantly holding a hill for the whole day against the Germans with his machine guns. He was wounded and remained on duty, wounded again and unable to walk, and finally shot in the head and killed as his sergeant was carrying him away. To live long enough to show what fine qualities he had, and to die splendidly and instantaneously, having lived without reproach, is to make as great a success of life as is possible. But for those who loved him, and especially for his father and mother, it is very hard. And when one reflects that this is only one out of thousands and thousands, the cumulative suffering of the War is awful to think of.

Adrian Graves was the second son of C. L. Graves, my colleague for many years, first on the Globe and then on Punch, and Lord Grey's nephew.

In another letter, about a book I had sent him, the title and authorship of which I cannot recall, Lord Grey says :

He evidently wrote the book to please himself and it is therefore more pleasant to read than many books that are written to please the reader. I am delighted with sentences that begin 'The learned, who are very troublesome now', and the description of the American Civil War as a forcible attempt on the part of the North to obtain restitution of conjugal rights from the South, is not to be forgotten.

20th July, '18

JAMES

. . . The other night Ramsay and I were talking to a small new boy of his, a grandson of old Earle, lately Dean of Exeter, aged 91. We asked him about his grandfather and he said he stayed with him sometimes, * But he's so depressing : he's always saying he's going to die, but I say to him, " O rot! Why not enjoy life while you've got it? "

I think this may please you as it did us. . . .

Dr. M. R. James, now O.M., once conferred splendour on my uneducated person by a reference in a Latin masque performed at Eton, to which I listened with awe. An amusing experience of A. B. Ramsays will be found later in this book.

JOHN
GALS-
WORTHY

MANATON
August 9, 1918

I always have the queer feeling that 'The First and the Last' was hardly written by me—yet it was; for that reason I don't like it as well as the others.

I dreamed last night that I was packed and on the point of starting from the world, when cords darted at me from all parts of the buildings and began in Poe fashion to tighten round me. Do you think with Lytton Strachey that this shows I have a Victorian conscience? Or only that I ate too much of Mrs. Endacott's butter-milk bread?

Galsworthys short story, The First and the Last, is in the volume entitled Five Tales, 1918.

October, 1918 *MARY
EDWARDS*

. . . Knowing your love of Sussex, and my own
love likewise, I send you the enclosed verses,
which I wrote above Birling Gap last Autumn . . .:

SUSSEX

A windmill dark against the cloud :
A haystack in a guarded hollow :
A far bell where the slow sheep follow :
A long farm, and a field fresh-ploughed—
This is kind earth's fairest gown,
Sussex of the windy down !

The green breast of hills asleep,
Cheek and throat and breathing lips,
Whispering to the distant ships :
Steep white cliffs, and waves that creep
Lovingly about the shore—
This is Sussex, England's core !

Down and headland, hill and farm,
Golden field and field of brown,
England's heart and England's crown,
Deep her passion as her calm :
This is kind earth's fairest gown—
Sussex of the windy down !

MAURICE
BARING

Here follow some of Maurice Barings typewritten letters from the Front in 1918. The Horatian ode was inspired by the little volume of translations edited by A. B. Ramsay, to which Rudyard Kipling, C. R. L. Fletcher and C. L. Graves contributed. Ricky was an admirable, guileless and guiltless alien barber whom the Home Office looked upon as a menace and incarcerated at the Alexandra Palace.

July to November
1918

Dear E., if you want to keep well,
You shouldn't drink Hock or Moselle,
It gives you a foretaste of Hell;
If you want to keep frisky,
Drink brandy (not whisky),
And Claret and Cliquot as well.

* * *

Ramsay was at Eton and at Cambridge with me. I like him very much. The ritual used to be to put him under a chair once on every occasion no matter what the circumstances were. The Provost of King's I also knew. A delightful person.

Isn't Eton lovely? I haven't seen it since my great friends the Cornishes left the Cloisters and I feel I could scarcely bear to go there, but as a matter of fact there is so much new life pouring through everything and so much beauty that sadness is overcome.

Do you follow sales in London? If you do, I should be curious to know who buys the Shelley relics or rather the 'Adonais' from the library of the late P. M. Pittar to be sold at Sotheby's on

June 25.' It is an 'Adonais' with a frontispiece designed by E. E. Williams.

**MAURICE
BARING**
{cottt}

I am being interrupted so I can't go on but I should like to bid seven and sixpence for the 'Adonais.'

* * *

HORACE. BOOK I, ODE V

What blue-eyed boy is wooing you
Amongst the roses and the dew
Of some delicious grot,
Pyrrha? For whom (Oh! Golden snare!)
So carelessly you twist your hair
In any simple knot?

Alas! how often will he cry
That fair is foul and gods can lie,
And stare with wild dismay,
When the black storm-clouds blot the skies,
And blind his inexperienced eyes
With bitter spray.

He thinks you golden to the core,
And fancy-free for evermore,
(Poor boy!) for ever true!
How lightly comes, how lightly goes
The breeze of love, he little knows!
And how I pity you

Who yet nothing know of that sea
Save that she glitters! As for me
Neptune can testify
My votive tablet decks his shrine,
My clothes still dripping with the brine:
Once bitten is twice shy!

* * *

MAURICE
BARING
(cont.)

JUNE 12, 1918

To-day, dear Edward, you are fifty-one,¹
And I am still no less than forty-four,
And we should still be glad to see the sun,.
Nor crave to open Plato's dismal door.

The sun is shining brightly, it is true,
The world seems very beautiful and glad,
But though the fields are green, and skies are blue,
The heart (perchance because of that) is sad.

Old friends have gone, the oldest and the best;
New friends are made no sooner than they go ;
And yesterday they told me ' John's gone West'
Like *elire res* . . . the Carian . . . long ago.

In spite of all, we've got to carry on,
And close the ranks up, as they grow more thin.
Therefore I drink your health in wine that's ' bon'
And murmur to myself: ' We've got to win.'

For June is smiling on your natal day,
And scarlet poppies crowd the waving wheat,
And waggons piled with loads of fragrant hay
Come creaking down the sun-baked village
street.

God bless you ! Edward, on this day of June,
And on the other fifteen score and five,
In spite of all, a birthday is a boon,
Thank God in any case that you're alive !

* * *

In stanza 3 of the birthday ode I wrote to

¹ I was really just 50.

MAURICE BARING

you in such a tearing hurry on your birthday to
catch the post the two last lines should run either

MAURICE
BARING
{cont.}

' And some one has just told me Tom's gone
west,

'Like *ἐπὶ τῆς* , . . the Carian . . . long ago.'

or:

' And Tom is missing, Harry has gone west,
So some one told me you know.'

The other line further on should run :

' And poppies riot in the ripening wheat.'

The point being that the wheat is green.

How are you, my child? Oh write me a letter
from home, as the song used to say.

I like your letters because although all too
brief they take me a long time to read owing to
the cryptic nature of the Calligraphy.

Here is a variant in the first stanza of your
Genthiliacon :

Fifty to-day ! Alas ! the years they flee,
Oh Edward, Edward, I am forty-four,
Well bless the sun on this your—
No matter let us toast your jubilee.

There ! And I promise to send you no more
afterthoughts. Leave ? Who speaks of leave ?
That is indeed a far-off prospect. Do you like
carp ? Not to eat but to feed. There are a lot
in the pond here. One is called William Rufus
and another is called Rufus Isaaks. You want
news from the back ? General de Castelnau had

MAURICE
BARING
(cont.)

luncheon with us yesterday. He is a charming old man. I have read a book called 'The Mystery of the Downs' which I recommend to you vehemently. I have got a new ribbon on this machine but I don't like it at all. It is too dark and it makes a mess.

* * *

LINES WRITTEN TO SIR WILLIAM ORPEN
ON His RECENT HONOUR

I am delighted, Sir, to see
That you are a K.O.B.E.
No titles can increase the fame
Of your already glorious name.
But we are grateful that the King
Has had them do the proper thing.
Arise, Sir William, brush in hand,
And go and paint the Holy land.
I think it hardly need be said
That you are not to paint it red.

Alas that one should be stigmatized with these horrible initials ! But there is nothing to be done. And it is better than getting a good decoration which one doesn't deserve.

* * *

I am boiling with rage about Ricky. I hope that directly you return from your well-earned holiday you will leave no stone unturned to get Ricky set free. It is a wicked cowardly shame. This alien-hunting is like public vice, Gladiators shows etc. the gloating of the hysterical crowd over the weak. It makes me sick. But I trust in your powers. Leave Cave no peace until Ricky is set free. Pester him annoy him telegraph to

him ring him up call upon him send him post-
cards send him visitors worry him tease him vex
him importune him never leave him alone let
him have no respite no peace no pause until
Ricky is free to shave again.

Poor Ricky, O my prophetic soul my Ricky.

* * *

I am very sorry about Ricky. This hounding
of the inoffensive sickens me. The Professor
namely Sir Walter Raleigh is coming out here in
two days' time. I wish you were coming too. I
hope to be in England some time in September
but I believe we shall only stay a day.

I have come to the conclusion that I don't
really like Gaspers to smoke. This is sad because
there is nothing else to smoke. French cigarettes
are semi-extinct and Russian cigarettes are held
up by the revolutions and counter revolutions.

I hear from Francis Edwards every now and
then. And sometimes the speaking Bear at the
Zoo sends me a postcard. Otherwise I have little
communication with the outside world.

* * *

I have been up the line from one end to the
other. From Dunkerque to the Rhine I have
been up the line. The weather was fine though
the mist was a bother. I have been up the line
from one end to the other.

In the city of Rheims there wasn't a jackdaw.
Many shells fell it seems in the city of Rheims.
In my wildest of dreams never I such a sack saw.
In the city of Rheims there wasn't a jackdaw.

With the rumour of war come the rumours of
peace. Our ears are all sore with the rumour
of war. Has the King of Lahore married Gaby

MAURICE
BARING
{cont.}

MAURICE
BARING
(cont.)

Deslys? With the rumour of war come the rumours of peace.

I think that's enough so Fil now say goodbye. Of this drivelling stuff I think that's enough. I am not in a huff but my type's running dry. I think that's enough so I'll now say

GOODBYE.

* * *

Thank you so very much for your very kind letter. You have such a light touch. Thank you so very much. A painter and Dutch could scarcely do better. Thank you so very much for your very kind letter.

I am sorry indeed that our Ricky's in gaol. That fate so has decreed I am sorry indeed. It makes my heart bleed. Oh that damned *Daily Mail* I am sorry indeed that our Ricky's in gaol.

* * *

Then the end of the War hove in sight.

HEADQUARTERS
INDEPENDENT FORCE
R.A.F., B.E.F., FRANCE
7 October, 1918

I am as you see back to the army again.

I was sorry not to see you again but it wasn't possible. I don't count my recent visit to London as having been a visit at all. I met Arnold Bennett at luncheon. I told him all about Ricky and he was most indignant. I told him to get the facts from you.

It was very silly of Ricky not to go to his Committee. Poles are quarrelsome people.

One has to deal carefully with them. But Ricky pining in prison haunts me.

MAURICE
BARING
(cord.)

Arnold Bennett is the sort of person who may get engines to work. Especially as he is in close touch with Beavers.

It is cold. Yesterday and the day before I was in Paris. The news arrived of the German peace offer late after dinner to the hotel Ritz as a rumour said by a writer in the *Gaulois* to be a fact. XS Sommerset the King's messenger told me. I said * Where's Belloc ? ' (Belloc was in Paris and we expected him.) Belloc arrived and we all went upstairs and we all sat together in the General's room (General Trenchard) with General Henderson too who had dined with us.

Sommerset again tried to place his news. ' The Germans,' he began. ' Do you know the story of the man in New York who went to a seance ? ' said Belloc. The story was told and we all laughed a great deal. Then Sommerset began again. ' The Germans are said to——'

' I must tell you \ said General Trenchard,' the story Godfrey Paine told at the Air Board. . . . ' The story was told. We all laughed.

' The Germans', again began Sommerset, ' are said positively to——'

' That reminds me', said General Henderson, ' of the story of the young pilot who met a lady in widow's weeds. . . . '

Then Sommerset gave it up.

The next day the General said ' Why on earth didn't you tell me last night ? '

IRVING

10 SUDBURY HILL

HARROW

Oct. II [1918]

I like the lines immensely. They are not only beautiful but true—give a very real idea of the reason for the affection with which he was regarded in his lifetime, and is still, by many.

In 1918 a bust of Henry Irving by Alfred Toft was sold by auction at a theatrical banquet for the benefit of charity. In order to introduce the sale I wrote the lines which Irving's son Harry commends. They were spoken by Stanley Logan, and the auctioneer was the late Arthur Collins of Drury Lane. I quote some of the lines :

Oh for the old Lyceum's gracious ways—
 The rich and stately movement of those plays,
 Their mellow harmonies for ear and eye,
 Their triumphs of serene urbanity !
 No parsimony there ! On all he wrought
 He spent the maximum of care, of thought,
 Giving his best by habit and with zest.
 Having in point of fact no second best.
 Of all offences, meanness first he branded,
 So spread his generous gold-leaf double-handed,
 Lavish not only on his sumptuous Art,
 But, privately, to ease how many a heart:
 Arithmetic herself could scarce compose
 The sum of Irving's kindness 'neath the rose.

But hush ! the curtain rises. There he stands :
 • That noble face again, those slim white hands.
 No matter who might be in box or stall,
 This was the dominator of them all:
 Touching whatever part he'd represent
 With something finer than the author meant:
 A something rare, and spacious, and his own,
 Which, influencing all within his zone,
 From floor to ceiling radiating through,
 Compelled the audience to be finer too.

Harry Irving, who died in 1849, aged only forty-nine, was ^{H.B.} **IRVING** ^{cont.} one of the most enchanting of men. He had the sardonic humour of his father, with an impishness of his own added, and far more learning. His early studies at the Bar had disposed his mind to an interest in the highways and byways of crime, and he never tired of exploring them, whether in conversation, in reading, or in writing. His book on Judge Jeffreys is a masterpiece. As an actor he brought intellect to every part, but it was in private life that I knew and valued him. There he was always tonic. Although anywhere in the company of a lobster at 1 a.m. he could be intensely happy, he was, as I remember him, at his best in his family circle.

Here is a characteristic scrap from Harry Irving in his mischievous vein :

I am surprised and not a little shocked that you should have heard from my lips and received with such callosity the tale of Lord—'s dreadful Decline and Fall in the Reading Room of the Athenaeum, and could have further written to me a jesting and heartless letter on the subject. I say no more—neither the grotesqueness of the scene nor the strangeness of his appearance can excuse or palliate your light-hearted treatment of the Falling Oak, as he appeared to be, gnarled, if you will, but still majestic in his staid downward slant !

There is nothing like a good biography—to my thinking. If you at this moment were to Fall in the Athenaeum or anywhere like the Corsican Brothers, I believe I should fall at the same moment in sympathy. So *DON'T*.

SIR
ROBERT
HUDSON

Here are two or three of several letters from Sir Robert Hudson, whose untimely death, in 1927, all his many friends deplored. This one was written at Buckthorn Hill, Lady Northcliffe's house at Crowborough, at a time when he was busy in getting funds for the Red Cross by every means his organizing genius could hit on. Later Lady Northcliffe became Lady Hudson.

1918

The lamentable tidings can't have reached you but let me admit the horrid truth. 10 days ago I came here for a week-end. I went straight to my bed with influenza, and there I've remained. A first-rate nurse procured from the London Hospital, a thoroughly good local Dr., a genius of a cook, and the best & dearest of hostesses have pulled me thro', and *just* dodged pneumonia. Fm told I must remain here for 2 or 3 weeks more. I shall bear it with fortitude.

Now to business. Lady Molly brought me *Punch* the other day & laughed so heartily over the picture by Frank Reynolds on page 284 (Oct. 30, 1918) that I must buy the original for her. Can you and will you conduct the delicate negotiation & send the picture on to me? I will be grateful if you will. To be able to make her a little present is a chance so rare that I must grasp at it.

Punch is doing gloriously for the Red Cross. Please assure O. S. [Owen Seaman] & everyone else of our gratitude.

If I don't hurry up & get away from the diet of Benger & arrowroot, I shall be a poor performer at the Peace Rejoicings !

Frank Reynolds' drawing is on the next page.



SIR
ROBERT
HUDSON
(cont.)

British Casualty. 'NAH THEN, LONGSHANKS, TRIM THE BARRER!
CAN'T YOU SEE WE'RE ALL COCK-EYED? JUST YOU BOB DOWN
A BIT AND TELL LITTLE TICH TO SHIFT 'IS POLE ON TO 'IS 'AT'

From the Drawing by Frank Reynolds in Punch, October 30, 1918

In another letter I find Robert saying :

You will make acquaintance with Buckthorn Hill some day, & will assess it as highly as I do. It is *the best*, & the best of everything is good enough for me !

Did you say you hadn't read Gibbon's Autobiography ? If so I shall try thro' some second-hand dealer to get you the edition wh. you ought to have. You may not like the book when you get it, but I'll chance that.

And again :

... I have been away for 3 or 4 days. On my return I find

The Picture !

It is the most delicious thing I ever saw. I admire & chortle every time I turn to it. Morrow is the greatest of artists. ...

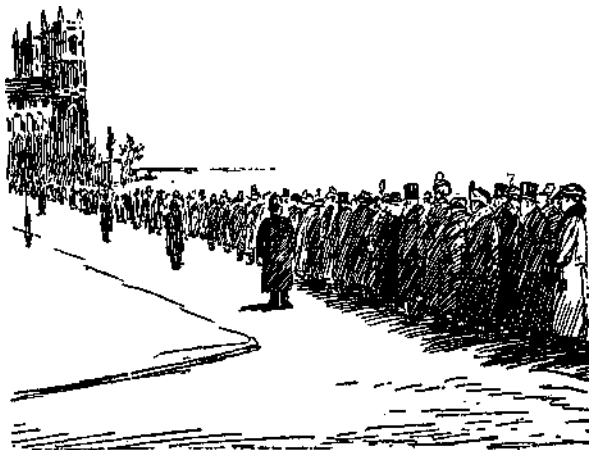
SIR
ROBERT
HUDSON
(cont.)

I should issue cards for a private view if I weren't starting tomorrow on a much-needed holiday.

As soon as I am back you must come & see me and see IT and eat a meal with me and have a jaw. But I've some hope of seeing you even before then, for Lady Molly said that either at the end of August or in the early days of September you and I should meet at her Crowborough Paradise.

Meantime, for the picture thanks and thanks and thanks.

Robert Hudson was a man of profound kindness and quiet sagacity whose advice was sought—and, I should guess, taken—by a great number of very different persons, not necessarily Liberals. George Morrow's picture is reproduced; 'Christianity Shortage' from Quoth the Raven.



CHRISTIANITY SHORTAGE

SCENE IN QUEUE AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY

From the Drawing by George Morrow in Quoth the Raven (1919)

[No date.] *F. J.
HARVEY
DARTON*

Here is a wise poem which I copied from the facade of an inn at West Stafford in Dorset:

I trust no Wise Man will condemn
A Cup of Genuine now and then.
When you are faint, your spirits low,
Your string relaxed, 'twill bend your bow,
Brace your Drumhead and make you tight,
Wind up your Watch and set you right.
But then again the too much use
Of all strong liquors is abuse.
'Tis liquid makes the solid loose,
The Texture and the frame Destroys;
But health lies in the Equipoise.

The odd thing is that the inn has no sign and only an off-licence.

MAURICE
HEWLETT

OLD RECTORY
BROAD CHALKE
SALISBURY

[1918]

Politics loom large down here. There is to be a mass meeting at Tisbury, address by Lloyd George and Deuce knows who beside—and I have been asked to take the Chair. I shall either break my neck motoring there in the dark, or have my head broken by a minion of Chamberlain's—so I expect I shall decline. But I have got very keen lately about the land business. Back to the land ! is all my eye—we don't want London wastrels down here ; but things must be so managed that our people stop where they are.

I have been reading Hazlitt lately. He was a smiter—but he was pretty much of a cad, all the same. Nothing could excuse parts of his letter to Malthus; which, if one knows the man who wrote it, may be judged pretty rank hypocrisy too. But a smiter he was, and of the best, and the dog had a pen, by Heaven ! It is odd that he made so little mark : that must have added its own drop of gall to the inkpot.

Towards the end of his life Hewlett thought seriously of standing for Parliament, but he had not the St. Stephen's temperament and, supposing him to be elected, would quickly have resigned. There was not a little in common between Hazlitt and himself. Both could be very intolerant; both wrote with uncompromising vigour; both wrote volumes of essays with Wiltshire titles. Hewlett's was Wiltshire Essays, 1922, an admirable but sadly neglected book; Hazlitt's was Winterslow, posthumously published in 1839.

RICHWOOD, OHIO CHAS. j.
January 10th, 1919 FINGER

. . . Muirhead's 'London' came as a complete surprise, and I have pored over the maps with a magnifying glass hour after hour : and, thus poring, there have come little memories of events long forgotten. For example, tracing my way through the streets, I chanced on Park Lane, and I recalled how, as a very small boy, I was walking there hand in hand with an elderly relative, who said :

'Look, Charlie ! There is Lord Beaconsfield. Run and ask him the time.'

I did as I was bidden, and, returning, the hero-worshipping relative said, 'You will remember that all your life. You have spoken to the greatest man in England.' However, I had forgotten the incident until I looked over the little map in Muirhead. . . . Then I tried to picture the man as I saw him, but failed. There was but an indistinct vision of a tallish man in a frock-coat, with the top buttons unfastened.

Indefatigable relatives, it seems, took me to see all kinds of people in the public eye, and after an effort, I recalled seeing, or hearing of Ogden—(I do not know who he was or what he did, but I saw someone I was told was he, in a 'procession' in Piccadilly). Then I recall Tichborne (Orton) being pointed out, and, at another time, being lifted up to see Bradlaugh at some station in the Underground Railway. Gladstone I saw accidentally as I was walking through St. Stephen's Hall. I did not know him to be the gentleman that was walking a few steps ahead of me as we approached a swing door, but both nearing it at

CHAS. J.
FINGER
{cont.}

the same moment, the gentleman pushed upon the door, and, finding someone just behind, held it open for me to pass. And I saw Mr. Gladstone.

But I regret now that my folks were keen on dragging me around to see people in whom I took no interest, but failed to take me to see places. Topography did not interest them. Thus, I never saw Temple Bar, nor Hampton Court, nor Kew, nor indeed any Historical Houses or sites. And yet, the passion for exploring was strong within me and I prowled around London in an aimless way, discovering things blindly as it were.

When Mr. Wells pictures a Kipps, a soul that knows no more of the things around him than a fly knows of the mechanism of the clock whose face it traverses, he pictures wonderfully. There are millions of Kippses—kindly, ignorant, dumbly-ambitious, blind souls, and it would be well if there were some way to interest them, to make them to know the valuable things around them. But the very schools do nothing of that—at least did not. At St. Saviour's school, in what was then the Shirland Road (but which I fail to see on the map) there were boys that had never seen the Thames. Once a year we took them to the Zoo, and once to a school 'treat', but the Tower of London, the Houses of Parliament, St. Paul's, the value of these as educational factors, was only dimly suspected, if suspected at all. . . .

Life in a town without historical associations is dull. This town of Delaware is a typical inland American town whose history goes back but an hundred years or more. We have a college building, a garish Carnegie Library, and a half dozen well built churches. We have some six * secret' societies;—an Elks' Club, three moving-

picture houses, no theatre, four ice-cream ' parlors,' six saloons, three billiard rooms, one roller-skating palace, nine drug stores and one hotel. Of social and intellectual life, there is no trace. The younger people use the ice-cream parlor as a social gathering place, the convivial souls gather at the bar, the men about town adorn the drug stores, and the reminiscently aged folks sit in the hotel lobby.

CHAS. J.
FINGER
{cont.)

Recently I started a book store as a fad, and have a young lady who is interested in literature to attend to it. But the real books that I put on the shelves are left severely alone, and the only call is for Marie Corelli, Robert Chambers, Oppenheim etc. But there was an attempt made here by a gentleman of my acquaintance to do something. At his own cost, he gathered together a collection of curiosities—some very rare and valuable things. These he has listed and ticketed and housed in a roomy, well-lighted basement. But his well-meant efforts have only resulted in his having been considered an amiable, but weak-minded gentleman.

Let me tell you a story in connection with his collection. He once bought a mirror that had a history, in that on the back different owners had pencilled something of its history. (I have a spinning wheel that is similarly marked.) Now, Mr. Buck found this mirror in a farm house near Kenton, and carried it 80 miles in his hand, driving a buggy. He showed me the inscriptions. The first read :

1750. This was given me from my father when I was married and we took it to Tennessee from Boston by stages.'

go

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

CHAS. j.
FINGER
{cont.}

Another hand had written :

' To New Orleans down the Ohio river.'

Then followed a line which read :

'Jan. 1st at Columbus Ohio, 1805. . . .'•

We were talking in the hotel a few days ago, and the conversation ran on plays. Now you must know that one must, with rare exceptions, go as far as New York from here to see a good play. Once I went to Cleveland (180 miles) to see Beerbohm Tree in *Henry VIII*. Columbus rarely has anything but vaudeville or 'musical comedy \ And to go to New York from here is something like going from Vienna to London. However, the talk was on play-going, and the Probate Judge, a pompous old gentleman, has the local reputation of being something of a dramatic critic. His is the *ipse dixit* on such matters, and when he speaks, all listen to Sir Oracle.

Someone had mentioned Shaw's *Major Barbara*. 'You may talk', the Judge said, 'about your Shaw and your socialist and anarchist playwrights, but I am here to tell you that the best play I ever seen was *The Honest Blacksmith*. Some play, that was. Bob Fitzsimmons he played in that there play. I seen him in it in New York. . . . You mind the time, Colonel ?'

The Colonel thus appealed to (the postmaster) spat on the gas log and, as it sizzled, said : ' I should say so. . . . Some bird as an actor was that there Fitz. Had 'em all backed off the boards he did. When he reskied that girl. . . . Mind that ? '

Now there is none so bold that dare dispute

the Judge. Be it Art, Politics, Religion, Literature, The Civil War, History Ancient or Modern, the Judge is dogmatic. And he is something of a political boss too.

CHAS. j.
FINGER
(cont.)

Now, in the circle was the newspaper man, and next morning the daily came out with this : ' Robert Fitzsimmons the unbeaten pugilist was also famed as an actor. Judge Williams of our city recalls him well.⁵

A day or so later, a local preacher used the information to point out a moral, and in the course of time the little lady that runs my fad book store told how a young school teacher had asked for a play called 'The Honest Blacksmith' by Mr. Fitzsimmons. ' I do not see it on the shelves,⁵ she said, ' but I see that you have another by Fitzgerald called Omar Khayyam.⁵

Now what wonders me is this : why, in such a circle could not some information that was valuable have leaked out? Why did it have to be balderdash? And yet it is no more wonderful than that I should have walked across Paddington Green in the past, hundreds of times, without knowing that a statue of Mrs. Siddons was there. But I did not until now.

To be sure, the drummer *had* mentioned Shaw ; but his name was anathema, for be it known to you that only last month a man was arrested for reading *The Unsocial Socialist* on a street car in Detroit, Mich.

Incidentally, and before leaving Fitzsimmons, I also chanced to see that * play \ This was the climax of it that so evoked the admiration of the Judge and of the Colonel. There was an extremely innocent maiden pursued by a very bad villain, and, at the eleventh hour, when all looked

CHAS. J.
FINGER
(cont.)

at its darkest for the maid, honest Bob felled the pursuer with a blow of his doughty fist. Then the little maiden clung to him and said :

' Oh Bob ! God will reward you for this.'

' Don't mention it,' said Bob.

I trust I have not tired you. It has been so good to write to someone. I used to write to a friend in Walsall, but since the war I have lost touch with him.

This vivacious and informative letter came from a total stranger, who will, I trust, not resent the publicity here given to it.

May 9 [1919] *AN OXFORD
DON*

I was telegraphed for, and went off, 3 or 4 hours after writing to you, and I had a week in the North Sea which was most exciting. On Palm Sunday it happened to be dead calm, and so the floating mines showed themselves well. We sank six of these pests by rifle & gun-fire (putting a morris-tube into a 4-inch gun and firing i-inch cartridges) and blew up three—total bag of nine, more than doubling the record of any Destroyer in the Port for 1 day. It's grand to see them go up, and they only do that if you hit a whisker ; otherwise they merely fill & sink after you've knocked enough holes in them. They look just like the rumps of enormous black drowned pigs bobbing along.

Another day I came in for a full gale & was very nearly sea-sick, a Destroyer being a fearful old bitch to roll. We saw French tugs taking away 8 Boche submarines, tricolour floating over German Standard which was trailing its ugliness in the water ; but we read in the paper that only one of these reached Cherbourg, the others having to be abandoned in the gale.

We also victualled some light-ships & one of them told us they had sunk 8 mines in a week though they had only one rifle on board. The whole scene between Harwich & Holland was a Piccadilly with every sort of tramp steamer, but all moving in swept lanes.

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

HUGH
WALPOLE

POLPERRO
May 22nd, '19

I'm sure your tender avuncular heart is aching to hear how your dear nephew is progressing—I don't think ! Anyhow your nephew wants to know how you are. His last glimpse of you a la Russe revealed you bathed in uneasy absent-mindedness !

I've been awfully happy here working very hard and walking. There's also been a perfectly *scrumptious* female who is wiser than Eve on one side of life and knows nothing whatever about any other. Altogether, as you do often remark to me, fate's much kinder to me than I deserve. The whole village has been fighting over a War Memorial, half of them wanting a Ladies' Lavatory and the other half a billiard-table ! (Obvious ground here for rustic jests.)

I've read a lot of old books : some of them damned interesting, like Lang's *Life of Lockhart*, and one fine new one, Conrad's *Arrow of Gold*, which he sent me in its American dress. A beautiful thing—and quite in a new manner.

Norman Moore, the erudite physician, was as unable to refrain from imparting information, usually recondite, as, in Mark Twain's phrase, the otter is from distilling the precious otter of roses. Here is a letter in reply to one from me about his baronetcy :

SIR
NORMAN
MOORE

May 24, 1919

You know that May Day is called in Ireland Bealraine and that in the remote parts of Ulster mentioned in the book you so kindly lent to me May 12, old May Day, is the day observed. The subject of your congratulation pleases me in that it unconsciously commemorates the old Kings of Ulster whose race was overthrown in the year 332. Their ensign was a red hand or rather cubit which thus came to be the symbol of Ulster. Armagh its capital is built on a hill a few miles beyond which is another hill bearing a great earthwork of eleven acres and called Eamhain Macha, in Latin Emania after the same Lady Macha whose name is preserved in Armagh. At the foot of Eamhain Macha is a tract of land called Crobruadha, in English Creverne, the red hand. It was the estate of the king's guards and is called Creverne to this day.

O'Neill since he claimed descent from Niall of the nine hostages through Niall glundubh (N of the IX h. died in 405 and N. glundubh in 918) bore a red hand on his shield and so did O'Donnell who was descended from Conall son of Niall of the IX hostages and several lesser kings of the same line of descent bore the red hand. They only preserved a memory for the ancient kings (before 332) were of a different race from that of Niall of the IX hostages from whom all the

SIR
NORMAN
MOORE
{cont.}

kings except Brian Boroimbe between 405 and 1020 were descended.

Thus you see the red hand given to Baronets leads them if they know it, through long paths in fairyland and points out to them a far stretching view over Ulster.

And this is how Norman Moore visualized a purely business visit after I had succeeded him as Treasurer to the Literary Society:

March 8, 1921

I enclose a note for Messrs. Coutts. If it is necessary we should go to the Bank in order that I may testify to your existence, please let me know and we can fix a day to visit the street of St. Edmund, King and Martyr, and be reminded of the street in Seville which bears the simple title LONGOBARDOS and wish we could walk down it with Lanfranc, Dorobornensis archiepiscus, and hear his account of Norman times in London. Will you come out by St. Dionis Backchurch or by its site, for it is demolished, or shall we leave by the tomb of John Newton, servant of slaves in Africa, or shall we turn up St. Clement's lane and read a page in the first edition of Pearson on the Greed, quite a readable book, and displayed on a lectern for all to see ? Thus you see how many pleasant memories your new office has !

Sir Norman Moore died in 1922, at the age of seventy-five, His first work was a Life of Waterton, the naturalist, in 1871. To the Dictionary of National Biography he contributed no fewer than four hundred and fifty-nine Lives,

AFTER THIRTY-SEVEN YEARS

September 13, 1919 *THE REV.*
A. T. GILL

Let me draw you a picture. A master is at the Black-board teaching a class of boys—aged from 14 to 16—English Composition. He is busy with a sentence from one of Gladstone's speeches—typically involved and prolix (he was very fond of taking one of those sentences with any number of adjectival and adverbial clauses)—and engrossed in drawing out his scheme of Analysis—subject, predicate, object, extension &c.—face to the Board, back to the boys, when he hears some one whispering behind him. Without turning round, going on still with his * schema analytica'—' Lucas, I know that's you talking ; don't you know I can see *through the back of my head* ? '—* There can't be very much in it, then !' was the quick rejoinder ; which set the whole class in roars of laughter, the master being not the last to join in it.

Do you remember that boy ?

Do you remember that master ?

He is not a little proud to-day to think that he may in some little way have encouraged that boy to love his English language and cherish its literature—(not a common thing for boys to do in those days)—and, at all events, to have helped him however slightly to write *good English* and avoid long, prosy, prolix involved sentences.

*This letter, from the Rev. Arthur Gill, who was then—
igig—vicar of East Wittering in Sussex, gave me very
great pleasure, more particularly as I had forgotten the
incident. The school was the Western College, at Brighton,
the Headmaster of which, Dr. William Porter Knightley,
was as near Dr. Grimthorpe in Vice Versa as could be.
It was Mr. Gill, our only master in holy orders, whom I*

nonplussed one Sunday afternoon when, finding me reading The Ingoldsby Legends, he said it was an unsuitable book for that day. 'But it was written by a clergyman?' I replied.

One of Mr. Gill's closest friends was George Macdonald, author of David Elginbrod and The Princess and Curdie, after whom his son, W. Macdonald Gill, the artist, is named. Another son is Eric Gill, the sculptor and designer. Mr. Gill was himself a vigorous painter.

12 WELL WALK
HAMPSTEAD, N.W.
Nov. 29, 1919

MAX
BEERBOHM

Ever so many thanks for your ' Message from Mons', which is indeed a treasure—or rather was a treasure, for the police have just been here and taken it away, acting under Regulation 27c of the Defence of the Realm Act. Golefax has wired to me that you and he expect me at the Athenaeum next Thursday at 7.45. I shall be there, but you, I take it, will be in Holloway. We shall miss you very much . . . a better fellow never picked oakum, etc., etc.

Again memory has played a trick, for I cannot recall what the ' Message from Mons' was.

SIDNEY
COLVIN

. Nov. 30, 1919

After all these years of spinning from your own inside it is of course right and natural that you should feel the need of a real change and break. Personally in your place I should get more pleasure and interest out of Mediterranean coasts and islands than out of the farther East; but every man must judge for himself, and we shall all hope to see you come back re-dipped to your full desire, body and mind.

What I most regret, as the journey *is* to come off, is that I can't help to make it pleasant for you by sending you on to the hospitality of one after another of my own relations out there in high places. I could have done this at any other moment the last hundred years, so to speak ; but the generations of Indian Colvins and Bayleys are dying out, and the last three Colvins—all soldiers, and of a good stamp too—have come home, either on leave or for good, this very autumn.

Written when I was about to start on a visit to India and America.

HENRY LAWRENCE

Dec. 20'19 BENJAMIN
HAUGHTON

In a description of school-life in your book *Landmarks*, you introduce an episode—the death of a junior master and the subsequent, much to be deplored, exhibition of his poor remains—which tallies in every detail with an event which happened during my own school-days.

Your picture, I feel, can only have been painted by one who was himself an eye-witness, and as it seems very unlikely that such an occurrence, with all its attendant circumstances, can have happened in two different places, it seems fair to deduce that we must, at one time, have been school-fellows.

If these premises warrant the deduction, the school in question was a Quaker one—the Woodlands, Hitchin, to which, when 12 years old, I was sent in 1877. Among the boys was one, Alfred Lucas, rather a chum of mine—he hailed from Brighton, I think, and before long he was joined by a younger brother, Edward, whom, at the risk of seeming personal, I should describe as of a ruddier countenance and more aquiline features. It would be strange, indeed, if the incident I have referred to had not left a lasting impression on youthful minds ; I say nothing of the legion of phantom horrors it brought in its immediate train.

How clearly I can see Cranston Woodhead now shaken to the depths of his great easy-going being—and yet not unconscious of a certain importance arising out of his office of seneschal at that pitiful Lying in State.

It is sad that the image of poor Lawrence—a most spruce little man—should remain for all time in our minds disfigured by a stubby beard :

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

BENJAMIN
HAUGHTON
(cont.)

I fancy we all felt as though we were taking an unfair advantage in prying upon him in his disarray. Blind terror probably swamped all other emotions, but I should like to think that most of us were conscious of being called upon to join in something we instinctively recognized as being rather bad form.

It cannot have been long after this I enjoyed the distinction, and enjoyed it very thoroughly, of developing a mild attack of scarlet-fever. In charge of a beldame named Lofts, I was banished to a temporary sanatorium, there to be joined in due course by another boy, who, unless my memory plays pranks, was none other than yourself.

Do you remember how we sought escape from the languors of convalescence by embarking on the high adventure of water-colour painting? We took our sailing orders—brief and precise they were as a doctor's prescription—from stout old Vere Foster, and braving the troubled seas of Payne's grey and neutral tint and sailing over lakes of varied hue we reached the enchanted shores of Bice and Sap Green—regions not even charted in these degenerate days. When we were well enough to explore the unoccupied portion of our pest-house it proved a gloomy sort of place. An old and, as I should judge, fairly important school-house in its time, it had fallen on evil days. There was a dingy class-room, the floor and desks well splashed with ink and the walls still imprisoning that faint odour which distils from the body, and, I am convinced, soul, of distressed boyhood.

What memory can lose is as strange as what it can retain. I certainly was in quarantine in the old building Mr. Haughton describes so well, but the only other invalid that I can recall was a boy named Ernest Marsh.

An album of selections from H. M. Bateman's work ^{MAX}
being in contemplation, in 1920, Max Beerbohm was asked ^{BEERBOHM}
for an Introduction. Here is his reply :

I have tried to do what you wanted. But it's no good. It won't do. I can't say anything that isn't utterly stupid about H. M. Bateman. The reason for my failure is that H. M. Bateman's drawings don't *need* any explanation. They so very signally explain themselves. And they have gone on doing so for a fair number of years. Where do I (the comparatively unpopular and esoteric) come in ? If Bateman were an obscure young man with a genius that went in need of trumpeting and elucidating and disenubilating and pushing, then, conceivably, I might be of some use, and might be inspired to do something worth reading. But—as it is ! I stand aside. Why on earth did the firm of Methuen want me to dodder into the foreground at all ? Good Bateman needs no bush. Very efficiently revolving wheels need no flies on them. Enough. The matter is closed. My silent homage to Bateman.

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

BISHOP
RYLE

[1920]

I am exceedingly grateful for your draft of an inscription and the comments accompanying it.

There is difficulty about the word 'soldier'. The unknown man may be a member of the Naval Brigade or of the Air Force. In order to meet susceptibilities the War Office suggested 'Warrior' and this at a preliminary meeting was accepted by the representatives of the Navy and the Air Force.

I feel like a nut between a Nasmyth hammer and an anvil of the size of Westminster Abbey.

This letter bears upon an inscription for the grave of the Unknown Warrior in the Abbey, which the Receiver-General of the Abbey, Sir Edward Knapp-Fisher, asked me to try my hand at. This was my effort :

SACRED

To the memory of

A BRITISH SOLDIER

brought from a grave in France
and buried here

on November 11, 1920,
the second Anniversary of Armistice Day,

Who

in the Great War of 1914-18

gave his life

that the world might become
safer and nobler

for

YOU.

A longer and better inscription was eventually decided upon, as all visitors to the Abbey know.

Bishop Ryle, who died in 1925, was succeeded by Dean Foxley-Norris,

July 12, 1920

LORD
GLEN-
CONNER

I like very much the phrase of the Baboo English—' the writer who wrote like the Kipling or the .Dickens '.

This was Edward Tennant, father of the present Lord Glenconner.

HUGH
WALPOLE

THE COBBLES
POLPERRO
Sept. i, '20

Funnily enough I was thinking about you yesterday afternoon for no especial reason except that I was hoping that 'Plum' would win the championship and connected that with you (and thank God he has !). I've had a hectic fortnight, all the family being here and two American women ; the last have undoubtedly kind hearts but an energy and a lack of discrimination that is crushing. They rushed from point to point of the county in a motor-car licking up Tintagel with one flick of the tongue and Land's End with another and talking quite incessantly about God, Harding-Cox (the U.S.A. Two, not the Garrick One), Botany, Indigestion and Stainless Cutlery.

Moreover a few days ago a perfect lady came to the door and asked the maid for an envelope or scrap of paper in my writing and the maid gave her one of her own and told me afterwards that she was sure the woman wouldn't know the difference. With all this I cannot write a good book (but I think the one two years from now will be good). And what is a good book anyway ?

Since then, 1920, there have been many good novels, including the Rogue Herricks trilogy. Since then, also, Mr. Walpole has become the head of the Book Society, which keeps a capricious eye on the good work of others. 'Plum' is Mr. P. F. Warner, then captain of Middlesex, who a few days before had written to me a letter with this sentence in it:

I should, like Wolfe, die happy if we could be Champions this year.

WILLIAM BATESON

NEW HOTEL
GREAT LANGDALE
AMBLESIDE
14 Sept., 1920

WILLIAM
BATESON

My contemporaries are republishing their scraps as books and sometimes I think of doing the same. When I get back I will see what I have and put them before you. There may be just enough to keep two covers from touching. No doubt a publisher would ask for a bit of red meat to eke out the cold orts. If so, I must wait.

This autumn I have two heavy chapters of my text-book to pull up to date, and then a 'Galton Lecture'. As I find 2,000 words a fortnight hard going, this about fills my winter. The Galton Lecture will be new matter—still they demand that it should, as a formality, come first in their 'Eugenics Review'. That contemporary does not exactly * find its way to every breakfast-table' but it is publication of a sort and has to be acknowledged.

My present occupation is paint. I start meaning to do a Grome—before canvas half covered I branch into the manner of Turner. Then reminiscences of Gotman and other cheerfulness keep breaking in and I purify in the style of an early Gorot and about at that stage my crust is covered with grey mud from top to bottom. I wish I had never seen any pictures at all.

This is the first letter I can find from William Bateson, the Mendelist, though it cannot be the first I received. With his customary thoroughness and directness he took, late in life, to painting, and might have done some fine strong work had he lived; but he died, all too soon, in 1926. The first paragraph recalls the famous review of a new publication

WILLIAM
BATESON
(cont.)

*which is credited to the American author, Ambrose Bierce:
' The covers of this book are too far apart.'*

Here, from another letter, is a criticism of ' The Stone-breaker \ that lovely English picture painted by John Brett when he was flirting with pre-Raphaelism :

Did you notice how he gets Box Hill into place by lacing up the blue of the Clematis fruits ?
' Literal transcripts' indeed !

' PLEASED TO MEET YOU

[KEVIN] E. K. HALL
NAIRN, N.B.
27.9.20

.... May I venture to suggest a retort to the American greeting of 'pleased to meet you'? My wife tells me that, during the war, an Australian convalescent guest, sent by Lady Harrowby for a fortnight's visit, greeted her in this way and afterwards she discussed this form of greeting with him. He said it is an Americanism and that the usual reply over there is 'Same here'. That's good, I think: at any rate brief! But the accent and intonation are everything. It's 'Same Hee-er'—raising the pitch on 'er'.

Is the American 'buttoned boy' so much sharper than ours? Arthur Balfour tells this incident. On the way to his American Commission his party was held up at Dumfries on account of reported submarines. On the evening of their arrival at the Hotel, the fussy Scotland Yard Official told him he must keep up his incognito. 'That's too late' said B.; 'I have already signed my name in the liftboy's birthday book'—

In her reminiscences, My First Sixty Years, published in 1933, Lady Maud Warrettder says that the Duke of Devonshire of her youthful days, when the American phrase, 'Pleased to meet you' was under discussion, remarked, 'If the fellow addressed me like that I should say, "So you damn well ought to be!"'

*Air. Bud Flanagan's suggestion for a reply is, 'I'm pleased to let you meet nu. **

E.: A. Hall died in 1923.*

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

G. L.
STAMPA

Many thanks for two post-
cards at the same time - I have
two eyes so it was easy —



I want to have a chat —
May I ?
Lunch or dinner perhaps, some where
some when - I let me be the host.



Say When.

Yours sincerely
G. L. Stampa.

Oct. 15th 1920G. L.
STAMPA

10, HODFORD ROAD,

CHILDS HILL,

N. W. 2.



My dear E. V.

Supposing I
knocked at your
door one day,
say about five.
which day would
annoy you least
to be found at
the other side of
it?

Yours always
G. L. Stampa

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

E. T. REED By the way, a French journalist, Recouly, once described this part [Kensington Park Gardens] as '*ce chic, coquet petit quartier de Nottinghilgate* ' Isn't it sweet ? My Japanese treasures are the sight of London : next to the Wallace and the late Chu-Chin-Chow.

One more P.S., please.

A Japanese nobleman (Viscount Shibusawa) when in America years ago fell in with Wana-maker—and nearly fell out, as he tried to convert him to Christianity. Shibusawa was a confirmed Gonfucianist and said so, protesting ' Let us be friends, great friends, all the same thing.' Wana-maker's reply is, to me, a marvel coming from a U.S. plutocrat : ' No ! They are not the same ! The coffin of Confucius is occupied ; the coffin of Christ is empty. He has left and is in our hearts.'⁵

When Shibusawa got back to Japan, whenever he was asked what he thought of the U.S.A. he always broke out ⁶ An American, Mr. Wana-maker, has said this '—and repeated the remark.

E. T. Reed, who' died in July 1933, was the comic draughtsman who used to illustrate H. W. Lucy's ' Toby M.P.' articles in Punch, but is best known for his Pre-historic Peeps.

THE SUSSEX DOWNS

Oct. 7 th, 1920

BARBARA
CHASE

... I am venturing to send you some verses
which I hope may please you a little, just because
you are a Sussex man—they are not worthy of
your consideration on any other score :—

HOMECOMING

I have come home, and have laid me down
On the swelling breast of Earth, my mother:
I have pressed my face to the English turf,
The Downland turf, which is like none other.
I've smelt the spice of grass and loam,
The scent of thyme : I have come home.

I've breathed again the cool strong breezes,
Fresh from the sea and faintly salted ;
I've stood by the lonely hill-top graves
That mark the spots where the Legions
halted.
The sun and wind, the Dead and I
And grey hawks hanging in the sky.

The wide, bare slopes, the white chalk roads :
The homestead hid, and the dew-pond stilly :
To all of these have I given my heart,
They have taken and hold it, willy-nilly :
The Downs, untamed, unfenced and free,
That long since laid their spell on me.

DION
CLAYTON
CALTHROP

Nov. 29, 1920

- r. What do the men say who do Punch & Judy and who are all the characters ?
2. How do you become a railway guard, a circus clown or a lion tamer ?
3. Why do men's coats have the buttons on the right side and women on the left ?
4. Why were trousers called Pantaloons when no Pantaloon ever wore trousers ?
5. Have you ever been to the rocking-horse factory near the Caledonian Road Tube Station and does one man do all the nostrils ?
6. Have you ever been to the King's Muffin makers in Rupert Street ?
7. How much gum a year is used on the backs of postage stamps ?
8. Do you know that Punch's voice is a copy of that first Punch, the waiter from Accera outside Naples, and is the only human voice handed down the ages ?
9. What is the true story of the dying duck in the thunderstorm ?
10. Why is a certain amount of drink called a jorum, and a certain amount of food a whack ? And what is a noggin, and why is it a Pony of stout ?
11. Do you know the rules of marbles or hopscotch ?
12. What is the inside of the Marble Arch like ?

THE PERUSING DANES

KOBENHAVN

Feb. 15, '21

HUGH

WALPOLE

I've been having a very good time here. They've been making quite a fuss of me you'll be sorry to hear. I've got quite a public here, mainly through the two Russian books and 'The Captives'—the latter seems to suit the Scandinavian mind. They like Wells and Conrad and Arnold, but have never heard of Galsworthy !

It's a pretty place and the Danes are very warm-hearted with lots of humour.

Since then, I fancy, the Danes have added Galsworthy to their list. For some years before his death he was the most widely read contemporary English novelist in every foreign country.

MAURICE
BARING

March 31, 1921

Yesterday we had a story-writing competition among the children. Three of them took part in it and they all got the first prize for different reasons. Lady Rosslyn's little girl, aged 8, wrote a story which I have copied out and enclose herewith as I feel certain you will enjoy it. The opening sentence is one of the supremest things in fiction.

THE LIFE OF A HORSE

On the side of a mountain in a sheltered spot a black stallion was softly licking her newly born colt.

The colt was bay with a white dab on his forehead. After an hour or two of rest he tried to rise up but fell down again. 'You are too young to walk yet' said his mother rubbing her nose on him affectionately. At the age of a year Silver-star was allowed to gallop on the plain that lay at the foot of the mountain. One moonlight night Silver-star galloped into the forest at the far end of the plain. The soft moss and the refreshing stream was so delightful that Silver-star decided to spend the rest of the night there, but little did he guess that a pack of wolves were on his track. One or two seconds after they found him quietly sleeping. In another minute he would have been dead had he not awoken and seen the hungry glaring eyes. He was up in a minute and crashed through the branches with the wolves at his heels. If it had not been for his agility he would certainly have become a meal to those carnivorous beasts. He galloped to one side and quickly turned and darted back into the forest. At the end of an hour he was safe and so he made his way through the woods and plains until he reached the place

AUTHORS v. AUTHORS

where he had been born. He always remained with his mother until she died.

The author of this gem was Lady Mary Erskine, now Lady Mary Dunn.

I append another letter from Maurice Baring without any date:

It is very rare that an author admires the book of another living author. This is not due to a sense of rivalry nor to jealousy conscious or unconscious ; but author A (as Henry James so well explains it) cannot help as he reads the work of Author B re-creating it, as he reads, in the way *he* would have done it. Even if author A docs admire the work of B, he doesn't always *enjoy* admiring it. . . .

ARNOLD
BENNETT

April 6, 1921

On Thursday night Cochran asked me to write a revue for him. I at once said that you ought to be invited to collaborate with me. He liked the idea. I don't know how you feel about it, but anyway for me this condition is an absolute *sine qua non*.

I really don't attach any importance to his suggestion, knowing that all these people are alike. But the next morning he sent me a note saying he was 'tremendously keen', and inviting me to lunch. For political reasons I refused his invitation, and asked him to dine with me at the Garrick on Thursday 16th at 8. He has accepted. My experience is that it is always wise to keep theatrical managers hanging about a bit. I have further told him that under no circumstances can I touch any fresh work until October.

Will you come to the dinner? If the notion of a joint revue—the collaboration to be equal in every respect—appeals to you, doubtless you will come if you can.

/ seem to have declined this offer at once, for I cannot remember any conversations about it.

ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

1921 *SIR P.
CHALMERS
MITCHELL*

Criticism is very good for us, and is often specially welcome to me, as I am, and always have been in great doubt, about the basal principle of keeping animals in captivity. I need hardly tell you that neither my colleagues on the Council, nor my assistants here, share these sentimental heresies !

About the nightingale : when did you see it in the small side cage ? The 1918 one, given us by Mr. Ezra, is to-day in one of the large central aviaries, and the keeper tells me that it has been there for some time. He had been a cage bird for some years before he came to us, and here he has sometimes been in the Central Aviary, sometimes in the small side cage. I like him to be in the large one : the Keeper and Curator prefer him in the small one, and insist that the bird does better there !

There is another nightingale, given us in 1919, in one of the outside aviaries of the same house.

Of course the public like seeing creatures whose names they know but which they have seldom seen. I gather from ornithological friends that the metrical remarks on the Skylark by Shelley (P. B.) and on the Nightingale by Keats (J.) have conferred on these species a notoriety hardly justified by their zoological distinction. It would be grimly humorous had these Odes brought more of their subjects into cages.

You will find more shocking abdications of logic in favour of convenience than the size of birds in the Small Birds' House. There are Fish in the Reptile House, Snails in the Insect House, small deer in the Ostrich House, Baboons and

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

SIR P.
CHALMERS
MITCHELL
(cont.)

Siberian dogs in the Lemurs' House. And I am Secretary of the Zool. Soc.

Please don't bother to acknowledge this, and by all means hit us hard when you think it useful. But if the complaint be one capable of remedy, within the limits that we *do* keep wild animals in captivity, it would be very nice of you to give me the chance of finding the remedy before you chastise us in public.

A letter from the Secretary of the Zoological Gardens, after I had written a remonstrance against caging nightingales. Since then Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell has laid us all under his debt by carrying through the rural Zoo Project at Whipsnade, where an avenue is named after him.

THREE COMIC ARTISTS

THE MANOR HOUSE
MERTON, S.W. 20
io.v.1921

**WILLIAM
BATESON**

The. 'Yell' came at breakfast and made me splutter my egg. I can hear it:

Tarrasch—Steinitz—Kieseritzky—Boden
Laskcapa, Lascapa, Corr Corr Coll !

Superb it is—especially *MM. les assistants*, as always in Monrovia.

There came a pain when I felt I must give my Caran d'Aches in return—but ' by a mighty effort of will' (like J. S. Mill) and wifely prudence I conquered my natural bonhomie and ask you to be put off with Gavarni—whom I do like, if not so much, and hope you do. If you think Geo. M. would care for one of them, you might hand on to him some day.

' *The Tell* ' was a drawing by George Morrow in *Punch* for April 27, 1921 I reproduce it.



THE CHESS-TEAM OF A CORRESPONDENCE COLLEGE GIVING THEIR
COLLEGE CRY ON ENTERING THE ALBERT HALL TO TAKE PART IN
A TOURNAMENT

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

EDEN
PHILL*
POTIS

TORQUAY
4 August, 1921

Wondering why any one should want a rhyme from me, I asked my daughter, and she said that you had, in cold blood, deliberately, fearlessly, openly praised a verse of mine and embalmed that commendation in a printed work.

You are, I think, the first contemporary who has ever said a kind thing for any rhyme from this pen, and such a rash act cannot be overlooked. Something must be done to record it. My last volume of verse is not at hand, but this still-born booklet may perhaps serve as a passing memento of my admiration for your generosity.

My admiration of the poems of the author of that glorious comic play. The Farmer's Wife, which I have seen, I am sure, a dozen times, is by no means confined to a single poem ; but here is that little masterpiece 'Man's Life' ;

A sudden wakin', a sudden weepin' ;
A li'l suckin', a li'l sleepin' ;
A cheel's full joys an' a cheel's short sorrows,
Wi' a power o' faith in gert to-morrows.

Young blood red hot an' the love of a maid ;
One glorious day as '11 never fade ;
Some shadows, some sunshine, some triumphs,
some tears,
An' a gatherin' weight o' the flyin' years.

Then old man's talk o' the days behind 'e ;
Your darter's young darter to mind 'e ;
A li'l dreamin', a li'l dyin' ;
A li'l lew corner o' airth to lie in.

Having mentioned The Farmer's Wife, let me add here a letter from Cedric Hardwicke who played Churdles Ash, the

cynical misogynist in that comedy, and later was the King in G. B. Shaw's Apple Cart.

i.ix.29 CEDRIC
HARD-
WICKE

It is a great relief to me to be able to straighten my back, but I don't think there is much real difference between ' Ghurdles Ash ' and the King. They are both monarchs in their own way!!

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

A. A.
MILNE

HOTEL ITALIE
FLORENCE
[1921]

Morally, if not legally, one must report to you from Florence. My first complaint is that I paid 16/- for your book' out here. However, everybody has to have it. One sees earnest-looking American women, Lucas in hand, spectacles on nose, referring from Edwardo to Angelica and back from Verrocchio to Verrallio ; they then put a little tick against it and say 'I've seen that'. 'Shall we take Lucas?' one hears in the lounge. You must be making millions.

I want the following :

- i. The Campanile.
2. Verrocchio's 'David' which I like much the best of them.
3. The Birth of Venus. (Primavera is in the same room with this now, and has its eye wiped by it.)
4. Two doors in the Palazzo Vecchio. I expect you know the ones.
5. A picture by Boucher of two cupids, which was being copied when we were at the Uffizi, but doesn't live there, I think. It isn't in the catalogue. I want this very badly.
6. Two portraits by Van Cleve, which clamoured to me for some unfathomable reason.
7. Filipino Lippi's 'Madonna \
8. Fra Angelico's 'Marriage of the Virgin', of which I have only seen (and bought) a print.
9. Verrocchio's fountain.

I think I should be content with that lot. But I've bought a full-size cast of the 9th which is as

adorable as the original. In a month's time come to Mallord Street and see it in our garden.

A. A.
MILNE
(cont.)

The noise is ghastly here now ; you don't do justice to it. No other tram has ever made quite the horrible row that they manage here.

We leave on Saturday—after a fortnight here and a previous fortnight at Santa Margharita. It's a terrible place this for spending money. I could go on and on, buying for ever. In fact I've lost my head badly once or twice, and have had to be led back to the hotel.

Our love to you. We are just going out. We, about to spend, salute you.

For the full understanding of this very characteristic letter I must confess to being the author of a guide-book to Florence.

Since the date of this letter A. A. M. has acquired an old Sussex farmhouse and garden, where there is more statuary, the impulse for which came from his own brain : the Pooh mythology, in short.

WILLIAM
BATESON

17.X.21

If you don't know it, read Maurice Barrès—*Du Sang, de la Volupté et de la Mort*—containing many nice things about Spain, and especially Toledo, a good meaty writer, though journalism of course. I have it and can send it. Also *Mile. Fel*—one of the very loveliest, she must have been. I only knew her in reprodn. and was delighted to find her and the whole set in the Louvre, for a while before going back to St. Quentin.

Got home this morning, with the swing of the train still rocking my head—good for nothing but letter-writing. A glorious time and painted a shade better towards the end, I hope and believe.

It is a pleasure to have this provocation to reproduce Quentin de la Tour's pastel of his mistress, Mademoiselle Fel of the sparkling eyes.



MADemoiselle FEL

From the Pastel by Quentin de la Tour at St. Quentin

AUGUS-
TINE
BIRRELL

Dec. 23, 1921

The paragraph-mongers seem to have gone mad over my *Memoirs*. *They dortt exist*—and, tho⁵ no man can be called happy until he is dead, I see no reason to believe that they will ever come into *existence*; and as for publication—if they ever do get written—that *must* be posthumous for the *enrichment* of my estate. The longer I live the more sick I become of my own 'Views and opinions', and as for my *contemporaries*, let 'em write their own *Memoirs* and be d——d to them. As for my *Vigour*, it is I trust a little *delusive*. I grow daily better acquainted with certain 'wages of mortality', which being—as happily they are—unaccompanied by pain or active discomfort, *encourage* the hope that I may depart, when the time comes, quickly. Who would wish to live *much* longer in this world?

Mr. Birrell, I am happy to say, is still with us, and in conversation as uncompromising as ever.

TURNING THE TURTLE

GOVERNMENT HOUSE

LUGKNOW

Jany. 10th, 1922

ARCHI-
BALD
BATTY

I want to add hastily—to put you in your proper place !—that I have participated in a new sport. I see you sitting at many an official dinner, swallowing your turtle soup and gazing apprehensively at a Menu as long as a cricket pitch. You may appreciate your soup, *but I have turned a turtle*. Until you have done this, you simply don't know what Turtle soup means.

Imagine a perfectly good ship at anchor two miles from a little island on which five Europeans live. A cheery dinner on board : a chugging motor boat ending in a soft bump and a jump through the surf for the shore. Silently we creep along the shore to take up our stations. Suddenly we see a spurt of sand and on the bank a turtle the size of a writing table digging a hole for its eggs. A great haroosh, and we rush for it. Some of us seize it by the shell and start to heave ; one unlucky one gets a blow from a flipper on the thigh and does a double somersault into the sand. At last he comes over, blowing through the nose, but defeated ; and contents himself with a few violent smacks on the chest. We have marked him down and go on.

A few yards further something appears in the sea. A turtle arrives on the beach, taking every advantage of the tide to propel him up the shore. He takes no notice of us—it really is a deserted island—and we turn him with little but physical difficulty.

Finally we get such a lot that we put them on their feet again and ride races. Slow but very

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

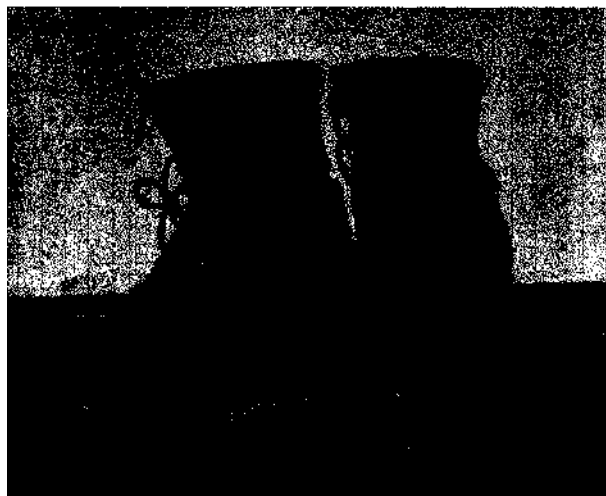
ARCHI-
BALD
BATTY
{cont}

sure until they get into deep water when they disappear from beneath one in a moment, leaving a shouting crew of two or three (they carry three easily) remembering that it is a shark-infested coast, and beating a hasty retreat to the shore.

It was a great evening and I daresay if you turn up a map of the Bay of Bengal you will find a spot—it won't be much more—at the entrance of the Bassein River, marked { Diamond Island \ This was where I turned my turtle.

This is an infernally long letter, but it may possibly brighten some long official dinner to think that the man who turned your Turtle was probably the first white man your inhabitant had seen for six months. Where I went ashore they hadn't seen anybody for a year. It seemed so strange that the man wouldn't speak. When he did, he asked if we could give him a loaf of bread and a vegetable. We brought him a hamper from the boat. I didn't tell him the war was over. He was the wireless operator and knew what Poincaré had said to Bonar Law that afternoon. Funny, isn't it ?

Captain Batty was Sir Harcourt Butler's A.D.C. when I was on a visit to Lucknow early in 1920. Afterwards he went on the stage.



MISS JEKYLL'S GARDENING BOOTS

*From the Painting by William Nicholson in the possession of
Sir Edwin Lutyens, R.A.*

MISS JEKYLUS PORTRAIT

Jany. 14, 1922 GERTRUDE
 JEKYLL

. . . Though I am so old in years I am thankful to have still some of the joy of life and delight in^all things beautiful.

When the portrait was proposed I protested, on the ground that unsightly objects had better not be painted, but the kind insistence of the promoter and painter overbore my objections and now I am content, as it proves to be a good picture and of some interest. . . .

This was the portrait of Miss Jekyll painted by William Nicholson and now in the Tate.

Mr. Nicholson, to complete his task, also painted Miss Jekyll's famous gardening boots. The original picture is now in the possession of Sir Edwin Lutycns, an early devotee of Miss Jekyll, who allows me to reproduce it.

THE REV.
G. A.
JACKSON

Jan. 16, 1922

. . . When re-reading the other day your *Second Post* I was reminded of what I was once told about Lincoln's letter to the bereaved mother, which I think may interest you.

When I lived at Knebworth, Cora, Lady Strafford—an American—occupied for a time Knebworth House, Lord Lytton's place, and the late Mr. Page, the American Ambassador, used to spend week-ends there. On one occasion, Lady Strafford told me, he noticed a copy—framed, I think—of Lincoln's letter and asked her if she knew the true history of it. He then related that John Hay had told him that when the news of the mother's bereavement was given to Lincoln he instructed Hay to write a suitable reply of condolence. This Hay did, and handed it to Lincoln. Lincoln was so surprised that Hay had so perfectly captured his style of composition that he had the letter exactly as Hay wrote it sent to the mother as coming from himself.

That is Mr. Page's story to Lady Strafford of Lincoln's famous letter, and I suppose that he was a man who knew what he was talking about; nor do I suppose that Hay was the man to say what was untrue. I feel sure that I have given this as Lady Strafford gave it to me, and as she is still in the land of the living she can corroborate it if the matter interests you sufficiently. Perhaps, however, the story is already familiar to you and I have needlessly troubled you to read all this.

By the way, if ever you bring out another series of letters can you include St. Paul's Epistle to

LINCOLN AND HAY

Philemon?' Perfect in its way—and no copy-right difficulties.

THE REV.
G. A.
JACKSON
{com)

St. Paul's Epistle is accessible to all, but here is the text of the Lincoln letter :

Executive Mansion, Washington,
November 21, 1864

Mrs. Bixby, Boston, Massachusetts.

DEAR MADAM,

I have been shown in the files of the War Department, a statement of the Adjutant General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from your grief for a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

ANON. *The four following letters, addressed to others, were sent to me by a reader of The Gentlest Art and The Second Post, my two epistolary anthologies, as being possible for any new edition.*

Letter from disappointed member of Shakespeare Society to one of the Committee who had the unpleasant task of selecting readers for *A Winter's Tale* :

I hope I may be pardoned the liberty of inditing a few lines to you. I have certainly only twice had the pleasure of being in your gracious presence. I feel therefore you will readily give me the favor I have asked. *Am* I excused? I have received a copy of the proposed cast for the forthcoming Reading in May but am more than disappointed to see my name associated with the part of scene reader.

I really could not take such a position. Only last Thursday evening I was called upon to entertain some two hundred highly educated people at a fee of £2-2-0 for my work, a hearty reception and a request for a future visit.

Why could not I along with one or two other ladies be invited to bring out our best nature in order to try and make real the character of the noble Hermione of the *Winter's Tale*? Or Paulina the warm-hearted who plays such an important part in the drama? The study of our great Artist's fair and noble women is a stimulant to my life—and oh then, to be asked to read the scenes!

Letter from a Chemist in a small country town to a Clergyman's wife who had decided to buy

her coffee where it was cheaper and better than in his rather dirty little shop : ANON.
{cont.}

W. H. Hancock presents his respectful compliments to Mrs.——— and is sorry he has lost her custom for coffee. Having endeavoured to please her palate as regards flavour in supplying the best pure quality he could obtain free from an admixture of chicory, he therefore certainly thought he could reckon on her custom with the other Church Ladies he supplies in the town and whose orders he has had for tea or coffee for many years without allowing any Denominational bias to over-rule—as unfortunately being a Dissenter not from practice but principle it does sometimes in these little towns, of which he is not a native, and considers that these conscientious scruples should suffer and permit the wave of expectancy to enter the channel in good thought, kindness and consideration for others who are not by accident folded in the Episcopal Church.

Letter from an exacting Irish office-seeker :

I would be very pleased to get a speedy answer to this letter, I am thinking strongly of becoming a 'secretary' to some gentleman in the Fleet, I mean to a captain or commander or admiral or any such person like them that would have a secretary. Now I want you to point out clearly to me all I should go through first to be one. I wish to know what are the subjects of the examinations I would have to pass and how far gone in each subject you should be. How much it would cost to be one, what age you should be when starting your first position to be one, and

ANON.
(cont)

all the different positions you would lie working before your pay would keep you and how much a year you should get from home to keep you until your pay would keep you. Who you would rank with, who you should salute (according to your position on your way to secretary) and what way the sailors would salute you in the different positions you could be in on your way to secretary. If you could tell me what sort of clothes I should wear I would be glad. What pay you would get and so on. Age for retirement and what pension you could have, how long you should serve? Of course there are very many more things necessary to know for that position which I did not refer to you could point out to me.

Letter from a girl to her aunt telling of a remarkable experience at a dinner party :

I must tell you what a dreadful time Mum and I had at a dinner party the other night. . . . I went in to dinner with a very shy young man—rather pretty he was, with a fair moustache. I made a very bad beginning because I took hold of the back of my chair and the top came off in my hand just as Mr.——was beginning to say grace, and it so upset me that I dropped my roll straight into my soup with a splash. Then I couldn't make out the young man at all. He talked a great deal of slang but he didn't seem to want to take a ticket for our cafe chantant and he said he never danced, but I never thought he was a parson because of his ordinary evening dress and his moustache.

Then a terrible drama began. We were eating

mince-pies and I suddenly looked and beheld Daddy tethered by a string leading from his mouth to the middle of the table. A bit of the table centre had frayed, a string had crossed his plate and Daddy had eaten the end with his mince-pie. I felt the shy young man was talking to me but I never heard a word he said, and I caught Mum's eye who was opposite. She saw it too and began to grow redder and redder. Daddy in blissful ignorance was talking blithely to his neighbour and chewing mince-pie and string. Then he moved his head and the string caught his wine glasses. They wobbled about ; he looked rather worried—put them straight—and then of course they wobbled again. At last he began to think something was going wrong so he put a large piece of mince-pie out of his mouth on to his plate and all was well. Then the maid took Daddy's plate away and the portion of mince-pie remained behind ! It sat on the table in front of him. Mum and I were going through gymnastic feats to keep our faces straight. She was simply red in the face and the tears began to run down my cheeks. Then my dear Papa, still being blind to the awful situation, knocked the piece of mince-pie off the table on to his knee, thereby pulling the string so that a portion of the table centre jumped forward and the glasses hopped about. Then he continued his conversation and Mum and I were just beginning to calm down a bit when he suddenly pushed the table centre back and up flew the bit of mince-pie off his knee on to the table with a wild hop that nearly finished Mum and me off. Finally I believe he cut the string but before that happened I was roused by the shy young man

ANON,
(cont.)

ANON.
(*cont.*)

repeating over and over again : ' I don't know why you should laugh, I am sure. I shouldn't say I was a curate if I wasn't. I don't see why it is so funny.' All the time he was explaining he was a curate at St. Thomas's I never heard a word. I was reduced to mopping my tears with my dinner-napkin and giving dreadful and unexpected gurgles and the more I tried to explain that I wasn't laughing at him the more certain he got that I was—so it never got settled at all.

And Daddy never knew till we told him all about it driving home.

[No date.] **MAURICE
BARING**

Here is my latest pumble, cut by a man with
a pair of sumbles on Brighton pumble.



POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

WILLIAM
BATESON

THE MANOR HOUSE
MERTON, S.W. 20
14 March, 1922

I think you have written a very nice little book about V.M. and you both rise in my opinion. But you are wrong about no artist painting *only one* religious picture. There is another who has.

You are very likely right about his rubbing down. If he did, that partly accts. for the rarity—for it must be a slow job with long waits for hardening. *Pictori crede*. But there must be some somewhere—and I will start when you are ready. Begin with Norfolk if you like—but Norbiton is nearer me and about as promising.

I think you get V.M. (pp. 9-10) into exactly his right place. Much as I like Mejuffrouw Vermeer, there is still the little wax lady at Lille. She also smiles back, but she is such a little lady, and that matters.

The book referred to is Vermeer of Delft, ig22. This is the passage in question :

But when it comes to perfection in the use of paint, when it comes to 'The Perfect Painter'—why, here he is. His contemporary, Rembrandt of the Rhine (whose hand has been traced by the experts in nearly seven hundred paintings), is a giant beside him ; but ruggedness was part of his strength. His contemporary, Franz Hals of Haarlem, could dip his brush in red and transform the pigment into pulsating blood with one flirt of his wrist; and yet think of his splendid carelessness elsewhere. His contemporary, Jan Steen of Leyden, had a way of kindling with a touch an eye so that it danced with vivacity and dances still, after all these years; but what a sloven he could be in his backgrounds ! His contemporary, Peter de Hooch (to whom, as I have

said, for two purblind centuries, Vermeer's pictures were chiefly attributed), could flood canvas with the light of the sun, but how weakly drawn are some of his figures ! And so one might go on with the other great painters—the Italians and the Spanish and the English and the French, naming one after another, all with more to them as personalities than Vermeer, all doing more work, yet all, even Michelangelo and Leonardo, even Gorreggio, even Raphael, even Andrea, even Ghardin (who was, so to speak, Vermeer's love-child), falling beneath him in the mere technical mastery of the brush and the palette—no one having with such accuracy and happiness adjusted the means to the desired end. Vermeer aimed low, but at his best he stands as near perfection as is possible.

WALTER
JAMES

March 26, 1922

... I venture to suggest to you that you are on unsafe ground when you judge of an artist's temperament and personality by the characteristics of his work ! It is of course an amusing and innocuous pastime, but in real life nothing has seemed to me stranger than the difference which I constantly observe between a man's work and the man himself.

I have noticed in particular that the people who paint very placid pictures are usually nervous, irritable and overstrung—perhaps they paint such pictures as antidotes ? Also sometimes swashbuckling palette-knifey and brutal painters are in real life very like rabbits, or even guinea-pigs ! etc., etc.

Walter James, who afterwards became Lord Northbourne, and whom I first met as a member of E. A. Abbey's cricket team, was himself an artist. He had studied painting under the Italian, Professor Costa, but preferred etching.

THE YOUNG IDEA

April 1, 1922

A SCHOOL-
BOY

I expect (unless you throw this letter straight into your study fire) that you will think I'm rather a bother : writing to you and taking up your precious time, whereas you might be composing another book.

You will also think that it is rather foolish of me to write at all as I am 'only a school-boy' : I have been at Winchester five halves now and we go down for the Holidays on Wednesday the 5th. Although I am very happy here I look forward with a most pleasurable delight to the Holidays.

Do you always say 'Hares' last thing at night on the last night of the month and 'Rabbits' first thing on the first day of the month ? I **do**. . . .

I am so glad you like old books : I love them. Have you ever read Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* : it is awfully quaint and interesting.

My favourite books are *Lavengro*, *The Romany Rye* and the *Bible in Spain* by George Borrow. What are yours ?

Did anyone make a good April Fool of you to-day ? Nothing much happened here.

I believe that in *The Open Road* you gave a poem or song of a Boy freewheeling Down Hill on a Bicycle. There is a fine Hill near here called Gheesefoot Head : it is 579 feet high and a mile long—and it takes 3 minutes to freewheel down, a glorious feeling but not so nice as a gallop on horseback over the springy turf of the Downs on a frosty morning.

I hope you either shoot or hunt ? But perhaps you like the 'Friendly Town' better ?

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

The free-wheeling poem was by H. C. Beeching. It runs thus:

GOING DOWNHILL ON A BICYCLE

A Boy's Song

With lifted feet, hands still,
I am poised, and down the hill
Dart, with heedful mind ;
The air goes by in a wind.

Swifter and yet more swift,
Till the heart, with a mighty lift,
Makes the lungs laugh, the throat cry—
' O bird, see ; see, bird, I fly.

' Is this, is this your joy,
O bird, then, I though a boy,
For a golden moment share
Your feathery life in air ! '

Say, heart, is there aught like this
In a world that is full of bliss ?
'Tis more than skating, bound
Steel-shod to the level ground.

Speed slackens now, I float
Awhile in my airy boat;
Till when the wheels scarce crawl
My feet to the pedals fall.

Alas, that the longest hill
Must end in a vale ; but still,
Who climbs with toil, wheresoe'er,
Shall find wings waiting there.

Lines written on seeing a Book-seller in St. James's Street on March 21, 1922, at 15 p.m. **MAURICE BARING**

I saw Mr. Maggs
on his way out to lunch ;
There were holes in his bags.
I saw Mr. Maggs;
He said : * I smoke fags,
They're a penny a bunch'.
I saw Mr. Maggs
on his way out to lunch.

And here I might quote the telegram which arrived on the morning after I had challenged Maurice to produce a limerick on his home-town :

There was an old cleric of Rottingdean
Who said ' I'm no longer a swatting dean—
I am taking my case
And I'm growing sweet peas,
I'm a hoeing and sowing and potting dean'.

CHRIS-
TOPHER
MORLEY

/ think this is my first letter from Christopher Morley, the American Everyman of Letters, to whose poems of child life, Ghimnesmoke, / had written an Introduction,

June 18, 1922

Most of my domestic verses were written some time ago ; the growing pains of the mind have led me on to somewhat different themes lately. But I heartily agree with you as to the marvellous beauty and amazement that the topic of a baby's growth offers. Our youngest, who will be 2 years old next September, is a perfect lyric to look upon : it would need William Blake and Walter de la Mare to come somewhere near the truth of her elvish comedy. . . .

Of course if a man is a satirist by nature ; or a sentimentalist ; or a pure humorist ; or a sheer mystic—his route is comparatively easy. He follows the native slant of his temperament ; his work shows throughout that one characteristic trend ; the 'critics' know what to expect, or at any rate pretend to find it, and deal with it accordingly. But if one has the painful fortune to find several of these instincts united in one's heart, and none strong enough to sweep out the others—then is the trouble ! But most of us, happily, know darkly what we are trying to do, and are generally unshaken by casual blames or praises. . . .

When I was in New York in ig20 I saw much of Christopher, or Kit, Morley, who entertained me on Long Island, but before doing so protected himself with every legal formality :

To make sure that our junket may not be marred by any mis-step, and having recently

LEGALIZING THE VISIT

bought a house (so that my mind, having envisaged many legal documents, is aware of the frailty of merely verbal 'understandings') I take my inkpot in hand to 'confirm' (as we hustling business men say) our telephone conversation, to wit:

CHRIS-
TOPHER
MORLEY
(cont.)

Memorandum of Agreement Between E. V. LUCAS of London, England, hereinafter designated as the Guest, and Christopher Morley of New York City, hereinafter designated as the Host—

Whereas the Guest agrees to submit himself, for several hours, to the ministrations of the Host, with a view to travelling, voyaging and faring upon the Long Island Railroad toward that plot or parcel of ground, with improvements and messuages, known, styled and generally recognized as the Country Life Press, Garden City, being the publishing plant of Messrs. Doubleday, Page and Company, and *Whereas* the Host undertakes no responsibility for the weather, climate, sunshine, humidity, or precipitation of moisture during the course of said expedition, but binds himself in honour to supervise and safely convoy said Guest, with comfortable delivery at Garden City and reasonably prompt transportation back to New York (the word *comfortable* being construed according to the customs and limitations of Long Island commuters),

BE IT KNOWN, THEREFORE, that Guest and Host do mutually contract and pledge one another, by word and oath, to meet for the execution of this contract in the waiting room of the Long Island Station (being the north wing of the Pennsylvania Station, downstairs), hard by

CHRIS-
TOPHER
MORLEY
{cont.}

the news-stand, at 10.45 o'clock, ante meridiem, daylight saving time, on Wednesday, May 19th ; it being agreed that the Guest will not permit himself to be confused, bewildered, dismayed or otherwise disheartened and set at naught on seeing clocks or timepieces in the railroad station marked '*Eastern Standard Time*' and indicating an epoch sixty minutes in arrears of the time displayed by the dial of his watch, or any other reputable mechanism for the enumeration of fugitive time in the city of New York.

AND FURTHERMORE that the parties to this agreement will be discernible, known and recognizable to one another by dallying with and gazing intently upon a copy of *The Atlantic Monthly* upon the news-stand, as though with intention to purchase ; and if, for reasons of composure and keeping countenance it shall be necessary for either party to *bay* said magazine, the price thereof shall be paid by the later arrival.

In Witness whereof the above parties pledge their lives, fortunes and sacred honor.

Loc. Sig. (Guest.)

Loc. Sig. CHRISTOPHER MORLEY (Host.)

A year later C. M. sent me his New York news :

1923

Stephen Graham, that delightful creature, spent last night with me in the glades of Long Island ; he has just come back from his two months' tramp with Vachel Lindsay in the Rockies; he has been writing a charming series of sketches about it for the *Post*, which he intends to use in book form. TRAMPING WITH A POET, he

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH

calls it; a companion volume, we tell him, to *Travels with a Donkey*. The genial Caliph A. Edward Newton is home again, and writes me terse bulletins from Philadelphia; I haven't seen him yet, but his new book—which will greatly entertain you—vient de paraitre here. We are told that the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse—Pearsall Smith, 'Peck' (A. P.) Herbert, Jack Squire and Maurice Baring—are on their way. The first two are, to me, the more important. Smith, of course, we still obstinately regard as a native; even though he has lived on your side for so long. His *Trivia* you have read, I hope? There is a *More Trivia* coming this fall: *Triviora* should have been the title.

CHRIS-
TOPHER
MORLEY
{cont.}

Mr. Newton's 'book' was The Amenities of Book Collecting, which had a fair sale in England and a very great one in America.

A complete edition of Mr. Pearsall Smith's essays entitled All Trivia appeared in 1933.

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

**KENNETH
BIRD**

I don't know how to thank you for the very handsome present of the picture of Mr. Thomas Box. I don't know how you could part with such a monument of the great days, but can only promise that it shall have a most appreciative home.

I note that his trousers are not as ample as those of my friends : I can only plead that it is probable that such a superman as the great Tom Box would have a soul above exact conformity with prevailing fashions—in fact, I'd suggest that his tight trousers may possibly have been a purely personal matter, like Ranji's silk shirt, or even W.G.'s M.C.C. tie.

I don't know that I quite approve of his position at the wicket—what the modern cricket-expert, with his easy command of English, would call 'the one-thighed stance'. But perhaps it had something to do with the lack of pads. . . .

Mr. Bird is better known by his humorous pictorial sequences in Punch and elsewhere signed 'Fougasse'.

I reproduce the portrait in question. Thomas Box of Sussex (1809-1876) was the first of the great wicket-keepers.



THOMAS BOX OF SUSSEX

From the Engraving in colour by C. Hunt

FRENCH AND ENGLISH

December 8/22 **LADY
(IAN)
HAMILTON**

I too am fond of^c going back to beginnings\ When I was living in Paris about two years ago, I amused myself looking up some French ' beginnings ' a few of which I quote for your amusement or interest.

'Au clair de la *Lune*' was originally written ' Au clair de la *lume* ' meaning candle-light, and had no reference to moonlight at all.

' Pommes de Terre en *robe de Chambre*' is the French way of describing potatoes cooked in their skins, but the original version was robe *des Champs*, literally the dress of the field, which is much prettier than the corruption. A puree of fruit, such as apple, is called in French a ' Marina lade' which word came from ' Marie—est—malade' when purees were made for one of the French Queens who was ill. There are many more examples of the kind that I could quote you, but I will refrain.

In a later letter more examples are given :

Another word which occurs to me as I write. We speak of a Baron of Beef in this country but the origin is French, namely the *Bas rond de Bœuf* which is sufficiently descriptive to require no further explanation !

You know of course the origin of the word Love in Tennis scoring. Tennis being the original Jeu de Paume, when someone made nought it was called PCEuf—or a Duck as we should say in Cricket. L'CEuf was easily contracted into Love when the game came to England, but the amusing thing is that now in France they say ' Love ' and think it's English !

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

LADY
(UN)
HAMILTON
(cont)

One of my favourites I must add. Barley Sugar was originally *sucre brule', which in English became naturally barley sugar. Then it went back to France and was retranslated into Sucre d'Orge, which it remains to this day.

SAILORS ON HORSEBACK

23 Dec, 1922 W. P. KER

Thank you—it was and is a good idea.

I have a share in No. 51—I had the papers first from Fletcher, and advised Raleigh to get and print them. One result was that an officer (Lieut. A. S. C.) wrote to the *Times* asking if those Admiralty instructions had ever been issued.

I mean to read the collection—I have had most of them through my hands.

Here is the latest birth of Time and our College. I never saw the like of it before. I make a good end.

This note from the great scholar and critic who was Professor of English at University College in Gower Street refers to the Broadsheets which The Times had published during the War for the beguilement of the troops abroad. The originator of the idea was Sir Lionel Earle, but the chief collector was Walter Raleigh, who asked every likely person he met if he could suggest anything. The Admiralty paper in No. 5/ runs thus :

ADMIRALTY INSTRUCTIONS RELATIVE TO HORSES AND DOGS

The Commander-in-Chief
H.M. Ships and Vessels
Portsmouth

Captain
Ship *Excellent*
Portsmouth
Submitted

With reference to your signal, there is nothing laid down in the Admiralty instructions as regards naval officers in charge of a battalion of seamen riding.

Their Lordships have hitherto left it to the discretion of the officers themselves whether they ride

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

or walk, and it was hoped that naval officers would not ride unless they were capable of withstanding the cup and ball motion which is so closely connected with equestrian exercise.

This hope, however, has not always been realized, and the disappearance into the big-drum* of the Grenadiers made by a commanding officer of the Naval Brigade on the occasion of a review at Windsor, together with a record made by a midshipman from Whitehall to Hyde Park Corner at the Jubilee Review, has not encouraged their Lordships to issue an order that naval officers should be mounted.

On such occasions as I have seen naval officers mounted, the uniform has been breeches and boots, but there is no mention of these articles in the uniform regulations.

I enclose a photograph of saddlery supplied or otherwise obtained by this establishment for the use of naval officers at functions. The extreme height of the pommel and the crupper of the saddle is to give extra stability to the officer while in the perilous position of being balanced astride the horse.

The only instructions issued here with regard to equestrian drill are that rolling and pitching should be avoided as much as possible, the animal's way should be checked when rounding corners, and extreme deflection never applied except at slow speeds ; in mounting and dismounting the port side only is used, and spurs are not to be used to hold on by.

If not under control four red lights need not be hoisted ; placing the hand behind the back is sufficient warning to the next astern not to close.

The animal is steered in the same way as a boat with a yoke, except that whereas in a boat the yoke is at the stern, with a horse it is in the bows. The yoke lines are called reins.

The initial velocity of the animal depends upon the mark and upon the food given. If it is a good mark and much food has been given, great care

must be exercised by the naval officer in getting into the saddle.

I am directed by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to inform you that they have under consideration your submission of February 13 last with reference to that portion of their Lordships' directions contained in Admiralty letter N.S. 2168/349 of January 2, '05, whereby caretakers employed upon ineffective vessels are required to provide a dog for that purpose that would meet with their Lordships' approval.

I am to inform you that their Lordships—having in view the purpose for which these dogs are to be employed—are of opinion that the samples cited by you—that is to say, a half-bred daschund and a toy pug—are not suitable ; and my Lords, while desirous of not limiting the choice of animals unduly, are of opinion that the dogs employed should be of active habits and able to bark effectively, that is with reference to the size of ship on which they are employed.

My Lords are of opinion that one of the sample dogs quoted in your correspondence—a Pekin spaniel of 3 lbs. weight—would not be effective on a battleship, but might be suitable for a gun vessel. You are, therefore, to make such arrangements in this respect as will, in your opinion, carry out the intentions of their Lordships most effectively.

My 'good idea' was to have some sets of the Broad-sheets bound up under the title Writing Men to Fighting Men, and one of these I gave to W. P. Some years later, they were collected in two ordinary library volumes under the editorship of Mr. Geoffrey Dawson under the titles, A Book of Broadsheets, 1928, and A Second Book of Broadsheets, 1929. The reference at the end of the letter is to a volume of poems, dedicated to W. P. Ker, issued, n 1922 by members of the English Honours School.

LORD
NORTH-
BOURNE

BETTESHANGER
EASTRY
KENT

1 st February, 1923

. . . I am glad to think that you had met my Father ; for, well as I knew him myself, I always thought that he must have been a most refreshing experience to people who came across him. He was not in the least like other people, and I do not think I have ever known anybody who had quite the same natural charm. I cannot fill his place, but I will do the best I can to succeed him worthily.

Walter James did not long survive his father, and the world thus lost a man of great charm and the cause of art lost a champion. Among many activities he was a Trustee of the Wallace Collection. I first met the old Lord Northbourne on the University launch at the Boat Race of 1921 when Cambridge won. Later, I watched a match with him, then the President of the Kent County Cricket Club, during a Canterbury Week.

The following letters, received at different times, since they all bear upon Charles Lamb, are printed together.

The first is from the late H. A. Roberts :

33 STOREY'S WAY **H. A.**
CAMBRIDGE **ROBERTS**
18 February, 1923

. . . There is a very old social club connected with my school, Christ's Hospital, called by the queer name of 'The Amicable Society of Blues'. I happened to be president of it last year, and the minute book of 1775-1818 lies before me as I write. There are two consecutive entries which run as follows :

14 January, 1817—Present H. Woodthorpe Junr., President. Read a Work of C. Lamb on Christ's Hospital. Resolved that C. Lamb be invited to Dine at the ensuing meeting.

11 February, 1817—Present Henry Woodthorpe, Senr. member—Chairman, Messrs. Sparks, Nixon, Hill, Jackson, Deane, Few, Pinkey, Kennell, Steel, Bunn, Blinkinsopp-Williams, Secy. Visitors—C. Lamb, and Mr. Charles Cole.

No. 15—

Read a Correspondence between C. Lamb and Henry Woodthorpe Junr., President—(after that they propose Cole of the War Office as a member be balloted for next time etc.).

The meeting was certainly at the London Tavern, their invariable meeting place at that time.

H. A.
ROBERTS
(cont.)

I had at first hoped that the date 1818 in the letters was conjecture, but it is given firmly without comment in Talfourd. However, the remark in question occurs in a long postscript, and the allusion to the dinners does not after all seem to imply any very secret or very public dinner.

The circumstances might easily have touched Lamb deeply ; it is an ordeal to face brother 'Blues' on such occasions (as I know, and I'm fairly brazen so far as audiences go). But Woodthorpe, Bunn, Blinkinsopp & Sparks had (like others) entertained at a dinner of the Society in the Wag's Head Tavern, Leadenhall Street (they removed to London Tavern in 1808) Coleridge, Le Grice and Allen. The occasion was St. Matthew's "Day, 1790, after the speeches in the Great Hall of Christ's Hospital, and while the boys were still at school. You recollect that the three names of the boys occur in a bunch in * Recollections of Christ's Hospital', which from its date was clearly the essay read. The Society had also entertained Lamb's 'poor S——' (Scott, who ended in Bedlam) the year before, with Coleridge. Scott had spoken the 'English Oration', and shortly after turned up to thank the Society 'which he did in a very handsome manner'.

So there were all the materials for a pretty bit of sentiment; and the breakdown, if at the dinner, was among friends and brothers.

Is this of any use ?

The facts are interesting, but how much more 'use' would they be if it were possible to trace the correspondence between Lamb and Henry Woodthorpe, Junior'. It is

doubtful if Lamb had the ⁱ old boy ' spirit—at any rate in such profusion that he would look forward to this kind of reunion. Some men have it; some more definitely have it not. Coleridge and Le Grice he would like to meet as often as possible ; but not the whole fraternity.

Since' the 'Recollections of Christ's Hospital' was reprinted in Lamb's Works, 1818, and its publication could not have been far enough advanced for anyone to have sight of it in January 1817, we must assume that the discovery of the essay, which first appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine/or June, 1813, was belated. In 1820 it appeared again in A Brief History of Christ's Hospital as ' by Mr. Charles Lambe '.

This article was a piece of special pleading for Lamb's old school against some aspersions that had been cast upon it. In the Elia essay ' Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Tears Ago ', which appeared in the London Magazine for November 1820, Lamb was much more himself. It begins very characteristically : ' In Mr. Lamb's " Works ", published a year or two since, I find a magnificent eulogy on my old school. . . . It happens, very oddly, that my own standing at Christ's was nearly corresponding with his,' and so forth. That was almost the true ' matter-of-lie ' impudence, was it not ?

It is in the Elia essay and not in the earlier that Lamb mentions his school-fellows ' in a bunch '.

This is from Mr. John Turnbull, a correspondent in South Africa, who had found in an old magazine the epigram from the Latin which he believed to be by Lamb. It ran thus:

As swallows shrink before the wintry blast,
And gladly seek a more congenial soil,
So flatterers halt when fortune's lure is past,
And basely court some richer lordling's smile.

/ cannot recall my reply, but in a further letter the following piece of evidence is mentioned:

In Charles Lamb's Timon of Athens, he para-

phrases Sec. Lord, and Timon's speech on Timon's entry in Act I I I, se. vi, as follows:

' For the swallow follows not summer more willingly than men of these dispositions follow the good fortunes of the great, nor more willingly leaves winter than these shrink from the first appearance of a reverse ; such summer-birds are men.'

This surely supports the Lamb ascription.

From Mr, Edmund D. Brooks, an American collector:

In the Appendix to your edition of the Works of Charles Lamb under ' Essays and Notes not certain to be Lamb's but probably his' you include ' Dog Days, A Letter To the Editor of the " Every Day Book " '

The original manuscript of this piece has recently come into my possession and I thought you would be interested to know that it is entirely in Lamb's handwriting and in addition bears a notation establishing his authorship beyond a doubt.

Below the signature ' Your faithful, though sad Dog Pompey ' Lamb has written :

DEAR H., I think this preceded by a short acco't of the Canicular Days might serve, or can't you make more of it ? Both pretty well. C. L.

Enfield Saturday.

From Mr. H, S. W. Edwards :

I recently purchased at a normal price an old folio edition of Heath's Choricks, 1676. On the

fly-leaf is written in pencil, 'Mr. C. Lamb's copy purchased by me at Mr. Moxon's sale B. Francis \ On the title-page is written in ink 'Charles Lamb \ In your Life of Lamb, p. 304, you say that Moxon selected 60 volumes for presentation and *destroyed* the remainder of his library. Was this cruel destruction limited to the tattered, or was it utter and complete? Is it possible that a quiet well-conditioned if rather dull volume such as this was put on Moxon's own shelves to appear again when his own library was sold? To possess one of Lamb's old folios, and half-bound at that, is an idea so delightful that I would fain think it at least possible.

From Mr. William MacGregor :

I happened the other day to be looking through 'Appendix III—Charles Lamb's Library' and found that you say under 'Bistonio Trigonio Elogi del Porco, 1761' 'Probably given to Lamb by some one' etc. . In my copy of 'Elogi del Porco' there is written in pencil 'Given to me by Mr. Moxon C.L.' . . .

From A. S. Lowell :

I feel it is like being made over again when one reads of such human kindly loving people as Charles Lamb. I feel 'converted' again, quite determined to be kind and human and stick to my job however boring and almost persuaded to try gin to see if it will turn me into something so wistfully loveable as Charles Lamb. . . .

I was especially glad about the Carlyle history—it is strange when one is young how Carlyle

seems so big and dwindles with every year of one's life. . . .

Whenever I feel like being spiteful and impatient I shall say 'diddle diddle dumpkin !' smell gin and be immediately different.

From Maud E. Bartlett:

Some 35 years ago I used to know a Birmingham lady, a musician, who had heard most of the famous musicians of her day and I once asked her whom she considered the finest singer she had heard, quite expecting she would say 'Patti'. To my surprise she unhesitatingly answered 'Clara Novello'. I remember she said what a most wonderfully pure and exquisite voice she had, and how, for some reason I do not remember, she had given up singing in public while still in her prime. When in 1908 I saw her death recorded at the age of 90 I felt I had been brought very close to Charles Lamb. It seems strange that the poem he addressed to her, which is such an admirable commentary on 'I have no ear', should never be quoted—at least not to my knowledge—and yet could anything be more characteristically Elian than its last lines—

Women lead men by the nose, some cynics
say,
You draw them by the ear,—a delicate way.

From Mr. A. Edward Newton, the American bibliophile :

August 14th, 1931

I have just finished reading Charles Lamb's Letters in your edition. I do not think I ever

read the volumes through from cover to cover before. Who ever wrote letters like Lamb? The divine 'chit-chat' of Cowper is not in the same street. Sometimes I think that Lamb's Letters are, if possible, better than the Essays.

LADY
NOBLE

In Reading, Writing, and Remembering / quote the verses that I wrote for Lady Noble's hundredth birthday; and her reply in kind. Six years before, on April 6, '1923 I had felicitated with her in these terms :

To hear the music of the spheres
(And dance to it) for ninety years
Is such a deed as almost none
—The Marvellous alone—have done.

But you, dear Lady Noble, you
Are high among that Special Few,
And may you still, and still, and still,
Defy old Time the Tyrant's Will.

Here is the answer :

With caution as a guide,
I meekly trod Life's mazes,
But now, puffed up with Pride,
From a real Poet's praises,

Audaciously I try
My thanks in rhyme to mumble.
Soon melts the wax : and I
To lowest level tumble.

Of Friends you have a tribe
(You'll now think me the boldest),
Let me—just *once*—subscribe
Myself—' one of the oldest'.

' Lord let me know my end '
I ask not, but am giving
Deep thanks—for many a friend
Who cheers me, old but living.

M. D. NOBLE.

Lady Noble, the widow of Sir Andrew Noble, died, aged 101, in 1929.

VILLINO CHIARO, RAPALLO
October 29, 1923

MAX
BRERBOHM

Here is the proof of my thing for the Q's doll's house. It is thick with corrections—but not one of these is an alteration from the original script : every one is merely a pious restoration.

Please issue an Ukase—or an Encyclical, a Bull (the *Quoad err ores Vuspissimi*)—that the printers shall pay minute attention to all the corrections *and instructions* written on the proof. One of the instructions is that I MUST RECEIVE A REVISE. Please tell somebody in your office to post a revise *registered* to me. Posts nowadays take only 2 days. I will of course send the revise back by return.

Excuse all this to-do. If one is writing a history of civilization, or propounding some great new gospel, printers' errors don't matter—may even brighten the thing up. But a trifle must be perfect.

P.S. By the way, what sort of dithering and blithering illiterate ass invented that mode of beginning every alternate paragraph at the extreme left of the line ? What are paragraphs for but to divide visibly the places where the sense of the writing is divided ? Will a day come when paragraphs shall be abolished altogether, and everything be printed as one gasp and gabble ?

When the Queen's Doll's House was in the making, in the early nineteen-twenties, it was decided to give the library real original books for its shelves, and original water-colours and etchings for its portfolios. All the books thus specially prepared by the most prominent authors of the day, and

many of the pictures, are reproduced in Vol 11 of the Book of the Queen's Doll's House, 1924.

Mr. Beerbohm's contribution, entitled 'Meditations of a Refugee', told how he had always resented his normal height and wished to be tiny :

I appealed to the Fairies, who are as puissant as they are small. They ignored me. I thought I might secure their interest and favour through men more closely in touch with them than I. I approached Mr. W. B. Yeats. He looked down at me and said that I seemed to him quite small enough already. I approached James Barrie. He looked up at me, said that I seemed to be unaware that I was addressing a Baronet, and disappeared in a dense cloud of tobacco smoke.

Sighing I fell back on my will-power, which is less slight than my brain-power. I steeped myself in the latest American books about Auto-psycho-pseudometamorphosis. I looked at myself in the mirror, and, with all my might, day after day, willed myself to become tiny. Suddenly, one fine morning, while I was thus engaged, I ceased to see my reflection. What I saw was the wainscot. Hurrah ! My eyes were hardly level with the top of that 6-inch wainscot. Henceforth all would be well ! . . .

... When I heard this morning that Edwin Lutyens had built for the Queen ' a one inch scale model of a twentieth century mansion', was it not natural that I should start to my feet, exclaiming, in the words of the poet, * There is my refuge, there my haven is !'

[14.x1.23](#) H. BELLOC

Words will not express my gratitude ! It is the most valuable and amusing present I have ever had in my life : which is a tall order : as I have had (A) a Mug which plays *Madame Angot* when you take it up full of beer ; (B) £100 from a forgotten debtor. You are my benefactor. I find in my own tale more than one blemish of construction. (I read it first) but I am no longer careful of fame. My gratitude.

The gift was The Book of the Queen's Doll's House, to which Belloc contributed a. moral tale entitled ' Peter and Paul ' published by Lyfreely and Cozen '

**HUGH
WALPOLE**

24 BRYANSTON SQUARE, W. 1

Dec. 12, '23

One thing has greatly distressed me. I got a bundle of catalogues last night and in one of them I found advertized a book you once gave me. How it happened I can't think except that when my house was sold and I was in America some books in a top room were sold and this must have been taken then by a guest. I have written to the man to get it back. Please forgive me !

I have got from April next a flat in my old place 2 Ryder St. and I think a cottage in the Lakes above Derwentwater. There I hope to live and die. I shall also write a novel full of local colour and call it *The Waterproof*. Do you know what to do with a lady with a past ? ' Give her a present'.

HOTEL ESTRADA
MONT ESTORIL
PORTUGAL

JOHN
GALS-
WORTHY

January 20, 1924

We have never wished you a happy New Year, and now do so, with our love. Here we spend an existence as level as the thermometer, which swings between 55 and 65 with the most delightful determination. You, I gather, live under feet of snow, and other inconveniences.

I am reading A. P. H.'s *Man about Town*. I do think he's a valuable youth. He amuses, and he hits things that ought to be hit quite nice and hard.

You must have had a topping time comparing the National Galleries of Europe in that determined way. Ours is really the best, take it *all round*, so far as I have seen them, and I fancy this is also your conclusion.

Ada is well again (though not very powerful), and I am flourishing. Played 36 games of tennis this afternoon.

This place is pleasant, but not exciting—just north of Lisbon, on the sea and about eight miles from Cintra. A good few English residents and visitors. Lisbon is not an attractive town, and has little art. The Portuguese I rather like—at least I like to look at them.

The valuable youth 'A. P. H.' is, of course, A. P. Herbert of Punch, who since then has written The Water Gipsies to prove that he is a novelist too.

I had been making a tour of the chief picture-galleries of Europe.

JOHN
GALS-
WORTHY

HOTEL ESTRADA
MONT ESTORIL
PORTUGAL
Feb. 17, 1924

Sir, I do realize the task before me, but I had not known the date. May 30 : 5 p.m. : so be it. The dinner in the evening is the ordeal I dread. Will you or some one give me the details ? What do I have to do, and who are the speakers ? Please let me do as little as possible on my hind legs.

What a curse are dinners when you can't get drunk in peace and with impunity.

Yes, the Berlin Gallery is a good second, so far as I have seen. The Ryks Museum, with its rather too Netherlandish scope, is a corker too, and after all I'd as soon find myself in the Uffizi again as in most places.

I only got your letter about *Captures* a few days ago. So glad you liked 'Had a Horse' I thought perhaps you might. I don't think it's an over-painted little picture. My God ! horses—and the men that have to do with them !

I cannot recollect what the dinner was. The story 'Had a Horse' is about a training stable and the dark work that can go on in and around such places. Galsworthy had a passion for racing.

Here are two later notes from him bearing upon the Sport of Kings :

Oct. 16, 1929

Saw Fairway win the Champion Stakes yesterday. He will be a top-hole sire.

Oct. 17, 1929 *JOHN
GALS-
WORTHY*

Just come back from Newmarket filled to the brim with love for two-year-olds. ' Press Gang ', ' Blenheim ', ' Lovat Scout ', ' Fair Isle ', ' Fair Diana ', ' Lady Abbess '. What heads, what eyes!

A. B.
WALKLEY

29 Feby., '24

I shall soon have to be thinking of a discourse for the R.L.F. dinner on the 20th March. I wish you'd stretch your kindness a little further, and give me a hint for a suitable theme—for an audience of a kind which is strange to me. I'm not thinking of the howling swells—the P. of W., Randall Cantuar, H.E. the Ruritanian Ambassador &c.—for what they're in the habit of listening to, God knows; I'm thinking of the 'general company', which is apt, I fancy (quite wrongly, I daresay), to be a somewhat stodgy and serious company. That is a sort of company I've never yet had to cope with in my occasional flights of after-dinner eloquence. Also, there are 50,000 ways of discussing Literature, and I don't want to pitch on the wrong one.

I seem to have made some suggestions, for a few days later A. B. W. wrote again, saying :

The comparison of the R.L.F. and the Civil List Pensions appeals to me, the most unbusinesslike of idiots, just because of its businesslike air.

The Royal Literary Fund 1924. banquet was held on March 20, 1924, the principal speakers being Lord Crawford and the then Headmaster of Eton, Dr. Alington, who ended a very witty speech in these words :

It is my privilege in proposing this Toast [of Literature] to couple it with the name of Mr. Walkley. Mr. Walkley has recently informed the world—I saw it in a Sunday paper—that, notwithstanding statements to the contrary, he is not a Frenchman. I have no doubt he found it necessary to deny that, because there are many people who believe that the grace which Mr. Walkley imparts to his writing is a

purely Gallic possession, and cannot be found on this side of the Channel. Mr. Walkley is one of those who knows how to exalt his prejudices into principles, and convert levity into Literature. Those who have the privilege of reading what he writes in *The Times* know with what amazing success he does it. I was glad to notice the other day that, besides the brilliant and fascinating ideas with which he delights us, he has also a firm hold on the commonplace ; and when I found him stating in *The Times* the other day that he thought the taste of Mr. Bernard Shaw was not always faultless, I felt that Mr. Walkley had that grasp of the commonplace which, combined with his levity and his idealism, make him the ideal representative of Literature to-night.

A. B.
WALKLEY
{cont.)

Walkley's speech, which I quote in full, reads excellently ; but it was delivered without oratorical skill, and was therefore disappointing.

Mr. Chairman, My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen, as I was making my way to this dinner to-night, I passed a crowd of playgoers waiting for the theatre door to be opened. They were listening somewhat impatiently to a kerbstone entertainer, who, it appeared, was giving them a recitation. I quickened my steps, but as I passed I noticed that the poor fellow bore on his breast the placard 'Paralyzed'. Well, I have not been invited to give you a recitation, but at the same time you must remember that the theatre crowd could not budge ; whereas you can. And I hope I shall not be misunderstood, but if you would all get up on the spot and go out, in my present frame of mind I should be inexpressibly relieved. But if you elect to stay and chance it, I must warn you that in your minds' eye you must see upon my breast the placard 'Paralyzed', I am paralyzed in the first place at having to respond for this Toast to that most awe-inspiring of all mortal beings, a Headmaster. That is to say, I was para-

A. B.
WALKLEY
(cont.)

lyzed until Dr. Alington had spoken ; but he spoke with so much wit and humour that anything like stage fright or awe was temporarily put out of the question, and was superseded by the much more comfortable feeling of amusement and delight. I was charmed to see that his favourite preparation for his awful duties at Eton was reading the sporting papers. That is a human virtue which we all value. I am paralyzed, in a second place, by the appalling magnitude of the subject I am asked to reply for—Literature. I know how entirely unworthy I am for the part, and I can only hope to pretend to approach it by taking a leaf from the book of the Rev. Mr. Thwackum, who, you may remember, was sometime tutor to the young Tom Jones: ' When I speak of Religion,' said Mr. Thwackum, ' I mean the Christian Religion ; and not only the Christian Religion, but the Protestant Religion ; and not only the Protestant Religion, but the Church of England.' I hope that you will understand that when I speak of Literature, I mean English Literature, and not only English Literature, but modern English Literature, and not only modern English Literature, but the modern English novelist, and not only the modern English novel, but the modern English novel as written by the fair sex. The Professor of Poetry at Oxford recently told us that the race of long-haired poets was dead ! but if we are to consider the relations between Literature and hair, why should we not come at once to that quarter where both hair and Literature naturally exhibit themselves in luxuriant growth ? I say naturally exhibit themselves because, as we know, in those regions art is always being brought in to correct nature, and our authoresses' locks as well as their literary style is constantly being curtailed and trimmed and frizzed and waved and curled into new and surprising shapes. Heine said that every woman who wrote kept one eye on her paper and the other on some man—except the

AUTHORESSES AND HAIR

Princess Hahn-Hahn, who had only one eye. I am inclined to believe that the man was a hairdresser. Indeed, I think we might almost construct a new historical survey of the modern novel solely from the hairdresser's point of view. If we carry our minds back a 'hundred years, and we cannot carry them back further because further back than that you do not really know what our authoresses' hair was like, we find that they sedulously hid it in Miss Burney's time under wigs and powder; in Miss Austen's time, under caps; while dowagers and chaperons lurked in ambush under turbans. Perhaps I may digress for a brief moment to mention that Miss Austen made her own caps, and I should like to quote to you the description she gave of one that she was doing up. She told her sister that she made the cap: 'To retain the narrow silver round it, put twice round without any bow, and instead of the black military feather shall put in the coquelicot one as being smarter, and also because the coquelicot is to be all the fashion this winter.' She added that after the ball she 'would probably make it all black'. The darling! Well, carry your minds back for a hundred years, and I think you will find that for a considerable part of that time, say from George Sand to George Eliot—I know that George Sand does not come into my self-prescribed division of English Literature, but I have just dragged her in literally by the hair because her hair happened to present the exact type of fashion of the period I am speaking of—it was a somewhat formal fashion with heavy folds braided down over the ears and framing the face. The best illustration I can give you of the style is the appearance of the spaniel—just think of the spaniel with its long ears coming down under its muzzle, framing its large eyes and its broad homely nose. I happen to know a cocker spaniel which so exactly represents the type I am speaking of that its people in their literary moments call it alternatively

A. B.
WALKLEY
(cont.)

A. B.
WALKLEY
{con}.)

George Eliot and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, though between you and me, if the truth were known, the dog will never answer to any other name than Sambo. Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, such is the coiffure of the ladies of that period. Such also is their literary style, massive, somewhat formal, slightly heavy, and always designed as a framework to the subject.

Then there came a change, and, in some sort, a reaction. Our mothers, and looking round this hall one might almost say our grandmothers, revolted against the formalities of that style, the 'bandeaux' style, as it was called. They boldly uncovered their ears, let down a fringe over their foreheads, and drew those heavy folds behind their heads into a bun, which they called a chignon, and they produced, or attempted to produce, a long sausage curl at one side of the cheek. On the whole it was a style which was elaborately ornate—what the architects would call, perhaps, baroque—but it was distinctly fascinating, especially as the alteration of hair brought with it, a strange thing which often happens, an alteration of nose. With the bandeaux you had rather a longish nose and solidly designed. Then with the chignon the noses began to turn rogueishly up. And so it was with the ladies' novels; they were a little stodgy, and perhaps padded like the chignon, and there were here and there hollow and adventitious longueurs like the curl, and, like the noses, they were apt to be frisky. I suppose that Miss Braddon, if Mr. W. B. Maxwell, her son, himself a most distinguished novelist, who is with us to-night, will allow me to say so, and Miss Rhoda Broughton, were the chief authors of that period, and I cannot help thinking that it must just have covered the earliest and tenderest years of Miss Marie Corelli.

But, oh, how different the spectacle when you turn from those early days to the present moment! How different the hair, and how different the novels! Our lady writers appear to have parted at once with

their back hair and their back literary traditions. They have had not only their heads, but their style 'bobbed' or 'shingled'. Short hair and short sentences have come back. And the short hair has given a new lease of life to the short story. Some of these short-haired ladies look like boy angels without wings, and some of them write like fallen angels without asterisks. Balzac's cynical hero, de Marsay, said that the wickedest book in the world was what women said or whispered to one another behind their fans. Fans are now out of fashion, and the new writers are compelled to print what they used to whisper behind their fans, and work it all in in their novels.

A, B.
WALKLEY
(cont.)

Talking of Balzac, I am reminded how in my youth French novels were carefully hidden from the young ; whereas now they are pushed at them to keep them from the English novels. I believe that the day is not far away when both the French and the English novel will be pushed at them to keep them from the American. But, after all, there is a chance for the future of our fiction, for we must remember that no fashion in hairdressing is permanent. Some day, with a new and happy arrangement of plaits or tresses, the quiet, reticent, comfortable style will come back again. Meanwhile, we can console ourselves by reading the novels of the charming woman who made her own hats. Upon that cheerful thought I will sit down, thanking you for the undismayed confidence with which you have greeted this Toast of Literature '

WILLIAM
BATESON

19.V.24

You owe me about £6 with franc at 70 **for** a stupid dinner eaten at Voisin's. For years I have always meant to treat myself that far, *mainly* on your (and in 2nd degree Labouchere's) printed recomm. Never again. I would rather try Lucas (le grand) or even Lucas (le petit)—or even the other sizes which you may have spawned up and down the city.

/ seem to have said that Voisin's was still good. Once it was supreme ; but directly it began to go down it declined swiftly, and is now no more. Recommending Paris restaurants is a foolish pastime which I have given up. Lucas-le-Grand in the Place de la Madeleine is now known as Carton-Lucas. There are two smaller Lucas restaurants, neither of which I know : one at 17 Rue le Pelletier and one at 44 Rue des Petites Ecuries.

MRS. W. K. CLIFFORD

I st June, 1924 **MRS. W. K.
CLIFFORD**

I am not a vain woman, but I wonder sometimes, and am sad, at my work being overlooked, for always I have written, not for money (tho' I have had very sore need of it), but because this or that character or situation has appealed to me and I *felt* it—and I have been so anxious not to put the dear name of W. K. Clifford to work that would disgrace it. But I often wonder if it is any good at all? Why? . . . •

Mr. Gerald Gould, who has been writing a series of articles in the *Observer* on living novelists, mentions—at least mentions—everyone but myself. Yet he was a student of W. P. Ker's—and W. P. Ker (as well as Sidney Colvin) read the proofs of my last novel *Miss Fingal* and liked it very much.

/ agree that this charming writer was allowed too soon to pass out of print. I have always thought the central character of Aunt Anne one of the best creations of modern novelists, and wondered why no one has set her on the stage. Possibly because actresses, until it is too late, are reluctant to be seen in elderly parts. Mrs. Clifford's story for children, The Getting-Well of Dorothy, also deserves to be never out of print.

J.C.
SQUIRE

THE LONDON MERCURY
CASTLE COURT
POPPINS COURT
LONDON, E.C. 4
August 1924

Your letter is my only source for the news; I didn't even know she was anywhere near it; I've seen the news nowhere and can hardly believe she is dead. Eileen and I had been resolving to call this week, and now she is beyond reach and leaving for neglectful me so sweet and noble a message. She was the most beautiful old woman I ever knew; inconceivable, really, until one met her, having the spirit and charm of a girl.

Poor old Colvin: it would have been better had he gone first, he was so dependent.

Lady Colvin, wife of Sidney Colvin, the Ex-Keeper of the British Museum Print-Room and Art critic, died on August 1, 1924, at a great age, two days after her adored Joseph Conrad. She retained almost to the very last her mental and spiritual vivacity; with her intense sympathy living not only her own but the life of her friends and protiges.

17 Nov., 1924

SIR
ALBERT
GRAY

Now that the author has turned publisher he must carry on as author, and give himself the best terms. Did you ever see Andrew Lang's lines on 'The Plumber and the Publisher'? They were shown to me many years ago, and have never been published, I think. They were walking hand in hand, and had a colloquy on their respective modes of jockeying the householder and the author. I only remember that at the end the author, when expecting a handsome cheque for royalties, is presented with an account showing that he owes the publisher two pound ten. This was forty years ago. The present generation of publishers are so very different !

This is the actual text of the poem :

THE PLUMBER AND THE PUBLISHER

A Ballad of the Trade

The Plumber and the Publisher
Were walking hand in hand ;
Said they : ' The profits that we make
Are most uncommon grand,
But how we came to do the trick
No man can understand.'

The Plumber said : * Folk call me in
To sort the gas and drains ;
And then, to make things ten times worse,
I give my earnest pains
And drop my solder on the stairs,
And smudge the wall with stains.

*I drive tin tacks through leaden pipes,
All for the good of trade,
Pick off cement and unhook traps,
And let the world upbraid ;
For, pal, you knows as well as me
That *business* thus is made.'

The Publisher, he rubbed his hands,
And grinned a ghastly grin :
' Why that is much the way,' says he,
' I commonly begin ;
I reckon all expenses thrice
And so secure my tin.

'I charge for my " advertisements "
As they were diamonds rare ;
The prices that the " boarding " costs
Would make the binder stare ;
Paper and print would break the Mint,
Profits there's none to spare.

' And when I've won three thousand pounds,
Diffusing light to men,
And when he comes and claims his share—
The chap that held the pen—
I prove, by elegant accounts,
He owes me seven pound ten.

* And when the book has paid *my* toll,
Which might exhaust the Mint,
And when the author's turn should come,
Oh, then I take the hint,
And say to all inquirers: " Ah !
That work is out of print! " '

The Plumber smiled a merry smile,
He was a merry man ;
Says he : ' No pan maligns the pot,
No pot reviles the pan ;
Tou are an honest tradesman,—I'm
An earnest artisan.'

27.2.25 T.E.SHAW
(COL.
LAWRENCE)

Please don't class me as a person who wantonly writes books ! I would like to be able to write, and the Arabian campaign gave me a good excuse for trying to : but the complete failure of that book as a piece of literature has left me no ground for further efforts. I very much hope to avoid trying again !

But since then T. E. Shaw has translated The Odyssey,

OLIVER
HERFORD

August 25, [1925]

The books came so long ago I am ashamed to look at the calendar.

It is like a tale from the Arabian Nigtitis—to make a wish at midnight in New York and in an incredibly short time to have shot at me from thousands of miles away four firm coffee-coloured packages containing my heart's desire in eight vols.

I think you must have a remote ancestor away back before people were sorted out into races (according to tint) who was a bit of a Djinn in his way—an amateur way, of course, he only did it for the love of the thing. Be that as it may, I am delighted to have the books—and was just beginning to get over the strangeness of renewing an old acquaintance (he *has* changed a little in the years but the same old Heinrich at bottom) when I was whisked into this place [a nursing home] and pretty nearly into *another* (so my leech told me) and since then there has been absolutely nothing for me to do in the last three weeks or so but letter-writing, so, by some law that seems to govern my being, I haven't written a solitary letter. But as Frank Richardson said—We are none of us perfect, except Hall Caine.

Speaking of imperfections, I was delighted with Heine's description of George Sand. H. describes her as having absolutely no conversation at all; like a cat of mine, she 'let others talk' and gathered in all that was coming and gave nothing herself in return. Heine also quotes de Musset as saying almost exactly the same thing of her (George Sand) and commenting rather acidly on the cannyness of her.

I hope to be out in a day or two—am half out as it is—making visits in the daytime to have tea or lunch with Peg—a sort of ticket-of-leave man.

**OLIVER
HERFORD**
(cont.)

Not to annoy you with Arnold Bennettish realism—it was a carbuncle who sneaked into my system disguised as an itinerant boil and tried to assassinate me.

The reference is to Charles G. Leland's translation of Heine. Peg is Mrs. Herfotid, whom her observant husband once described as having 'a whim of iron'.

**MARGARET
MACKAIL**

Oct. 31, 1925

Most of my old friends now sit between two covers on a bookshelf. Only one mistake did I notice. The 'Webb' mentioned in Mrs. George Howard's letter on page 35 was Philip Webb, the architect who built the Howards' house on Palace Green, and who was a great friend of Morris. Godfrey Webb did not belong to their circle. I used to meet him staying at the Percy Wyndhams' in the seventies, and received one of my first flatteries from him, in the couplet which completed his rhymed Collins on leaving the Wyndhams :

' . . . and give my love to her who owns
The pretty face and pleasant name of Margaret
Burne-Jones.'

Very set-up by that, I was.

A reference to The Golvins and Their Friends.

24 Jan./26 *A TOTAL
STRANGER*

As I fancy that you must know England very well from your writing, which I read with much pleasure, I am writing to ask if you know of any pleasant sunny rooms that you can recommend in the country not too far from London and preferably in Berks or Bucks as I prefer being in a place served by the Great Western Railway. One of the nice type of landlady, formerly in good service, and within easy distance of small town where provisions can be procured. I need a bedroom and sitting-room. Do you know anything of Wareham as a place of residence ?

I should be most grateful if you could help me ; and it would be *most* kind of you.

On gravel or sandy soil essential.

And another, from an American stranger :

March 28, 1933

I will be pleased if you by your influence with the Company will find a book of tickets from the Manchester Sweepstake. Dear listen I will this book of tickets for my families. See if you can gether from the Manchester Sweepstake. I will be very much obliged to you for this favor. Thank you.

Please answer me.

A. W.
PINERO

23rd May, 1928

Thank you for the picture. I am a great admirer of Mr. Morrow. Long may we be able to say :

G. Morrow, and G. Morrow, and G. Morrow,
Peeps in this pretty space from day to day !

/ am not sure to which of George Morrows privately-issued drawings—made for me for Christmas cards—the writer refers, but not improbably to the picture of St. Francis being preached to by the birds, which I reproduce : a picture reminding me of a quatrain that has stuck in my memory :

St. Francis fed pigeons whenever he see 'em,
But I saw a parson to-day
Who sat on the steps of the British Museum
And frightened the pigeons away.

GEORGE
MORROW



THE BIRDS PREACHING TO ST. FRANCIS

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

**EDGAR
WALLACE**

27 June, /28

I wonder whether our poet sacrificed anything to his technique ? A gloomy fellow, yet his high skies and windy grasses compensate for his graves and clay, and those beautifully handled words of his are stepping stones so enticing that you are over the dangerous stream so quickly that you cannot see the dead bodies lying on the bed of the river ! I read ' The Shropshire Lad ' at a sitting—I'll read it now properly. . . .

/ had given Edgar Wallace A. E. Housman's deathless volume.

THE CHIEF OF POLICE.

July 13th, 1928 **LORD BYNG**
 OF VIMY,
 F.M.

Thank you. I pleaded Old Age, Varicose Veins and Senility, Corns, Craziness and Inferior Complex, Liver, Lumbago and Laziness, Giddiness, Girth Galls and Gaggadom, Melancholia, Mysticism and Mucus Membrane. But to no purpose. *Hinc illae lacrymae*, I finally capitulated, and must now endeavour to get your finger-prints.

In reply to a letter from me when Lord Byng assumed office at Scotland Yard.

I append another typical passage from another letter :

August 30th, 1929

The 'big five', the indisposed six, an elephantiased seven, to whom nothing is secret, told me you were in London, having returned from a holiday, but I searched the vaults of the Athenaeum in vain one day with no result. . . .

• POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

MRS.
ANDREW
LANG

Oct, 18, 1928

A chill having kept me in the house, I have beguiled the time most pleasantly with your book, which I finished at lunch. Of course, I knew many—most, of the people concerned, and a few personal reminiscences may amuse you. Mrs. R. L. S. I only saw once, probably on one of her early visits to England. Henry James, then living in 34 De Vere Gardens, asked me—and me only—to lunch to meet her. I liked her very much, and thought her excellent company.

About '78 or '79, we spent a month at Mickleham and in our wanderings over Box Hill were frequently joined by George Meredith. Personally, I never shared in the worship of his neighbours. For one thing, I always felt on reading his books that I must have turned over two pages, and that becomes annoying. His (second) wife was very nice, but 'most beautiful'—heavens ! I remember on one occasion a friend there taking us all in her waggonette to the Silent Pool, and G. M., who was at the end opposite me with our knees nearly touching, began to discuss me *in French* with his wife, who looked dreadfully uncomfortable. As it was impossible to pretend I didn't hear, I put on the air of polite interest with which one listens to details of total strangers.

Then I saw—and am very glad I did see—the performance of *Deacon Brodie*, and can picture at this moment the thin evil figure of Andrew with his lank black hair stealing across the empty stage, but I can't recall who any of the actors were. I know, of course, that Mrs. Fleeming Jenkin was held a goddess among a certain set of people, and I took part in a performance—financed by

ROBERT BROWNING

Mrs. Winkworth and arranged by Pro. Lewis Campbell—given for a whole week (I *think*) in June '79 in Q.A.M. to which everybody notable in any direction was invited. I have never been able to understand, myself, how a person with any dramatic sense could *wish* to act both Clytemnestra and Cassandra, but that is what she did.

MRS.
ANDREW
LANG
(cont.)

The Cly. was as a whole very impressive, but when it came to poor Cass., with her scanty greyish locks and a high squeaky voice (to differentiate), it became ludicrous, and Mrs. F. J., seated in front and applauding vociferously at every comma, was repressed at once by the real actors in the audience.' I was the slave girl deputed to lay down the carpet (a piece of purple drapery from Damascus lent me by Sir F. Leighton) before Agamemnon on his return from the wars, and to do other little things which would fail of their effect is not executed neatly and a propos—but no cue was ever given me, and when I asked for one I was told * you mustn't speak to
THE LADY '

I too thought Coquelin's *L'Art et le Comedien* a wonderful piece of work. I was asked to translate it as soon as it appeared, for Scribner I *think*, and it was the hardest bit of translation I've ever done, from any language. But then it is very metaphysical—and I am not.

All about Browning interests me deeply. I always remember with pride that never once did we meet at a dinner-party without our being placed next each other and our respective partners being neglected. Driving home one night I told my husband I had asked R. B. who was the best talker he had ever heard, and A. L. said ' Don't tell me ; let me think : was it Landor ?-' ' Yes,

MRS.
ANDREW
LANG
{cont.)

it was.' Well, R. B. was the best talker I ever heard, except Goquelin.

I've read *Treasure Island* in Spanish, and it runs very well—I wish some more of them had been done. Well, again, you will be tired of my havers so I'll stop. But did Mr. James ever tell you of his disastrous introduction to George Eliot?

Mrs. Lang died in 1933.

EDMUND BLUNDEN

March 5, 1929

EDMUND
BLUNDEN

I am very eager to offer you a perfect copy of the *Undertones* to replace the stammering example ; and if you will not object to the carrying off of this heavy volume, I will bring it to the Omar dinner. Forgive my not saying this sooner. I can hardly get anything done with this pen, and this body. I am happy that you like the book as a beautiful book, and hope one day to send you another in prose that you will think well shaped—viz. L. Hunt's shapeless Life. He himself keeps his course, but there are so many collisions and currents.

My copy of Edmund Blunders Undertones of War had turned out to be defective—'stammering' in that it had the same sheet bound in twice; and I seem self-protectively to have complained about it to the author instead of like a gentleman, buying another copy. When the work on Leigh Hunt was ready—The Life of Leigh Hunt—it came to me from the author with the following verses :

June i, 1930

Ghost of Leigh Hunt.

Well, so you've made a book of me ; I hear
You kept it mellowing into the tenth year—
I liked my Horace once ; but, let me speak,
Why did you spend so much as one brief week
On muddling out my pre-celestial course ?
Why not do honest work, or back a horse ?

Author.

It's blokes like you wot, if all 'ad their rights,
Should be chained up, especially o' nights;

EDMUND
BLUNDEN
{cont.}

'Ere's me been sweating blood to get you
straight,

And then you argufy and aggravate—
Passin' remarks ! You 'op it, down or up,
Rejoin Abou ben Adhem or ole Krupp,
And let me sit respectable, and spell
This—keep your 'ands off—note from E. V. L.

Since then this imaginative and penetrating critic has written what I think one of the most understanding and beautiful books in the language, his Charles Lamb and his Contemporaries, 1933, in which I am proud to find myself mentioned. But I can see now that all I did was to assemble materials ; it was left to Blunden to mix them in his crucible and extract the true elixir.

Edmund Blunden, it may not be generally known, was also, like Lamb, a Christ's Hospitaller ; but, too late for Newgate Street, he knew the School only in its Sussex surroundings. In my copy of Charles Lamb and his Contemporaries is written : ' Set a Blue to catch a Blue '.

June 24 [1929]

ST. JOHN
LUCAS

It was so kind of you to read the play and to trouble to write such a long letter about it. I agree *in totalibus* with your remarks; and I am glad to see that you agree with me that the author has avoided guying and vulgarizing that great and beloved One for commercial purposes. Of course, what you say about the stammer rings the bell, touches the spot and acquires the coconut. Again very many thanks for your kindness and patience.

Tomorrow I am selling my first editions of Wells, Galsworthy, Shaw; Moore of Ebury Street, etc. etc. with various autograph letters of a scurrilous character, by auction, but not, not thine own. I have a perennial red hot stomach-ache and wish I were in Heaven or thereabouts.

Thy wag

ST. JOHN

Couldst thou not lunch with me one hour ?

Behold

Dawn skims the sea with flying feet of gold,
With sudden feet that graze the bloody sea ;
Couldst thou not lunch with me ?

The play referred to was written round the life of Charles Lamb and his sister. It was produced, but I did not see it, having a prejudice against all plays about authors and particularly one about the tragedy of the Lambs. I could not even get myself to The Barretts of Wimpole Street; and more reluctantly should I have approached the recent dramatic effort of which Francis Thompson was the centre ; having known him in real life.

ADRIAN
STOKES,
R.A,

28 July, 1929

Do tell me another place in France.

The first was a success. I should like a river, and elegant trees, and a good inn—not very *expensive*. Landscape painting is rather down and out just now.

/ had sent Adrian Stokes, whose delicate romantic brush once preferred mountains to rivers, to an hostellerie beside the Eure.

THE FLITTERMOUSR •

30 Aug., 1929

**EDEN
PHILL-
POTTS**

To your lore of the Bat add that this was the creature that Nature cast out and condemned to everlasting twilight and loneliness, because, when the beasts warred against the fowls of the air, Master Bat sat on the fence and waited to shout with the conquerors. Thus Aesop of the rere-mouse.

There are also pleasing legends about the creature in a novel—*No. 87* by Harrington Hext (Butterworth).

**ARTHUR
BATCHELOR**

AT SEA, OFF AZORES RETURNING
FROM BERMUDA

(1930)

Now I'm going to warn you never to go to Bermuda, which is now simply a pub for Yanks, but to put you wise about one or two things on your trip.

Next time you are in Chartres lunch at the Cafe Normand near the fish-market. You won't find any English or Yanks there but the proprietor drove for one of our Generals in the war. Quite bourgeois but excellent.

Never stay in Orleans. but go to St. Benoit sur Loire on a Friday when frojnage d'Olivet is marketed. By the way, in the lovely little musee in the Mairie in Chartres there are two splendid portraits by, of all people, Greuze. I was also unlucky in Poitiers, but the place to lunch, if you must stop there, is the Quatre Piliers, I think the name is. If ever that way again however you must go to Saintes, a lovely and unspoiled town with a perfect French commercial hotel—I think the Messageries, but away from book I can't be sure.

Why oh why did you stay up in the cit^ at Carcassonne? There is a charming old-fashioned and quiet French hotel in the town,—also the proper one at Toulouse where I last had a perfect bouillabaisse. And at Toulouse there is in St. Sernin the finest of all crucifixes almost life-size and very early.

Glad you went to Beziers; there is a good cook there who plays with a monkey in the courtyard in his off-time. Talking of cooks, there is a good one on this ship. Have you ever had

Chilian Huevos—poached eggs under a puree of potatoes with a crown of chopped ham? I suppose you know Harpignies lived close to Grasse at a place where they make all the casseroles in the world. Must try and remember St. Nectaire. I think Belloc is right when he connects civilization with the best cheeses. . . .

ARTHUR
BATCHELOR
{cont.}

In a later letter Mr. Batchelor tells me of an advertisement in a Kenya paper which suggests a mad dinner party—
'For sale. Refractory table, with chairs to match.'

DION
CLAYTON
CALTHROP

Feb. 10, 1930

Many thanks for information about Gruyere. Do you know Parmesan? It is a volcanic island, I am told, with fumes coming up from its crater, and the sea surrounding tastes of soup. At Cheddar, they tell me, the cress dashes at the feet of the cliffs in which cave-dwellers once hewed homes with a scoop (see Grocer on Tasting).

Gorgonzola was, of course, discovered by a celebrated French author and is cut off from the main land by the Index. At Stilton Marie Corelli wrote *The Mighty Atom*, I believe. Delightful are the yellow houses with red roofs of the cheese of Holland, the cream cliffs of Eddish, the circular tours round the double Glosters, the snows of Petit Suisse & the rich plains of Brie.

Enough of this fromagerie. One day, perhaps, I shall write a little book upon 'Utterly Unknown England' which shall include Foreshevel Marshes, Nether, Zoakenhampton, and Ornithbury, those sweet villages buried in lovely boskage. Meanwhile I languish here.

31st March, 1930

A. E. W.
MASON

I enclose you Andrew Lang's lines about the two men who thought they were looking into mirrors and were looking at each other through a pane of glass.

Brown his tie adjusted,
And Green arranged his hair.
They each exclaimed, disgusted,
' I thought—I hoped—I trusted
My face was far more fair !'
As Brown his tie adjusted,
And Green arranged his hair !

This truncated triolet was new to me ; and ' arising from the question ' / am tempted to print the record of an experience that once happened to an acquaintance of mine who is now a legal luminary in a provincial town. He and some friends were visiting Paris, and one day went out to Versailles. As they were walking along one of the great florid Galleries they saw advancing upon them from the far end a party similar in number, also bent upon tearing the secret from the sumptuousness of the Sun-King.

ⁱ Look,' said my friend, ' here comes the British tripper with a vengeance, and his compatriots with him. I ask you—did you ever see such tweeds and such a cap ?' (This was in the days when an Englishman always went to the Continent in a cap.) ' Arry in Parry if I ever saw one.'

And behold the end of the room was all mirror, and it was himself and his friends that were reflected in it.

**LORD BYNG
OF VIMY,
F.M.**

May 28th, 1930

Happy Thought. Thank E. V. There it is. My Doctor stole my last copy of the old tome and I was without one till tonight.

Byng's whole-uncle encouraged by this, tells a long story, and looks to me for a laugh. No ! See page 227.

Thank you, dear E. V.

A new edition of Burnand's Happy Thoughts, with a preface by Robert Lynd, was dedicated to Lord Byng. In accepting, Lerd Byng wrote :

Nov. 15th, /29

I shall be only too proud to have my half-aunt's characteristics dedicated to me.

Here is page 227 :

Going to the drawing-room.

Old Mr. Symperson, Fridoline's father, has been telling very ancient stories. So has Byng's whole-uncle.

Happy Thought.—Laugh at all Old Symperson's stories and jokes. It is difficult to show him that not a word of his is lost upon me, as there are five between us. Byng's whole-uncle, encouraged by this, tells a long story, and looks to me for a laugh. No,

Happy Thought.—Smile as if it wasn't bad, but not to be mentioned in the same breath with anything of Old Symperson's.

Milburd (hang him!) interrupts these elderly gentlemen (he has no reverence, not a bit), and tells a funny story. Old Symperson is convulsed, and asks Byng, audibly, who Milburd is ?

I wish I could make him ask something about *me*.

Happy Thought.—Picture him to myself, in his study with his slippers on, giving his consent.

I get close to him in leaving the room. He whispers something to me jocosely, as Byng opens the drawing-room door. I don't hear it.

Happy Thought—Laugh,

SIR
GILBERT
PARKER

22nd Sept., 1930

I've read *Lady Chatterlefs Lover*. 'A spade, a spade'—no, in the words of the Bishop, 'It's a bloody shovel !' I've never read so frank and brutal a book. I suppose it had to be written, but I do not want to read another like it. It is not fastidiousness, it is an old-fashioned prejudice. Will it do good ? I 'dunno'. It seems to me that the young man or woman reading it wd. not be benefited by it. I recognize that the young of to-day are not the young of my day, still I am doubtful. Frankly I would not allow it to be published if I were censor—not because of its 'spading', but because it would turn young minds to the scents and ugliness of the cess-pool. 'Fie,⁵ the critic may say, 'we all do it.' Yes, but not in the open, and this book is the open, and, as it is clearly written, so much the more dangerous!

There, I've let myself go, and it may be I am completely wrong, but Kipling wd. have handled the same themes with an artistry concealed but ever-present and one cd. read without ^c going to the side of the ship ' ! It isn't fastidiousness; it is common decency. I'm glad to have read this, but I don't want to read another like it. Shut up, G. P. !—you've spoiled an oyster-bed !

D. H. Lawrences novels Lady Chatterley's Lover, was issued in 1928, for subscribers only, but a Paris publisher rushed out a reprint which anyone could buy there—in fact, at the Gare du Nord and the Gare St. Lazare it was thrust in the faces of all travellers to England, so that its circulation became considerable. Later, an expurgated edition was published.

THE IMPROPER DUCHESS' 209

25th February, 1931

JAMES B.
FAGAN

I am glad you like the play, but you must like the title too, which is the only possible one. When I was reading Carlyle's *History of Frederick the Great* in New York, I found a story of one of the mistresses of a little German Kingdom whom William always referred to as 'the improper duchess'. It was at the same time I got the idea for this play, and there could be no other title.

/ had maintained that the late J. B. Fagarfs comedy, The Improper Duchess, in which Yvonne Arnaud was so delightful, ought to have been called The Astute Duchess or something of that kind, because the other title gave too much away. To the regret of many people Fagan died in 1932-

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

SIR
GILBERT
PARKER

29th Feb., 1931

It is like you to send me J. M. B.'s *Greenwood Hat*. I shall read it with joy. What a man he is—so great, so modest, so self-effacing. What a pity such men should disappear—no, they don't ever ; they live on ! We miss the outer form but the Presence is there and that is all that matters in a beautiful, tiresome, evasive world !

Barriers Greenwood Hat was printed in 1930 for very limited private circulation. It took its title from Frederick Greenwood, editor of the St. James's Gazette, to which Barrie contributed in his early days. The book consists of certain of his St. James's articles with a modern commentary.

Another note from Gilbert Parker:

17th Oct., 1931

I've read and read and read *The Greenwood Hat*, and I feel that in J. M. B. we have a great artist and a most original mind. He is a Buster from Busterville. 'Gor bless im,' I say, and I can't say no more but this—'He was a big man and he done big things.' {*The Woodlanders.*)

11th March, 1931

WALTER
DE LA
MARE

In your *Ann and Jane Taylor* there is a poem by Jane called ' Dirty Jim ' I have come across a variant called ' Dirty Jack '. Apart from other differences the last stanza runs :

The pigs in the" dirt could not be more expert
Than he was in grubbing about,
So at last people thought the young gentleman
ought
To be made with four legs and a snout!

which seems to me preferable to :

The idle and bad, like this little lad,
May love dirty ways, to be sure ;
But good boys are seen to be decent and clean
Although they are ever so poor.

Do you happen to know if ' Dirty Jack' is a Jane Taylor variant, or has some other hand been meddling ?

I could not say.

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

JAMES O.
HANNAY
(GEORGE
BIRMING-
HAM)

MELLS RECTORY, FROME
June 12, 1931

I quite think that——and——ought to have sent me at least a ham, but I have shrunk from asking for anything. I once said in a novel that a lady, not my heroine, was as wholesome and as unexciting as——underclothes. I hoped for at least a camel's hair dressing gown, and instead of that I got a series of abusive letters from a managing director in which he tried to prove that the main object of the——Company was the production of frivolous ' undies '. After that experience I felt that it was better not to call ——&——'s attention to the free ad. I gave them.

In this author's novel Fed Up, 1931, the real name of the provision and comestible dealers will be found ; and I may add that they rose to the occasion and sent to Mells Rectory two bottles of excellent port and two of superlative sherry.

THE WEAKEST LINE

June 27, 1931

SIR
FREDERICK
MAC-
MILLAN

When I asserted the other day that 'A mister Wilkinson a Clergyman' was a Wordsworthian line written by a conscious imitator of the poet, I thought I was right but unfortunately could not give my authority. I have since found a reference to the Story in *Tennyson and His Friends* from which it appears that Edward FitzGerald was the man.

* From a paper called "FitzGerald, Carlyle and other Friends" by Dr. Warren, President of Magdalen, quoted in *Tennyson and His Friends*, edited by Hallam Tennyson.

"Imagine a man abetting all this" (the establishment of The Browning Society), he writes. Tennyson had through life, a high opinion of FitzGerald's powers of criticism. They had often in their youth discussed the classics of all time and all times together, and also, with the poetic freedom of young men, their seniors—Shelley and Byron and Wordsworth. It was FitzGerald who invented for the last the name by which he went in their circle of the "Daddy". *They had fought for the ownership of the Wordsworthian line*, the "weakest blank verse in the language",

"A Mr. Wilkinson, a Clergyman."

It was really FitzGerald's description, given in conversation of the gentleman who was going to marry his sister. When he died in 1862 FitzGerald, writing to Tennyson, reminded him of the line: "This letter", he writes, "ought to

' POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

SIR
FREDERICK
MAC-
MILL AN
{cont.)

be on black-edged paper in a black-edged cover :
for I have just lost a brother-in-law—one of the
best of men. If you ask ' Who ? ' I reply in what
you once called the weakest line ever enunciated,

A Mr. Wilkinson, a Clergyman." '

24.7.31

F. /.
HARVEY
DARTON

I could have desired that the magazine had got a less laborious picture of Woolley. This because (1) he is the least laboured and most enchanting of all bats now living ; (2) I saw him make 68 yesterday on a not at all pleasant Mote wicket, and he didn't look a bit like the picture—tho' some other people who tried to bat did. I think I must tell you one shot the like of which I have never seen. Geary (bowling very well) sent him a short one on his middle leg. It kicked to about 5 ft.—i.e. well up on W's chest—very suddenly, when he had shaped to bang it venomously to square leg, with a left-hander's ferocity. But he with the utmost ease 'to his full height his stately stature drew', and swung right round, and *hit* it—not deflected : he slammed it—almost along the line of the pitch behind the wicket-keeper, to very fine long leg. It went as quickly as one of his big off-drives, and hit the bowling screen a whump—all along the ground, somehow. I saw him *doing* it—really meaning it, and trying to injure the unhappy ball. He nearly killed the wicket-keeper, who had to dodge the giant swing of his follow through. Very noble, and greatly admired by the populace, who know what cricket is in these parts. I was also gratified by Chapman fielding like a great immobile neuter cat with a mouse—just a paw and a ball, no matter where it was ; and by Freeman, this morning, bowling like a small patient relentless devil whose sole duty it is to keep sinners on the grill. This gave me much pleasure.

The first county match I saw at the Mote was

F.J.
HARVEY
DARTON
{cont.}

Gloster v. Kent, and W. G. made a 100 on the old ground (angle of about 45°), where Walter Wright knew every daisy to speak to and could beat bat and wicket and all whenever he liked—he was the Mote pro. then, I think: but the Old Man knew all about it too, and hit fours whenever *he* liked. I'm afraid about 1890. .

You mention the great Wenman, His nephew (I think) still lives on Benenden Green (a retired grocer), where heroes played for Kent and England and still the village tries to.

The match was Kent v. Leicestershire at the Mote Ground, Maidstone, on July 22, 23, and 24, 1931, when Kent won by 25 runs. Woolley made 33 and 68; Freeman took altogether 15 wickets for 144 runs. Walter Wright of Kent was the only first-class professional instructor I ever had. At Brighton in the eighteen-eighties. He went to Kent from Notts. The match referred to was at Maidstone, May 22-4, 1890, when W. G. made 109 not out.

I append a reference to cricket from a letter from an anonymous lady:

I suppose you are glad cricket is beginning again. This is what I think of it, specially indited for your benefit:

- Cricket is the queerest game,
Every stroke is just the same,
Merely whacking at a ball,
Nothing else to see at all.
Then there comes some big surprise
When I chance to close my eyes.

Since we are concerned with cricket I might place here a more recent letter bearing upon the game in America ;

9 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE
BOSTONJOHN W.
CUMMIN

April 19, '33

Your constant interest in cricket tempts me to some words on the game in this country. Do you realize that not one in a hundred of the present generation have ever *even* seen the game played? I say this with great regret for I had the unusual experience of learning the game at an American school, and so know something of its fascination. From '85 to '88 I attended St. Paul's School in Concord, New Hampshire, where cricket was still the *chief school game* (displaced by baseball about 1890). Here on a beautiful turf, with batting nets etc. and under the eye of an English professional (Morley by name) every one who cared to could play cricket and the School team made up of masters and boys held its own with most of the club teams then in existence.

Later I joined the Longwood Cricket Club of Boston, which had teams until 1901, when lawn-tennis completely swallowed cricket up and was the scene of the first Davis Cup matches. The groundsman of the Longwood Club was Chambers, a professional cricketer, born in Kimberley and playing for Notts in the early 80's, coming to us in '84 and retiring last year after 48 years' service in the care of our grounds. From the time when cricket ended (in 1901) the club had always given Chambers a benefit cricket match played on the last day of the lawn-tennis season between teams captained by Chambers and Tom Pettitt (who beat Lambert for the World's championship of Court Tennis in '85). With Chambers' retirement no more cricket will

JOHN W.
CUMMIN
(cont.)

ever be played at the Longwood Cricket Club, but it will still have in its club-house a group of team pictures and old bats which I had the satisfaction of getting together, and if you are ever in Boston I would like to take you to this, almost the last, shrine of cricket in America.

To-day at the Covered Courts I met a fellow-member, Burton by name, now 76 years old, who still plays lawn-tennis and who played on the Notts 'Colts' and later on the Notts County teams in the early '80's a year or two after Chambers left for this country. So the club still has a real cricketer on its rolls.

A WOULD-BE CENTAUR

*From an unknown correspondent on the West Coast of ANON.
Africa to a firm of publishers, who handed it to me :*

DEAR SIR OR MADAM

Well now I must say a few word to you In regards to what I want to ask you if you would be so kind as to send me one of your Catalogue List on to me of your horsemanship sir well now sir I am very Anguish to get to know how is to learn to get on A horse back sir and I want to know how is the way to Ride him sir for I must Confess to you now that I have Never been on A horse back in my life time sir and now that why I am asking you now if you would be so kind as to send along one of your Catalogue-List sir of your horsemanship for there is one point that I should like to get at and that is to learn how to ride on A horse back so now Could you send me along A few of your Instructions sir and I should like if you Could send me some of the Photographs of some of your horses and some of your pupils that is now or that have been learning with you for I must Confess to you now that I would love to learn to Ride on a horse back and I would like to get that wonderful Book sir that you have got in your shop but I can see it mark with the Price on it sir 15/- Shilling Well now would you be willing for me to get this Wonderful Book sir or Could you let me have this nice Book if I would be willing to send on to you a Shilling week Towards it and would you Object of me haveing this book if I payi you one Shilling week for it for I would love to get this Book if I could and now do you know anyone who would give me lessons of how get on a

ANON,
(*cont.*)

horse back and how is to ride him sir so now
could you drop me a line or two sir.

Here, carefully typed, is the message of a Chinese well-wisher, accompanying a gift of a ham and fruit to an English lady :

I beg herewith to send you a Xmas present
stated below for hoping you a Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year, and when reached please
to receive same with a smile.

25 July, 1931

**HENRY
AINLEY**

I have been wandering through your county for 10 days getting wet through day after day, and I would rather tramp Yorkshire. Last night I went to Chapman's travelling circus at Lewes—a real old-fashioned one-night-stand circus. Ali the three clowns were Yorkshire, and I nearly joined them for good. . . . Seeking health is a solitary game, and I feel I have enough to play and beat Maurice Tate single wicket! . . .

T. ANSTEY
GUTHRIE

8 Oct., 1931

It was kind of you to think of sending me Lynd's article. As a matter of fact I had seen it in *John o' London*—an excellent paper which I get every week.

I only hope the Press will be half as kind to *The Young Reciter* as it has been to *Humour and Fantasy*, Most of the notices have been extraordinarily good—one or two found the stories 'faded' and (except V. V.) showing strain and effort. All I know is that I thoroughly enjoyed writing every one of them, but possibly that is not to the point.

I liked a Christian Science gentleman who said that I wrote for the genteel middle classes (and why shouldn't I ? though I really wrote to please myself). He kindly added that my work might delight clergymen, and (this was a nasty one) *even the laity*.

Oh, and did you know that I was one of the many authors who began their career as architects.

I wasn't aware of it myself till I read it in one of Durrant's cuttings. How true it is that we live and learn.

The reference is to the omnibus volume of F. Anstey, which began with Vice Versa, and included all the glorious comedy which he has created.

THE GENTLEST REBEL .

Oct. 23, '31 HENRY S.
SALT

In the days of the Humanitarian League I came once or twice into touch with General Booth. He signed our memorial against corporal punishment ; but he was very angry with me personally for my book on Richard Jefferies, in which I showed that Jefferies's supposed deathbed conversion was all humbug. And on *that* point the General was not very candid.

By the way, why is it that the Salvationists have ceased to challenge with 'Are you Saved ? ' There is a good story about my brother-in-law, Herman Joynes, a nervous fellow, that when very suddenly thus accosted at some sea-side place, he fell into great confusion, and replied :
* Oh no ! thank you very much ; but I'm only a *visitor* here.⁵

With regard to what Richard says about the thrill of new inventions, I am deficient in that feeling. What chiefly interests me in electricity is the relief it brings to horses. I think of what Thoreau said about the telegraph : that the first news to come across would be that the Princess Charlotte had the whooping-cough.

The only criticism of the book that I can offer is one which Bernard Shaw once gave me (the only thing he said) when I presented him with a handsome volume : that ' anyone publishing a book without an index should be put to death '. How, for example, am I to find the page, if I want to turn quickly to the Story, about ' prodding Marie's rotundities ' ?

The valiant old vegetarian and humanitarian had been reading a story of mine called The Barber's Clock.

JAMES
AND MAR-
GUERITE
McBEY



We would
like to know
if you have
ever assisted
to cut the Star
symbol on
the Tail of
a mule.
McBeys

LORD NELSON'S MARSALA

January 25th, 1932

/s. s.
WINTER-
BOTTOM

One of Manchester's leading wine shops is at present using as an advertisement for Marsala wine a fac-simile reproduction of an agreement made and signed by Nelson. This old document, which has excited considerable interest, reads as follows :

' An agreement made and entered into by the Right Honourable Rear Admiral Horatio Lord Nelson and the Duke of Bronte in Sicily with John and William Woodhouse, Merchants of Marsala at Palermo (?) on the nineteenth day of March, 1800, to furnish His Majesty's ships off Malta with five hundred pipes of the best Marsala wine to be delivered there free of freight and all the other charges without loss of time at one shilling and fivepence sterling per gallon wine measure, and to be paid for in bills upon the Commissioners for Victualing His Majesty's Navy at the usual date by the respective pursers of His Majesty's Ships to which the wine is delivered, and should any of the casks be wanted with the wine an additional charge is to be added of £1 sterling each pipe, the wine to be delivered as expeditiously as possible and all to be delivered within the space of five weeks from this date. . . . '

The agreement is signed by Lord Nelson, the Duke of Bronte and John Woodhouse.

The writing on the document is, in places, very faded and difficult to distinguish. For example, it is impossible to read the word which I have assumed to be ' Palermo', and there are a further few words at the end of the agreement which it is impossible to make out.

I understand that the original document is in

**WINTER-
BOTTOM
(cont.)**

the possession of the Woodhouse family mentioned in the agreement, and another interesting point is that Nelson's body is said to have been brought to England after Trafalgar in a cask of Marsala.

The common story is that Nelson's body travelled in a cask of spirits, probably rum.

27.2.32 H. M. TOM-
LINSON

I've been reading Thomson again, only to find I've drifted far from his outlook. I'm not anti-pathetic—simply unmoved. I'd hoped to find it otherwise, but the fact is I must confess to incompetence. All the same, I think Thomson ought to be lifted out of neglect—but / can't do it. He would infect me with his own gloom if I tried, for the present weather and the look of the world are all for him.

In response to the suggestion that H. M. T. should write an Introduction to a new edition of The City of Dreadful Night, an office eventually filled by Edmund Blunden.

GERTRUD.
JEKYLL

May 17, 1932

I am conscious of having helped people to see that gardens are something worthy of better treatment. Now in my last days I feel as if I was only beginning and could go a good step further but can only suppose that that step will be to the churchyard ; but I do not worry and am always cheerful.

Miss Jekyll died on December 8, 1932. Shortly afterwards her sister-in-law and neighbour, Lady Jekyll, wrote to me as follows ;

LADY
JEKYLL

With regard to Munstead Wood I am ruminating perpetually, and welcome the help and suggestions of her friends—in case we could, at least, for a few years, save it from builders or devastation. Godalming has no playgrounds to speak of, in the summer, garden union members, garden lovers, American enthusiasts, might come thither as to a place of pilgrimage—or some sort of club or association might be organized, and the house she so loved inhabited by one of her own family on a modest scale—so that, instead of the devastation which so swiftly follows on gardens where the Wind passeth over it, and it is gone, the Torch might be handed on, for 25 years or so at any rate. Mr. Musgrave of Horticultural Society and one or two others know what is in my mind, though shapeless and ignorant still. . . .

I send you a Service paper in case no one had done so, and I think it was simple as she would have wished, and also beautiful and dignified as befitted the occasion. She was very far away the last weeks, coming back to hold my hand, and murmur of faraway things. A family group of

birthdays on Nov. 20th to 30th recalled the long-ago Bramley days when violets, wild, white and blue, were collected on the edges of those Surrey woods ; so we got her some, so that their unsurpassed fragrance might sweeten her last memories and hours. She liked me to read her the Psalms, and when I stopped, baffled by sanguinary references to enemies and bloodsheds, she always murmured ' Go on, that sound comforts me !' . . .

*LADY
JEKYLL
{cont}*

**FRED-
ERICK
LONSDALE**

SAVOY HOTEL
LONDON
23rd May, 1932

. . . I am so sorry I won't be able to dine with you tomorrow, as I am leaving for Jersey'tonight. I am going over to prepare those Jerseymen for your visit in July. You have no idea how long it takes a Jerseyman to get red carpet.

As soon as I come back I will let you know. If at any time you want twenty thousand pounds, my address there is the Palace Hotel.

The proposed jaunt in Jersey, in which Seymour Hicks, another Jerseyman, was to have participated, had to be postponed.

A RIVER ADVENTURE

June, 1932

A. p.
HERBERT

Last night was jolly—for us, at least, I was very glad to get you on to my old ship at last : and it was fun to steam up from Westminster and find you waiting in the dark (and evening-dress) on the Ranelagh coast ! I hope you are none the worse for the voyage : but I will tell you now that you very nearly were—very much worse. I said nothing last night, for you seemed to notice nothing unusual in the manner of your embarkation. Perhaps you and ' P. P. ' had dined so well at Ranelagh that you were indifferent to danger ! Anyhow, here is the ' inside ' story, which you may enlarge as you will if ever you find yourself among explorers or men of action telling tall stories of their escapes from death.

I ought to have fetched you in the dinghy myself, but I was anxious not to keep my distinguished passengers waiting on the Putney tow-path, so I sent Pam off for you before I anchored the ' Ark '. The tide was running strongly and Pam had enough to do controlling the dinghy without controlling two literary men, eager to board the parent-ship. As a host, I appreciated that eagerness: but it is a good old rule of the tideway that *two elderly gentlemen should not attempt to get from one boat into another at the same time.* This you did, and I was forced to repel boarders. I ordered you sternly back to your thwarts, and then began to tranship you one at a time, beginning with you. But before the transfer of your valuable body was complete the dinghy, to my horror, began to slip away from the ' Ark ' I am not quite clear what had happened : but I gather that ' P. P. ' again tried to disembark

A. P.
HERBERT
(cont.)

with you, and Pam, fearing that the dinghy would upset, shifted her weight to the other side and so lost her hold of the ' Ark ' (The dinghy ought to have been made fast, but you impetuous boys never gave us time.) Anyhow, the dinghy continued to slide away, and there was a long and awful moment when you were suspended horizontally over the dark and dirty water; your feet were on the gunwale of the receding dinghy and I clung to the other end of you desperately by the arm-pits ! If the dinghy had escaped from your (I presume) prehensile heels the situation would have been grim. Your lower half at least would have been immersed, and you might have slipped out of my clutches altogether. I don't know how well you swim in evening-dress after dinner : but unless you do it pretty well it would have been no easy job, with that tide, to retrieve or, should I say, ' gaff' you. It was, I think, the most anxious moment I have had in my venturesome career on the water. I was wholly responsible, and should not have been able to plead ' P. P.'s' impetuosity. Indeed, knowing your dislike for mismanagement, I was prepared for censure. But you were quite calm and cheerful. Or perhaps you thought that that was the normal manner of embarkation. I want to assure you that it isn't, as I should like to be ship-mates with you again.

I fear that this story is only too true. My fellow voyager was the Array Coach, M. de V. Payen-Payne, who ought to have known better.

MISS KELLER'S ABERDEEN

October 6, 1932

**HELEN
KELLER**

We are reading your small book of large interest. For it is large in charm and sympathy. Your Aberdeen terrier has captured my affection, he is dur wee Bensith painted to the life ! Like her he is an elf antf an imp in one. Like her he is indefatigable in starting all manner of living things out of hiding—leaves, crickets, twinkling tails, fluttering wings.

Truly the terrier is a sort of grim chorus for all dogs, he is so individualistic and egotistical, and withal a supreme companion. Sometimes Bensith exasperates me, so that I feel like taking her out and stepping on her, but a moment passes, and where I thought I saw a naughty gnome, lo ! a darling Fairy of Good Intent nestles up to me.

I spoke to Mr. Eagar about having your animal books put into Braille. I believe you know Mr. Eagar, he will be glad to talk the matter over with you. The blind would love your descriptions of bird and animal life under their fingers—I certainly would !

When I went to see Miss Keller in her London hotel, in September 1932, an Aberdeen terrier was making himself exceedingly comfortable against her on the soja. The book she refers to was called The More I See of Men . . . , a title that sufficiently explains its subject.

v. w. D:
[cont.]

twice. The first time I went into quarantine everybody said that of course I would die. My Mummy said that as I would certainly die if she left me behind, I might as well have the chance. I went to the Blue Cross Home and they were just dears and it really wasn't bad at all.

But now please listen because this is most important. My Mummy went to see me after two days. Up till then I had been in despair because / *thought I had been stolen*. As soon as I had seen her, I knew that she knew that I was there, and that it must be all right. After that I settled down and was quite contented. So do please go and see your little dog and tell him that it is All for the Best. Please don't think that Dog People don't understand, because we do.

Last time I came home I had to travel alone because the trooper wouldn't take Dog People. Mummy and I cried when we said good-bye in the River at Calcutta, but she told me to look after two white Bull Ladies who had never been to sea, and what with stopping them eating the Ship's Cat, and helping the Butcher with his work, and having a fight at Colombo, and a cat hunt in Marseilles, the time passed quite quickly, and when I got back to the Home and saw the Head Kennelman I gave my famous imitation of bloodhound bay, which I only give for Mummy and Master and one Bearer-Who-Used-to-Love-Me.

So you see I was really pleased to be back in England even though it meant another six months in the Home.

Just one more thing. We Dogs like to brag a bit, and when our People come to see us in the Home, we just mention it to the other dogs. (' They ran over in the Rolls this afternoon, from

the place they've taken in Scotland ; sounds a good little spot, rabbits you know'). So do go and see him, or the other dogs will be patronizing. ('What, na one been to see you this month? Ah well, times are hard, I expect they are economizing.') If you like I can tell you lots more about quarantine and other dog matters but Mummy says I have written enough.

With my respects to your dog person,

I remain

Yours faithfully,

V. W. D.

P.S. In case you don't know, V. W. D. means Very Wise Dog.

And then in April 1933, I had a charming letter from a sympathizer who had been keeping a note of the days, saying how glad she was that the six months were up and how happy I must be to have my dog again. And I had to confess that it was all an invention.

Here is another letter about dogs:

**ARTHUR
WHYTE**

I want to thank you for the nice things you say, and the thorough insight you show, about dogs. I have just lost my Scotch terrier—he was called 'Solomon' because his chief claim to wisdom was his ability to divide things in half (with an occasional tendency towards experimenting on humanity in that line). As I know you will be interested I send you his photo.

When you next write about dogs I wish you would point out how people who don't understand them ought not to keep them—to keep them on the chain or lead all day is cruelty ; and then

ARTHUR
WHYTE
(cont.)

to be thrashed because they take exercise at the first opportunity is adding injury to insult. I once dreamt it was the end of the world and the form it took was that all the cats and dogs in the neighbourhood invaded my bedroom and, forming a ring round the bed and standing on their hind legs, they sang in chorus 'It's our turn now ! !' Isn't that a parable and a half? It was as usual terrifying in the extreme.

Solomon had the keenest sense of humour I have ever known in a dog—he used to nip the calves of passing workmen and then sit down in the road and yawn, in the way Scotch terriers do. I once apologized to a man so treated, whose friend replied with a broad Yorkshire accent, 'It's nowt, 'e only smelled 'im a bit fresh !' A line of thought quite new to me.

Poor little beastie, it was a motor-car that was responsible, and I've never ceased to miss him since he went.

EDWARD
ELGAR

Apropos dogs, here is Sir Edward Elgaf's Christmas Card for 1932. It may be news to some readers that our great composer is also a poet

In a gorgeous, illimitable, golden corridor, several
of the Higher-Beings were in waiting.

Around, and in mysterious depths, great and
marvellous works were making. . . .

But the New World, it seemed, was not going well.

'I do not see why a New World,' said Gabriel.
Uriel surveyed, with hesitating discontent, a
trumpet.

'Have you to play that thing ?' asked Raphael.
'Some day,' Uriel answered, without enthusi-
asm. . . .

AN ALLEGORIST

A vast Purple Shadow filled the space and Lucifer sat. Ithuriel slightly shifted his spear. EDWARD
ELGAR
{cont.}

'How,⁵ asked One, 'do you, Intellect, picture what is coming?'

Lucifer answered—* I shall like it; there will be much to amuse beside the religions.'

'Nonsense,' said Gabriel, 'they are dull.'

'Also,' continued the Purple One with considerable relish, 'I shall enjoy Shakespeare; he will say I am a gentleman. Milton——'

'We are sick of Milton,' hastily interrupted the Others,—* of Milton and a whole lot of insufferable bores. Why, oh why, must it be?' . . .

Michael fingered a sword and saw his effigy as the everlasting maitre d'armes; Raphael groaned 'Think of me in pictures of that wretched boy with his eternal fish!'

Uriel, Ithuriel and the rest yawned, * Unhappy Earth, why, oh why?' . . .

¹ From somewhere near came a curiously pleasant sound; pleasant and not unmirthful.

If the MAKER-OF-ALL could be pleased beyond ordinary with any single piece of work, it would seem that the last created thing was of an excellence surpassing those grisly gewgaws which HE had seen and found good. . . .

Michael drew the draped curtain; then backed away, radiant.

'HE is pleased,—HE laughs,—HE has made, (Michael whispered)—a Puppy!'

. POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

**EDWARD
ELGAR**
{cont.)

The august features of the Higher-Beings relaxed. * The Earth is well/ they chanted, * a Puppy !'

The Purple Shade heaved outward and sank below.

Lucifer knew that through the ages Man could be serenely happy with his DOG.

No man could adore dogs more than does the Master of the King's Mustek, and they return the compliment.

The reference to Ithuriel will be found in Paradise Lost, Book iv., lines 810-814.

GARDENERS' DAUGHTERS

26 Oct., 1932 T. ANSTEY
GUTHRIE

I forget how long ago, but in the *Sunday Times* you wrote of Frank Miles and his 'Gardener's Daughter', and your youthful admiration of it. I admired it, too, and that coloured print was one of my pictures in my first term in College in 1876.

Another coincidence. But as a matter of fact that print adorned a good many other undergraduates' walls.

I believe I have it stowed away in a chest still. . . .

In connection with Frank Miles and his famous drawing, I cannot resist the temptation to print the following letter, addressed to my publisher after the essay on Miles had been reprinted in a book :

11 Aug., 1932

In his book of essays published by you, *Visibility Good*, Mr. E. V. Lucas says that 'Gardeners no longer have such pretty daughters'. I wish he would come down to Sheen Nurseries, Richmond, and I will introduce him to Mr. Thompson, who has two daughters quite above the average in *looks'. Whether the proximity of flowers is responsible, I don't know, but the fact is interesting.

T. ANSTEY
GUTHRIE

Nov. 16, 1932

... I've always thought and said that 'Huck Finn' was one of the world's great books. I never shot a robin, but I once shot a sparrow (sitting) with a pistol, and was more pleasantly surprised by my skill than sorry for the bird, though I never fired again at any animal whatever.

I used to have rooms at a charming old farm about a mile from Maldon and knew all the country round well. I had dancing lessons in an old house in Golden Square—and there was a fine old crusted Early Victorian restaurant—Blanchard's in Beak St. where; when my brother and I came up from Grimston's for a Saturday to Monday, we always were taken to lunch by my father, and always chose mutton cutlets and tomato sauce and a Neapolitan ice to follow, and were never the worse for it.

I expect you know the Adam bedroom furniture from Garrick's Villa in the V. and A. Museum.

I used to meet Myers and Gurney occasionally, and I've been to a Moody and Sankey meeting. I forget where—either in an annexe to the Westminster Aquarium or the Agricultural Hall, I think.

And William Blakeley in 'Pink Dominoes' &c. at the Criterion used to make me laugh as he did you.

I entirely agree with all you say about America and the War, and Richard's views as to a future state are about the same as mine, except that I don't want to be re-incarnated as a dog or anything else.

F. ANSTEY AT CAMBRIDGE

Last night I read *Sketches from Cambridge* all through. Leslie Stephen's Cambridge was ten years before mine, but pretty much the same for all that—though dear old Ben Latham, my tutor at the Hall, was the very best and kindest and most understanding of all possible dons, past or present.

T. ANSTEY
GUTHRIE
[cont.)

But most of the others were aloof and donish, and as undergraduates we were incurious barbarians enough. I never found courage to speak at the Union—most of the audience read the daily papers steadily through the debates with chilling effect. But I spoke at College debating societies occasionally—always nervously.

At Cambridge I first read Lamb's Essays, and the one on Oxford without of course suspecting that it was really Cambridge.

I love his description of Dyer's 'phrenesis'. Neither of the latter's portraits makes him look shabby and unkempt, but perhaps he was washed and burnished for them as he was for his marriage. . . .

A letter called forth by some reminiscences of mine. Leslie Stephen's Pall Mall Gazette articles on Cambridge, which appeared when he was a young man, were re-issued in 1932. Lamb's letter about George Dyer was written to Thomas Manning on December 27, 1800,

' POST-BAG DIVERSIONS

A. B.
RAMSAY

The following letter came to me from the Master of Magdalene, of whose adventure in Athens I had heard from Anstey Guthrie :

Dec. 19, 1932

Guthrie has only half-remembered what I told him. It was a more personal experience. But I don't know if you can transfigure it.

When I was still one of the younger masters at Eton, the Vice-Provost (F. Warre-Cornish) sent for me. He was an old man, and he *looked* about 100 : very thin, like a bird, and with wisps of white hair, and a distant voice. He had heard I was going to Greece in, the Easter holidays. In the privacy of his bedroom, and with a secrecy as of the Confessional, he told me of the sinful thing which had lain upon his conscience for fifty years. When he was a young man he had taken a lump of marble from the temple of Nike Apteros and brought it home. He pointed to it where it lay on his dressing-table. There it had lain through the rest of his life, silently accusing him every morning when he shaved. Could I, would I, liberate him ?

Well, I could not say no : and there and then I undertook with most sacred vows to restore the marble to its place.

But it was of the size of a small leg of mutton ; and apart from the trouble of finding room for it in my portmanteau, there was all the difficulty of explanation at the douane. In fact there was no explanation—I forget the silly reasons I gave. But it wasn't confiscated, and at last it arrived in Athens, and I hid it under rugs in my room at the hotel.

They had recently become very vigilant on the

THE INNOCENT CRIMINAL

Acropolis, and it was a criminal offence to remove any of the stones—even the smallest fragments. I didn't want to remove any, but it seemed to me that, if I was found with the thing in my hand, my statement that I was taking it back would sound rather thin. Several days passed, and still I did not dare to act. But I could not return to Eton and give the marble back to the Vice-Provost with a tale of failure. It would have killed him on the spot. So I took note that the time when the Acropolis was most deserted was after lunch ; and on a broiling afternoon I put on a long ulster—the only garment under which the stone could be concealed—and set forth. It bulged out from my side like some hideous malformation ; and when I had wearily climbed the steps, nothing in the world could have looked more suspicious ; and the one gendarme on guard followed me about at a distance of about ten yards.

Then I had my inspiration. I sat down against the wall of Nike and apparently dropped by degrees into a restful sleep. He watched me for some time, but then wearied of it and went away. Very slowly I let the stone slip to the ground under my garment; and after a while I rose, stretched my arms, and made my descent. The rest of the trip I enjoyed with a light heart, and when I brought back the good news to the Vice-Provost it had such an inspiriting effect on him that he lived for ten more years.

They have been discovering all the places to which the scattered fragments belong and restoring them : and I often wonder if this stone was a long lost piece and found at last. At any rate they must have been puzzled, when they found

A. B.
RAMSAY
(cont.)

A. B.
RAMSAY
{*cont.*}

it, by the grease on it which had fallen from the Vice-Provost's guttering candles : some of it was very old.

Well, that's the story. There is no more to say. And you are welcome to it.

Feb. 6th, 1933 ^{A.}
EDWARD
NEWTON

Have you heard this one?—it came to me direct from Paris. A Frenchman asked another Frenchman how his sons were getting on. 'Fine,' was the reply, 'my first son is a diplomat and my second son is also a lunatic; my third son is a banker and my fourth son is also in jail; my fifth son got the Croix de Guerre and my sixth son did not go to the war either'

MRS.
HEATHER
WATKINS

*/ make the following letter the latest in date in this book.
No communication from a stranger ever gave me greater
pleasure:*

ioth July, 1933

On Friday when I went into the seedling tent at the Chelsea Rose Show the first thing I saw on the McGredy stand was a brilliant red rose proudly bearing the name ' E. V. Lucas '

It is a bedding rose of the ' K. of K.' type, but in the grower's opinion it will supersede ' K. of K.' as it is firmer and less inclined to flop. It has long spiral buds which will make it a good button-hole rose.

Owing to the long journey in the intense heat from the north of Ireland it did not do itself justice at the Show, but even then I thought the colour was very fine.

It will not be ' in commerce', as they say, until next year.

By a strange chance there arrived, almost at the same time, u letter from Mr. Frank D. Barron, a horticulturist at Otago in New Zealand, giving me the belated news that ' some years ago ' he produced a new sweet-pea, which, ' with due pomp and ceremony', he christened with my name and sent it out into the world. The more than flattering description follows:

E. V. LUCAS (M.S.F.).—Brilliant tomato-red and quite a different shade from any other in the scarlet, red, or orange-scarlet class. Truly a blend of scarlet-red and crimson with an orange flush, the colour usually associated with a ripe tomato. Absolutely sun-proof and free flowering,

SAID WITH FLOWERS

with large blooms that make a wonderful display in the garden and are a sheer joy in the house. We have seed ready for immediate delivery and can recommend this variety as absolutely reliable and a most popular colour.

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